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De Tal Palo Tal Astilla: Exploring Mexicana/Chicana Mother-Daughter Pedagogies

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De Tal Palo Tal Astilla: Exploring Mexicana/Chicana Mother-Daughter Pedagogies

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Education

by

Alma Itzé Flores

2016

ABSRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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Alma Itzé Flores

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

University of California, Los Angeles, 2016

Professor David Gumaro García, Co-Chair

Professor Daniel G. Solórzano, Co-Chair

This qualitative dissertation examined the role that mothers play in the educational success of Mexicana/Chicana working-class first-generation college students. Research has shown that Mexicana/Chicana mothers are integral to the educational achievement of their daughters, however few studies have explained why, or outlined specifically what it is that they do to inculcate educational success (Gándara, 1982, 1995, Gándara et al., 2013). Using Chicana/Latina feminist theory (Delgado Bernal & Elenes, 2011), this study explored the teaching and learning practices between Mexicana/Chicana immigrant working-class mothers and their first-generation college daughters. I focused on 10 mother-daughter dyads from Los Angeles County. The majority of the mothers are immigrants from México with an average of an elementary school education. Nine of the daughters are enrolled in Ph.D. programs in Los

Angeles and one is an assistant professor at a local university. I facilitated 30 pláticas: 10 pláticas with the mothers, 10 pláticas with the daughters, and 10 mother-daughter pláticas. Additionally, I conducted 18 home visits, collected photographs and personal items, and kept a journal for self-reflexivity. I analyzed the data using modified grounded theory (Calderon, 2008; Malagón, Pérez-Huber, & Velez, 2009) with a Chicana/Latina feminist sensibility to generate theory from their lived experiences. During my analysis, I recognized the ways systems of oppression impact the lives of Women of Color. When preliminary themes were identified, I shared them with the mothers and daughters in the mother-daughter pláticas to discuss analysis, receive feedback, and engage in a collaborative data analysis process. Following this, I engaged in a final analysis stage where concluding themes were identified. My findings show that Mexicana/Chicana mothers use a pedagogy of the borderlands to raise muxeres truchas. A pedagogy of the borderlands encompasses the creative, defying, and empowering ways in which Mexicana/Chicana immigrant working-class mothers raise their daughters. It uses a bodymindspirit approach to instill a conocimiento of how to navigate, thrive in, and transform the physical and metaphorical borders that inform the everyday lives of Mexicanas/Chicanas. It is grounded in the epistemologies and ways of being of Mexicana/Chicana mothers and used to raise muxeres truchas. These are women who embody a unique form of intelligence of how to live in the world and transform it as Women of Color. Implications for this study point to the importance of improving the connection between Mexicana/Chicana mothers, daughters and schools, particularly for families of first-generation college students, reframing how we understand and measure success and achievement in schools, and the significance of continuing to develop Chicana/Latina feminist pedagogies and methodologies.

The dissertation of Alma Itzé Flores is approved.

Dolores Delgado Bernal

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University of California, Los Angeles

2016

Dedication

Para mi mamá Alma Jovita Flores Bernal, sé que siempre quisiste estudiar y es por ti que este tema se significa mucho para mí. Este doctorado es para ti, tu no pudiste lograrlo pero yo lo logre por ti.

Para mi papá Jorge Luis Flores Grajeda, gracias por todo lo que has hecho por mí y por nuestra familia. Yo sé que fue difícil dejar nuestra vida en México, nunca podre regresarte ese tiempo pero este doctorado es una manera de honrar ese sacrificio.

Para mi abuelita Mamá Esther, yo sé que desde arriba me sigues guiando, dando el esfuerzo de seguir adelante, y las ganas de siempre sacar puros dieces. Quiero pensar que mi decisión de ser profesora fue en parte por ti, que lo llevaba en la sangre. Te extraño mucho.

Para mi abuelito Bolo, por inculcarme que iba ser una doctora algún día. Gracias por tu amor incondicional, por todos tus cuentos, y por regalarme tu amor por los libros.

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"Dime con quien andas y te dire quien eres"

I began my education in el norte at eight years old. Our move to the U.S. was supposed to be temporary, my parents would work to save enough money and we would return back to our lives in México. Twenty years later and my family and I have not returned to our beloved home in Guadalajara. We have made our lives here in the states. This Ph.D. is a product of my parent's sacrifices and hard labor. All of my accomplishments and degrees are for them and because of them.

Má, this Ph.D. is for you. You are the inspiration for this study. Thank you for always believing in me and for giving me the strength and perseverance to never give up. I remember when you dropped me off at my first day of school in the U.S. at Harding Elementary School, then at UCLA for college, and finally at Austin for my masters. All of these times we embraced each other and cried. I was afraid- but you have always made me braver. Thank you for teaching me to be more courageous, self-assuring, and confident. Whenever I doubt myself I think of you, I love you.

Papi, se que fue dificil dejar a nuestra familia en México, especialmente a Mamá Esther y Papá Toño. Yo se que nunca te voy a poder regresar todo ese tiempo pero quiero que sepas que nunca lo tome por menos. Yo siempre eh estado atenta de que tan duro trabajas, de los sacrificios que has hecho por nosotros, y de lo mucho que nos quieres. Para mi la escuela fue mi manera de poder darte las gracias y enseñarte cuanto yo te quiero. Mis momentos más felices han sido ver tu felicidad y orgullo por mis logros. Te quiero mucho.

Esther, thank you for loving me both at my worst and at my best. At such a young age you have touched so many lives already. You embody what education should be- critical and

transformative. I feel honored to call you my sister, I love you. Jorge, you always listen with such a loving and open mind. I have always admired the way you truly try to be in community with others. Thank you for teaching me so much, I love you.

To my soon to be husband and partner in life, Luis, thank you. I never imagined that we would both be pursuing a Ph.D. From the day I met you I was inspired and moved by you. You have changed my life and taught me so much. Thank you for believing in me and always loving me even with my imperfections. You have taught me to be more patient, loving, and appreciative of all the little things in life. Te quiero mucho amor.

To my chosen sisters, Tanya, Suky, Ednna, and Ambar- thank you. You are the best thing UCLA gave me. You have brought so much joy and love into my life. I never really knew the true meaning of friendship until I met you all. I am still in awe when I think about the fact that we all went on to become doctors and lawyers. I don't think it is by coincidence, but rather a reflection of our friendship and how we support each other. I can't wait to see all the amazing things we will do by each other's side.

I want to especially thank Tanya and Suky who have been my ride or dies in academia. Tanya I will always treasure the time we shared in the Ph.D. program together. I feel incredibly honored and grateful to call you my friend. From dragging my mattress to your dorm room, to countless San Diego and Tijuana outings, to SROP in the cornfields, and to cooking with you- I cherish every memory. Thank you to your mom as well, from day one since she has welcomed us to her home, fed us, and put up with our crazy asses. I want you to know that I have learned a lot from you and that I am better person because of you. I love you, academia better watch out for Dr. Gaxiola Serrano!

Suky thank you for always believing in me. I knew it was real when you and Tanya

brought me pizza and M&Ms after I bombed my first midterm at UCLA. I have always felt very supported by you. From reading my cyclops paper to drafts of my dissertation, I appreciate how much you've helped me all these years. Thank you for giving the best advice, for listening, for making me laugh, and for straightening me out when I need it. I am so proud of everything you have accomplished and it makes me so happy to know that you and I finished this journey together. Te quiero mucho Dra. Morales.

My journey to the Ph.D. began as an undergraduate at UCLA through the guidance and mentorship from many people. I want to thank the Academic Advancement Program (AAP), the Freshmen Summer Program (FSP), and the Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program. In AAP, I want to recognize Nixora Ferman, my undergraduate counselor, who provided me with many resources and opportunities to succeed as a first-generation college student. Dr. La'Tonya Rease Miles is the reason why myself and so many other Students of Color are graduating with Ph.D.'s across the country. LT thank you for paving the road for so many of us, you truly are special. Thank you to my McNerd familia, especially Dr. Pedro E. Nava, Dra. Elizabeth Gonzalez, Dra. Rosa D. Manzo, and my McNair mentor Dr. Kris Gutierrez. I also want to recognize Rosalinda Ruiz who I met my last year as an undergrad. She has become part of my family- thank you for everything you have done for my family and I. 805 por vida!

At the University of Texas at Austin I was fortunate to have met some great friends, mentors, and professors. Thank you to my master's committee members, Dr. Luis Urrieta and Dra. María Fránquiz. Thank you also to Dr. Noah De Lissovoy and Dr. Doug Foley who encouraged me to go for the Ph.D. Thank you to Dr. Juan F. Carillo and Dr. Claudia Cervantes-Soon as well. You both are amazing mentors and inspire me greatly. The following muxeres made my time at UT even better: Dr. Toni Avila, Dr. Christian Zuniga, Dr. Monique Ribeiro,

Rocío Villalobos, and Liliana Ortiz, thank you. Tambien le quiero dar las gracias a mi tio Julio y a mi tia Sonia por siempre estar al tanto de mi durante esos dos años.

During my Ph.D. at UCLA I was fortunate to make new friends and mentors. To my cohort and grad school bff, Ed Curammeng, thank you. Thank you for always checking in with me, for reading my work, for listening, and for always believing in me. I cannot express how grateful I am for everything you have done for me. I feel very fortunate to have you in my life. You are an amazing friend and scholar. I know you know that I love and care for you deeply.

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chose to get a Ph.D. Thank you for pushing me to finish- there is no way I would have without you. I am grateful for the way you remind me to believe and trust in myself. I have learned so much from your scholarship, mentorship, and teaching.

Dr. Marjorie Faulstich Orellana, thank you for taking me under your wing since day one. I have learned how to be a better teacher and mentor from you. Some of my favorite memories from the Ph.D. are with the education 194 team, thank you for giving three years with an amazing team! Dr. Dolores Delgado Bernal, thank you for agreeing to be a part of my committee. I have always looked up to you since I came across your scholarship. I admire the way you femtor so many of us, we are lucky to have you. I hope to one-day model that same type of femtorship with my students, especially the muxeres.

This work would not have been possible without the mothers and daughters who gave up their time to participate. Thank you Marissa and Fe, Flor and Huitzilin, Chata and Quetzali, Rosario and Maria, Socorro and Alejandra, Nati and Cecilia, Marimar and Felicia, Carolina and Paloma, Camila and Catalina, and Sofia and Olivia. Para las mamás gracias por tratarme como si fuera su propia hija. To my colegas and hermanas in the trenches, thank you. You remind me that sisterhood is possible in academia. Thank you for your help, friendship, and stories. This dissertation is for our mamás chingonas! Or como dijo Marimar, para las madres que son a todo madre!

Bolito, siento que en parte me estas esperando que acabe para que te puedas ir en paz. Desde chiquita siempre me recordabas que iba ser una doctora. Hoy que fui a verte te deje mi tarjeta para enseñarte que nuestro sueño se realizó, soy la Doctora Alma Itzé Flores. Quiero que sepas que te quiero mucho y que te voy a extrañar muchísimo. Gracias por todos cuentos y por tu amor incondicional, te amo. Mamá Esther, aunque no estés hoy aquí, sigo pensando mucho en

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Lastly, to all those who suffered and fought so that People of Color could pursue higher education, I thank you. I walk proudly because of your struggles. I promise to pay it forward.

Vita

ALMA ITZÉ FLORES

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Co-Chair, Graduate Student Association in Education	2013

Preface

Para mi Mamá

Chicana[1] scholars like Michelle Téllez (2011), Sofia Villenas (2006), and Karleen Pendleton Jiménez (2013) have written about the ways their mothers influenced their identities as scholars, mothers, and feministas. In a similar way, I begin my dissertation by sharing my mother's muxerista story[2] to affirm her wisdom and to show how I became interested in Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies. Her story also serves as a way to challenge deficit-framed scholarship that continues to portray Chicana/Latina mothers as being incapable of raising or educating their children.

When I think about my path towards higher education I am reminded of the many familial stories I grew up with; stories of migration and separation, of hard labor and sacrifice, but also of hope and love. These stories have all shaped and taught me important lessons, yet my mother's story of stolen educational opportunities always stuck with me- it impacted me much more profoundly. It changed the way I viewed the value of education for Women of Color[3]. I understood what a huge privilege it was for me as a young immigrant meXicana[4] (pronounced

[1] I use Chicana to refer to women of Mexican descent living in the United States regardless of generation and Mexicana to refer to first-generation immigrant women from México. When I use Chicana/Latina I refer to not only women of Mexican descent, but also to women from other Latin American countries that live in the United States.

[2] I discuss and explain what muxerista stories are in chapter eight.

[3] Similar to Pérez Huber, L., Huidor, O., Malagón, M., Sánchez, G., and Solórzano, D.G. (2006) I strategically capitalize Woman/Women of Color, Mothers of Color, Daughters of Color, People of Color, Students of Color, Families of Color, and Communities of Color as a means to challenge the marginalization of these groups.

[4] Rosa Linda Fregoso (2003) uses the term meXicana as a metaphor for cultural and national mobility; it is a way to draw attention to the process of transculturation, hybridity, and cultural exchanges. She quotes Chavela Vargas' song, "Ni de aquí ni de alla" to draw attention to those that inhabit the borderlands between México and the U.S. I identify as a meXicana because of my immigrant, transcultural, political, and muxerista awareness.

me-chi-cana) to be able to assert my desire to pursue higher education, or to openly discuss and be supported in my academic goals. My mother never had that opportunity, along with many other Chicana/Latina women that have come before me.

As the only daughter of four children my mother grew up distinctly aware of her gender. The responsibilities and expectations at home and in school were different for her. She was asked to do more than her brothers at home, but in school she was asked to do less, to settle for vocational classes. Due to economic and family challenges she grew up going back and forth between el norte[5] and México. Her family finally settled in Santa Bárbara, California where she completed all of high school. She excelled in her studies despite the racist practices of schools and all of her home responsibilities. When it came time to apply to college, she applied without letting anyone know.

She was offered admission to various universities including the University of California, Santa Bárbara the local campus about 15 minutes away from her home. With tears in her eyes she retells the story,

> I remember thinking once I get in [to college] how could they [referring to her parents] say no…and then it was no, your grandpa was like no, no puede ir[6] and I think it was like she can't leave the house, it was like a woman's place is in their house, para que va estudiar si ya se va a casar and at that point it was like fine ok I am not going and that was it, I never asked again (Personal interview, Apr. 29, 2012).

I probed her angrily, why didn't you fight it? Why did you listen? I could not accept her decision. This story was very difficult for me to understand, because I have a very close relationship with my mother's father- Bolo[7]. The grandfather that would always ask about

[5] In my mother's pueblo, Tepehuaje de Morales, the United States is often referred to as el norte.

[6] I do not italicize words in Spanish as a way to challenge the hegemony of the English language.

[7] My grandfather's name is Carlos Bernal, but his grandchildren know him as Bolo or Bolito.

school and remind me that I was going to become the first doctora in the family had at one point denied my mother the opportunity to go to school. I could not make sense of it.

It was not until years later when my Chicana feminist sensibilities had developed more that I was able to fully grasp the workings of patriarchy in this story. Chicana/Latina feminist theories helped me understand my grandfather's perspective in a way that humanized (not justified) his imperfections and failures. I was able to reconcile the conflicting view I had of my grandfather and to maintain a relationship with him.

My mother's story shaped my identity as a muxerista. Muxerista literally translates into womanist; the x replaces the j to signify a connection to the ancestry and languages of México and Latin America (Revilla, 2004). Villenas, Godinez, Delgado Bernal, and Elenes (2006) describe it as an "…approach to power, knowledge, and relationships rooted in convictions of community uplift" (p. 7). They explain that they use the term mujerista (they spell it with a "j") rather than feminista because often el feminismo is not part of the everyday realities of ordinary women.

This is the case for my mother, although she may not necessarily identify as a feminist, she certainly raised me to be one. Her experiences as a racialized immigrant Woman of Color informed the strong work ethic she instilled in me. Her demand that I always speak up and stand up for myself comes from her not always being able to do that, and her insistence that I put up with the marginalization of being in predominately white classes throughout most of my k-12 education was so that I could be as competitive as possible for college.

Therefore my dissertation begins with my mother, with my othermothers[8], in the recognition of their critical practices that shaped my identity, and their unconditional support to

[8] Patricia Hill Collins (2009) refers to othermothers as "women who assist bloodmothers by sharing mothering responsibilities" (p. 192).

be able to theorize and claim space in the academy (Cruz, 2001). The title of my dissertation, *De Tal Palo Tal Astilla*, is a common dicho (saying or proverb) I grew up hearing. In English it can be understood as the saying, "the apple doesn't fall far from the tree." I use this dicho to acknowledge that in order to understand the education of Mexicana/Chicana students we must look to their mothers; we must explore their teaching and learning practices, their life experiences and muxerista stories, and their pedagogies of the home (Delgado Bernal, 2001).

This dissertation is about and for Mexicanas/Chicanas, for those that came before me and for those that will come after me. Too much academic scholarship has stripped Mexicanas/Chicanas of their dignity: blaming them for society's ills, dismissing their contributions, and misrepresenting them. My voice is unapologetically used throughout my entire dissertation. I wrote this always seeking for the "goodness" in the lives of these mothers and daughters, in honor of my mother as well as all the other Women of Color that were not able pursue an education because of systemic oppression. c/s[9]

[9] c/s stands for con safos. In his iconic book (1993), *Drink Cultura*, José Antonio Burciaga explained his use of c/s to mean "amen" and to say that "whether you agree with me or not, whether you like it or not, with all due respect, this is my reality" (p. 8). I use it in the same way, I embrace my positionality as my mother's daughter, meXicana scholar, and muxerista; this is the reality I write from.

Chapter One

Introduction

"Our production of knowledge begins in the bodies of our mothers and grandmothers, in the acknowledgment of the critical practices of women of color before us." –Cindy Cruz

This dissertation is a muxerista story[10] of ten mothers and their daughters. It is a story that reveals the strength and struggles of Mexicanas/Chicanas. More specifically, it is a story about how Mexicana/Chicana mothers raise muxeres truchas- women who are not only smart in the traditional sense of education, but who also know how to navigate, thrive in, and transform systems of oppression. The epigraph of this chapter from Cindy Cruz sets the tone for this story. It expresses how in order to understand ourselves[11] as Women of Color we must look to our mothers and grandmothers. It indicates that this is a story about understanding the teaching and learning practices between Mothers and Daughters of Color, what Villenas and Moreno (2001) refer to as mother-daughter pedagogies. In this chapter I present a brief overview of the educational status of Chicana/Latina students, how the word achievement was used in this study, the research questions that guided the study, and a roadmap for the entire dissertation.

The Educational Status of Chicana/Latina Students

Currently Chicanas/Latinas represent the largest female racial or ethnic group in the United States K-12 system, yet are faring much more poorly than any of their female counterparts, and progressing at an alarmingly slower pace (Gándara et al., 2013; Ginorio & Houston, 2001). While a growing body of literature may suggest that Chicano/Latino students

[10] I discuss what a muxersita story is in chapter eight.

[11] I often include myself when discussing Women of Color or Daughters of Color by using expressions like "ourselves," "us," and "we."

are most at risk, Chicanas/Latinas face their own challenges[12]. As a group, Chicanas/Latinas begin school significantly behind other women and without adequate resources or support. About half of all Chicanas/Latinas will enter school speaking Spanish as their first language (Gándara, 2015). Recent research has shown that Chicanas/Latinas from immigrant families who maintain their Spanish are more likely to go to college, and especially four-year colleges, than those who lose their primary language (Santibañez & Zarate, 2014). Yet more often than not schools fail to recognize their native language skills as an asset to build on and instead they are placed in remedial programs that track them into lower level curricula and slow their academic progress (Crosnoe, 2006).

They are also more likely to live in high poverty and attend segregated elementary and secondary schools[13]. What this means is that they attend schools that are underresourced, often lack high-level curricula, and have higher teacher and academic personnel turnover; this directly affects their high school graduation rates. Chicanas/Latinas graduate from high school at lower rates than any major subgroup; more than one in five has not completed high school by age 29. They also have the highest push out[14] rate among all women (Ginorio & Houston, 2001). Thus even though as a group they have made progress in closing the high school graduation gap, compared to other women they are still falling behind (Gándara, 2015).

[12] See for example President Barack Obama's (2014) My Brother's Keeper Initiative, Dr. Tyrone C. Howard's (2009) Black Male Institute at UCLA, and Dr. Victor Sáenz's (2010) Project MALES at the University of Texas at Austin. My intention here is not to dismiss this important work, or place Women of Color against Men of Color, but to keep both of these groups in mind as both face unique challenges.

[13] This is with the exception of Black women.

[14] I use the word "push out" instead of the traditional term "drop out" which puts the blame on students for their failure to graduate instead of examining systems that force students out of the educational system like lack of resources and racism (Valencia & Black, 2002).

This is the same for their college graduation rates- they have made strides in gaining associate degrees and higher. However, they are still the least likely of all women to complete a college degree, at just 19 percent compared to 44 percent of white women. Furthermore, Chicanas/Latinas who do enroll in college are more likely to attend community college, only 39 percent will enroll in four-year colleges compared to 50 percent of Black, 60 percent of white, and 67 percent of Asian women (UCLA Civil Rights Project, 2015). While there is nothing wrong with attending community college, research has found that it reduces the chances of getting a degree (Gándara et al., 2012).

In regards to graduate degrees, they are the least likely to receive one compared to other women. In 2013, only four percent of Chicanas/Latinas had received a Masters degree (NCES, 2014). Chicanas/Latinas in graduate school also develop psychological and physiological conditions due to prolonged exposure to racial and gendered microaggressions (Cueva, 2014). Although they may be getting more graduate degrees than their male counterparts they remain underrepresented as faculty. Chicano/Latino faculty outnumber Chicanas/Latinas in all faculty ranks except as instructors and lectures (González, 2007). Their representation steadily declines with rising academic rank. The edited anthology (2012), *Presumed Incompetent*, lays out the many unique challenges Chicana/Latina faculty face- hostile campus climates, tokenism, racism, and marginalization, to name a few.

In summary, although Chicanas/Latinas have made tremendous strides in education in comparison to all other women they are significantly behind. We know what supports Chicana's/Latina's educational success. This includes having access to high quality preschool and childcare, more Chicanx/Latinx[15] teachers and counselors that can communicate effectively

[15] I use Chicanx and Latinx to challenge the gender hierarchy in the Spanish language. Where the use of the "o" is used to encompass both men and females. In the past Latin@ has been used to include both

with their families, maintaining bilingual skills, providing access to rigorous academic programs, being involved in extracurricular activities, feeling confident in math and doing well in it, having high aspirations, having peers with knowledge and aspirations to go to college, and having strong mothers in their lives to support them (Gándara, 2015; Gándara et al., 2013; González, 2006). This dissertation focused on this last factor of success- Mexicana/Chicana mothers. The goal was to further understand the role Mexicana/Chicana mothers play in the educational achievement of their daughters.

Since the mid 1970s numerous studies reported how integral Mexicana/Chicana mothers were for the educational success of their daughters. (See for example Calderon, 1990; Eagle, 1989; Fleming, 1982; Gándara, 1979, 1982, 1995; Hernandez, Vargas-Lew, & Martinez, 1994; Tinajero et al., 1991; McKenna & Ortiz, 1988; Veres, 1974). The work of Patricia Gándara is especially important because it shifted the trend of focusing on failure to the success of Chicanx students. Her book (1995) *Over the ivy walls: The educational mobility of low-income Chicanos* concentrated on exploring the educational pathways of 50 Chicanx students who had either graduated with a Ph.D., M.D., or J.D. From her interviews and survey data she found that "most subjects reported that both parents were supportive of educational goals, though mothers were substantially more so" (p. 36). In her article (1982) *Passing through the eye of the needle: High achieving Chicanas*, she also found that in all but four cases, "the women reported that their mothers had either been equally as or more influential than their fathers in their educational aspirations" (p. 171). Hernandez, Vargas-Lew, and Martinez's (1994) study of intergenerational academic aspirations of Mexican American females also found that, "Mexican-American

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masculine and feminine identities, however Chicanx and Latinx includes individuals whose gender identities fluctuate along different points of the gender spectrum. I use Mexicana/Chicana/Latina when referring to individuals who identify as women regardless of biological sex. I am also cognizant of the gender fluidity in the experiences of self-identified women.

mothers have high academic levels of aspirations for their daughters and tend to be the most significant factor to the achievement of their daughters. This is true despite actual academic and/or occupational attainment of the mother" (p. 202). Since these earlier studies, more research has continued to identify Mexicana/Chicana mothers as significant to the achievement of their daughters[16].

In 2013, the Eva Longoria Foundation commissioned UCLA's Civil Rights Project to examine what supports Latina's educational success[17](Gándara et al., 2013). Their report was consistent with earlier conclusions. Most recently in 2015 the United States (U.S.) White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics teamed up with the UCLA Civil Rights Project to publish a report on Latinas in the U.S. The findings added to those from the 2013 report by expanding the conversation to include other facets of the Chicana/Latina experience like housing, health, and political participation.

While we may not need more research to prove the importance of Mexicana/Chicana mothers, we do need a more complete understanding of what exactly it is that they do to encourage the educational achievement of their daughters. This dissertation sought to explore this- what are the actions, rituals, and interactions that Mexicana/Chicana mothers use to support their daughters? The study focused on understanding Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies, defined by Villenas and Moreno (2001) as "the teaching and learning that occurs between mothers and daughters of color" (p. 673). I focused specifically on working-class immigrant mothers from México because many of the barriers that hold Mexicanas/Chicanas back are related to poverty (Gándara, 2015). I engaged the perspective of both mothers and

[16] See Cantú, 2008; González, 2006; Lozano Rodriguez, Guido-DiBrito, Torres, & Talbot, 2000

[17] See more here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8WACy2H04ps
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aN2QKW_77CU

daughters to not only provide a more comprehensive understanding, but also because many of the existing research studies on mother-daughter pedagogies only account for one viewpoint.

It is projected that by 2060, Chicanas/Latinas will form nearly a third of the female population of the nation and as I have shown they still face unique challenges (Gándara, 2015). We must continue conducting in-depth research that explores Mexicana/Chicana achievement. In discussing the future directions of Chicana/Latina feminist pedagogies, Sánchez and Ek (2013) identified the significance in developing Chicana/Latina mother-daughter pedagogies. As such, the goal of this dissertation was to contribute to the work on Chicana/Latina achievement by focusing on what has already been identified as integral to their success- their mothers. To continue developing Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies platiqué (conversed) with ten immigrant working-class mothers and their respective daughters who grew up in Los Angeles, nine who were doctoral students and one who was an assistant professor. By engaging both of them through this process and focusing on women who by definition are high achieving, I sought to add to the work on Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies and Chicana/Latina feminist pedagogies and methodologies.

A Cautionary Note on Achievement

This dissertation explored achievement in a cautionary way. I was cognizant of how measures of intelligence or what is considered smart are based on middle-class white values and cultural behaviors. Schools unquestionably operate from this dominant perspective and in doing so reproduce inequalities on the basis of race, class, gender, language, and physical ability, among other things. This social construct of intelligence dictates the ways schools measure achievement; what students get identified as "smart" or "gifted," and ultimately are responsible for their academic trajectories and futures.

I recognize that achievement is rooted in meritocracy, the idea that educational mobility is based solely on earned merit. Meritocracy dismisses the ways institutionalized racism functions to create unequal distribution of wealth and opportunities for students. This dissertation adds to the growing body of work that has begun to challenge these confined notions of achievement[18]. I explored achievement through the perspective of Mexicana/Chicana immigrant mothers and their daughters, women who are marginalized in our educational system. I found that the way they made sense of achievement went beyond what is traditionally measured in schools. The daughters talked more about the ways their mothers taught them how to navigate oppression both within and outside of school, than the practices that are traditionally seen as fit for raising "smart kids" (i.e. reading, extracurricular activities). This is not to say that the mothers did not do these things, but to show how limited this construction of intelligence is. The daughters are high achievers not only in the sense that they met these traditional white standards of achievement, but they also embodied and enacted a different form of intelligence because of what they learned from their mothers. This is what I will highlight in this dissertation- a subaltern muxerista form of achievement and intelligence.

Research Questions & Rationale

I explained how I situated achievement to begin to set the background for my research questions. The goal of this dissertation was to explore Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies through the perspective of immigrant working-class mothers and their daughters who were in Ph.D. programs or professors. In this section I present the three research questions that guided the study and some context for them.

1. What cultural/familial actions, rituals, and interactions do Mexicana/Chicana mothers engage in to shape the educational achievement of their daughters?

[18] See Hatt, 2007; Carillo, 2013; Cervantes Soon, 2016

Rationale: This is the primary question that guided the study. The first three findings chapters are organized accordingly to this question. In other words, I broke this question down into three questions. Chapter six focuses on the actions, chapter seven on the rituals, and chapter eight on the interactions. This question was addressed through the perspective of both the mothers and daughters. I use "cultural/familial" because I understand that some actions, rituals, and interactions may be contours of the Mexican/Chicanx experience (i.e. cultural) and others may be unique to a family (i.e. familial). I use the dash to recognize the fluidity between cultural and familial ways of being. By actions I refer to something done, performed, or a way of being. I was specifically interested in performance because of Villenas' (2006) concept of performative pedagogies, learning that goes beyond words but also encompasses the body- teaching by doing. Rituals refer to established or everyday practices or behaviors. Lastly, by interactions I mean social actions or dialogue, like storytelling.

2. How do Mexicana/Chicana first-generation college students explain or understand their mothers' influence on their educational achievement?

Rationale: This question sought to understand how the daughters made sense of their educational achievement in relation to their mothers. I was interested in seeing if their understandings fit with conventional school measures of success. Initially, I found myself trying to compile a list of what Mexicana/Chicana mothers could do to support their daughters. However, what I discovered was that the way the daughters spoke about their mother's role in their education was multifaceted, it involved a reframing of what schools traditionally see as being smart and went beyond the physical space of schools. I argue that the way the daughters explored or understood their mother's influence on their educational achievement is best

illustrated through a pedagogy of the borderlands and the concept of muxeres truchas. Thus, this question is also addressed in chapters six-eight.

3. Where do Mexicana/Chicana mothers and daughters' accounts differ? What do these differences reveal about Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies?

Rationale: This question sought to unveil the tensions and contradictions of Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies. I was interested to see where the mothers and daughter's interpretations conflicted with one another. This question was especially important because it focused on highlighting the dyadic approach this study took. In chapter nine, I discuss how heteropatriarchy was the central source of the majority, if not all, the tensions and contradictions in the mothers and daughter's accounts.

A Roadmap of the Dissertation

In this chapter I presented the educational status of Chicana/Latina students to show the importance of continuing to conduct research on their educational achievement. I demonstrated how studies since the 1970s have revealed the significant role that Mexicana/Chicana mothers play in the education of their children, more specifically in their daughter's lives. Although we may not need more research to recognize this, we do need work that explores the microcosms of the Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter relationship. This is where this dissertation fits into the conversation; the goal is to provide a deeper and richer understanding of Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies through the perspective of immigrant working-class mothers and their daughters who are in Ph.D. programs or professors. I also presented how I situate the idea of achievement in my dissertation. I explained the problems with this concept and how this work challenges limiting notions of intelligence. I then outlined the three research questions that guided this study and provided context for them.

The next chapter presents my theoretical framework, Chicana/Latina feminist theory, along with a literature review of the five concepts I use to position the study. These five concepts are: mother-daughter pedagogies, pedagogies of the home, epistemology of the brown body, Anzaldúa's Borderlands, and community cultural wealth. Following this I present my methodology, which is closely connected and informed by my theoretical framework- muxerista portraiture. The chapter after this presents what methods and modes of analysis I used. Chapter five serves as the introduction to my findings, it outlines what a pedagogy of the borderlands is and what I mean by muxeres truchas. Chapters six-eight discuss the rituals, actions, and interactions that make up a pedagogy of the borderlands. Chapter nine reveals how heteropatriarchy was the central tension and contradiction in Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies. The last chapter of the dissertation is my conclusion in the form of a letter where I engage in a conversation with prominent scholars who informed this work. In the letter I describe the implications of the study.

Chapter Two

A Chicana/Latina Feminist Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature connected with the theoretical framework of this study, Chicana/Latina feminist theory (CLFT). The chapter is organized into five foundational concepts that guided the study: mother-daughter pedagogies, pedagogies of the home, epistemology of the brown body, Anzaldúa's Borderlands, and community cultural wealth. These five notions can be understood as theoretical tools of CLFT. However, I recognize that Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth model is more recognizable as a Critical Race Theory[19] tool, yet I see its relationship to CLFT through its goal of highlighting the strengths and resources of Communities of Color. Within each of these sections I define the concept as well as engage other literature that is closely related or provides a richer understanding. Before reviewing these concepts, I first describe CLFT and three ideas that were essential to my study: pedagogy, family, and mothers. These ideas shaped the way I selected the literature, my interactions with the mothers and daughters, and my analysis.

Politically, I also acknowledge that whose work gets cited significantly contributes to what and whose knowledge is legitimated (Delgado Bernal, 1998). I am therefore very conscious of whom I cite. I titled this chapter a Chicana/Latina feminist literature review because I prioritize the scholarship by or about Women of Color. You will see that much of the literature is by Chicana/Latina feminist scholars. Figure one is a visual representation of my literature review. It shows how my theoretical framework guided the selection of the literature I considered.

[19] Solórzano (1998) defines critical race theory in education as a framework that "challenges the dominant discourse on race and racism as they relate to education by examining how educational theory, policy, and practice are used to subordinate certain racial and ethnic groups" (p. 122).

Figure 1. A Chicana/Latina Feminist Literature Review

Chicana/Latina Feminist Theory

Chicana/Latina feminist theory (CLFT) centers its analyses on the experiences of Chicanas/Latinas in the U.S. through a critical, social, economic, political and cultural perspective. It draws from a theory of agency (modes of acting upon their world) as a way to highlight how Chicanas/Latinas struggle against intersecting forms of oppression, such as race, class, gender, sexuality, and linguistic inequalities. It speaks to the issues and needs of Chicanas/Latinas and it is dedicated to showing how they have not passively accepted racist, sexist, classist, and heterosexist institutional and cultural practices (Delgado Bernal & Elenes, 2011). As De la Torre and Pesquera (1993) explain, in CLFT Chicanas/Latinas become "speaking subjects, at the center of intellectual discourse" (p. 1). Through CLFT the experiences and realities of Chicanas/Latinas are understood as foundations of knowledge.

Drawing on CLFT, Dolores Delgado Bernal (1998) developed a Chicana feminist epistemological framework to center the unique life experiences of Chicanas. This framework is "…concerned with the knowledge about Chicanas, about who generates an understanding of

their experiences, and how this knowledge is legitimized or not legitimized" (p. 560). It challenges traditional western notions of objectivity, universal truths, and dichotomies like objective truth versus subjective emotion. It begins with a standpoint that Chicanas experience different opportunity structures than men and white women. While there are similarities to Black feminisms it is different in that it addresses issues that are common to Chicanas like immigration, migration, generational status, bilingualism, limited English proficiency, and Catholicism[20].

While CLFT have traversed multiple disciplines (i.e. Ethnic Studies, History, Gender and Sexuality Studies), the theoretical tools I use have largely been applied in the field of education (although not limited to). Now that I have described CLFT, I provide some background on my study by discussing three central ideas- pedagogy, family, and mothers. I then review the literature by engaging the four concepts that are grounded in CLFT.

Situating the Study- Pedagogy, Family, & Mothers

I used Laura I. Rendón's (2009) sentipensante pedagogy to inform my ideas of teaching and learning practices. Rendón calls for a pedagogy that "represents a teaching and learning approach that is based on wholeness, harmony, social justice and liberation" (p. 132). The two Spanish words that make up sentipensante, sentir which means to sense or feel and pensar to think, are understood as existing in dynamic with each other. This form of pedagogy challenges the western assumption that rationality is the key form of understanding and learning. Instead it emphasizes that rationality and intuition can coexist and complement each other. Sentipensante pedagogy highlights the union of body, mind, and spirit. This dissertation argues that education is not bound to classrooms or institutions and can include community and home spaces as

[20] I list Catholicism with the awareness that while a majority of Chicanas are Catholic not all of them are. The same is understood for other markers.

important sites of teaching and learning. Thus the studies I reviewed encompass a form of pedagogy that is less concerned with privileging *only* intellectual development and more concerned on educating the whole person (body, mind, and spirit).

Similar to Patricia Hill Collins (2009) this dissertation challenged normative definitions of family. Below she explains how we traditionally view families,

> Formed through a combination of marital and blood ties, "normal" families should consist of heterosexual, racially homogenous couples who produce their own biological children. Such families should have a specific authority structure, namely, a father-head earning an adequate family wage, a stay-at-home wife and mother, and children (p. 53).

This dissertation included families that were single-mother households, had mixed immigration-statuses, were made up of multiple families, and at one point were transnational or migrant. I problematize the romanticization of family as a private haven from the public world, because more often than not the mothers struggled with multiple forms of oppression leading to a blurring of the private (home) and public (work) spheres. The traditional fixed sexual division of labor, where a woman's work is constituted in the private home space and men's work in the public space ignored their experiences. The mothers crossed both the home and work space. I therefore considered the fluid and shifting boundaries of Families of Color as a foundational idea in approaching this research.

Lastly, when defining mothers, I did not limit it to biological mothers but was inclusive of what Collins (2009) calls othermothers, "women who assist bloodmothers by sharing mothering responsibilities" (p. 192). Othermothers can be grandmothers, aunts, cousins, and sisters who take on child-care responsibilities. However, it should be clear that ultimately all the mothers in this study were the biological mothers of the daughters. African-American, and I would add Chicanx/Latinx families, have recognized that entrusting one person with full responsibility for mothering a child may not always be possible or wise, as such children are

often raised through women-centered networks (Collins, p. 192). These women-centered networks of bloodmothers and othermothers are key in understanding the African-American and Chicanx/Latinx family experience.

When confronted with racial oppression, a community based childcare approach can be a critical function for the survival of Families of Color. These women-centered networks can provide support and preparation for Mothers of Color that often navigate multiple responsibilities. The traditional family assigns mothers' full responsibility for children and values their ability to sustain a nuclear family household. Yet the willingness of othermothers to help biological mothers, or these women-centered networks, illustrates how African-American and Chicanx/Latinx families collectively cope and resist oppression. The mothers in this study all relied on women-centered networks to help raise their daughters. Additionally, the daughters often served as co-mothers to their siblings.

These concepts (pedagogy, families, and mothers) helped me situate the experiences of the mothers and daughters. Because they are related or grounded in CLFT I was able to honor their unique experience through a framework of agency. These three central ideas also shaped how I chose what literature to draw on. What follows next is my literature review of the four concepts that are grounded in CLFT.

Mother-Daughter Pedagogies

Sofia Villenas and Melissa Moreno (2001) define mother-daughter pedagogies as "the teaching and learning that occurs between mothers and daughters of color" (p. 673). In their study of eleven Latina mothers in rural North Carolina they described the teaching and learning that occurred between mothers and daughters as being translated through consejos (advice), cuentos (stories), y la experiencia (experience). Although they point out that these mujer-

oriented pedagogies were full of tension and contradiction, they also stressed the space for possibility and transformation. They found that the mothers in their study instilled in their daughters the skills to negotiate and refute oppressive gender ideologies, teaching them how "to survive the system and to be able to move between race, capitalism, and patriarchy" (p. 685). Through their findings Villenas and Moreno also offer a critique of funds of knowledge[21] (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992) as lacking an understanding of mujer-oriented knowledge and education. They suggest that teaching tools like consejos, cuentos, y la experiencia are funds of knowledge that are nurtured by Chicana/Latina mothers.

Villenas and Moreno reposition Mothers of Color from the margins to the center of educational research. Their findings not only challenge dominant beliefs about Chicana/Latina mothers being submissive, but they also show the significant role they play in teaching their daughters to be resistors of systems of oppression. Yet missing in their research were the voices of the daughters. As such, this dissertation sought to engage both mothers and daughters to get a more comprehensive understanding of Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies.

Mariella Espinoza-Herold (2007) presents a case study of a Chicana college student, Carla, to show how mothers impart mujer-oriented funds of knowledge. Through the narrative of Carla, we learn the importance of her mother's dichos (sayings or proverbs) in helping her persevere academically. Espinoza-Herold's focus on Latina mothers' funds of knowledge provides a greater understanding of how mothers facilitate resiliency and academic achievement in their daughters. She explains, "*Dichos* do not contain definite truths, but they are fountains of good advice, subject to varying interpretations of time and context that can be applied and used in specific situations" (p. 265). Carla describes that her mother's dichos have helped her

[21] Funds of knowledge are "historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being" (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992, p. 133).

navigate higher education. For example, she explained that the dicho "Dime con quien andas, y te diré quien eres" (Tell me who you keep company with, and I will tell you who you are) helped her understand the importance of being selective of peers in college who would be good role models and supportive of her ambitions.

Thus, her mother's dichos became important tools in helping her succeed in college. Unfortunately, Espinoza-Herold does not provide us with Carla's mothers account. Hearing from Carla's mother would allow us to understand where these dichos came from or in what instances she uses them. The identification of dichos as a tool of mother-daughter pedagogies is an important contribution to the field. My dissertation found other important mujer-oriented funds of knowledge like muxerista story(telling) and a rasquache aesthetic.

Villenas chapter (2006), *Pedagogical moments in the borderlands*, highlights the contradictory and performative aspect of mother-daughter pedagogies. She explains that her mother's "…pedagogical moments cannot be easily conveyed as specific 'positive' lessons (i.e., hard work, emotional strength, cultural traditions) …" (p. 149). These lessons are much more complicated and require us to move from limiting distinctions between good versus bad mothering. Villenas explains how her mother's pedagogies are imbedded in her life experiences- in the pain, joy and contradictions of womanhood as a racialized and working-class Latina mother in the U.S.

Villenas learned from her mother what it meant to suffer and survive as a Woman of Color in patriarchy. She states, "I learned the words aguantar (to endure), sufrimiento (suffering), vergüenza (shame), but also how to valerse por mi misma (be self-reliant). Through her body, her words, and her silence she taught me la cultura as both tyranny and comfort" (p. 149). This is similar to the way Patricia Hill Collins (2009) explains Black mother-daughter

pedagogies as pedagogies of dilemma that teach Black daughters how to "fit into systems of oppression" to ensure survival, but also how to *not* become "willing participants in their own subordination" (p. 23). Similar contradictions and tensions are addressed in my final findings chapter where I specifically engage how heteropatriarchy fits into Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies.

In addition to this contradictory aspect of mother-daughter pedagogies Villenas also illuminates the performative aspect of them. She describes performative pedagogies as learning that goes beyond words but also encompasses the body- teaching by doing through feelings, actions, and rituals. Significant is the way Villenas centers the body as an important tool in teaching and learning between mothers and daughters. As she explains, "…my mother performed the way of life or the way of teaching and learning that she grew up with and expected me to learn…" (p. 148). This work pushed me to think about the role of the body in Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies. I explored this specifically through an embodiment of hustle and a discipline of bodymindspirit.

Villenas' aforementioned chapter (2006) touches briefly on the generational element of mother-daughter pedagogies, the learning that is transmitted from generations of mothers (grandmother-mother-daughter). Marisela was one of the mothers Villenas interviewed, who emphasized the continuity and connections between women across generations. She explains, "Thus, her (referring to Marisela) lifetime of experiences and interpretations of teaching and learning cannot be understood apart from the lives of her mother and grandmother" (p. 154). Marisela talked about how her mother's pedagogy informed how she was raising her own daughter. Therefore, mother-daughter pedagogies are a form of intergenerational teaching and learning in new and old contexts, values, and ideas, but most importantly they empower

daughters to dream beyond their mother's life. Consequently, we cannot understand mother-daughter pedagogies without taking a holistic approach that considers the intertwining lives of generations of mothers and daughters. I explore this idea in my finding of intergenerational sabidurias and tensions.

Hernandez, Vargas-Lew, and Martinez's (1994) exploratory case study focused on the trigenerational aspirations of Mexican-American women. Mothers, daughters, and grandmothers were interviewed and surveyed to understand each mother's role in relation to her daughter's academic aspirations. The results of this study indicated that Mexican-American mothers are perceived by their daughters to be instrumental in terms of their educational aspirations. When asked, "Who encouraged you the most to do well in school?" most mothers and daughters credited their mothers (p. 201). Several other studies have shown that despite their low socioeconomic status Mexican parents hold high educational aspirations for their children (Ceja, 2004; Gándara, 1995; Ovando, 1977; Perez, 1999; Solórzano, 1992).

Leticia Romero Grimaldo's (2010) dissertation is another example of an intergenerational case study of three Latinas. Her ethnographic study examined the oral histories of three generations of Latinas who grew up in a rural West Texas town and achieved academic success. Her case study shows how three generations of women managed to pursue higher education drawing and growing from each other's experiences. Grimaldo's argument is that we cannot apprehend each woman's individual educational experiences without considering the women that came before them. As such, this dissertation put mothers and daughters in conversation with each other to fully understand their notions of education. Even though my study only accounted for two generations of women, the daughters did talk about their grandmothers and the mothers about their own mothers. The daughters who were mothers themselves also talked about how

their mothers were shaping their own mothering practices. Future research should consider how Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies evolve through generations.

Pedagogies of the Home

The concept of pedagogies of the home was particularly important to this study because it recognizes the learning that happens in home and community spaces. I used pedagogies of the home to ground the everyday cultural/familial practices that Mexicana/Chicana mothers engage in to support their daughters. Delgado Bernal (2001) defines pedagogies of the home as "the communication, practices and learning that occur in the home and community" (p. 624). Drawing on Gloria E. Anzaldúa's (1987) concept of a mestiza consciousness Delgado Bernal explains how Chicana undergraduate college students draw from their biculturalism, bilingualism, commitment to their communities, and spiritualities as tools and strategies to navigate higher education. These knowledge bases from the home were used sometimes consciously and other times subconsciously when Chicana students faced challenges that impeded their academic achievement or college participation.

Delgado Bernal further explains that this community and family knowledge is often taught through legends, corridos (Mexican ballads), storytelling and behaviors. These pedagogies of the home provide strategies of resistance to interrupt dominant deficit perceptions about Chicana's language and culture. However, they also often reify hegemonic ideas like heteropatriarchy. In this way, pedagogies of the home are not necessarily always "positive." In contrast to Villenas and Moreno's (2001) work on mother-daughter pedagogies, Delgado Bernal focuses her research just on Chicana students not Chicana/Latina mothers. Although she does point out that more often than not it is the women in the family or mothers that teach Chicana students these practices.

Within the concept of pedagogies of the home I categorize earlier anthropology of education scholarship on Latinx familial knowledge. This includes the work of Gonzalez et al. (1995) on household funds of knowledge. Funds of knowledge can serve as educational resources to challenge deficit assumptions of working-poor Chicanx/Latinx families, but more importantly they can act as home to school bridges for educators to engage Latinx students. Through home visits Gonzalez et al. and Moll, Amanti, Neff, and Gonzalez (1992) gathered details on the accumulated knowledge and resources found and nurtured in Latinx families. Most of the research on funds of knowledge focuses on experimenting with curricular design that honors and builds of off Latinx home knowledge. The goal of a funds of knowledge approach is to build home to school relationships. Yet as was discussed through the work of Villenas and Moreno (2001) there is a need to examine how mothers enact funds of knowledge in the home space. It is essential to understand the relationship between mujer-oriented knowledge and funds of knowledge.

Mother-daughter pedagogies and pedagogies of the home are essentially referring to socialization practices in mother-daughter relationships or in home and community spaces. As such, I also acknowledge the earlier work of Concha Delgado Gaitan (1991, 1994) and Guadalupe Valdés (1996), who conducted ethnographic studies on Latinx/Mexican immigrant families. Delgado Gaitan's work on consejos or what she also refers to as cultural narratives exemplifies the way Mexican immigrant families use consejos as critical tools to instruct their children in schooling matters. In her study of the Estrada family she discusses how consejos were ways of nurturing advice and encouraging their children to be self-sufficient.

Delgado Gaitan's work shows how familial cultural practices are valuable strengths to the educational success of Latinx students. Consejos not only teach how to do "school," but are also

ways of bonding parents with their children. Delgado Gaitan emphasizes that consejos involve critical thinking and the independence to think for yourself. My dissertation found that consejos were often expressed through educación, muxerista story(telling), and intergenerational sabidurias.

Valdés' (1996) ethnographic study focused on ten case studies of Mexican immigrant families. She explored how the families navigated the education of their children, while at the same time learning to adjust and survive in a new country. Valdés focused closely on the mothers of each family since they were the ones she had most of her interactions with. They shared with her their personal migration stories, their experiences in a new country, and how they were raising their children. In a similar way to Delgado Gaitan, Valdés also discusses the teaching method of consejos as an integral way that the families inculcated important lessons. She explained, "Consejos were important because mothers considered la educación de los hijos (the moral education of their children) to be their primary responsibility" (p. 125). This shows how consejos are a form of mujer-oriented knowledge, since it is often the mothers responsible for giving consejos to their children.

Valdés bridges consejos, educación, and mothers. Her focus on mothers shows how the three are inseparably tied together. She explains that educación cannot be translated just with the English word "education" because what English speakers typically understand education to be is school or book learning. Spanish speakers understand educación as having a much broader meaning, encompassing both manners and moral values. For example, when Mexican parents generally refer to a child as "mal educado," this means that the child has bad manners and was not reared appropriately. I discuss the role of educación in Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies in chapter seven.

When the mothers in Valdés' study talked about educando a los hijos (educating their children) this included teaching children how to behave, how to act around others, and what was good and what was moral. Valdés explained, "It included teaching the expectations of the roles that they would play in life and the rules of conduct that had to be followed in order to be successful in them" (p. 125). This way of teaching was generally done by the mothers in the practice of "dando consejos" (giving advice). As one of the mothers in the study explained, "Les digo y les digo, para que se les vaya grabando" (I tell them and tell them so that it will stick with them) (p. 125). In this way, Valdés illustrates how these three concepts- consejos, educación, and mothering, all work together. Yet missing in her ethnographic study is a more in-depth analysis of the children. From Váldes' study we come to understand how mothers use dichos. However, as was illustrated from Espinoza-Herold's work it is also important to understand how children make sense of them or apply them in their everyday lives, especially in their education.

In addition to her discussion of educación, Valdés also talks about respeto (respect). An important element in understanding the relationship between the mothers and their children was the concept of respeto. Similar to educación, respeto is a concept that goes beyond the English translation of respect. Valdés explained that, "Respeto in its broadest sense is a set of attitudes toward individuals and/or roles that they occupy…Having respeto for one's family involves functioning according to specific views about the nature of the roles filled by the various members of the family" (p. 130). Respeto was earned when each individual family member worked to fulfill his/her role as expected (i.e. husband, wife, son, daughter). For example, as buenos hijos (good sons and daughters), children were expected to be considerate, obedient, and appreciative of their parents' efforts.

Respeto therefore involved both the presentation of self before others, as well as the recognition of those persons with whom the interactions took place with. To faltar el respeto, meant breaking rules of behavior prescribed for each particular role in the family. In my findings I show how respect is part of the mother's educación. However, the way the daughters talked about respect was different than Valdés, they explained it as recognizing the humanity in people.

Villenas (2001, 2006) has also identified other concepts important in understanding Chicana/Latina mothering practices like valerse por si misma, aguantar, sufrimiento, and vergüenza. I found the idea of valerse por si misma especially important in how the mother's raised the daughters. My last findings chapter troubles concepts like aguantar and sufrimiento by connecting them to heteropatriarchy and showing how the mothers lack self-care.

I include the work of Francisca E. González (1998a, 1998b, 2001) under the concept of pedagogies of the home since she examined how young Mexicana identities are created, shaped, and developed through a framework of educación (education of the whole person). González (1998b) worked with high school aged Mexicanas to understand how they made sense of "…gendered cultural socialization, educación, and success as cultural epistemologies and pedagogies…" (2001, p. 641). Through the narratives of the young Mexicanas, González illustrates how foundational cultural knowledge was for helping the young women make sense of their identities. She explains that, "both consejos and educación shaped the learning with message and lessons about wisdom, expectations, and young ideas" (p. 649). In González's study consejos were understood as "the telling about values, symbols, expectations and ways of thinking and knowing" and educación as "the daily teachings and lessons most often related to behavior with illustrative examples based on the elder's experiences" (p. 649). I found

educación to be a central part of my findings and argue that it should be a mujer-oriented form of knowledge. The mother's in my study embody educación; they would show their daughters what educación versus telling them.

Important in González's work is also her identification of spirituality in the women's identities. This spirituality, she explains, emerged from their "…homespace, as energy, from their mothers' and elder's cultural knowledge, from growing up in their homeland of Mexico, and their own creations of images, rituals, and beliefs into practices for negotiating and navigating from day to day" (p. 648). I discuss the ritual of religion/spirituality in chapter seven. I show how the daughters connected religion/spirituality to their commitment to social justice. I also trouble religion in my last findings chapter by discussing how a religious outlook complicated how the daughters could express their sexualities.

Epistemology of the Brown Body

Earlier in this literature review I discussed how Sofia Villenas (2006) centered the body as a teaching tool between Chicana/Latina mothers and daughters. She referred to it as performative pedagogies, teaching by doing through feelings, actions and rituals. In this section I include other scholars who have centered the body as an epistemological and pedagogical tool. It is important to situate the female brown body in Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies in order to recognize that mothers teach through their embodied or lived experiences, these are lesson from the Mexicana/Chicana body. Following my definition of pedagogy that encompass not only mind and spirit but also the body, I acknowledge that Mexicanas/Chicanas ways of knowing are not separate from their everyday experiences.

The Mexicana/Chicana body learns how to carefully navigate spaces of xenophobia, patriarchy, and white supremacy. It is through these often painful experiences of navigating such

spaces that we as Women of Color develop what Gloria E. Anzaldúa (1987) refers to as la facultad, "the capacity to see in the surface the phenomena the meaning of deeper realities, to see the deep structure below the surface" (p. 60). La facultad is a deep and quick awareness mediated by the body. Anzaldúa describes it as a survival tactic that we unknowingly cultivate "…so that we'll know when the next person is going to slap us or lock us away" (p. 61). This shift in perception deepens the way we see people, "the sense become so acute and piercing that we can see through things." La facultad is an important concept in understanding Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies. I contend that through a discipline of the body mothers teach their daughters how to take care of themselves, be alert, and recognize the dangers that surrounds them.

Cindy Cruz (2001) reminds us that, "The brown body, with its multiple and often oppositional intersections of sociopolitical locations, must be acknowledged in its centrality in creating new knowledges" (p. 657). Cruz (2001) explains that she often begins her college seminars with critical stories about the body. In this way she welcomes students to deconstruct the narratives inscribed in their bodies. She explains, "The body is a pedagogical devise, a location of recentering and recontextualizing the self and the stories that emanate from that self' (p. 668). When discussing muxerista story(telling) I talk about how migration stories are often written into the Mexicana/Chicana body. I show how Catalina's scar on her head functions as a prompt for her migration story. Camila, her daughter, uses this story as her drive to succeed in her education.

Cruz explains that the body prompts memory and situates knowledges that can begin to validate the survival, transformation, and emancipation of our communities. Cherríe Moraga and Gloria E. Anzaldúa (1983) refer to this as theory in the flesh. "A theory in the flesh means one

where the physical realities of our lives-our skin color, the land or concrete we grew up on, our sexual longings-all fuse to create a politic born out of necessity" (p. 23). Indeed, I found that Mexicana/Chicana mothers' everyday experiences informed their epistemologies and pedagogies for their daughters.

However, as Villenas (2006) pointed out earlier, the Chicana/Latina body is often a messy text. The incongruent and silent practices of our Mexicana/Chicana mothers often lead to difficult contradictions to understand. But it is often in doing and perhaps not speaking that we learn powerful lessons from our mothers, especially when experiences are too painful to disclose. Pendleton Jiménez (2006) describes how our bodies are products of multiple ancestries. As Chicanxs we carry both the colonizer and colonized in us. It is our attempt to bridge this contradiction in our experiences that informs our epistemologies and identities as mestizas/os. I found that the body was a central text in Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies. Lessons were more often embodied than expressed directly.

Anzaldúa's Borderlands

Without the work of Gloria E. Anzaldúa this study would have been entirely different. Her theorization of the Borderlands was vital to my thinking of Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies. She helped me conceptualize a pedagogy of the borderlands to explain the actions, rituals, and interactions among Mexicana/Chicana mothers and daughters. In this section I explain the Borderlands through the perspective of Anzaldúa as well as three additional related terms, mestiza consciousness, conocimiento, and nepantla. Through my discussion I weave in how other Chicana/Latina feminist scholars have used the Borderlands to talk about pedagogy or mothering.

For Anzaldúa, Borderlands with a capital B goes beyond the geographic/political borders to encompass psychic, sexual, and spiritual Borderlands as well. These Borderlands can be both geographic and metaphoric and represent "intensely painful yet also potentially transformational spaces where opposites converge, conflict, and transform" (Keating, 2009, p. 319). When Anzaldúa does not capitalize borderlands she generally refers to the Texas-México border.[22] Villenas (2006) exemplifies how the Borderlands can be used as an analytical framework to understand mother-daughter pedagogies. She explains, "These borderlands, where Latina mothers and daughters teach and learn through body and words, are pedagogical spaces- indeed an intangible 'third space'- where dilemmas are negotiated and possibilities for creativity and self-love flow" (p. 147). She uses Anzaldúa's conception of the Borderlands to talk about how mothers negotiate citizenship, generational, and cultural borders, while at the same time raising their children. Using a Borderlands framework allows us to embrace contradictions or tensions. This is an important feature of Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies.

Elenes (1997, 1999, 2006, 2011) is another Chicana feminist scholar that has used Anzaldúa's Borderlands to talk about pedagogy. She asserts (1997) that the Borderlands as a theoretical framework can advance educational theory by taking into account multiple subjectivity and difference. She explains that border/transformative pedagogies encompass Chicanx complex histories, epistemologies, agency, and subjectivities (2011, p. 65). In her book (2011), *Transforming Borders*, she elaborates the possibilities that border/transformative pedagogies have in re-inscribing meaning on Chicanx popular cultural icons like La Llorona, La Virgen de Guadalupe, and Malintzin/Malinche. She draws on the Borderlands' ability to look beyond dualistic thinking in a static oppositional stand and instead captures the complex way

[22] I use both Borderlands and borderlands to refer to geographic and metaphoric borders. I do not differentiate between the two in my writing.

these icons have given Chicanas/Latinas the ability to negotiate their multiple and contradictory positions.

Elenes (2006) has applied her border/transformative pedagogical framework in her university classes as well. She describes how this framework allows her to:

> …blur many distinctions artificially created in cultural productions and classroom practices: mainly the incorporation of the everyday cultural practices as source for the construction of knowledge outside of the officially sanctioned space for such creation, as well as the transcendence of disciplinary boundaries (p. 247).

Therefore, a border/transformative pedagogy seeks to challenge the devaluing of marginalized subjectivities and knowledges. It also concerned with eliminating hierarchies of language, gender, class, and sexual orientation, to name a few, in classrooms. It offers an alternative vision of education where multiple ideologies can be accommodated.

In her study of women, children, and language Norma González (2001) used the Borderlands to show the complexity of how language socialization functions in a community that is socially, politically, and ideologically in between U.S. and Mexican cultural practices. Working with 12 Mexican-origin families she explored how they constructed multiple repertories of language, identity, and ideology. The Borderlands became a helpful analytical tool for her because it moves away from simple categorization and instead accommodates for contradiction and ambiguity. She is able to tell the stories of women and children by embracing how their interactions are not fixed or coherent, but instead often conflicting. She finds that there are not necessarily unified patterns of language socialization in the families. Using a borderlands perspective allows her to show the intricacy and contradiction of language socialization in a powerful way.

Lastly, de los Ríos (2013) used a borderlands analysis to explore how students described their experiences in a Chicanx/Latinx yearlong high school class. The Borderlands allowed her

to explore the physical and metaphorical borders that students navigated while in her classroom. She argues that a borderlands curriculum encourages "…students to analyze their own hybrid identities, acknowledge the complex identities of their classmates and teacher, and examine the socially constructed identities of their communities" (pp. 122-123). This process decenters Eurocentric curriculum and epistemology where essentialist notions of identity, culture, gender and difference are more often than not incorporated. She shows how Chicanx/Latinx studies can serve as a space for students to make sense of their multiple identities and collective histories in and beyond schools.

Anzaldúa explained that it is in the literal and metaphorical borderlands where a consciousness of the borderlands is developed, what she refers to as a mestiza consciousness. This can be understood as a holistic, non-binary way of thinking and acting that includes a transformational tolerance for contradiction and ambivalence (Keating, 2009, p. 321). The mestiza, the women of the Borderlands,

> copes by developing a tolerance for contradictions, a tolerance for ambiguity…She learns to juggle cultures. She has a plural personality, she operates in a pluralistic mode-nothing is thrust out, the good the bad and the ugly, nothing rejected, nothing abandoned. Not only does she sustain contradictions, she turns the ambivalence into something else (Anzaldúa, p. 101).

A mestiza consciousness is a powerful concept to understand how daughters navigate the mixed messages they often receive from their daughters. The daughters in the study all expressed that their mother's pedagogy could at time be ambiguous. Yet they learned how to navigate such uncertainty, it became part of their everyday lives at home.

As described earlier in this chapter, Delgado Bernal (2006) used the concept of a mestiza consciousness to describe the experiences of Chicana undergraduates in higher education. She expanded mestiza consciousness "to include how a student balances, negotiates, and draws from

her bilingualism, biculturalism, commitment to communities, and spiritualities in relationship to her education" (p. 117). I describe the type of consciousness that muxeres truchas embody as similar to a mestiza consciousness. For example, as muxeres truchas the daughters know how to navigate the connections and discrepancies between their mother's educación and traditional education.

I use the concept of conocimiento in my description of muxeres truchas. Conocimiento is the Spanish word for knowledge but can also be understood as epistemology or consciousness; Anzaldúa often refers to it as reflective consciousness. Anzaldúa elaborates on her earlier concept of mestiza consciousness through conocimiento. Similar to mestiza consciousness, it is a consciousness developed in the borderlands, it represents a non-binary and connectionist way of thinking. Anzaldúa's path of conocimiento (path of consciousness) can be understood as "a personal epistemological path based on seven stages of awareness or reflective consciousness" (Delgado Bernal & Elenes, 2011, p. 102). It is often a painful process that plays out within oppressive contexts but provides a deepening of perception. Anzaldúa (2002) explains that conocimiento "comes from opening all your senses, consciously inhabiting your body and decoding its symptoms" (p. 542). It is a mental, emotionally, instinctive, imaginal, spiritual and subtle bodily awareness. It connects body, mind, and sprit.

Part of the path of conocimiento is to confront the traits or habits that have distorted or inhibited you from seeing your full reality. This notion is an important one for my findings, as I argue that it is through a pedagogy of the borderlands that the daughters develop a conocimiento of how oppression functions both within and outside of schools. The mothers raise muxeres truchas by nurturing this type of reflective consciousness, this is central to their success in navigating their education.

Nepantla is one of the seven stages of Anzaldúa's path of conocimiento. It is a Nahuatl word meaning "in-between space," that is considered a space of transformation. Anzaldúa associated nepantla, "with states of mind that question old ideas and beliefs, acquire new perspectives, change worldviews, and shift from one world to another" (Keating, 2009, p. 248). To be in this space is to be in a state of transition, but also a to be in a place where transformations are enacted. Rebecca Burciaga (2007) used the concept of nepantla to describe the personal and professional aspirations of Chicana Ph.D. students. She described nepantla "as a bridge to possibility, a bridge to aspirations; a bridge one crosses voluntarily and involuntarily to draw from the rivers of lived and learned experiences" (Burciaga, 2007, p. 147). To understand a pedagogy of the borderlands we must understand nepantla because it shows how this type of pedagogy is in constant flux, it is not static. In nepantla you embrace change and transformation.

Muxeres truchas are nepantleras. Anzaldúa coined the term nepantleras to describe a type of mediator, one who facilitates passages between worlds. Keating (2009) explained that:

> Nepantleras live within and among multiple worlds and, often through painful negotiations, develop… 'a perspective from the cracks'; they use these transformed perspectives to invent holistic, relational theories and tactics enabling them to reconceive or in other ways transform the various worlds in which they exist (Keating, p. 322).

In my research I came to understand the daughters and mothers as nepantleras as they often navigated marginality in their education, work places, and/or homes. For the daughters the farther they went in their education the more isolating it often felt for them. I learned that they often recharged at home with their mothers to prepare them for the hostility they experienced in their Ph.D. programs. They knew how to be in both worlds- institutions like universities or colleges and their communities and homes. Although at time the two were in conflict with each other they had developed the skills and knowledge to navigate both.

These four Anzaldúan concepts: Borderlands, mestiza consciousness, conocimiento, and nepantla were all helpful in my formation of a pedagogy of the borderlands and muxeres truchas. I will reiterate their connection to each other in chapter five. What is prevailing in Anzaldúa's Borderlands is that it gives us a framework to highlight women's resistance and agency. She offered me a powerful analytical tool to write the stories of these mothers and daughters.

Community Cultural Wealth

Yosso (2005) draws on the epistemologies of Communities of Color, especially Latinx communities to conceptualize community cultural wealth, "…as the array of cultural knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed by socially marginalized groups that often go unrecognized and unacknowledged" (p. 69). She specifically outlines six forms of capital that are based upon the systems of knowledge that Students of Color bring to schools from their homes and communities; these include aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, navigational, and resistant capital.

These six forms of capital should not be understood as mutually exclusive or static, but rather as fluid and building off of each other. For example, aspirational capital "is the ability to hold onto hope in the face of structured inequality and often without the means to make such dreams a reality" (p. 77). Yet aspirations are often nurtured within the context of family and community, thus overlapping with familial capital, "the cultural knowledges nurtured among *familia* (kin) that carry a sense of community history, memory and cultural intuition" (p. 79). Using a community cultural wealth model Yosso recognizes the ways the culture of Students of Color can nurture and empower them, challenging deficit notions on familial and cultural practices of Communities of Color. Below is a list of the remaining capitals defined by Yosso:

> *Linguistic capital*: includes the intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language and/or style.

> *Social capital*: can be understood as networks of people and community resources.
> *Navigational capital*: refers to skills of maneuvering through social institutions.
> *Resistant capital*: refers those knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality.

Through these six forms of capital Yosso centers Students of Color and their families as producers and beholders of knowledge instead of unprepared or lacking in potential.

Yosso's community cultural wealth framework has been used by other scholars to illustrate the values and resources cultivated by marginalized communities. For example, Burciaga and Erbstein (2010) used testimonio interviews to reveal the cultural wealth of students that had been pushed out, challenging deficit views of push outs as being disconnected and apathetic, and instead revealing how these students have not had equal access to opportunities. Yosso and García (2007) used a community cultural wealth framework to analyze Culture Clash's play *Chavez Ravine*; this shows how this framework has been used interdisciplinary.

Lindsay Pérez Huber (2009) identifies spiritual capital as an additional form of capital that undocumented Chicana undergraduate college students used to survive, resist, and navigate higher education. I discuss the relationship between spiritual capital and the ritual of religion/spirituality in chapter seven. Larrotta and Yamamura's (2011) study is the only one I identified that analyzed Latina mothers using a community cultural wealth model. They focused on examining parent's participation in a family literacy project, paying specific attention to ten Latina mothers. They found that through their participation in the literacy project they developed aspirational, social, and familial capital.

My interest in using a community cultural wealth model was to understand how mothers develop these forms of capital in their daughters. Although I do not specifically delineate all the forms of capital in my findings, I could argue that the mothers nurtured all six of them. For example, when Yosso describes resistant capital she shows the ways Mothers of Color raise their

daughters to be "resistors." She explains, how "…Parents of Color are consciously instructing their children to engage in behaviours and maintain attitudes that challenge the status quo. These young women are learning to be oppositional with their bodies, minds and spirits in the face of race, gender and class inequality" (p. 81). Muxeres truchas embody resistant capital because of their mothers. What is signification to point out is that this dissertation illuminates the process of how these forms of capital are instilled- through muxerista storytelling, working with mamá, and an embodiment of hustle (to name a few). It is also important to note how community cultural wealth intersects with pedagogies of the home. I found that these forms of capital were nurtured by the mothers in their home or work places, thus community cultural wealth could also be understood as a form of mujer-oriented knowledge.

Looking Back & Looking Forward

This chapter presented a Chicana/Latina feminist literature review. I began by first describing my theoretical framework- Chicana/Latina feminist theory. I then transitioned to outlining three central concepts that guided the study and the selection of the literature- pedagogy, family, and mothers. This Chicana/Latina feminist literature review was organized through four major concepts: 1. Mother-daughter pedagogies, 2. Pedagogies of the home, 3. Epistemology of the brown body, 3. Anzaldúa's Borderlands, and 4. Community cultural wealth. Although distinct these four theories worked together to provide me with a framework to understand Mexicanas/Chicanas through an asset perspective. As Lawrence-Lightfoot (2005) would say, they allowed me to look for the goodness in their lives. The next chapter will present my methodology, muxerista portraiture, which draws on Chicana/Latina feminist theory and Portraiture. After that I discuss the methods I used to collect and analyze my data.

Chapter Three

Muxerista Portraiture[23]

For Chicana/Latina researchers, methodologies become more than tools for obtaining data; methodologies are extensions of ways of knowing and being, thus are central to the way we embody and perform research –Saavedra & Salazar Pérez, 2014

Saavedra and Salazar Pérez's opening quote grounds the way I understand methodology as a meXicana feminist scholar. For me, and arguably for other Chicana/Latina feminist scholars, methodology is inextricably connected to how I navigate the world as a brown immigrant woman. My positionality, theoretical framework, methodology, and methods are all connected and informed by each other. This research for me was more about telling stories than proving a point. Yet this should not dismiss the fact that these stories are supported by rigorous research methods, this is just to say that I am unapologetic about the fact that my voice is everywhere in this dissertation. I am in conversation with these mothers and daughters throughout my findings. For my conclusion chapter I chose to write a letter to my colegas, other Feminist Scholars of Color, as a way to convey the implications of this research.

In this chapter I outline my methodology, muxerista portraiture, an epistemological and methodological approach for qualitative research that draws on portraiture (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1983) and Chicana/Latina feminist theory (Anzaldúa, 1987; Delgado Bernal 1998; Delgado Bernal & Elenes, 2011). I begin by tracing the relationship between portraiture and Chicana/Latina feminist theory to show where they connect and diverge. I then present muxerista portraiture by explaining the five elements of portraiture (context, voice, relationships, emergent themes, and aesthetic whole) in a way that engages and is informed by Chicana/Latina

[23] This chapter draws on the article, *Muxerista Portraiture: Engaging Portraiture and Chicana Feminist Theories in Qualitative Research*, which is currently under review with *Chicana/Latina Studies: The Journal of Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social*. Special thanks to Dr. Dolores Delgado Bernal, Tanya Gaxiola Serrano, and Socorro Morales who provided feedback.

feminist theories (Flores, under review). The following chapter will explain the methods of this research, the tools I used to collect and analyze the data. Although as I will show these tools are closely informed by my methodology.

At the Crossroad of Portraiture & Chicana/Latina Feminist Theory

My appeal to tell stories through research is what led me to graduate school; I wanted to tell stories that could inspire and encourage us to think more deeply about ourselves and the society we live in. This desire turned out to be much more difficult than I expected. My introduction to qualitative methods courses left me feeling cold and insecure about using research as an avenue for telling affirming stories of Communities of Color. Research after all is rooted in a history of colonialism and imperialism; western scholars have used research for years to strip Communities of Color of their dignity or to claim ownership of their ways of knowing (Smith, 1999). I struggled with the notion of objectivity; that one could know something without any emotion or interpretation (Dixson, 2005).

My dissatisfaction with my introductory classes pushed me to venture outside of assigned readings. I was in search of a methodology that could speak to and honor the experiences of Communities of Color; it was then that I came across portraiture. A friend and colleague pointed me to (1997) *The Art and Science of Portraiture*, which delineates the methods, strategies, and process of how to do portraiture[24]. Prior to arriving to portraiture I knew I was going to use Chicana/Latina feminist theory (CLFT) as my theoretical framework but was struggling to find the right methodology. As I read through the scholarship on portraiture it began to resonate with me because of how deeply connected it was to CLFT. In this section I will discuss how portraiture and CLFT are related or distinct. I first briefly introduce portraiture and CLFT. I

[24] Dr. Juan F. Carrillo used portraiture in his dissertation (2010), *So far from home: Portraits of Mexican-origin scholarship boys*.

then present their similarities and distinctions by discussing: 1) the role of the researcher, 2) research participants, 3) positionality, 4) the search for goodness, and 5) relationships.

The Art of Portraiture

Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) define portraiture as "a method of qualitative research that blurs the boundaries of aesthetics and empiricism in an effort to capture the complexity, dynamics, and subtlety of human experience and organizational life" (p. xv). Portraiture is used when the researcher wishes to produce a full picture of an event or person that tells as much about the subject as it does about the researcher or portraitist[25] (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005). Lawrence-Lightfoot's experience of having her portrait painted inspired her thinking of portraiture. As the subject of a portrait she became aware of the close relationship that is nurtured between the artist and subject, the power in the medium of art, and the negotiation of how the perspective of a person is captured. Years later in her attempt to capture what she called "life drawings" of high schools, she saw the possibility of merging the realms of science and art- thus portraiture was born.

In all, portraiture requires detailed description developed through sustained interaction between researcher and collaborator(s)[26], tracing and interpreting emergent themes, and finally piecing these together into what Lawrence-Lightfoot calls an "aesthetic whole," which can be understood as the final portrait. She offers five elements as part of the portraiture process: context, voice, relationship, emergent themes, and aesthetic whole. These will be discussed in more detail as I present muxerista portraiture.

[25] Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot (1997) often refers to the researcher as the "portraitist" in reference to the metaphor of art in the research process. When I use portraitist and researcher I mean the same thing.

[26] Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot (2005) refers to her research participants as "collaborators" to recognize their significant role in the research process; inspired by her, I do this as well.

Chicana/Latina Feminist Theory[27]

Chicana/Latina feminist theory (CLFT) centers its analyses on the experiences of Chicanas/Latinas in the U.S. through a critical, social, economic, political and cultural perspective. It draws from a theory of agency (modes of acting upon their world) as a way to highlight how Chicanas/Latinas struggle against intersecting forms of oppression, such as race, class, gender, sexuality, and linguistic inequalities. It speaks to the issues and needs of Chicanas/Latinas and is dedicated to showing how Chicanas/Latinas have not passively accepted racist, sexist, classist, and heterosexist institutional and cultural practices (Delgado Bernal & Elenes, 2011). Through CLFT the experiences and realities of Chicanas/Latinas are understood as foundations of knowledge.

Drawing on CLFT, Dolores Delgado Bernal (1998) developed a Chicana feminist epistemological framework to center the unique life experiences of Chicanas/Latinas. This framework is "…concerned with the knowledge about Chicanas, about who generates an understanding of their experiences, and how this knowledge is legitimized or not legitimized" (p. 560). It challenges traditional western notions of objectivity, universal truths, and dichotomies like objective truth versus subjective emotion. It begins with a standpoint that Chicanas/Latinas experience different opportunity structures than men and white women. While there are similarities to Black feminisms it is different in that it addresses issues that are unique to Chicanas/Latinas like immigration, migration, generational status, bilingualism, limited English proficiency, and Catholicism[28].

[27] This description can also be found in the previous chapter. I place it again here to help readers understand the relationship between portraiture and Chicana/Latina feminist theory.

[28] I list Catholicism with the awareness that while a majority of Chicanas/Latinas are Catholic not all of them are. The same is understood for the other markers.

Part of a Chicana feminist epistemological framework includes what Delgado Bernal refers to cultural intuition. She argues that as Chicana/Latina scholars we bring unique viewpoints that are strengths to our research. Cultural intuition embraces our "… experiential knowledge, subjugated knowledge, embodied knowledge, and relation knowledge within the research process" (Delgado Bernal, p. 1, 2016). Similar to Strauss and Corbin's (1990) "theoretical sensitivity" which refers to a personal quality of the researcher used to give insight and meaning to the data, Delgado Bernal extends on this by including not just the researchers personal experience but also "…collective experience and community memory and points to the importance of participants' engaging in the analysis of the data" (pp. 563-564). Delgado Bernal identifies four sources of cultural intuition: personal experience, the use of existing literature, the ability to draw from professional experience, and the research process itself. These four sources of cultural intuition are foundational to a Chicana feminist epistemology.

The Role of the Researcher

Portraiture and CLFT are similar in that they both center the role of the researcher in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of the data. In portraiture, portraits are shaped by a close and fluid relationship between the researcher and collaborator(s). Lawrence-Lightfoot (2005) explains, "The portraits are shaped through dialogue between the portraitist and the subject, each one participating in the drawing of the image. The encounter between the two is rich with meaning and resonance and is crucial to the success and authenticity of the rendered piece" (p. 3). Portraitist must therefore be prepared to be active listeners; there is a difference between listening *to* a story and listening *for* a story. The former is more passive, where one absorbs the information and does little to give it shape and form. The latter is active and engaged, in which one tries to tease out the central themes of the story. This does not mean that one directs the

story, but one does participate in selecting the story, searching for patterns to build coherence (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005). While there is never a single story to be told (as there could be many), as the portraitist you select the themes that will make up the final story, along with the points of focus.

Research Participants- Collaborators

Chicana feminist epistemology emphasizes the political and ethical issues involved in the research process. Delgado Bernal (1998) argues that Chicana researchers have unique viewpoints, what I described earlier as cultural intuition. Cultural intuition includes four major sources, including the research process itself. She explains that part of the research process is to include collaborators (research participants) in the interactive process of data analysis. Both the mothers and daughters in this study helped in the analysis of their own narratives and in shaping the findings. In portraiture, Lawrence-Lightfoot explains that rather than interviewing her research participants, they are "collaborators" or "cocreators" of their life stories. This shows how portraiture and CLFT similarly understand the role of research participants in the research process- both see them as central and active.

Positionality

Yet one important distinction between portraiture and CLFT is cultural intuition. While I do see a relationship with portraiture's idea of voice(s), which can be understood as a researcher's positionality, cultural intuition focuses on the unique insights that Chicana researchers bring to the research process. Because positionality is important in conducting research, cultural intuition should be understood as a verb, as a process where we must be critically reflective of the assumptions, experiences, and values that frame what we see and do not see in our research. Therefore, cultural intuition will look different for each of us, similar to

how voice in portraiture will vary by person. Both cultural intuition and voice emphasize that we be critical of our positionality by being insightful of our epistemology, ideology and method in our research process, however cultural intuition insists on the unique perceptions that Chicana/Latina researchers bring to the research process. Furthermore, Calderón, Delgado Bernal, Pérez Huber, Malagón, and Vélez (2012) reveal how cultural intuition has been expanded and rearticulated to include ideas like place, relationships, spirituality, and the brown body that affect the experiences of Chicana researchers.

The Search for Goodness in Research

The emphasis on the search for "goodness" in research is what ultimately helped me see the relationship between CLFT and portraiture. The search for goodness is an intentional research process that seeks to illuminate what is affirming and vigorous, yet always assumes that expressing goodness is tied with imperfections. This examination should not be misinterpreted as disregarding the contradictions we all experience, as this is central to the expression of goodness. This is reminiscent of Chicana queer feminist Gloria E. Anzaldúa (1987) who urged us to embrace our dualities through her concept of mestiza consciousness. Mestiza translates to a woman of mixed ancestry, however to Anzaldúa and other Chicana/Latina feminist scholars, mestiza has come to mean a new Chicana consciousness, what she refers to as a mestiza consciousness, which straddles cultures, languages, races, nations, sexualities, and spiritualties. A mestiza "…copes by developing *a tolerance for contradiction*, a tolerance for ambiguity…She learns to juggle cultures" (p. 579). This ability to embrace, examine, or situate our dichotomies is significant to both portraiture and CLFT.

We are walking contradictions, our brown bodies are products of multiple ancestries- we carry both the colonizer and colonized in us (Pendleton Jiménez, 2006). It is in our attempt to

bridge this clash in our experiences that informs our epistemologies and identities as mestizas/os. The way we negotiate this irrationality of colonized/colonizer is an example of "the power of paradox" that Lawrence-Lightfoot talks about with portraiture (2005, p. 9). She explains, "…that one of the most powerful characteristics of portraiture is its ability to embrace contradictions" (p. 9). Portraiture's concept of "goodness" embraces these oppositions as part of the research process. This is another way that CLFT and portraiture are comparable; they push back on western rationality that employs a binary way of thinking.

Through this search for goodness, portraiture resists research that focuses on pathology rather than resiliency. While identifying things that *do not* work is arguably important to identifying things that *do* work, the focus on failure often leads to the blaming of the victim or the justification of oppressive practices. This is indicative of how CLFT uses a theory of agency to show how Chicanas/Latinas actively resist intersecting forms of oppression, instead of using a deficit framework that positions Chicanas/Latinas as passive or compliant in their own oppression.

Relationships

The emphasis on interactions and relationships is also important to discuss. Building trusting relationships is central to portraiture; the portraitist must be vulnerable but also know how to process or sit with discomfort. CLFT see relationships intimately related to spirituality. This means being in partnership with our collaborator(s), acknowledging the differences between us but insisting on our commonalities as well. It is these commonalities that can serve as catalysts of transformation or spiritual activism (Anzaldúa, 2015). Anzaldúa (2002) explained that although most of us define ourselves by what we are not, she urged us to define ourselves by

what we include- what she coined as new tribalism. To not use our differences to separate us from each other but to also identify them, to create bridges rather than new binaries.

Creating a Partnership

As I read through the examples of portraiture (Chapman 2005, 2007; Dixson 2005; Dixson, Chapman, & Hill 2005; Harding 2005; Hill 2005; Lawrence-Lightfoot 1983, 1988, 1994; Newton 2005) I realized that the pairing of portraiture with other theoretical frameworks was not new. For instance, Chapman (2005) discussed an alliance between Critical Race Theory and portraiture, and Dixson (2005) employed Black feminisms and portraiture. Yet with the exception of a small number of dissertations I found few examples of CFT and portraiture[29]. Despite portraiture's similarities to CLFT I recognized its limitations in narrating the stories of Chicanas; it did not entirely account for the role of bilingualism, immigration, colonialism, and Catholicism, themes that are often central in the lives of Chicanas/Latinas. This allowed me to consider the possibility of creating a partnership between CLFT and portraiture in order to capture the nuances of the everyday lives of Chicanas/Latinas.

As I have shown, portraiture and CLFT are more similar than different, however they are also unique in their own ways. I began by discussing how both portraiture and CLFT center the role of the researcher by highlighting the political and ethical issues involved in the research process. The two see research participants as integral. Lawrence-Lightfoot calls participants, collaborators, to acknowledge the importance of detailed interactions. CLFT are critical of including research participants at all stages of the research process. Positionality is also important; while voice and cultural intuition are similar, CLFT focus more closely on the unique insights Chicana/Latina researchers embody. Both portraiture and CLFT also challenge

[29] For dissertation examples see Flores Carmona 2010, Reyes McGovern 2013, and Valdés 2008.

traditional western ideas of research that rely on notions of neutrality or the creation of binaries. Most notably, they operate from an asset framework looking for the goodness in research or how agency is enacted. Although it is clear that relationships are important to both methodologies, CLFT use an element of spirituality to acknowledge our interconnectedness. While Lawrence-Lightfoot does not necessarily say that portraiture is a specific methodology for Communities of Color, in its attempt to tell stories beyond the realm of academia we see the focus on marginalization and empowerment. CLFT do specifically focus on the marginalization and empowerment of Chicana/o communities. In the next section, I outline what portraiture with a Chicana feminist sensibility looks like, what I call muxerista portraiture.

Muxerista Portraiture

> Gloria E. Anzaldúa (1990) writes,
>
> > Necesitamos teorías that will rewrite history using race, class, gender, and ethnicity as categories of analysis, theories that cross borders, that blur boundaries—new kinds of theories with new theorizing methods…In our mestizaje theories we create new categories for those of us left out or pushed out of existing ones (pp. xxv-xxvi).

Moved by her call for nueva teorías in this section I outline what I refer to as muxerista portraiture or the muxerista portraitist. As a meXicana scholar examining Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies I argue for the partnership of portraiture and Chicana/Latina feminist theories. My goal is to offer a thoughtful and deliberate epistemological perspective and methodology, not an alternative or replacement for one or the other. I begin by first describing the relationship between epistemology, methodology and muxerista portraiture. I then describe why I use the term muxerista. I conclude by outlining the five elements of portraiture (context, voice, relationship, emergent themes, and aesthetic whole) in a way that demonstrates how they can be informed by CLFT.

Epistemology and methodology are inextricably related. Epistemology can be understood as the nature, status, and production of knowledge- it is our system of knowing (Delgado Bernal, 1998). Put simply methodology is the intersection where method and theory meet. While method is the techniques and tools we use to collect our data, methodology encompasses that, as well as the theory that grounds our research process. It can include the way we frame our questions, how we collect and analyze the data, and how we negotiate the ethics and politics of our research. Our epistemology therefore informs our methodology, how we read and understand the world prompts the questions we ask and how we ask them.

Muxerista portraiture uses a Chicana feminist epistemology; it is grounded in the lives of Chicanas and acknowledges that our lived experiences are legitimate sources of knowledge. A muxerista portraiture methodology is both grounded in theory but also in a deep connection to honoring the bodymindspirit in the research process (Lara ,2002). It does not attempt to disconnect body from mind or spirit (as often western methodologies do) but instead allows us to "…confront the research process with our total selves- our grief, our fears, our desires and our love" (Calderón, Delgado Bernal, Pérez Huber, Malagón, & Vélez, 2012, p. 534). It is a spiritual and political practice that consciously nurtures the whole self.

I draw on Anita Tijerina Revilla's (2004) muxerista pedagogy to explain why I pair the word muxerista with portraiture. Revilla's study of Raza Womyn de UCLA, a student organization of Chicana/Latina activists, revealed how important redefining, reclaiming, and/or reconstructing terminology used for self-identification was. One of the identities the members quickly embraced was muxerista, an alteration of the word mujerista which literally translates into womanist, a term coined by Alice Walker in 1983. "A muxerista is a woman-identified Chicana/Latina who considers herself a feminist or womanist" (p. 91). The x is representative of

México's and Latina America's ancestry and languages. To claim this identity is to embrace Chicana/Latina feminisms. This identity goes beyond traditional white notions of feminism by centering a connection to community, culture, language and the struggle for social justice

The pairing of the words muxerista and portraiture, does not signify the merging of CLFT and portraiture, but instead refers to the idea of being in between these two bodies of theories, the ability to be able to draw different ideas from each one. Muxerista portraiture is founded in the methodology of portraiture and CLFT. It is based on the realities and lived experiences of Chicanas/Latinas and aims to paint portraits committed to social justice and challenging all forms of subordination. It encompasses the five elements of portraiture (context, voice, relationships, emergent themes, and aesthetic whole) but with a Chicana/Latina feminist sensibility. It incorporates the portraitist's cultural intuition in the co-construction of the portraits. It is a dynamic and ongoing interchange between process and product, dedicated to searching for the goodness in the lives of Chicanas/Latinas. Thus, muxerista portraiture is a mestizaje theory that blurs theoretical and methodological boundaries- it provides us with a new approach to paint rich portraits of Chicanas/Latinas; below I outline the five tenets of muxerista portraiture.

The Borderlands as Context

According to Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) context refers to the setting: physical, geographical, metaphorical, historical, and cultural. When using a muxerista portraiture framework, context must examine the different markers of discrimination that Chicanas/Latinas experience like race, immigration status, religious affiliation, sexuality, and language, to name a few. This means that the muxerista portraitist acknowledges the systems of oppression that affect the everyday lives of Chicanas/Latinas, but also accounts for the ways they have resisted

and constructed third spaces (Pérez, 1999), where they are able to re-imagine possibilities and opportunities. Lawrence-Lightfoot asks that we consider context "…as a dynamic framework-changing and evolving, shaping and being shaped by the actors" (p. 59). As such, we must account for ourselves in the setting- how the setting shapes us and how we shape the setting.

Muxerista portraiture uses Anzaldúa's concept of the borderlands as context for Chicanas. Anzaldúa refers to the borderlands in the geographical sense by indicating the U.S.-Mexican border as "…*una herida abierta* where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds" (1987, p. 25). Yet she also talks about the borderlands as metaphorical, encompassing psychic, sexual, and spiritual borders that often lead to painful experiences, but can also potentially be transformative spaces where opposites converge, conflict, and transform (Keating, 2009). Villenas (2006) exemplifies how Anzaldúa's idea of the borderlands can be used to understand mother-daughter pedagogies. She explains that the borderlands are pedagogical spaces where Latina mothers and daughters teach and learn not only through words but also through the body. The borderlands are a relevant context for studying Chicana/Latina mother-daughter pedagogies to understand how dilemmas are negotiated, how possibilities for creativity and self-love flow, and where third spaces are nurtured (p. 147). It provides us the lens to understand the intersecting forms of oppression that shape this form of teaching and learning.

The borderlands offer us the ability to look beyond dualistic thinking in a static oppositional stand and instead capture the complex way Chicanas/Latinas negotiate their multiple and contradictory positions (Elenes, 2006). For Chicanas/Latinas, the physical context is also colonized land, land that was once Mexican and Indian. Chicana queer feminist Pendleton Jiménez (2006) reminds us that we are standing on colonized land, land that "…has been covered in blood for hundreds of years, often spilled as a result of racist ideologies" (p.

225). Therefore, the borderlands is a useful tool to understand context through muxerista portraiture because it centers the experiences of Chicanas/Latinas in a way that accounts for their physical, geographical, metaphorical, historical, and cultural setting.

Translating Voice

Portraiture recognizes that the voice of the researcher is everywhere: "…in the assumptions, preoccupations, and frameworks she brings to the inquiry; in the questions she asks; in the data she gathers; in the choice of stories she tells; in the language, cadence, and rhythm of her narrative" (p. 85). For this reason, the final portrait tells as much about the portraitist as it does about the subject. In muxerista portraiture cultural intuition is central to the voice of the researcher. Cultural intuition argues that Chicanas bring a unique perspective to the research through their personal experience, the existing literature, their professional experience and the analytic research process; it also includes community memory, collective experience, and as Calderón, Delgado Bernal, Pérez Huber, Malagón, and Vélez (2012) point out, place, relationships, spirituality, and the brown body. Yet the muxerista portraitist must recognize the hegemony of the English language and be aware of how that affects her voice, as well as her collaborator(s).

Unique to the muxerista portraitist is the conflicting process of translation, both literal from the Spanish to the English language (and vice versa) but also figuratively in the process of translating community voices for academic spaces. Flores Carmona (2014) refers to this as the "Malintzin researcher" because of the relationship we share to Malintzin[30] (also known as La Malinche). Malintzin is often characterized as a traitor to her people, but to Chicana/Latina feminists she has come to represent "… a woman who had agency in deciding her own future

[30] Malintzin was a Nahuatl woman who served as an interpreter and advisor to Hernán Cortés during the Spanish conquest.

and in deciding how much she shared when she translated her people—she was a survivor" (p. 114). Flores Carmona offers the metaphor of Malintzin because of the difficult process Chicana/Latina researchers must engage in when we translate voices in our research. She urges us to be critical of the process of translating and editing the voices of our participants in educational research. She explains,

> As mujeres Chicanas or Latinas, we also participate in our communities playing contradicting roles as educational researchers coming from the academy and as translators and interpreters for our communities. We play the role of writing our people into academia—of translating them from everyday language to academic discourses. (p. 115)

Similar to Malintzin as Chicana/Latina academics we are also translators and interpreters of many cultures, however we must also use our agency in deciding how much we choose to interpret our communities for academia. We must remember the colonial history of research and be vigilant of our stories. Most importantly, the muxerista portraitist has to write with the needs of our communities first and those of academia secondly.

As muxerista portraitists we need to negotiate and reflect on how to translate voice, keeping in mind how some things may not be translatable, and that participants may not want certain aspects translated or disclosed. As Delgado Bernal, Burciaga, and Flores Carmona (2012) prompt us, "One must be cautious to translate conceptually rather than literally because in translating particular terms, nuances get lost, and we run the risk of reproducing language marginalization" (p. 365). There are some words in Spanish that do not easily translate to English, for example the word educación does not accurately translate to education. It goes beyond what we traditionally think of education to include the imparting of morals and ethics. Words like this one require the muxerista portraitist to use her cultural intuition to translate conceptually rather than literally.

In CLFT the body is also its own voice and text. Cindy Cruz's (2001) epistemology of the brown body refers to how "the body is a pedagogical device, a location of recentering and recontextualizing the self and the stories that emanate from that self" (p. 668). In muxerista portraiture we must attend to how the body also speaks, how it prompts memory and situates knowledges. Pendleton Jiménez (2013) writes about how her mother taught her to embrace her body as a Chicana butch. She describes how her body falls outside acceptable gender norms, in terms of weight, ability, and ethnicity, yet it was in witnessing her mother embrace gender non-conforming ways of being through her actions that helped her see the beauty in her own body. Chicana/Latina mothers often teach through the body therefore muxerista portraiture must centralize the body as a form of voice. The Chicana/Latina body is also often a messy text to understand (Villenas, 2006). The incongruent and silent practices of our Chicana mothers often lead to difficult contradictions to understand. But, it is often in doing and perhaps not speaking that we learn powerful lessons from our mothers, especially when experiences are too painful to disclose.

Relationships & Spirituality

Authentic portraits are constructed and shaped through the nurturing of relationships. In portraiture, "…portraitists hope to build trust and rapport- first, through the search for goodness; second, through empathetic regard; and third, through the development of symmetry, reciprocity, and boundary negotiation with the actors" (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1997, p. 141). In muxerista portraiture spirituality is central to the development of relationships. I draw on Sendejo's (2014) methodologies of spirit to account "…for moments of connection and understanding between the researcher and those with whom she works as vital sites of knowledge" (p. 850). Sendejo explains that methodologies of the spirit allow us as researcher to account for the knowledge

production that occurs when "…researcher and participant intersect and overlap and where the researcher's own spiritual development, experiences, and trajectory help to inform the research being conducted" (pp. 84-85). Through a framework of spirituality, I am able to recognize the experiences of the women I am working with as windows into my own history and self (Sendejo, 2014). In this way as a muxerista portraitist I am able to acknowledge the interrelatedness and connections with the Mexicana/Chicana mothers and daughters I am collaborating with, and to honor and centralize this in the research process. I am less concerned about the "authenticity" of their memories and more interested to hear how their own understanding of their memories have shaped their experiences.

I use Anzaldúa's concept of spiritual activism to consider spirituality as a call to action, not just as a relationship between a God or a Creator. Keating (2006) defines spiritual activism as "…spirituality for social change, spirituality that recognizes the many differences among us yet insists on our commonalities and [using] these commonalities as catalysts for transformation" (p. 12). If we think about relationships as rooted in an ethic of interconnectedness this recognition can transform us and motivate us to work actively for social change. This inclusivity can increase dialogue and consciousness, again it is Anzaldúa's concept of new tribalism- to create bridges between each other means to loosen our borders and build community. As a muxerista portraitist you must risk being open, vulnerable, personal and intimate all at the same time. This is how authentic relationships are created.

To use a muxerista portraiture framework is to understand relationships as guided by the Mayan moral concept of In Lak'ech, tú eres mi otro yo (you are my other me). This means identifying the commonalities between researcher and collaborator(s). By using spirituality as a guide to nurture relationships we can challenge the traditional research canon that splits the mind

from the body and spirit, and instead use a bodymindspirit approach that humanizes research relationships. One example of how I understand relationships through a muxerista portraitist methodology is Judith Flores Carmona's (2010) study that focused on the everyday pedagogies of Latina mothers. Flores Carmona approached her research with the focus on building relationships and honoring those relationships with the mothers first, placing the research secondary. She says, "This research was not so much about pushing a theory forward; of course it is research, but it was much more about building relationships and mutual respect with la comunidad" (pp. 209-210). We must challenge the false split that keeps us from each other as "researcher" and "subject," and instead build together with our hearts first, not academia.

Related to spirituality is the importance of developing confianza (trust) in relationships. Confianza encompasses a level of vulnerability and accountability, meaning whatever I ask my collaborator(s) I am also willing to share. By accountability I am not referring to the idea that I am required to do something in return for the person, although that can be part of it, but rather a more spiritual approach; I am accountable to you because I am you and you are me (following the concept of In Lak'ech). Above all confianza is being selfless, putting your collaborator(s) well-being before your research needs, similar to the way Flores Carmona (2010) did in her research. In an effort to build meaningful relationships rooted in confianza, the muxerista portraitist also engages the collaborator(s) in the analysis of the data. They guide the selection of themes and points of focus, and the presentation of the story. They help create the portrait as much as the muxerista portraitist does.

Cultural Intuition in Emergent Themes

In portraiture, emergent themes refer to "…a disciplined, empirical process-of descriptions, interpretation, analysis, and synthesis-and an aesthetic process of narrative

development" (Lawrence-Lightfoot 1997, p. 185). During this process of emergent themes, the muxerista portraitist uses her cultural intuition to guide her. She recognizes the strength it plays in how she gathers and analyzes the data, and how she will paint the portraits of her participants. Cultural intuition must be critically cultivated (it is not static) through "…a deep examination and confrontation of our own privileges, suppositions of common experiences and perspectives, identities as border crossers and the histories of imperialism and exploitation characterizing U.S.-Mexico relations…" (Cervantes-Soon, 2014, p. 109). Therefore, to use muxerista portraiture requires us to be reflective of our cultural intuition throughout the entire research journey, especially during the process of identifying emergent themes in order to tease out intellectual, ideological and personal themes that will shape how we tell the story. As muxerista portraitists we must acknowledge the guiding research questions we have set out to answer, but must also be flexible in adapting them to fit the realities of our collaborators.

In the field, the muxerista portraitist participates in an ongoing dialogue between data gathering and reflection. She must listen and observe, accounting for what is familiar and what is surprising. Lawrence-Lightfoot suggests the iterative practice of: data collection, interpretation, and analysis. She suggests identifying themes in the following manner: 1) looking for repetitive refrains, 2) listening for resonant metaphors, poetic and symbolic expressions, 3) paying attention to cultural and institutional rituals that seem important, 4) using triangulation to weave data together, and 5) considering what she calls "deviant voices," perspectives that are often experienced as contradiction and dissonant.

In muxerista portraiture the same approach of identifying emergent themes is taken, however the portraitist uses a Chicana/Latina feminist lens. She must consider the repetitive refrains in Spanish, English, and Spanglish. When listening for metaphors, poetic and symbolic

expressions she must consider things that are often unique to the Chicana experience like dichos (sayings or proverbs), corridos (ballads), and religious/spiritual symbols. She must account for community memory and collective history and have an understanding of cultural rituals that are commonly central to the experiences of Chicanas; these could include the creation of altars at home, the act of persinar (to give the blessing), or yearly family road trips to México. For example, Michelle Telléz (2011) talks about memories that invoke her mother such as Saturday morning house cleaning with Mariachi records blasting, yearly summer trips to her mother's hometown in Jalisco, and learning to dance the zapateado. These memories could be categorized as a theme of cultural or familial traditions that help Chicanas/Latinas embrace our relationships with our mothers through muxerista stories. Gaspar De Alba (2014) and Elenes (2011) reclaim and reimagine La Llorona, Sor Juana, Malinche, The Virgin of Guadalupe, and Coyolxauhqui[31] as feminist figures to understand the experiences of Chicanas/Latinas. These icons are important to consider specifically in muxerista portraiture; it is this Chicana/Latina sensibility that is important in the process of emergent themes.

Aesthetic Whole- Piecing Coyolxauhqui together

Lawrence-Lightfoot uses the metaphor of weaving a tapestry to discuss the process of creating an aesthetic whole- the final portrait. She explains that, "…the image allows for various configurations of color, texture, and design, as well as a clear structure of overlapping threads" (p. 247). In portraiture the portraitist constructs the aesthetic whole by considering four dimensions: the conception which refers to the development of the overarching story, the

[31] La Llorona, Sor Juana, Malinche, The Virgin of Guadalupe, and Coyolxauhqui are all historically situated women that Elenes and Gaspar de Alba have written about to show how they refused to comply with the problematic framing of "good women" vs. "bad women." La Llorona is portrayed as a bad mother, Sor Juana as rebellious for her defiance of church and convent traditions, the Malinche as a traitor to her people for working with Cortés, the Virgin of Guadalupe as a false construction of a "good women", and Coyolxauhqui as the "bad daughter."

structure which refers to the sequencing and layering of emergent themes that scaffold the story, the form which refers to the organization of the narrative, and the cohesion which refers to unity and integrity of the piece (p. 247). These four dimensions guide how you create the final portrait or a collage of portraits (Curammeng, in-progress). This dissertation uses a collage approach by presenting mother-daughter portraits instead of individual portraits, as it is traditionally done in portraiture.

Parallel to the way Lawrence-Lightfoot uses a metaphor to describe the aesthetic whole in muxerista portraiture I suggest the image of piecing together Coyolxauhqui. More specifically, the muxerista portraitist draws on what Anzaldúa describes as the Coyolxauhqui imperative to create the aesthetic whole. In Aztec mythology Coyolxauhqui tried to kill her mother Coatlicue in order to kill patriarchy and war, but in the process she was killed by her brother Huitzilpochtli and torn into over a thousand pieces. Gaspar De Alba (2014) describes Coyolxauhqui as "… 'the first sacrificial victim' of the Aztec heteropatriarchal military state" (p. 132). She is the first femicide victim in México, and serves as a burning reminder of the continual dismembering and torturing of female bodies in the U.S.-México border.

Drawing on this narrative, Anzaldúa describes a Coyolxauhqui imperative as "… a self healing process, an inner compulsion or desire to move from fragmentation to complex wholeness" (Keating 2009, p. 320). Anzaldúa often associated this concept with the writing process and it can be connected to the way portraiture "pieces the story together," or the aesthetic whole. Coyolxauhqui then becomes a symbol (also in the tradition of portraiture) for the muxerista portraitist of "…reconstruction and reframing, one that allows for putting the pieces together in a new way…an ongoing process of making and unmaking" (p. 312). In order to create whole portraits, the muxerista portraitist must put together the fragments of identities and

spirits that have been dispersed through the data analysis process. In doing so, I also reconstruct myself from the fragmentation I experience as a meXicana researcher in the peripheries of academia.

A Coyolxauhqui imperative adds this significant layer of healing and spirituality in the process of creating the aesthetic whole. Coyolxauhqui is la fuerza femenina that helps reconstitute and heal Chicanas oppressive herstories (Moraga, 1983). Anzaldúa explains the importance of Coyolxauhqui:

> I think the reason this image is so important to me is that when you take a person and divide her up, you disempower her. She's no longer a threat. My whole struggle in writing, in this anticolonial struggle, has been to put us back together again. To connect up the body with the soul and the mind with the spirit. That's why for me there's such a link between the text and the body, between textuality and sexuality, between the body and the spirit. (Anzaldúa in Keating 2000, p. 220)

Similar to the comparison of weaving a tapestry for creating the aesthetic whole, the muxerista portraitist offers the metaphor of piecing Coyolxauhqui back together. She uses her Coyolxauhqui imperative to guide her from fragmentation- the process of dissecting the data to select themes, to wholeness- the process of creating an aesthetic whole or the complete portrait. This practice of splitting narratives (or data) up for the purpose of analysis, to connecting them back for the final portrait is similar to how Coyolxauhqui was mutilated by her brother but has been put back together through the writings of Chicana/Latina feminist scholars.

This process disrupts what Luis Urrieta (2003) talks about as dismembering human bodies- disconnecting human emotions and human lives through the research process. The muxerista portraitist acknowledges the troubling tension of "dividing" and "selecting" themes to weave stories together, and shifts this tension to focus on a process of healing, of putting Coyolxauhqui back together by creating stories of "wholeness" and "goodness." In muxerista portraiture we must recognize "…the responsibility of questioning and realizing that identities

are about human beings and not just about what can be told on paper" (Urrieta, p. 165). As a muxerista portraitist, I write not disconnecting the emotion, spirituality, and healing that can come from writing, in this way I work to "put us back together again," and disrupt the dismembering that can often result from unethical research practices done on Women of Color.

Conclusion- Giving thanks

In this chapter I explained my methodology- muxerista portraiture. I began with a brief explanation of what CLFT and portraiture are. I then explained how the two are similar and distinct. Given that both offered their own unique strengths I chose to put them in conversation with each other through the conception of muxerista portraiture. Muxerista portraiture is a mestizaje theory that draws both from CLFT and portraiture. It is based on the realities and lived experiences of Chicanas/Latinas and aims to paint portraits committed to social justice and challenging all forms of subordination. As I showed it encompasses the five elements of portraiture but with a Chicana/Latina feminist sensibility. The goal of this methodology is to paint portraits that highlight the goodness in the lives of Chicanas/Latinas.

I am grateful for la madrina (godmother) Gloria E. Anzaldúa that guides much of my thinking and allows me to have the courage to create teoría that is ingrained in our own herstories and experiences as Chicanas/Latinas. I feel a spiritual connection to her in my writing and see this chapter as an offering to her. I also recognize my mother who has crossed many borders and has instilled in me the strength to do so as well. Muxerista portraiture is born out of this ability to be "in between" and to be able to heal the divide between personal and academic borders that often disempower us as Chicana/Latina scholars. I hope this methodology inspires other Chicana/Latina scholars to continue creating mestizaje theories that are committed to social change. In the next chapter I address how I collected and analyzed my data- my methods. As I

will show these methods are intertwined with my positionality, theoretical framework, and methodology.

Chapter Four

The Methods of this Study

This chapter presents how I collected and analyzed my data. I begin by first discussing how recruitment worked. I then present the 20 collaborators of this study- the mothers and daughters, and why I focused on Los Angeles as a site. After that, I discuss the process of how I gathered my data by explaining what pláticas are and how I saw them fit for this study. I highlight how they are both a method of collecting data but also a methodology since they are grounded in Chicana/Latina feminist theory. I conclude by sharing how I analyzed my data using a modified grounded theory approach with a Chicana/Latina feminist sensibility.

The Collaborators

In this section I discuss the 20 collaborators- my research participants. I start by discussing how recruitment worked and then share a bit about who the mothers and daughters are. In addition to the information here about the mothers and daughters, the first time I introduce them in my findings chapters I share more about who they are. I conclude with discussing Los Angeles as the context of this study.

Recruitment

I used a snowball and convenience sampling method to select 10 Mexicana/Chicana doctoral students or recent graduates and their respective mothers, for a total of 20 collaborators (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The daughters' self-identified as Chicana, Xicana, Mexican, Mexicana, Mexican-American, and/or Latina. These various identities were all categorized to mean women of Mexican ancestry. The daughters all classified as first-generation college students based on both of their parent's educational levels. Nine of them were at the advanced stages of their Ph.D. program and one of them was a recent Ph.D. graduate who was now an

assistant professor. In order to participate in the study the women had to currently live and have been raised within Los Angeles county, be a doctoral student at one of the following institutions the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), University of Southern California (USC), or Claremont Graduate University (CGU), recognize their mothers as integral to their educational achievement, and most importantly make sure that their mothers were also interested and available to participate and currently residing within Los Angeles county[32]. Table one explains the criteria to participate and my rationale for it.

Collaborator Criteria	Rationale
Self identifies as a woman of Mexican ancestry	I am aware that people of Mexican origin identify in different ways, often depending on context. Therefore terms such as Mexican/Mexicana, Mexican-American, Latina, Hispanic, Chicana, Xicana (to name a few) were accepted to mean of Mexican ancestry.
Classifies as a first-generation college student	I used Nunez and Cuccaro-Alamin's (1998) classification for first-generation status, students whose parents' highest level of education was a high school diploma or less.
Currently enrolled in the advanced stages of a Ph.D. program (third year or beyond) or is a recent Ph.D. graduate (one year or less post Ph.D.) from UCLA, USC, or CGU.	Because I was interested in achievement I selected women that were working towards receiving (or had received) one of the highest degrees awarded, a Ph.D. I was interested in women that were in their third year or beyond because I wanted them to be able to talk about what role their mothers had played in their doctoral experience. I also sought a retrospective approach where I could account for how and what Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies looked like at different junctures of the Mexicana/Chicana educational pipeline. I selected UCLA, USC, and CGU because I had contacts at these universities, they are Ph.D. granting institutions, and they are inclusive of a private and public school experience.

[32] I made one exception for Paloma whose family had recently moved to Moreno Valley, which is considered Riverside county. However, she had grown up in La Puente.

Mother lives in the Los Angeles county	Because I was interested in having a mother-daughter perspective I needed the mothers to reside in the Los Angeles area in order to be considerate of time and travel.
Mother expresses interest and availability to participate in the study	It was important that the mothers also express an interest and availability for the study. I made sure to screen for this through personal email and phone communication.

Table 1. Collaborator Criteria & Rationale

I created a flyer that included information on the study, the criteria to participate (what is in table one), my contact information, and a link to a form I created through Google Forms to fill out. The form included a total of 17 questions with an estimated time of completion of 10 minutes. The majority of the questions asked for basic information like name, email, institution, and year in program. There were other questions that asked how they self-identified and why there were interested in participating. The last question gave them an opportunity to pose any questions or add any additional comments or concerns they had in regards to the study. Every time someone filled out the form I would get in contact with them through email to introduce myself, share more about the study, ask any further questions I had for screening purposes, and address any questions or concerns they had.

The flyer was distributed in various ways; through my personal networks, email list serves, social media, and departments, centers, and student organizations at the three institutions. I began by sending out personal emails to colleagues, friends, and professors, and asking them to share it with their networks. I then sent it out through various list serves like the Mujeres Activas en Letra y Cambio Social (MALCS), Dr. Daniel Solórzano's Research Apprentice Course (RAC), and the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education (AAHHE) list serve. I used social media as well; I shared it on my Facebook and posted it on groups like Latinas Completing Doctoral Degrees, Creating Bridges through Mentorship, and Women of

Color and Friends for Higher Education. Friends and colleagues shared the flyer on Facebook as well. Additionally, I emailed various departments, centers, and student organizations at the three institutions asking if they could share it; the majority responded and gladly did.

In total, recruitment lasted about a moth, the flyer began circulating in mid-February of 2015 and by mid-March I had selected the 10 daughters to participate. In all, 20 women filled out the form, however I received about an additional 10 to 15 emails of women that were interested but had questions. Unfortunately, or fortunately, exactly half of the women who filled out the form were either not eligible to participate or ultimately were not able to commit. I had women fill out the form that were from Los Angeles but were no longer living there; this was mostly the reason for why they could not participate. Those that were not able to commit came to the realization on their own terms that either their schedules or their mother's schedule were too impacted to participate in the study.

The ten women that were left were screened further through email and/or phone communication. I asked them to please talk to their mothers and also volunteered to talk to them myself about the study. Some had already talked with their mothers prior to filling out the form and had received their verbal approval to participate, while others went back to their mothers and asked for their thoughts. In the end all the mothers gave their verbal agreement to their daughters to participate.

Las mamás y hijas- Who are they?

At the time of the study the ten daughters ranged from ages 24 to 40. The majority grew up in predominately Chicanx/Latinx working-class communities in Los Angeles (L.A.). As mentioned earlier nine of them were doctoral students and one of them was a recent graduate who was now an assistant professor. Four of them were from UCLA, three from USC, two from

CGU, and one was a professor at a local university. From the 10, seven were in education departments, one was in Chicana/o Studies, another in American Studies, and the professor had gotten her Ph.D. in psychology and was currently working in a psychology department. I realize that this perhaps is a limitation of the study since all of them were concentrated in the social sciences. I was hoping to get women in Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics (STEM) but none of the women that filled out the form were in these fields. The spread is however representative of where most Mexicanas/Chicanas are in Ph.D. programs- education or the social sciences.

From the 10, I knew seven of them. This is important to note because it helped nurture vulnerability and trust. My relationship with them ranged from having taken a class with them to actually spending time outside of school related matters to hang out. The other three I met for the first time through their participation in the study. Eight of the daughters were U.S. born and the other two were born in México. For eight of them Spanish had been their first language and for the other two- English, however they were all bilingual. From the 10, three were mothers themselves and were also the only ones in relationships, two were actually married. This is important because I talk about how marriage or relationships became a point of tension in chapter nine. Two of them talked in depth about their queer identity, one was undocumented and queer. Half of them were the oldest in their families and the other half the youngest- all of them had at least one sibling. The majority were Catholic, although one was Christian and another Buddhist. Their relationship to religion could be understood as being in a continuum of very practicing, to spiritual on their own terms.

All of them had completed the majority of their k-12 schooling in Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD); some had done part of their education in México. Upon high school

graduation only one went through the community college route, the other nine had enrolled at UCs, Cal States, or private institutions. The majority had completed their undergraduate degrees at a local university in L.A. Six of them had gone either out of state or out L.A. to pursue their bachelors or masters. The other four have remained in L.A. for all of their education.

Eight of the mothers were born in México and had immigrated to the U.S. at different ages; most were in their late teens when they came. The mothers came from the states of Jalisco, México Distrito Federal (D.F.), Sinaloa, Durango, Yucatan, and Michoacán; most were from pueblitos (small rural towns). From the eight that immigrated, seven had come because of economical reasons; the other fled an abusive husband. The other two mothers were born in Los Angeles. As a group they ranged in ages from 52 to 75. The majority felt more comfortable speaking in Spanish. All of their occupations were in the service sector.

At the time of the study, half of them had either divorced or separated from their husbands. Thus half of the daughters grew up in single-parent households. The other half was still married; the oldest mother was a widow. Two of the daughters lived at home with their mothers; the other eight had their own place. The mother's education ranged from a third grade education to a high school diploma. The majority had only completed elementary school; with the exception of the two that were born in L.A. all of them had done their education in México.

In relation to the daughters and mothers I could relate to all of them, however it is also important to point out our differences. For example, I grew up in Santa Bárbara (S.B.), CA, which is predominately white and middle to upper middle class. Throughout most of my schooling, I often found myself to be the only Mexicana/Chicana in my classes; this was not the case for majority of the daughters. The daughters grew up surrounded with a large Mexican/Latinx community. This was not my experience; I grew up with a lot of white people.

It was not until I left S.B. that I really realized how white it really was and how culturally deprived I felt from living in a city like that. Los Angeles saved me in so many ways; it gave me what I had been yearning for since I had immigrated to the U.S.

However, I also benefited from the resources and opportunities of growing up in a city like Santa Bárbara. I recognize that the Santa Barbara Unified School District (SBUSD) does not compare to LAUSD. My mother grew up going back and forth between México and the U.S. and through this experience gained knowledge and capital of how to navigate the school system. She is bilingual and eventually secured a job at SBUSD, which allowed her to have a greater role in my education than other parents.

I was similar to the daughters in that I was the oldest of three, an immigrant or daughter of immigrant parents, Spanish was my first language, I grew up working-class, was in a doctoral program in education, have a mother that was only able to complete high school, and I shared their commitment to using education as a means for social change. I was different in that I did not grow up in L.A. or was born in the U.S., had done all of my schooling post high school outside of the city I grew up in, and was not a mother or wife. I recognize my privileges in comparison to them as well- my citizenship that allows me to navigate the world free of fear of deportation, a two parent household with more resources available to me, I grew up in a predominately white and wealthy city, my light skin that protects me from anti-black sentiments and at times allows me to pass as "not Mexican," my safety to love who I want to, and I also now benefit from my parents more middle-class status.

The table that begins in the following page serves as a portrait of who the mothers and daughters are. It is organized by the institutions that the daughters were at: USC, UCLA, CGU,

and lastly the professor[33]. Most of what I have shared up to this point about them is in this table. I share more about who the daughters and mothers are as I introduce them in my findings chapters. All of the daughters and mothers selected their pseudonym[34]. This was important for me because I wanted to challenge the colonizing way research functions in the renaming people. The mothers were the most resistant in selecting another name and I understand why. They wanted their names in this dissertation so people would know their stories. It took explaining on my part and their daughters to help them understand the intricacies of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) policies.

I have selected to use Mexicana/Chicana as an umbrella identity when referring to the mothers and daughters as a group because I feel it does the best job in capturing the varying identities that the mothers and daughters expressed. The majority of the mothers identified as Mexicana and the daughters as Chicana so these labels also seemed fitting. Furthermore, Chicana as a political identity is not limited to women of Mexican ancestry, I therefore use Mexicana in front of it to recognize that these women are of Mexican origin.

Mother-Daughter	**Mother's place of origin**	**City where daughter grew up**	**Ages**	**Mother-daughter language preference(s)**	**Daughter's education**	**Mother's education**	**Mother's occupation(s)**	**Family characteristics**
Rosario & Maria	Jalisco	South Gate	54 & 24	English/ Spanish for both	Scripps College, USC (American Studies)	H.S. diploma	Teacher's Assistant	Single-mom, daughter is the youngest of four, Catholic home

[33] I do not list the institution of the professor to protect her identity.

[34] I did help three out of the 20 collaborators with selecting a new name, specifically Huitzilin and Flor (daughter and mother) and Fe (daughter). Huitzilin is an Aztec name that means hummingbird. I suggested this name since Huitzilin talked about the special connection she had to hummingbirds. Flor translates to flower in English. I recommended this name because of the link between hummingbirds and flowers. The hummingbird and flower association is a metaphor for the mother-daughter relationship. Fe means faith in English and I felt that Fe embodied faith so I suggested this name for her. The rest of the names came directly from the mothers and daughters.

Chata & Quetzali	Mexico, D.F. but was born in L.A.	Cerritos	62 & 33	English for both	Cal State Long Beach, USC (Education)	H.S. diploma	Secretary	Single-mom, daughter is the youngest of three, Catholic home, daughter is married & a mother
Sofia & Oliva	Durango but was born in L.A.	West Covina	56 & 32	English for both	Cal State Fullerton, UCLA, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, USC (Education)	H.S. diploma	Receptionist	Daughter is the oldest of three, Christian home, daughter is married & a mother
Marissa & Fe	Sinaloa	Compton	55 & 25	Spanish & English/ Spanish	UC Santa Cruz, UCLA (Education)	3rd grade	Housekeeper, stay at home mom, & seamstress	Daughter is the oldest of four, Fe did not grow up with her biological dad, Catholic home, lives at home with mom
Nati & Cecilia	Durango	Inglewood	61 & 37	Spanish & English/ Spanish	El Camino, East L.A. C.C., UCLA, UCLA (Education)	3rd grade	Housekeeper, stay at home mom	Daughter is the oldest of three, Catholic home, daughter is in a committed relationship & a mother
Marimar & Felicia	Yucatan	East Hollywood	60 & 27	Spanish & English/ Spanish	UC Santa Cruz, UCLA (Chicana/o Studies)	6th grade	Stay at home mom	Mother suffered from mental health issues & is a single- mom, daughter is the youngest of three, the only girl, & identifies as queer, both of them are Buddhist
Camila & Catalina	Michoacán	South Gate	63 & 40	Spanish & English/ Spanish	Occidental College, Cal State LA, University of	6th grade	Seamstress, medical assistant	Daughter is the oldest of three & the only

					Pittsburg, UCLA (Education)			daughter, Catholic home
Flor & Huitzilin	Mexico, D.F.	Baldwin Park	60 & 25	Spanish & English/ Spanish	Pomona College, CGU (Education)	6th grade	Seamstress, housekeeper, caretaker, street vendor, & newspaper delivery	Single-mother, daughter is the youngest of five and queer, both are undocumented, mixed-status family, Catholic home
Carolina & Paloma	Jalisco	La Puente	52 & 32	Spanish & English/ Spanish	Cal State Fullerton, University of Washington, CGU (Education)	6th grade	Housekeeper	Daughter is the oldest of four, Catholic home
Socorro & Alejandra	Michoacán	San Pedro	75 & 34	Spanish & English/Spanish	UC Riverside, Cal State LA, UC Santa Cruz (psychology), professor at a local L.A. university	6th grade	Housekeeper, fish packer, janitor	Daughter is the youngest of two, only girl, an assistant professor, & lives at home with mom, Catholic home

Table 2. Las Mamás y Hijas

Los Angeles- A City of Immigrants

I selected Los Angeles, CA as the context of my study mostly because of convenience. I have lived in L.A. for nine years so I also felt like I had a good sense of the city. I was attending UCLA and living on the west side at the time of the study so it seemed fitting for me to stay local. Although at one point I considered focusing on Santa Bárbara as well I realized that it was important to focus on just one city in order to understand how it framed the mothers and daughter's experiences.

Nevertheless, L.A. offered a lot to my study. It is the largest city in California and the second largest (after New York City) in the U.S. (U.S. Census, 2010). Most importantly, it is

home to the largest Hispanic population where 78% of this population is of Mexican origin (PEW Research Hispanic Trends Project, 2011). It also has the highest number of undocumented immigrants in the state and is home to nearly 3.5 million immigrants (Hill & Hayes, 2015). Fifty-eight percent of children who live in L.A. have at least one immigrant parent (USC Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration, 2013).

In regards to education, LAUSD is the largest school district in California and the second largest in the country. It currently has a Latinx student population of 73%, one of the largest in the state and country (ED-Data, 2013-2014). Thus L.A. as the site of my study provided me with a context that is both historically and presently uniquely Chicanx and immigrant. The image (Image 1) below shows where in L.A. county the daughters grew up. Most of these communities can be described as predominately Mexican/Latinx and working-class.

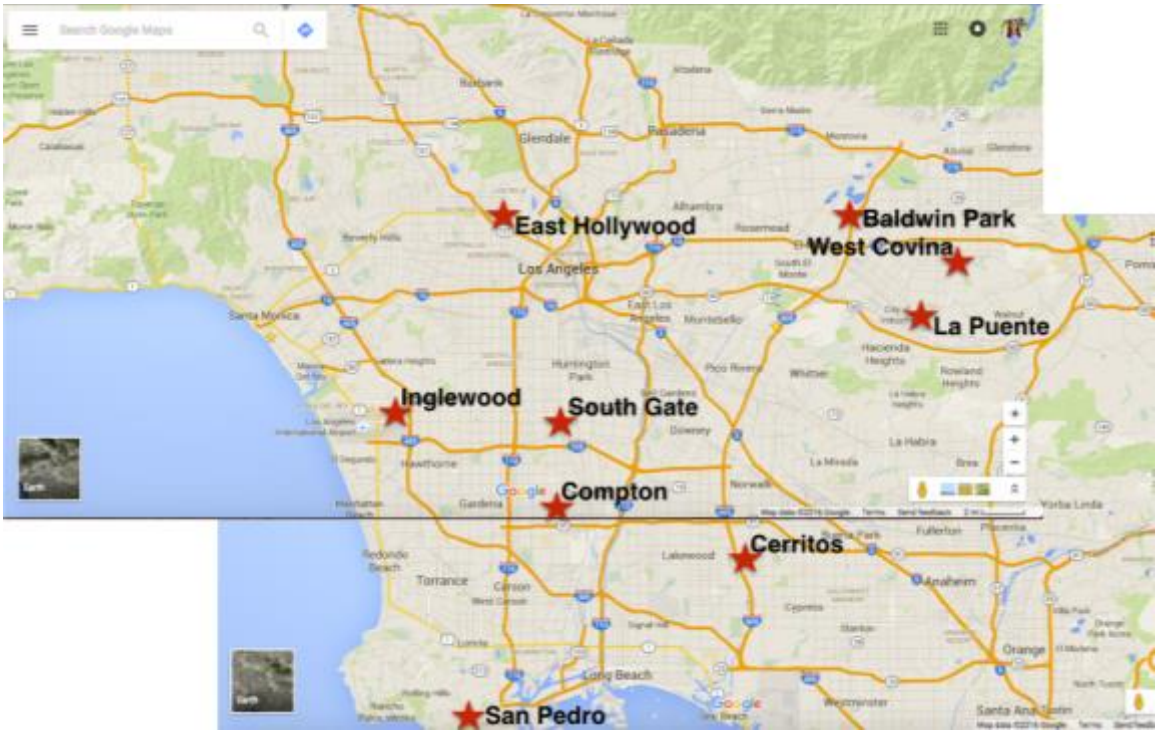

Image 1. The cities in Los Angeles County where the daughters grew up

Platicando Entre Muxeres

In this section I describe what my data collection included. The main way I gathered my data was through pláticas- individually with the mothers and daughters, and in pairs. During the individual pláticas I asked both the mothers and daughters to also share any photographs or items that reminded them of either their mother or daughter. Throughout this entire process I also kept a journal where I reflected on how I was feeling before and after each plática. I wrote about ideas or themes I was noticing. I also described the daughters and mothers- their mannerisms, what they were wearing, their way of being, and any unique characteristics I noticed. When I visited the mother's homes I made sure to also take notes on what I observed both within and outside of their home, like the surrounding neighborhood. I will begin by describing what pláticas are and how I used them in my study. I will also briefly talk about the role of the photographs and items, home visits, and the journal.

Pláticas

As Fierros and Delgado Bernal[35] (in press) point out there is a lack of scholarship that details pláticas as a research method or methodology. This dissertation used pláticas both as method and methodology. I use pláticas as my method of collecting data but as I will show it is also theoretically grounded in muxerista portraiture making it not just a method but also a methodology. I use Francisca González's (1998a) definition of a plática, "as conversations that take place in one-on-one or group spaces, and which are a way to gather family and cultural knowledge through communication of thoughts, memories, ambiguities and new interpretations" (as cited in Fierros & Delgado Bernal, pp. 11-12). In González's (1998a) dissertation she used

[35] In sharing my struggle to describe or define what a plática is, Dr. Dolores Delgado Bernal and Cindy Fierros willingly shared their article (in press), *Vamos a pláticar: The contours of pláticas as Chicana/Latina feminist methodology*. I am deeply grateful for this.

individual or personal pláticas, and encuentros which can be understood as group pláticas to examine how Mexicana high school students made sense of womanhood.

Unlike psychology or mental health scholarship that used pláticas as only method or as entry points to the data collection process[36], González (1998a, 1998b) used pláticas as spaces of theorization, where the young women were able to theorize about their own lived experiences. As Fierros and Delgado Bernal describe "…within the space of pláticas Chican@ knowledge can be shared, constructed, and theorized" (p. 12). Pláticas align nicely with muxerista portraiture because of their effort to humanize the research process and the ways they challenge colonial and/or objective notions of research. Fierros and Delgado Bernal identify five elements of pláticas; I list them below and explain their relationship to muxerista portraiture. Ultimately I aim to show that pláticas and muxerista portraiture are intimately related. It is for this reason that I found pláticas to be the most valid way of collecting data.

1. Pláticas are grounded in Chicana/Latina feminist theory and possibly other theories that center the experiences of marginalized individuals and draw attention to the multiple ways systems of oppression effect the daily navigations of some people, to the benefit of privileged others. I claim that pláticas are grounded in muxerista portraiture through their connection to Chicana/Latina feminist theory as well as the way they center relationships, spirituality, and the voice(s) of the research and collaborator(s). Muxerista portraiture, like pláticas, aims to paint portraits that are committed to social justice and challenging all forms of subordination.

2. Pláticas honor participants as co-constructors of knowledge. Muxerista portraiture refers to research participants as collaborators to recognize their contributions to the research process. Through the nurturing of authentic relationships rooted in spiritualty and confianza,

[36] See for example, McKean Skaff, M., Chesla, C., De los Santos McCue, V., & Fisher, L., 2002 and Valle & Mendoza, 1978.

muxerista portraiture aims to highlight the voice(s) of the researcher and collaborator(s). In this study, the mothers and daughters participated in the analysis of their pláticas and thus helped shape the findings.

3. Pláticas makes connections between everyday lived experiences and the research inquiry. In muxerista portraiture everyday lived experiences are a central part of the research method. These experiences guide the process of emergent themes; they inform the conception of the portraits. I recognize that this study was about me, as much as it was about the mothers and daughters. I was invested in this work because it connected to my everyday lived experiences and the daughters shared the same feeling. For many of them the opportunity to participate in this project was tied to their desire to highlight and thank their mothers, something we are regularly not able to do in higher education. To talk about our families in the context of education is often seen as taboo, we are socialized as academics to see theory as removed from the everyday. This feature of pláticas was important because it allowed me to recognize my commonalities with the mothers and daughters as Women of Color.

4. Pláticas provide a potential space for healing. Muxerista portraiture uses a bodymindspirit approach in the research process. My experience of conducting the pláticas with the mothers and daughters was emotionally draining, but in a good way. We cried and laughed, but also struggled at times to make sense of things. Many of the mothers expressed during the mother-daughter plática how grateful they were to be able to sit and talk with their daughters without any interruptions, to relive memories, and to analyze or reflect on such experiences. I continuously saw how the mothers and daughters learned something new from each other through the pláticas. Often reliving memories helped heal feelings of shame, sadness, or remorse. For me personally, these pláticas helped me heal from the stressors of graduate school,

especially my insecurities about my potential to be in a Ph.D. program. I cannot thank the mothers enough for their own consejos and encouragement; they touched me more deeply than they probably know.

5. Pláticas rely on the researcher reciprocity, reflexivity, and vulnerability. This was a significant feature of my research method. In the pláticas I shared a lot about me and in this way helped shaped the portraits of the daughters and mothers. Whatever I asked them to talk about I was also ready to share. The journal helped me be reflexive through the whole research process. I continuously asked myself how I could improve as a portraitist, what I had learned, and what was I still wondering. Reciprocity is related to the way muxerista portraiture draws on the Mayan moral ethic of In Lak'ech, tú eres mi otro yo (you are my other me). Reciprocity focused on being accountable to the mothers and daughters because I saw myself in them. I cared for them beyond the research and therefore offered my help in whatever ways I could that went beyond this project. I saw us as a community. This is unique to pláticas and muxerista portraiture; reciprocity is rooted in deep connections between the researcher and collaborator(s).

Pláticas therefore served as an extension of muxerista portraiture. They helped me gather the data in a way that was grounded in the principles of muxerista portraiture. They worked together rather than distinctly. In retrospect muxerista portraiture worked so well because of pláticas and vice versa, the pláticas were successful because of a muxerista portraiture approach. In Lawrence-Lightfoot's (the founder of portraiture) work I have found that she often relies on oral histories to create her portraits. I wonder then if pláticas are the best fit for muxerista portraiture because of their Chicana/Latina feminist sensibility.

Pláticas were also familiar to the mothers and daughters and not removed from their experiences. I would often tell the mothers "hay que platicar sobre su hija" (let's talk about your

daughter) or "cuenteme sobre su hija" (tell me about your daughter). This made them feel at ease- what mother does not enjoy talking about their children? These pláticas took place where very often women gather to talk- in the kitchen table or in the living room. I would bring food to share with the mothers or daughters, since in my experiences siempre hay comida cuando estas platicando (there is always food when you are talking). My familiarity with pláticas made the experience so much more enjoyable for me, it felt natural. I would like to think that this was also the experience of the mothers and daughters. In the next section I discuss the manner in which I collected the data. Although these methods are all closely tied together, I have organized them in the following way: 1. Individual pláticas, photographs, and personal items, 2. Mother-daughter pláticas, 3. Home visits, and 4. Journaling.

Individual pláticas, photographs, & personal items

I conducted individual pláticas with the mothers and daughters separately, a total of 20 pláticas. The individual pláticas ranged from an hour and a half to three hours for both the mothers and daughters and were audio recorded. I started first with all the daughter pláticas and then moved to the mothers. These pláticas were either facilitated in my apartment, my partner's home, UCLA, or their home. With the exception of one plática all the mother's pláticas were conducted in their homes. For the daughters, the plática focused on exploring one central question- what role their mother's had played in their education. For the mothers, the plática focused on their rearing practices- how did they raise their daughters? Although I had questions prepared I never once covered them all. At times we would go completely off script and other times we followed most of the questions on there. The questions were emailed in advance to both the daughters and mothers. The majority of the pláticas with the mothers were entirely in Spanish, with the daughters they were mostly in English with some Spanish or Spanglish.

During these individual pláticas I asked both the mothers and daughters to share any photographs and/or personal items that could help them express how they felt about either their daughter or mother. The majority shared photographs. The mothers shared pictures of their daughters at various points in their education, of special occasions like graduations or birthdays, and family pictures. The daughters shared photographs of their moms when they were young or of their everyday life in México, of the two of them together, and special occasions as well. In addition to photographs the mothers and daughters often shared other personal items. The mothers especially found it easy to share these things because we were in their homes. Some of these items included awards, trophies, diplomas, and college admission letters. Often the mothers would walk me over to a wall in their living room where they had these items proudly displayed. The daughters shared things like books, artwork, letters, or tattoos that had special meaning to them and related to their mothers.

I began the pláticas with the photographs and/or personal items because I found that it made it easy for them to talk about something they had already thought about. Often these photographs or items served as prompts for stories or memories. The mothers would begin, "En esta foto estabamos…" (In this photograph we were…) or "Me acuerdo que…" (I remember that). This was a nice way to warm up to each other. During the remainder of the plática we often returned back to these photographs or items. With their permission I asked to take pictures of the photographs or items as part of my data collection. Because these things are very personal I have opted to not share any pictures of them to protect their identities. However, I do talk about them and used them in my analysis.

Mother-Daughter Pláticas

After I completed the 20 individual pláticas I spent some time immersing myself in the data. I listened to everyone's audio at least once and used a modified grounded theory approach (Calderón, 2008; Malagón, Pérez Huber, & Vélez, 2009) informed by Chicana/Latina feminist theory to analyze the transcriptions and identify themes that would guide the mother-daughter pláticas. I will talk more about my method of analysis in the following section, but it is important to note that prior to facilitating the mother-daughter pláticas I engaged in a preliminary analysis of their individual pláticas. For this reason, all of the mother-daughter pláticas were structured differently because they were based on my analysis of their individual pláticas. Although I began to notice unifying themes across all of the individual mother and daughter pláticas, each mother-daughter plática engaged themes that were unique to their individual pláticas.

I connected ideas that both the mothers and daughters talked about separately and also brought up moments where they talked about things differently. These themes and ideas were constructed into questions to guide the mother-daughter plática. There were four questions that I asked in all the mother-daughter pláticas, which were: 1. (Daughter's name) is there anything you want to tell your mom that you haven't told her before or expressed to her enough in regards to your education? 2. (Mother's name) is there anything you want to tell your daughter that you haven't told her before or expressed to her enough in regards to her education? 3. (Mother's name) if you could raise (daughter's name) again would you do anything differently? And 4. Are there are any questions for me or anything else you both would like to add that I haven't give you the opportunity to speak to? These were my closing questions for the mother-daughter plática.

I presented the mother-daughter plática as an opportunity for the mothers and daughters to participate in the analysis of their individual pláticas. I would begin each plática by letting them know that I had analyzed their individual pláticas and based on that process had come up with questions to discuss. I asked them to please add to my analysis, but to also clarify or correct anything I had perhaps not captured succinctly. I audio-recorded the 10 mother-daughter pláticas and with the exception of one they all took place in the mother's home. They lasted between an hour to three hours and were conducted in the mother's preferential language.

If the mother felt most comfortable speaking in Spanish, I facilitated in Spanish. This is not to say however that no English or Spanglish was also used. The daughters would sometimes respond to me in English when I would speak in Spanish or I would sometimes find myself falling back into English when speaking in Spanish. There is something to be said about the hybridity of languages and emotions that happened during these spaces. Listening to the recordings made me realize the centrality of language in the research process, I talk more about this in my conclusion chapter. The mother-daughter pláticas was my favorite part of the research process because of how powerful it felt to be among Women of Color, who I saw myself deeply connected to, and to be theorizing together.

Home Visits

With the exception of one mother, I visited the homes of all the mothers twice. The first time for the individual plática and the second, for the mother-daughter plática. Image one shows the cities I visited, although missing are two cities (Santa Monica and Moreno Valley) I went to because the mothers had since moved from the community their daughter had grown up in[37]. These home visits were important for various reasons. To begin, it made it easier on the

[37] Marimar, mother of Felicia, no longer lived in East Hollywood, she now lives in Santa Monica and Carolina, mother of Paloma, no longer lived in La Puente, she now lives in Moreno Valley. I therefore visited the mothers in their new homes.

mothers. I could visit them where they felt most comfortable and not disrupt their schedules by asking them to travel somewhere. The home visits were also important because it gave me an opportunity to learn more about the communities the daughters grew up in. After each home visit I would find a local coffee shop and journal not only about the plática but also on what I observed in the surrounding community.

The home space also served as an opportunity for the mothers to share more about their daughters. They often had pictures of them hanging in the walls, or their diplomas or other school related work. Through these home visits I also got to meet more of the daughter's families like their siblings or fathers. During my visits, the mothers always offered me something to eat or drink. One mother in particular cooked a beautiful meal for me when I visited; everything was delicious. These act of kindness and generosity made me feel like I was back home or visiting my own family.

The houses also told stories themselves through the manner in which they were decorated and the history of the people that had lived there or would come through on a regular basis. I found that the mother's parents often lived with them or that they cared for their grandchildren there on a regular basis. The homes told a lot about the mothers by the way they were decorated too- the colors, photographs, artwork, religious icons, and altars. I used the home visits to further understand the mothers and daughters; they shaped my experience of collecting data and also added to the analysis itself.

Journaling- Analytical memos

Journaling is a practice I have engaged in since I immigrated to the U.S.; this practice of reflective writing is very familiar to me and has become a great outlet for negotiating, celebrating, and envisioning. I began to keep a journal during the pilot case study I conducted in

preparation for my dissertation and found it to be a good tool for the practice of on-going data analysis. I therefore continued journaling throughout the entire research process. The journal entries ranged in structure. Prior to collecting data, my entries were more about what I was feeling and things I needed to do. It was more of a way to keep myself organized and deal with the stress that came with the demands of a dissertation.

During the data collection phase these entries became semi-structured. For example, after each plática I facilitated I tried to answer questions like: What had I learned? What had touched me? What was I still wondering? And how could I improve as a muxerista portraitist? I also wrote about the daughters and mothers as individuals, what they were wearing, their mannerisms, their laugh, and the language(s) they used. As mentioned earlier I accounted for my observations during the home visits as well. Many of these entries ended with questions or my identification of preliminary themes. In this way my journal entries can be understood as analytical memos. However, I do not refer to them only as analytical memos because they were not always "investigative" as was illustrated when I discussed what they look liked before I started data collection; they also captured my feelings. I used a bodymindspirit approach in my journal entries, not only emphasizing "academic" (mind) reflection but also how I was feeling physically and spiritually.

These journal entries were used to complement the analysis of the pláticas. I could go back to entries to see what I had already begun to identify as themes or to help me think through an idea or question I had. After the individual pláticas were done I listened to all of the audio recordings and took notes in the form of journal entries for each one. In the end, I would write a summary of my notes and identify initial themes. This was especially helpful as I prepared for the mother-daughter pláticas. The entries also helped me see what role my own voice played in

shaping the data. In the final stage of analysis, I revisited all of my journal entries to help me solidify the final themes.

Summary of Data Collection Methods

In total I conducted 30 pláticas: 10 individual mother pláticas, 10 individual daughter pláticas, and 10 mother-daughter pláticas. During the individual pláticas I also collected pictures of the mother's and daughter's photographs and/or personal items. I conducted two home visits with nine out of the ten mothers, at total of 18 home visits. Lastly, I kept a journal during the entire process to checking in on myself through a bodymindspirit approach, to practice reflexivity, engage in on-going analysis, and ask questions. Table three sums up the methods of data collection and my rationale for them.

Data Collection Method	Rationale
Individual Pláticas (20 in total)	Mothers: to understand how they raised their daughters and what role they played in their daughter's education. Daughters: to understand how they made sense of the role their mother's played in their education.
Photographs & Personal Items (~20 in total)	To use them as entry points to the individual pláticas. To further understand their feelings about each other. To use them as prompts for stories or memories. To complement the analysis of the pláticas.
Mother-Daughter Pláticas (10 in total)	To engage the mothers and daughters in data analysis. To discuss commonalities and difference in their individual pláticas. To solidify final themes.
Home Visits (18 in total)	To understand the context the daughters grew up in. To engage in the sharing of photographs and/or personal items. To make sense of how homes are extensions of the mother's identities and her-stories.
Journaling	To engage in reflexivity and on-going data analysis. To stay organized through the research process. To honor a bodymindspirit approach in the research process.

Table 3. Data Collection Methods & Rationale

Data Analysis

I used a modified grounded theory approach (Calderón, 2008; Malagón, Pérez Huber, & Vélez, 2009) informed by Chicana/Latina feminist theory to analyze my data. The goal of grounded theory is to generate theory from lived experiences. Strauss and Corbin (1990) define grounded theory in this way:

> A grounded theory is one that is inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents. That is, it is discovered, developed, and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to that phenomenon. Therefore, data collection, analysis, and theory stand in reciprocal relationship with each other. One does not begin with a theory, then prove it. Rather, one begins with an area of study and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge (p. 23).

Modified grounded theory argues for an abductive approach, rather than strictly inductive or deductive. As I mentioned earlier, my goal in conducting this study was not to prove a theory. The literature has already shown the important role Mexicana/Chicana mothers play in the education of their daughters. Instead I sought to develop theory from the "ground up" (inductive), to make sense of what the literature had already proven. Yet I did not enter this process with no prior knowledge of how systems of oppression govern the experiences of Women of Color. As such, I approached the data deductively knowing that themes were going to emerge that were tied to oppression or marginality.

Thus, an abductive approach combines both of these methods, inductive and deductive. I was able to construct grounded theory in conversation with my own cultural intuition and experiences as a Woman of Color to make sense of the data. I used a Chicana/Latina feminist framework that drew on my own experiences as well what the literature says about Chicana/Latina students and mothers. My data analysis consisted of three phases I explain them below.

PHASE 1: I first began with the 20 individual pláticas by analyzing them in mother-daughter dyads. This means that I would analyze a daughter's audio/transcript and subsequently follow with her mother's audio/transcript. I went through a process of open coding, allowing for themes to emerge organically and kept myself open to whatever came up (Maxwell, 2012). As Dey (1999) points out, there is a difference between an open mind and an empty head. Keeping an open mind did not mean that I denied any prior ideas I had about the data. I was aware of the literature on mother-daughter pedagogies, but was open to learning new things through the process of coding. I tried to code data as actions, so I looked for instances of "learning" or "teaching." While I kept Rendón's (2009) sentipensante pedagogy in mind, I was also open to new interpretations of pedagogy. I looked for moments where the daughter's perceptions shifted- points of conocimiento. I moved quickly through the data, comparing the daughter's transcripts with their mothers, writing down simple and precise descriptor codes, and looking for actions in the data.

In my second round of coding, I used focused coding to help me group together the descriptors for each mother-daughter dyad into themes and patterns across their individual pláticas. In this round my codes were more selective and conceptual. They were based on similarities and differences between each mother-daughter pair. For example, if I noted that a mother had talked a lot about religion I would code for that in her daughter's transcript/audio and vice versa, if a daughter talked a lot about race I would code for that in her mother's transcript/audio. I also began to code with my research questions in mind. Thus, I coded for actions, rituals, and interactions. I looked for consistency but also for disagreements among mother-daughter sets. I searched for moments when the daughters indicated growth or learning, often in opposition to what they were learning in schools.

After these two rounds of coding (open and focused), I created questions based on the themes and patterns I had noted for each mother-daughter dyad. These questions were used to facilitate the mother-daughter pláticas. They focused on many things but a majority of them touched on identity, race, gender, education vs. educación, first-generation college experiences, and family. The questions were also used to clarify or confirm ideas that I had begun to develop.

PHASE 2: During the mother-daughter pláticas I engaged the mothers and daughters in the analysis of the themes I had created based on the first phase of analysis. This allowed for member-checking as well as the opportunity to expand or interrogate the themes. For example, I would say something like you both talked about the importance of learning how to speak up for yourself, can you tell more about this. Or I would say, I noted that you both talked about your immigration story differently, and then would share this distinction by quoting directly from their transcripts. More often than not they would be in agreement with the themes or ideas I presented, but they would add more to my understanding. Discussing heteropatriarchy, sexuality, and religion were often the most difficult things to talk about and it is in these instances where they would interrogate my analysis or each other's analysis. As you will see, chapter nine attempts to write about this but it became quite complex and difficult for me to fully express.

After all the mother-daughter pláticas were complete I repeated the process from phase one. I did open coding first and then focused coding on all the mother-daughter transcripts/audio. During this process of coding I was conscious of the codes that had come about from phase one, however I kept an open mind to see if new things would emerge. I engaged in a constant comparative approach across all 10 of the mother-daughter pláticas. Unlike phase one, I completed this phase with subsequent rounds of axial coding (Saldaña,

2009), where I combined themes into categories and subcategories. The purpose of axial coding is to "sort, synthesize, and organize large amounts of data and reassemble them in new ways after coding" (Charmaz, p. 60). This is when I began to delineate a pedagogy of the borderlands. I decided to organize all the codes that had emerged into either actions, rituals and interactions. Additionally, I also coded for "disagreements," "conflicts," or "tensions," to address my last research question. I made a list of actions, rituals, interactions, and tensions based on this process. The list was quite exhaustive and therefore I needed to narrow it down- I discuss how I did that in phase three.

PHASE 3: Once I had created a list of all the actions, rituals, interactions, and tensions, I went through the 30 transcripts again (both the individual and paired pláticas) and did line-by-line analysis. The purpose of doing line-by-line analysis was to find out which of the many codes were more pronounced or talked about in all the transcripts. I had come up with too many codes and needed to narrow them down; thus I proceeded with doing line-by-line analysis. I revisited all my journal entries during this time and looked over the photographs and personal items to complement the analysis. In examining the themes and categories I would also go back and play the audio to listen for emotion. For example, I identified excerpts from the transcripts where unless you listened to the audio you would not be able to tell that there was crying, silences, pauses, and/or laughter. This helped me gain more insight on not only what was said but also how things were expressed.

From this process, I was able to finalize the final concepts/themes of a pedagogy of the borderlands. I also learned that ultimately the biggest disagreements or sources of tension among the mothers and daughters were rooted in heteropatriarchy. Figure two is a summary of the three phases of my data analysis.

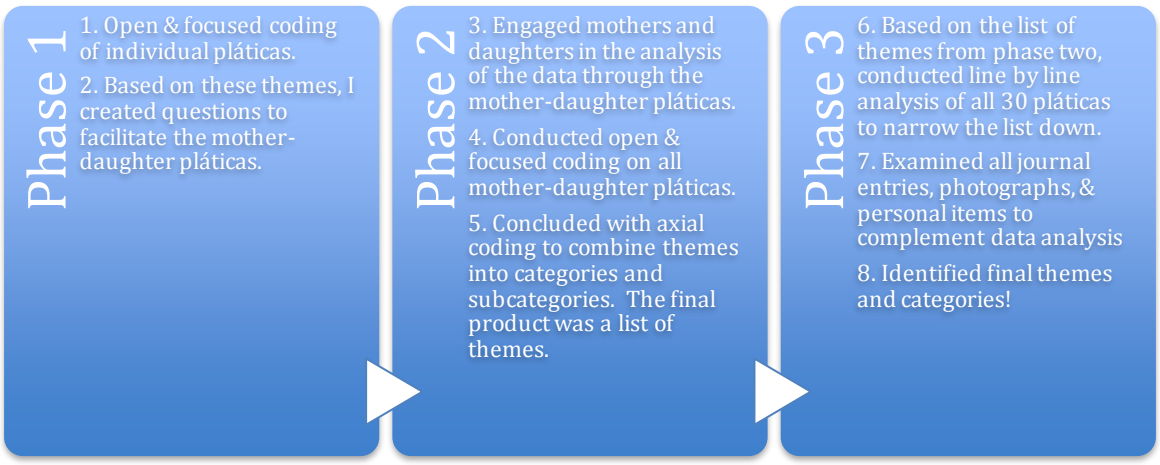

Figure 2. Phases of Data Analysis

Tying it all Together- Theoretical Framework, Methodology & Methods

This chapter presented the methods I used to collect my data. I started by discussing my process of recruitment. I then presented the 20 collaborators of this work- the mothers and daughters. I also highlighted why Los Angeles was a good fit for this study. I then explained what pláticas are and how they are grounded in muxerista portraiture. After this, I discussed the methods I used to collect my data: individual pláticas, photographs and/or personal items, mother-daughter pláticas, home visits, and journaling. I described how these various ways of collecting data worked cohesively. I concluded with discussing the way I analyzed my data- using modified grounded theory with a Chicana/Latina feminist framework.

The previous three chapters of this dissertation have discussed my theoretical framework- Chicana/Latina feminist theory, my methodology- muxerista portraiture, and my methods- mostly pláticas. As I have shown they are all interrelated. My theoretical framework especially

informed the methodology and methods of this study. Figure three, shown below, illustrates this relationship.

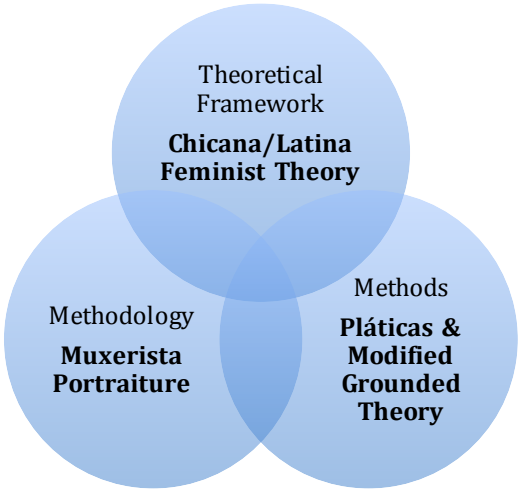

Figure 3. The Relationship Between Theory, Methodology, & Methods

Together- theory, methodology, and method- helped me theorize what I will present in the following chapters, a pedagogy of the borderlands. The next five chapters discuss the findings of my study. The first chapter serves as an introduction to what a pedagogy of the borderlands is and its relation to raising muxeres truchas. The four chapters that follow detail the various facets of a pedagogy of the borderlands.

Chapter Five

A Pedagogy of the Borderlands: Mexicana/Chicana Mothers Raising Muxeres Truchas

This chapter serves as an introduction to the following four chapters in which I present the findings of this study. I begin by explaining what I mean by a pedagogy of the borderlands and why I thought it best captured how the mothers shaped the educational achievement of their daughters. I then discuss how mothers raise muxeres truchas using a pedagogy of the borderlands. I describe what muxeres truchas are, what a trucha sensibility is, and what I mean by conocimiento. Lastly, I explain how I present my findings and how the chapters are organized. This chapter can be understood as a glossary, where readers can find descriptions of the central concepts I use to explain my findings. Yet unlike a glossary, it is placed in the middle to help guide the reader in the following chapters.

A Pedagogy of the Borderlands

My dissertation argues that Mexicana/Chicana immigrant working-class mothers use a pedagogy of the borderlands to raise muxeres truchas. A pedagogy of the borderlands encompasses the actions, rituals, and interactions that will be described in the subsequent chapters. When I use the word borderlands I am referring to the way in which Anzaldúa has theorized the borderlands, as not limited to physical borders but also metaphorical ones. What is powerful about Anzaldúa's borderlands is that it incorporates a Chicana/Latina feminist awareness, in which she centers sexuality, spirituality, and the body. As I discussed in my literature review, other Chicana/Latina feminist scholars have used her conceptualization of the borderlands to theorize about pedagogy (de los Ríos, 2013; Cervantes-Soon & Carillo, 2016; Elenes, 1997, 1999, 2006, 2001; González, 2001; Villenas, 2006). As such I continue in this tradition but in the context of mother-daughter pedagogies.

I define a pedagogy of the borderlands as the creative, defying, and empowering ways in which Mexicana/Chicana working-class immigrant mothers raise their daughters. It uses a bodymindspirit approach to instill a conocimiento of how to navigate, thrive in, and transform the physical and metaphorical borders that inform the everyday lives of Mexicanas/Chicanas, by privileging the epistemologies and ways of being of Mexicana/Chicana mothers. Through a pedagogy of the borderlands mothers are situated as creators, thinkers, and knowers. Figure four visually shows what a pedagogy of the borderlands is.

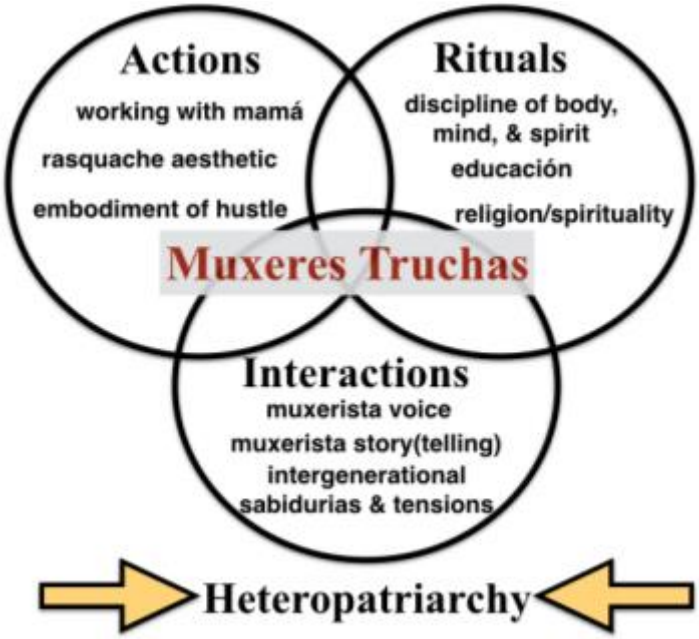

Figure 4. A Pedagogy of the Borderlands

You will notice the actions, rituals, and interactions that encompass a pedagogy of the borderlands. You will also note that heteropatriarchy is part of a pedagogy of the borderlands; I discuss this in chapter nine. Heteropatriarchy governs much of the tensions and contradictions that Mexicana/Chicana mothers and daughters grapple with. For the daughters, it was the one system of oppression they learned about early on in their lives. While the mothers continually taught their daughters to challenge heteropatriarchy, they were also compliant in it. A

borderlands framework allows me to show how this contradiction can be damaging, but also the potential it has to be transformative. At the center of the figure is the concept of muxeres truchas. In my findings chapters I will show how the mothers used a pedagogy of the borderlands to raise muxeres truchas.

In using Anzaldúa's borderlands as an analytical tool I am also cautious of not romanticizing the borderlands. I am painfully aware of the traumatic stories of people who suffer in crossing physical borders, like the U.S.-México border. As an immigrant, I am not removed from the reality that people have died crossing the border. I grew up hearing the disturbing experiences of family members who crossed the border and were abandoned or cheated by their coyote[38], or suffered from the extreme heat or cold of the dessert. I acknowledge my U.S. citizenship privilege that saved me from having to cross in this way. I therefore use the concept of the borderlands with this awareness. Most importantly, a pedagogy of the borderlands is not disengaged from this reality; the mothers and daughters are all linked to the physical U.S.-Mexico border in one way or another.

Muxeres Truchas

Cervantes-Soon (2016) first introduced the concept of mujeres truchas through her critical ethnographic study of a high school in Juarez, México. She shows how the young women in her study were mujeres truchas, "who embodied a type of smartness that included much more than what is measured in most schools" (p. 7). She explains that being trucha "involves the assumption that society is an unequal playing field, that struggle is part of every woman's life, and that advancement is not real unless it is part of a collective" (p. 7). She outlines five fundamentals characteristics of what she refers to trucha smartness: trucha as

[38] In Latin America individuals who smuggle people across the border are referred to as coyotes. They are mostly men and typically ask for a high a fee.

borderlands smarts, trucha as self-defense and defiance, trucha as survival tactic, and trucha as mujerista intellectual.

These five expressions of trucha smartness show how this type of intelligence is rooted in strategic ways of navigating oppression and used toward communal uplift and social justice, rather than simple personal success (p. 2). She argues that this type of smartness or intelligence[39] should be recognized and fostered in schools that serve marginalized youth. Cervantes-Soon's work is part of a growing body of scholarship that has begun to challenge narrow notions of intelligence or achievement[40]. She frames ideas of smartness through a mujerista lens by highlighting the young women's unique forms of intelligence that are generated from their everyday lives where they must resist and negotiate oppression, violence, inequality and contradictory messages.

Building off of her work and other scholars that have contested hegemonic ideas of intelligence, I focus on the way mothers inculcate a unique form of smartness through a pedagogy of the borderlands. I contend that it is this form of intelligence or conocimiento that has helped the women achieve in their education. Informed by Cervantes-Soon I define muxeres truchas as women who embody a form of intelligence that helps them navigate, resist, and transform oppression both within and beyond their education. I replace the j with an x in mujeres to signify a connection to México's languages and ancestries (Tijerina Revilla, 2004). It also serves as a connection to a muxerista (womanist) identity, which embraces Chicana/Latina feminisms.

To understand why mothers are so central to the educational achievement of Mexicana/Chicana students we must challenge hegemonic notions of intelligence that rely on

[39] Cervantes-Soon uses these two terms interchangeably; I do so as well.

[40] For more on this, see chapter one.

testing and standardized curriculum and assessment. Dominant definitions of smartness have been created by those in power and in doing so have undermined the unique abilities of those living at the margins of the dominant group (Carillo, 2016). Constructions of achievement and smartness are shaped by a white standard of what counts as knowledge and fail to recognize how systems of oppression undermine the unique epistemologies of People of Color. What I present in this dissertation goes beyond what schools consider or count as smart.

Thus, I will illustrate how Mexicana/Chicana mothers raise muxeres truchas. The concepts of conocimiento and a trucha sensibility are also informed by Anzaldúa. As described in my literature review, conocimiento is the Spanish word for knowledge but can also be understood as epistemology or consciousness; Anzaldúa often referred to it as a reflective consciousness. It is a consciousness that is developed through a pedagogy of the borderlands, it represents a non-binary and connectionist way of thinking. I will show that through a pedagogy of the borderlands the daughters develop a conocimiento of how oppression functions both within and outside of schools. The mothers raise muxeres truchas by nurturing this type of reflective consciousness, I contend that this is what helped them succeed in their education.

I define trucha sensibility as having an alertness or a quick perception that helps you read and navigate systems of oppression within and outside of education. "Ponte trucha" means being alert and aware of yourself, but also of your family and community. A sense of collective struggle and community is central to a trucha sensibility; this perception does not develop on its own, it is through our interactions with our mothers. Ultimately, I add to Cervantes-Soon's work by showing that it is our mothers who raise us to be muxeres truchas. A trucha sensibility begins at home by witnessing how our mothers have learned to survive and thrive in the borderlands.

A Note on the Presentation of the Findings- A Collage of Mexicana/Chicana Mother-Daughter Pedagogies

As a reminder to the reader I use muxerista portraiture as my methodology (Flores, under review). The manner in which I approached, collected, and analyzed my data was informed by the five contours of muxerista portraiture (context, voice, relationships, emergent themes, and aesthetic whole), which draws on Lawrence-Lightfoot's theorization of portraiture, but with a Chicana/Latina feminist awareness (see chapter three). Muxerista portraiture also informs the way I will present my findings. Yet, unlike Lawrence-Lightfoot's beautifully written lengthy portraits, I use the idea of a collage to present my findings (Curammeng, in progress).

In line with the artistic element of portraiture, a collage is a piece of art made up of various different images; it is a combination or a collection of various things. In portraiture a collage is made up of smaller portraits that make up one large portrait. Each small portrait tells its own story, but they are all part of the larger portrait; one cannot exist without the other. You will find that in my findings chapters I present mother-daughter portraits or individual mothers and daughters to illustrate a point. Yet these singular portraits represent features of the mothers and daughters as an entire group. These small portraits are part of a collage of Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies. Muxerista portraiture also informs my collage by how these portraits are presented- bilingually, with my voice, and spiritually.

Chapter Six

Mexicana/Chicana Mother-Daughter Actions

"*Change requires more than words on a page—it takes perseverance, creative ingenuity and acts of love" –Gloria E. Anzaldúa*

I am sitting across Flor, a 60-year-old single-mother and undocumented immigrant, crying and feeling troubled as I listen to her struggles of raising her daughter Huitzilin. I feel ashamed for making her recount such a difficult time in her life; I worry that I am asking her to be *too* vulnerable or that this plática may not be healing. While Flor could very much be my mother, I must acknowledge my own privilege as an immigrant meXicana *with* papers and as someone who grew up with two parents. Flor immigrated to the United States (U.S.) to escape an abusive husband. She left four children in México City, an older daughter and a son that were married, and her 12-year-old twin sons who chose to stay with their dad.

Huitzilin chose to leave with her mother; she was only seven when she arrived to el norte (the U.S.), and started school in Baldwin Park, a predominately working-class Mexican community in Los Angeles. On their first Christmas in the states their car got broken into and all of their immigration papers were stolen. While they still had their visas they eventually expired, leaving them both undocumented. Flor struggled to make ends meet, and because she often could not afford childcare she took Huitzilin to work with her. There was a period of time when Flor worked as a seamstress at a garment factory in downtown Los Angeles and was left with no option but to take Huitzilin with her. With the permission of her boss she was allowed to bring her to work under the condition that she would stay in a box in case of an inspection from supervisors. With tears running down her eyes, she recounts the story:

> …en una caja alta así como ese mueble, y así de ancho, ahí cabía la niña perfectamente, ahí cabía. Entonces esta era mi maquina, ahí ponía la caja de mi hija, mi silla, le llevaba sus muñecas. Ella tenía siete años, le llevaba su lonche y entonces yo le decía nena te

voy a meter a esta cajita aquí te vas a quedar. Nada más te voy a sacar en el break y luego en la hora de la comida y luego en otro break, y luego te vuelves a meter. Y ella se esperaba el primer break, la sacaba, le daba su desayuno, lo que le llevaba de desayuno, iba al baño, se regresaba y la metía a la caja. Y en hora del lonche la dejaba correr un rato, la dejaba correr un rato para que se pudiera meter a la caja. Entonces luego me avisaba la señora María que nos íbamos a quedar más tiempo, que si me podía quedar, le digo si. Dice, yo voy a encargar pizza para que coma la niña, para que comamos todos, voy a cerrar el taller para que la niña pueda salir. Y había veces que la señora llevaba a sus niñas y ya se acompañaba Huitzilin, así estuve por dos meses, pobrecita de mi niña, pero muy buena niña, se dio cuenta como trabajaba su mamá…

…in a tall box like that piece of furniture and this wide, the girl fit perfectly, she fit there. My machine was here, I would put my daughter's box here, my chair, I would take her dolls. She was seven years old, I would take her lunch, and then I would tell her nena I am going to put you in this box and you're going to stay there. I am only going to take you out during the break, and then during the lunch hour, and then at another break, and then you have to go back in. And she would wait until the first break, I would take her out, I would give her breakfast, whatever I would take for her for breakfast, she would go to the bathroom, she would come back and go back in the box. And during the lunch hour I would let her run for a bit, I would let her run for a bit so she could go back in the box. And then Señora Maria would let me know that we were going to stay longer, and if I could stay longer, I would tell her yes, she would say I am going to order a pizza so the girl can eat, so that we can all eat, I am going to close the factory so the girl can come out. And there were times that the señora would take her own daughters and Huitzilin would have someone, I was like that for two months, my poor girl, but she was such a good girl, she learned how her mother worked…

Huitzilin would go on to help her mother sell food out of their car, clean homes, and work small jobs at the factories her mom worked in. Now a doctoral student and an aspiring immigration lawyer, she shared with me what these experiences meant to her in relation to her education. She talks about developing a strong work ethic and how struggling alongside her mother taught her about oppression.

The mothers taking their daughters to work with them, whether that was because of the expense or lack of childcare, or because they needed help, is a theme shared amongst the ten mothers in my study. I myself spent my summers cleaning homes with my grandmother in Santa Bárbara, mainly because she was my caretaker but also because even at her age she still needed to work to make ends meet. What I learned and will argue in this chapter is that the act of the

mothers taking their daughters to work with them shaped the educational achievement of the daughters.

In this chapter I discuss three prominent actions that Mexicana/Chicana immigrant mothers engaged in to support the educational achievement of their daughters. By actions I refer to something done, performed, or a way of being. What I found is that the mothers did not necessarily "teach" in a traditional manner of organized learning or lecturing, but rather it was embodied through their everyday actions. Often the mothers were surprised to hear their daughters speak about everything they had taught them or were hesitant in taking credit for their daughter's achievement. As Felicia, a different daughter in the study described her mom, "She just does." Meaning that her mom "just does" without necessarily stopping to think about what she is teaching or modeling for her. It is a way of life that comes from being a Woman of Color, an immigrant, undocumented, working-class, a single-mother, or a survivor of domestic abuse. You often do not have the luxury to ponder or be reflective, *you just do*. Yet it is these everyday actions that inculcate a trucha sensibility, which helped the daughters navigate school successfully.

The first action I will discuss is the act of "taking their daughters to work with them." As Flor and Huitzilin's opening vignette showed this was often done because of lack of childcare, affordability of childcare, or as a source of help or support. The second action I will describe is a "rasquache sensibility," which can be described as a type of resourcefulness the mothers modeled for the daughters. I will explain more where the term rasquache comes from and how it fits into my study. The last action I will describe is an "embodiment of hustle." Hustle and rasquachismo are inextricably related and overlap. However, hustle begins with the body, it means constantly doing and going, like Alejandra, another of the daughters put it, "andar en

chinga." It is also a survival tactic that the mothers use to provide for their daughters and family. In all, these three actions overlap and blur, it is only for organizational purposes that they are teased out. Figure five demonstrates a pedagogy of the borderlands and lists the actions I will describe. As discussed in the previous chapter I argue that it is through a pedagogy of the borderlands that the mothers raise muxeres truchas.

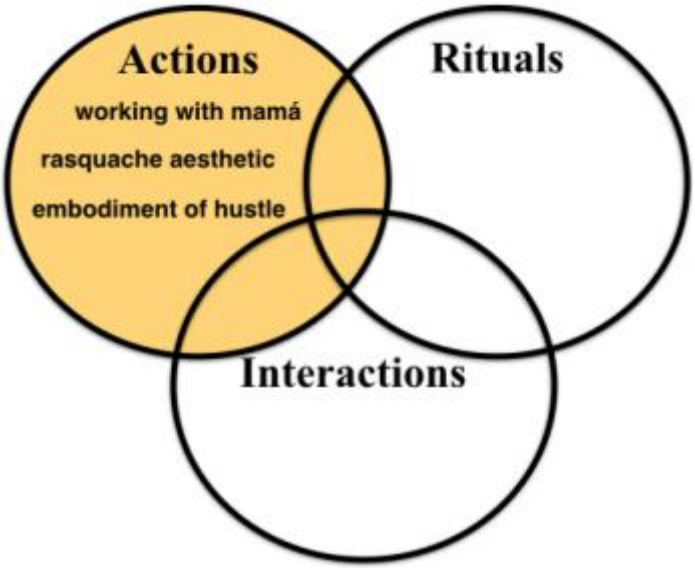

Figure 5. The Actions of a Pedagogy of the Borderlands

This chapter addresses my first two research questions: *1) What cultural/familial actions, rituals, and interactions do Mexicana/Chicana mothers engage in to shape the educational achievement of their daughters?* This chapter directly addresses the actions; the following two chapters will speak to the rituals and interactions. *2) How do Mexicana/Chicana first-generation college students explain or understand their mothers' influence on their educational achievement?* This research question is addressed through the theorization of a pedagogy of the borderlands. As a reminder to the reader I use the idea of a collage to present my findings (Curammeng, in progress), meaning that I highlight three mother-daughter portraits but they all

make up one large portrait that is representative of Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies. I focus on Flor and Huitzilin, Marimar and Felicia, and Socorro and Alejandra.

Working with mamá- *"It was like, 'We're going to go to work,' because we were a team, that's kind of really how we approached everything" –Huitzilin, daughter of Flor*

Of the ten daughters in my study more than half had experienced working with their mothers. In addition to raising their daughters, the mothers in my study worked multiple jobs, at times juggling more than one. They worked cleaning homes and offices, as seamstresses at home and in large factories, as in-house and day nannies, as caretakers of the elderly, in large fish packing factories, and many other service jobs. According to Estrada and Hondagneu-Sotelo (2011),

> non-white children from working-class families are more likely to work and contribute to the family economy, and Latino immigrant children routinely do all kinds of work for their parents that is nonremunerated but that is nonetheless critical for the adult parents for family livelihood and settlement in the United States (p. 106).

These mothers blend reproductive work with wage-earning work as a means of survival. What is important to point out is that these experiences of working alongside their mothers taught the daughters a critical conocimiento (consciousness) of struggle or oppression, a strong work ethic, and how to translate not just literally between languages, but also culturally; how to read and translate power.

As Huitzilin described in the quote above, she always saw her work with her mother as a team effort. During my plática with Huitzilin she continuously referred to herself and her mother as a team. All decisions were made together, even decisions that perhaps in a traditional home do not involve young children, like how to pay bills, what jobs to take, and how to buy groceries. Huitzilin talked about the transition of being the baby or the "consentida" (the favorite) in México, to coming to the states and having to grow up fast to help her mother. Surprisingly, she

and her mother both noted that she never complained about it. Estrada (2016) refers to this as economy empathy, "a resiliency that results from experiencing their parent's position of oppression" (p. 10). This empathetic stance that the daughters developed came from working together with their mothers or witnessing their struggles. In the excerpt below, Huitzilin is talking about her experience of selling food as a street vendor with her mom. It is important to pay attention to how she negotiates her interactions with the police officer that comes up to them. Recall, that both mother and daughter are undocumented, so they run the risk of deportation.

> When we used to sell food in middle school there was a police officer who came around and I thought we were going to be taken away. [Laughter] He started buying our tamales. He called me over and was like, "Come here." "Yes sir?" "So you're selling food," and I was like "mom?" "si ya le dije." "Yes we are." [Laughter] So he was like, "Does your mom work?" "This is our job." "OUR job?" "Yes." "Do you go to school?" "Yes." "How are you doing in school?" "I'm top of my class." "Oh okay you got all A's?" "Yes." "Did you do your homework already?" "Yes." "Are you going to wake up on time?" "Yes." "What time are you going home?" "Before midnight." "Okay how much are your tamales?" "Mom?" "Okay give me six." What the fuck? The cop did not just take us away right? She [in reference to her mom] learned to have these conversations and say no, this is how I make a living and this is my daughter. Courage right there.

Huitzilin's interaction with the police officer shows some of the skills the young women developed from working with their mothers. In this situation Huitzilin asserts herself with the officer, she does not shy away from letting him know that this is *their* job, and that despite having this third shift (school, household work, and street vending) she still is at the top of her class (Estrada, & Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2013). Although she is aware of the consequences of illegally selling food out of their car, Huitzilin handles the interrogation from the officer with confidence. She knows that this is dignified work as she herself has witnessed her mother's struggles in making ends meet. This is an example of translating not just literally between languages as Huitzilin does between her mother and the officer, but also translating power, knowing how to read and navigate these intersectional forms of oppression. There is a moment

in the exchange where Huitzilin is ready to lie to the officer and tell him that they are not selling food, but she turns to her mom to get her lead on the situation. She is reading these cues and translating them as she converses with the officer. She lets him know that she can handle being a top student and help her mom work. It is such experiences that create this critical conocimiento that has helped Huitzilin navigate school and everyday life as an undocumented Mexicana/Chicana.

During my plática with Huitzilin she shared that she was the one that volunteered to go help her mom sell food. She realized that her mom was being cheated and that she needed help handling the money and customers. Money was tight, and she saw it as the responsible thing to do. Although her mother hesitated she knew Huitzilin was right- she did need her support. In addition to being a street vendor with her mom, Huitzilin also helped her mom clean homes and offices and worked in garment factories doing small jobs. As I asked her to think about how she thinks this helped her in school, one of the first thing she describes is her work ethic.

> …your work speaks for you. So, when no one has anything to say about you, they're going to look at how you've impacted them through your work. What's your mark on the world? It's your work. So, taking pride in what I do, and doing things right. And doing things right the first time. Like, she's super exigente. When we cleaned houses together she was like, "Mm-hmm. Come back, now you have to do it twice. You should have done that right." So, paying attention to detail, doing things right. Because that's the way, especially when we cleaned houses, like referral system. You're not going to get another house to clean, if you don't do this one right. Like she's not going to tell her friend that you're great, because you didn't meet her standards. So, your work speaks for you. Do things right, and it's going to, it's your best form of advertising, or whatever, or representation. And I think it applies to everything. Doing things right the first time, taking pride in what you do, because it's like one of her biggest things, to be proud. Like, take pride in what you do.

Orellana (2001) writes about the work immigrant children do, not just in the capacity of what is traditionally understood as work, like I have discussed here, but also about the invisible work that children do like translating, caring for younger siblings, running errands, filling out

government forms, and navigating public transportation (among other things). I will talk more about this invisible work when I discuss the ritual of discipline, however it is important to point out that all the daughters in my study had experience doing this type of invisible work. For Huitzilin, she did it all; school work, household work, and street vending or cleaning homes. This created a strong work ethic, which she describes above. She understood the importance of time management, but also doing your best, "taking pride in what you do." In the situation of cleaning homes, a good work ethic meant more job opportunities. This easily transfers to the setting of schools; a good work ethic also means more opportunities, more attention from teachers, and the nurturing of a "smart" or "gifted" identity. As we continue our plática she recalls the minimal pay she received when she worked with her mom at one of the garment factories. For a full day of work, she would be paid $20 dollars. Her mom would always offer to pay her from her own earnings. Huitzilin's contagious laugh keeps the mood light. She points out how this made no sense, since ultimately the income was for both of them.

In summary, what I argue is that the mother's action of taking their daughters to work with them taught them a critical conocimiento of struggle or oppression, a strong work ethic, and how to translate language and worlds. Huitzilin learned from her mother what it meant to be undocumented and a Woman of Color. Her mother modeled how to navigate systems of oppression- with dignity and pride. The other daughters in my study who also had experience working with their mothers share these skillsets. They talk about a strong work ethic being nurtured from working with their moms. Their first lessons on racism, heteropatriarchy, and nativism took place in their mother's workplace. These experiences had implication for their educational attainment. It helped them forge a trucha identity or sensibility which begins with the assumption that "society is an unequal playing field, that struggle is part of every woman's

life, and that advancement is not real unless it is part of a collective," (Cervantes-Soon, 2016, p. 7) in this case their mother's and families well-being. A trucha sensibility is thus nurtured through working alongside mamá. Being dignified, alert, and ready to translate and navigate moments, people, and languages is being trucha.

A rasquache aesthetic- *"Seeing that example, that in the most fucked up situation you still make something out of it, that's what my mom taught me" –Felicia, daughter of Marimar*

Marimar describes herself as "una mujer fuerte." From my pláticas with her I quickly learned that she was this and much more. She is strong, but also sharp, fun, and outgoing. She carried herself with a type of confidence that resembled that of the women in my family. It is a type of confidence that her daughter Felicia best described as "not giving a fuck about what other people think." I had seen this in my mother, in how unapologetic she was/is about using coupons, bargaining, or recycling to make the most out of what you have.

At a young age Marimar was left behind in Yucatan to care for her siblings while her mother worked in the states to support their family. Her parents had divorced due to issues of domestic abuse and her mother was left to raise the children on her own; unable to make ends meet she left to the states. Marimar had dreams of studying, but now as the mother figure to her siblings she knew that would not be possible. Eventually the entire family immigrated; Marimar was the last one to do so. She married and struggled with an abusive husband. Fortunately, by the time Felicia was born she had found help, gotten a divorce, and filed a restraining order against him. After the split, she struggled with her mental health, suffering from depression and bipolar disorder; because of this she stopped working and was put on disability. Now as a single-mother she had to provide for Felicia and her two older brothers on just her disability checks.

Marimar and all the mothers in my study developed a skillset of how to make a lot out of a little, what I refer to a rasquache aesthetic. For example, Socorro, Alejandra's mother, often made her daughter's clothes so that they would have new outfits for important days like the first day of school, Easter, and birthday parties (to name a few). Paloma described her mother Carolina as someone who knows how to hunt down the best deals. She explained that the family never questions whether or not she got the most out of any purchase. For some time Paloma's family even had a beautiful garden where they grew their own vegetables to curb grocery costs.

Tomás Ybarra-Frausto (1991) refers to rasquachismo as a uniquely working-class Chicano sensibility; it is making do with what you have. It can be understood as a form of resistance that incorporates strategies of appropriation, reversal, and inversion. He explained it in the following way:

> Very generally, rasquachismo is an underdog perspective- a view of *los de abajo*, an attitude rooted in resourcefulness and adaptability, yet mindful of stance and style. Rasquachismo presupposes the worldview of the have-not, but is also a quality exemplified in objects and places (a rasquache car or restaurant) and in social comportment (a person who is or acts as rasquache). Although Mexican vernacular traditions form its base, rasquachismo has evolved as a bicultural sensibility among Mexican Americans. On both sides of the border it retains its underclass perspective (p. 156)

Mesa-Bains (1999) introduced a Chicana rasquache sensibility that she names "domesticana." She adds to Ybarra-Frausto's conceptualization by acknowledging how the domestic space is central to the expression of working-class Chicanas. She explains that this sphere "…includes home embellishments, home altar maintenance, healing traditions, and personal feminine pose or style" (p. 160). Her explanation is important for many reasons, firstly because it highlights a Chicana feminist stance, pointing to the subversion and resistance toward heteropatriarchal white culture. It is also important because it shows how rasquachismo has traditionally been used in the perspective of Chicanx art. It has been used to describe how art is

made with limited available resources and begins with a "…stance that is both defiant and inventive" (p. 158).

Yet other scholars have taken the concept and applied it in the context of education (See Perez, 1993). For example, Pizarro (2005) used it to describe Chicanx youth identity formation. He explained that student's racial political identity "…encompassed a creative re-visioning of self and community which in essence is a rasquache identity" (p. 107). He argues that through a rasquache framework we can understand the ways in which identity through a racial formation process can be reconstituted to move Chicanxs toward empowerment.

In my study I use a rasquache aesthetic to describe the mother's actions of how to make a lot out of a little, in reference to economic means but also with the resources available to them. I use the concept to highlight their drive and an attitude of fearlessness that the mothers espouse to raise muxeres truchas. Adopting a rasquache aesthetic means nurturing confidence, and a creativeness of how to make it work even when you do not have the same opportunities that white families do. I use the word "aesthetic" in line with portraiture's incorporation of art in its methodology. In my collage of Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies I focus in on the portrait of Marimar and Felicia to illustrate what a rasquache aesthetic entails. However, it should be noted that all the mothers to some degree used this sensibility.

Central to Marimar and Felicia's narrative was how the intersection of class, gender, and immigration informed their experiences as mother and daughter. Before the Immigration Reform Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 Marimar was undocumented and as such, was afraid to seek out services to help her with her abusive husband. She shared with me that she thought that if she asked for help they would deport her, leaving her children by themselves. She waited until she fixed her immigration papers to get the support she needed. She became empowered once

she learned how to navigate all the services and opportunities that were available for her and her children. It is important to note that getting her papers was not the defining moment of her rasquache aesthetic, if anything it developed more. Before IRCA Marimar had found a way to get all of her children into magnet schools in Palisades, a much wealthier community than the one they lived in. She was already learning how to make the best out of the limitations she faced as someone living in a working-class neighborhood, in this case bussing her children across town for a better education. As she navigated many institutional offices and systems Felicia witnessed it all. She shares below what it was like. In this excerpt I will highlight the resourcefulness of Marimar, a central expression of a rasquache aesthetic.

> Felicia: I am recalling like being a kid and going to all these different places, like whether we were getting free food somewhere, or we were going to the welfare office, or we were going to social security, or she was taking her mom to her fucking…'cause I remember going with grandma, cuando grandma iba a no se, no se ahi en la Coronado, ni se que oficina es ahi (when grandma would go to I don't know, I don't know there on Coronado, I don't even what office is there).
>
> Marimar: La sección ocho? (Section eight?)
>
> Felicia: No es section eight, no se si era la terapista o social worker (No it's not section eight, I don't know if it was the therapist or social worker) …but that's what I remember my mom always fucking going. I think the best way for me to think about it is how she makes food which is an analogy to like how she fucking…like for me when I make food like I have to have a recipe, I have to cut everything very nice and neatly, I have to have everything like set and ready and like you know this whole thing, whereas my mom is like fucking give her like 20 minutes, give her 20 minutes and she'll just fucking throw things, like grab shit put it together like there is no hesitation and there's no doubt, and it's just like doing and going and pursuing…

Because of the family's small income, Marimar had to learn how to make the most out of the social services she qualified for. She learned how to "stretch" her disability checks to support the entire family. As Felicia described it, this entailed navigating multiple offices and systems to get the most out of every opportunity they could benefit from. Felicia's analogy is important to tease out since it illustrates just what a rasquache aesthetic means. She explains that

when she cooks, she follows a recipe and everything is neatly organized. In comparison, her mom's cooking is creative, and as scholar Mesa-Bains explained rasquachismo earlier, it is "inventive and defiant." This way of being is defining part of a rasquache aesthetic; it entails being resourceful and creative. You develop an instinct for seeking out opportunities wherever possible, or as Felicia put it, it is always "doing and going and pursuing." Also important in this passage is how Marimar is not only seeking resources for her own family but her mother as well. Felicia shared with me that once her mother learned how to navigate all these systems she taught her friends, who were mothers too, how to do so as well. Everything she learned she took back to her community of mothers to share. Next, I will discuss how this communal sense is also part of a rasquache aesthetic.

When I asked Marimar what was one of her favorite memories of raising Felicia she talked about their trips to the park. She mentioned that even with their little means she always found ways to get the kids involved in sports, activities, or take them on day trips. She did not want them to miss out on having fun just because they could not afford it. One way of making this possible was by teaming up with other mothers or family members to share the costs of outings. She discusses this below:

> Siempre que jugaban en el parque todas las mamás llevaban algo, yo compraba cajas de paletas a la troca del ice cream, pero mi hijo el grande siempre recuerda que nos íbamos a comer a Sizzler, o nos íbamos con mi mama ahí vivía mi mama asi es que pasábamos el tiempo, mi mamá, mi comadre, sus hijos y nosotros nos íbamos a los juegos, comprabamos paletas entre todas, o entre todas las mamás llevábamos comida, o si no nos íbamos a comer siempre
>
> *Whenever they would go play at the park all the moms would take something, I would buy boxes of popsicles from the ice cream truck, but my oldest son always remembers that we would go eat at Sizzler, or we would go with my mom, my mom lived there, that's how we would pass the time, my mom, my comadre [godmother], her children and us would go to the playground, we would buy popsicles together, or with the other mothers we would take food, or if not we would always go out to eat somewhere*

This excerpt illustrates how Marimar and other mothers or family members came together to support each other. This type of community building among Mexicana/Chicana women or comadrismo shows how working-class mothers raise their children, not in isolation but with the help of other women. What is rasquache about this is the creativeness and communal essence. Marimar found ways to give her children fun experiences like park outings by collaborating with other mothers or family members. It is the idea that if we put all our resources together we are better off than if we work with only our own. Instead of denying these fun excursions because of expenses, Marimar found creative ways to make them happen. This resourcefulness and communal approach makes up a rasquache aesthetic. For working-class mothers a rasquache aesthetic means recognizing the value in comadrismo, or women centered networks, to provide better opportunities and experiences for their children.

There is a type of drive that I noted in the mothers that shaped my thinking of a rasquache aesthetic. This drive is directly nurtured from "los de abajo" (those at the bottom) and connected to the confidence I discussed earlier. This drive or confidence taught the daughters to make something out of the worse situations and is significant in raising muxeres truchas. Felicia described her mother's drive in the following way:

> …to provide with little means but not stopping until she's able to do so…not giving two shits about what other people think or what's around her or maybe these obstacles that are there, and I guess I've seen that multiple times growing up with her, like she really doesn't give a fuck, she's herself, she handles, whether it's providing for us or getting what she needs.

Originally the word rasquache had a negative connotation since it was associated as being of a "lower class" or impoverished. The way Felicia explains her mother's attitude as "not giving a fuck" about what other people think is talking back to this deficit construction of rasquachismo. Thus, a rasquache aesthetic means embracing a working-class sensibility with

dignity and pride, even when heteropatriarchal white society continuously uses you [the poor] as scapegoats for institutional and social problems. As a single-mother on welfare, Marimar had to develop this drive to survive and raise her children. If she focused on what people would think of her or the obstacles around her, it would impede her from trying and moving forward.

In conclusion, a rasquache aesthetic entails a sense of resourcefulness, creativity, community, and a drive or confidence that expresses fearlessness. The mothers modeled this rasquache aesthetic through their everyday actions, and the daughters noted this in our pláticas. Being trucha begins with the acknowledgment that society reproduces inequalities and forms of oppression that marginalize Women of Color. However, raising muxeres trucha means nurturing the skills and knowledge to navigate this, like a rasquache aesthetic. This became a source of awareness that they could use to always make the most out of each "fucked up situation" as Felicia's opening remark put it.

An embodiment of hustle- *"En esta casa nunca descansaban, no es que nunca descansaba la gente, pero tantos mis abuelos como mis dos padres siempre andaban en friega [snaps fingers] ...siempre había movimiento" –Alejandra, daughter of Socorro*

"In this house no one ever rested, well it's not that people didn't rest, but my grandparents as well as both of my parents they were always in a hurry [snaps finger] ...there was always movement" –Alejandra, daughter of Socorro

Of the ten mothers in the group, Socorro was the eldest. She greeted me with a warm embrace when I first met her and like many of the mothers offered me something to eat or drink. As I entered her home in San Pedro, a working-class community in Los Angeles known for its fishing industry, I was taken back to my grandmother's home in Mexico. The bright colors, the coziness of the furniture, the streams of pictures in the walls, and the fresh smell of cafe, all

harmonized beautifully to create a welcoming space. Socorro certainly does not look her age, or lets it determine what she can or cannot do; at 75 she is still active in her community, with her two granddaughters, and with her daughter Alejandra who lives with her. During my plática with Alejandra I heard someone with a grocery cart come in through the front of the house, it was Socorro coming back from her Saturday morning routine of going to the local church and grocery store.

As a way to incorporate the aesthetic in my data collection I asked the mothers and daughters to select photographs they liked, or represented the way they saw each other. One of the photographs Alejandra shared was of her mother on a horse. They are in their ranchito in Michoacán, each one on a horse, smiling. Both Socorro and Alejandra are older, indicating that the picture was not taken too long ago. Looking at the photograph Alejandra said the following:

> Well I don't wanna say little old lady cause nunca se me va hacer vieja pero es una señora que a ella le vale, ella se sube a los caballos, ella siempre andaba en burro over there [referring to México], so I just like that picture cause she's happy.
>
> *Well I don't wanna say little old lady cause she's never going to be old to me but she's a lady who doesn't give a shit, she gets on horses, she was always riding on donkeys over there [referring to México], so I just like the picture cause she's happy.*

Alejandra's account of her mother's attitude as "me vale" resembles how Felicia described her mother's attitude as "I don't give a shit." This should not be taken as condescending, but rather as a form of resistance to heteropatriarchal white supremacy. For Socorro, it is her way of talking back to ageist and heteropatriarchal notions of respectability or modesty.

The last central action that I will discuss in this chapter is an embodiment of hustle. Although this action really mirrors and overlaps a rasquache aesthetic, it is still significant to discuss it on its own. An embodiment of hustle begins with an acute awareness of how systems

of power function to benefit white people and marginalize working-class People of Color, especially Women of Color. Thus, to embody hustle is to subvert this system, to cross boundaries, like rasquachismo- to make it work with what you have, y hacerlo todo sin vergüenza (and to do it all without shame). I use the word "embody" to signify how hustle has to do with the body, it means to always be on the move. This is how many of the daughters described their mothers, always moving and transitioning from one responsibility to the next one. I focus on Socorro and Alejandra's portrait to illustrate an embodiment of hustle. However, about half of the daughters in my study used the actual expression of "hustle" to describe their mothers.

Alejandra's favorite photograph of her mother is one of her school pictures. Socorro was only able to attend school up until junior high and even then her path was non-linear. There were large gaps in between grade levels. The photo, Alejandra discusses is her mother's last school picture, she is in her 20s standing among junior high age students. She clearly sticks out because of the age difference but the way Alejandra puts it, she is standing with dignity and pride, as if the age difference does not faze her at all. Later, I learned from Socorro that she was only able to afford attending junior high by giving Catechism lessons. She shared with me that she always wanted to be a teacher and really wished she could have dedicated herself to that, unfortunately the family was very poor and needed all the help they could get. Eventually the family immigrated to Los Angeles, but similarly to Marimar they did not come all together, little by little each one made it. There was no time to consider going back to school when Socorro arrived to the states; she started working multiple jobs right away.

Seven out of the ten mothers preferred to speak in Spanish versus English. Although all ten could to some degree understand English they expressed varying levels of comfort in

speaking it. Socorro was one of the mothers who said she did not speak English, yet this never stopped her from being involved in Alejandra's education. Having worked with Mexican immigrant parents for some time now, I understand that it is often the language barrier that pushes them away from being present or involved in more traditional ways in schools. Schools do not also always provide translators or culturally responsive ways of including them as well. Socorro's language constrains, like her age, never seemed to limit her. In this excerpt I show how part of the hustle or hustling is understanding oppression or power, but most importantly knowing how to resist or navigate it. During the mother-daughter plática I asked her how she did this, our discussion played out in this way:

> Socorro: Yo no hablaba ingles, ni hablo, pero siempre estaba metida (laughs), siempre estaba involucrada ahi en la escuela, llendo a las juntas, yo no se como lo hacia (laughs)…
>
> Alejandra: Pero había, la mayoría de las mamás hablaban Español, no? Entonces ustedes se comunicaban entre si
>
> Socorro: Entre si pero había, pero adentro
>
> Alejandra: Pero las que mandaban…
>
> Socorro: …hablaban ingles pero pues ahi nos hacíamos entender como podíamos pero la señora nos explicaba de todos modos ya después, lo que pasaba en todo la escuela y todo
>
> Alma: Entonces eso nunca la desanimo?
>
> Alejandra: Nunca la detuvo…y lo que me fije y no sabia tanto cuando estaba chiquita pero ahora si me doy cuenta que a mi mamá nunca le daba pena, ella…(laughs)
>
> Alma: No pero si eso es lo que pasa muchas veces con los papás y si entiendo les da pena
>
> Socorro: No pues si, si da porque como pronunciar todas las palabras y todos pero pues a señas cuando menos si podia hacer entender (laughs)
>
> *Socorro: I didn't speak English, I don't, but I was always involved (laughs), I was always involved in school, going to the meetings, I don't know how I did it (laughs)*

Alejandra: But there were, the majority of the mothers spoke Spanish, no? So then you all communicated with each other

Socorro: With each other but there were, but inside

Alejandra: But those that were in charge…

Socorro: …spoke English but we would somehow make them understand us however we could but the señora would explain it to us after still, whatever happened in school and everything else

Alma: So then this never discouraged you?

Alejandra: It never stopped her…and what I noticed and did not know so much when I was little but now I realize is that my mother was never embarrassed, she…(laughs)

Alma: No but yes that's what happens a lot of times with parents and I understand they get embarrassed

Socorro: Well yes, you do get embarrassed because how do you pronounce all the words and everything but well with signs at the least I could make them understand me (laughs)

Socorro's hustle is illustrated in this excerpt in various ways. First, she understands the power dynamics that are at play in schools when her and Alejandra point out that those in charge are the ones that speak English. This shows that she is aware of how language and power are inextricably connected. Again, part of "hustling" is being aware of how systems of oppression inform the everyday lives of People of Color. Although she understands this, she does not let it get in the way of being involved in Alejandra's school. Like a rasquache aesthetic she makes it work with what she has, she talks about using her body or señas (signs) to communicate. This is related to how hustle is embodied, it should be understood as verb or how I argue here an action.

Central to the exchange is Alejandra's point of how later in her life she realized that her mother really was not embarrassed or afraid of stepping out of her comfort zone. We see this in her determination to also attend school in México, despite the big age difference. Alejandra also mentioned how even though teachers often confused her mother as her grandmother because of

her age, it never shamed her from making a presence in her schools. To hustle, you cannot let shame or vergüenza (embarrassment) stop you from doing things- it is what I call a sin-vergüenza (without embarrassment) pedagogy. Although Socorro admits that she did feel embarrassed in perhaps mispronouncing words she found ways to still communicate with teachers. This sin-vergüenza pedagogy that our mothers embody is important in raising muxeres truchas. Although Socorro may not have thought about this as a "teachable moment" it served as an example to Alejandra of how to step out of your comfort zone or to be ok with discomfort. To be trucha you have to learn to see discomfort as growth or moments of possibilities. I remember learning this from my mother. She inculcated this idea very strongly; in retrospect probably because she saw how I would let my vergüenza take over me. She often on purpose would put me in uncomfortable situations. Although I hated it, I learned to appreciate her for it.

The last thing I would like point out is the communal aspect of "hustling." Alejandra reminds her mother that as a group of mothers they often communicated and supported each other with their limited English speaking skills. This is important to point out because in popular media, "hustling" is presented as individualistic or as having a selfish mentality. On the contrary, to hustle is to work with others, not in isolation, to support one another and like a rasquache aesthetic it means to tap into each other's strengths to create opportunities. Socorro later discussed how as mothers in the community they supported each other through things like sharing driving responsibilities when it came to dropping off and picking up the kids from school, updating each other on school happenings, and keeping an eye out for all the neighborhood kids, not just theirs.

Socorro also embodied hustle through her incredible work ethic. In accounting for her work ethic, I do not limit this to work done outside of the home space as it is traditionally

measured but also account for her reproductive labor or what Collins (1993) refers to motherwork. Motherwork as Collins describes it challenges the rigid distinction between "…private and public, family and work, the individual and collective, identity and individual autonomy and identity growing from the collective self determination of one's group" (pp. 47-48). Instead motherwork blurs these dichotomies. In a similar fashion hustle is not limited to a certain time or space. It recognizes that part of the hustle is doing this exactly, blurring and crossing time and space. In the following quote Alejandra is discussing her mother's hustle in school and at a work and how those two merge.

> Well, elementary school she was always there. Always in meetings, always in parent conferences. In junior high it was a little bit because I mean, you don't really have mom and dad in the classroom I guess. But she would go to like back-to-school nights and open-house and all of that. And she was always on top of what we were doing, right? Even though it got harder to understand, I think at that level at junior high. Especially in high school, you have how many classes? What? It just got a lot more complicated and she was working a lot more then. So, in elementary school, she kind of took it easy with just kind of doing, you know a few houses and then she was around when we were in school. And then in junior high, estabamos más grandes and she started working at the bakery. Then back over here in the canary, so she was a lot more busy. She really worked a lot during the night so that she would be home when we were home. They were always on the go. How I remember her, siempre en chinga you know but always on top of what we have to do. She made sure we got to school, that we got back and that we were fed.

From Alejandra's account we learn how involved her mother was in her education, despite the language barriers she discussed earlier. She does note a shift in her involvement around junior high, especially during high school when it was a bit more challenging to understand how school functioned. Something to note from her excerpt is the blurring between motherwork and work. Alejandra notes how her level of involvement in school intersected with her work commitments. During elementary school Socorro worked mainly cleaning homes because of the flexibility it gave her. She also shared that if she needed to, she could take Alejandra to work with her. Since she was not able to be as involved during junior high and high

school Socorro worked various jobs, sometimes juggling more than one. This included work at a bakery, a tuna canary, and as a janitor at California State University, Long Beach. She worked as a janitor the longest because she was able to do the night shift, which allowed her to be present for her children during the day.

I would argue that around junior high and high school perhaps it was not necessarily that it became harder to be involved, rather, schools, teachers, and/or administrators possibly did not do such a great job of reaching out and working with parents. It is clear that Socorro remained committed to staying involved and despite the push back that she may have received she still found her own ways to support Alejandra. For example, during high school Alejandra participated in color guard and Socorro was able to be involved in that way. She made the uniforms and flags for the team one year and she never missed a game to cheer Alejandra and the team on.

What I intended to show in this excerpt is how hustle is illustrated through the distortion of motherwork and work. These two are intimately connected; hustle therefore is being able to cross and navigate these boundaries. I avoid saying the word "balance" because as I learned balance is many times an unrealistic goal for immigrant Mexicana/Chicana mothers. Hustle therefore embraces the messiness or imbalances. For Socorro she hustled jobs that allowed her to maintain a presence in Alejandra's schools. As she put it:

> Entraba a las once y salía entonces, era part time, y salía a las tres o cuatro de la mañana y ya llegaba me dormía un ratito y ya estaba lista para alistarlos para que se fueran a la escuela y luego recogerlos, así dormía en ratitos, ya después entraba a las tres de la mañana y salía a las 12.
>
> *I would start at eleven and then get out, it was part time, and I would get out like at three or four in the morning and I would get back and sleep for a little bit and I would be set to get them ready so that they could get to school and then I would pick them up, I would sleep in small bits at a time, later I was able to start at three in the morning and get out at 12.*

"Siempre andaba en chinga" is difficult to translate but can be understood as always going and doing nonstop; it is an embodiment of hustle. I am amazed by the way in which Socorro made it work with the little sleep she seemed to get. Alejandra shared that she worries sometimes for her mother because she never complains and she does so much, even at her age today. The way Socorro subverted racism, heteropatriarchy, and other forms of oppression was through hustling various responsibilities, she knew she needed to work but she also knew that if she wanted her children to disrupt these very systems she needed to be involved in their education. It was important that they feel encouraged and supported by her. What Socorro also illustrates beautifully is this sin-vergüenza pedagogy, which is part of embodying hustle; she never let her age, language, or appearance stop her from doing things. Alejandra recalls how some of her peers and teachers often confused her as her grandma because she was an older mother but "a ella le valia todo," (she didn't care) she expressed.

Socorro and Alejandra's portraits serves as exemplars of what embodying hustle means. Through their portraits I have shown how Socorro and Alejandra understood the power dynamics in relation to language, how Socorro subverted the hegemony of English by still making her presence in Alejandra's schools, how she blurred boundaries between work and motherwork as a way to economically support the family but also be there for her children's education, and how she did it all sin-vergüenza. Similar to a rasquache aesthetic she made it work with what she had. I learned from the daughters that embodying hustle was how their mothers survived in a heteropatriarchal white society. The daughters also learned how to hustle in their education. They adapted their mother's hustle when it came to navigating their education. For Alejandra, it served as an example of the possibilities for her, if her mother could do it, so could she. Part of her trucha identity was to challenge herself to do things she maybe was afraid of because of

shame, lack of confidence, or a combination of the two. She also developed a strong work ethic, a central component of a trucha sensibility; she learned how to handle multiple responsibilities through her mother. These lessons continue to be central to Alejandra, even now as an assistant professor.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have addressed the actions that are part of a pedagogy of the borderlands. These actions include: working alongside mamá, a rasquache aesthetic, and an embodiment of hustle; they all overlap and work cohesively. I argue that the goal of a pedagogy of the borderlands is to raise muxeres truchas, women who are not only academically "smart" but also have a sensibility or conocimiento of how to navigate *and thrive* in systems of oppression within and outside of education. This chapter addressed my first two research questions through the perspective of both mothers and daughters, specifically through the portraits of Flor and Huitzilin, Marimar and Felicia, and Socorro and Alejandra.

I return to the opening quote of this chapter that comes from the madrina Gloria Anzaldúa (2002) who says, "Change requires more than words on a page—it takes perseverance, creative ingenuity and acts of love" (p. 575). Although she is referring to academic writing, I apply her words to this chapter in the sense that the daughters often found their mother's actions spoke to them more than words alone. This is not to dismiss the interactions that I will discuss later, but it is to say that a borderlands pedagogy is performative; it is acted out not necessarily taught in writing or lecture, but lived every day. Gloria's words also fit perfectly in this chapter by pointing out the perseverance, creative ingenuity, and love in the actions I discussed. I see all three of these actions conveying this: perseverance in working alongside mama and the creative ingenuity in rasquachismo and hustle. Love is at the root of all these actions; they are all acts of

love. Although a pedagogy of the borderlands may be testing, we must remind ourselves the centrality of love that guides this form of pedagogy. Because after all a borderlands pedagogy comes from our mothers, from women who truly know the meaning of unconditional love.

Chapter Seven

Mexicana/Chicana Mother-Daughter Rituals

"U.S. Black [Mexicana/Chicana] mothers are often described as strong disciplinarians and overly protective; yet these same women manage to raise daughters who are self-reliant and assertive" -Patricia Hill Collins

> Fe: …my mom is scary (laughing)…my mom's really scary but I think she is really fun, she's really loving, she's really caring.
> Alma: But she's scary?
> Fe: She can be really scary.
> Alma: Scary in what way?
> Fe: Like scary don't mess with me, 'cause you already know what's going to happen. So don't even...

Fe is about my height (yes, we are both petite) and has long beautiful dark curls that go down to her waist. She is someone I admire deeply, not only because she is brilliant but because of her unwavering commitment to her family, community, and students. She met me at my apartment for our plática; we had dinner with my roommate and caught each other up on where we were in our academic journeys. The conversation eventually shifted to our mothers, and the carcajadas (cracking up) began. I remember thinking at one point, am I supposed to be having this much fun "collecting my data?"

It was almost as if we were raised by the same mother, as they are both strong disciplinarians. We joked about how we could recognize our mother's miradas (looks) when they were mad or when we had messed up and were going to hear it later, and about those sneaky peliscos (pinches). As the epigraph above points to, both of us at various points in our lives were scared of our mothers. They kept a strict household, with rules and high expectations. For Fe specifically, she spoke about being treated as an adult since a very young age because of all the responsibilities that were bestowed upon her. Half of the daughters in my study were the oldest in their families and the other half were the youngest. For the ones that were the oldest,

including Fe, they spoke a lot about the theme of discipline or the multiple responsibilities they had to juggle. Many of them were like second mamás to their siblings.

In this chapter I will discuss three prominent Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter rituals that shaped the educational achievement of the daughters. As a reminder to the reader, by rituals I refer to established or everyday practices or behaviors. A discipline of the body, mind, and spirit is understood as a ritual because the daughters described it as an established practice throughout their entire lives, even to this day. The actions, rituals, and interactions that I discuss are more similar than they are distinct. They are fluid and overlapping.

Like the previous chapter on actions, this chapter also addresses my first two research questions, beginning with research question number one which reads: *What cultural/familial actions, rituals, and interactions do Mexicana/Chicana mothers engage in to shape the educational achievement of their daughters?* This chapter directly addresses the rituals aspect of the question; the next chapter will address the interactions. Additionally, research question number two is as follows: *How do Mexicana/Chicana first-generation college students explain or understand their mothers' influence on their educational achievement?* I address this question through my theorization that Mexicana/Chicana mothers use a pedagogy of the borderlands to raise muxeres truchas. This theory is driven by the manner in which the daughters explained or understood their mother's influence on their education. I continue to use the idea of a collage in the presentation of my findings (Curammeng, in progress). Muxerista portraiture informs how I have created this collage of Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies (Flores, under review). I zoom in and out of the collage by highlighting specific mothers, daughters, or mother-daughter dyads.

Figure six highlights the three rituals I will discuss: 1) a discipline of the body, mind, and spirit, 2) educación, and 3) religion/spirituality. These three rituals inform each other and work together (like the actions discussed in the previous chapter) to raise muxeres truchas. A pedagogy of the borderlands encompasses the actions, rituals, and interactions that I present throughout these chapters. Muxeres truchas are women that are not only "book smart" or have successfully navigated school, as all of the daughters have, but they also embody a critical conocimiento of how systems of oppression inform their experiences within and outside of education. A trucha sensibility provides the daughters with an alertness to oppression, to recognize it, navigate it, but also thrive in it and transform it. Their mothers have not only facilitated "book knowledge" but also (and I would argue more importantly) knowledge about how to live in the world and transform it as Women of Color.

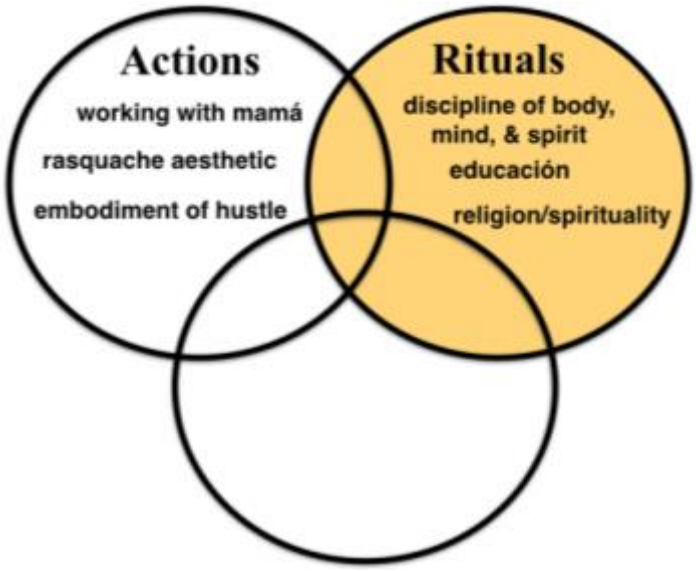

Figure 6. The Rituals of a Pedagogy of the Borderlands

A discipline of body, mind, and spirit- *"Because I remember growing up she was super hard core. Like you do this, you stand straight, like you don't look down when you're walking in the street"-Fe, daughter of Marissa*

To discuss the ritual of a discipline of body, mind, and spirit I draw on the portraits of Marissa and Fe, Rosario and Maria, and Sofia and Olivia. I found that each of them highlighted a unique contour from which to understand the complexities of discipline in Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies. I continue with the mother-daughter portrait of Marissa and Fe to discuss a discipline of the body, I introduce Rosario and Maria to show a discipline of the mind, and I conclude with Sofia and Olivia to talk about spirit. Together, bodymindspirit, represent wholeness and balance. Irene Lara (2002), among other Chicana feminist scholars, discusses how academia often splits the self through its emphasis and sole focus on the mind, and thus disconnects us from our bodies and spirits. This fragmentation is rooted in the western belief that to be "objective" we must dismiss any emotion or intuitive feeling from the body. The mothers disciplined an awareness of the body, mind, and spirit to raise muxeres truchas. This balance helped the daughters succeed not only in schools but also in their everyday lives.

A Discipline of the Body

Marissa, Fe's mother, arrived to Compton in the early 80s when the city was still a predominately Black community. As a recently arrived 18-year-old immigrant Woman of Color from Sinaloa, México with limited English proficiency it was difficult to transition to her new community. There were not many other immigrant Latinx families and she described feeling aterrorizada (terrified) the majority of time. She shared that for the longest time she confused the UPS (United Parcel Service) truck as la migra or ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement). Laughing she says, "cuando miraba el UPS que se pasaba por la calle o llegaba a dejar algún paquete (laughing) decía yo, 'no hay viene la migra' y que me corria y escondía" *(when I would see the UPS truck that would drive through the street or would stop to deliver whatever packet (laughing) I would say, 'no here comes la migra' and I would run and hide).* This fear, while it

is funny to think about today, shows just what the environment was like for Marissa and other young recently arrived immigrant Women of Color. As a young woman she feared for her safety walking in the streets, lived with the constant anxiety of deportation, and struggled to fit in as a monolingual Spanish speaker.

It is important to share this context because seven years later Fe was born, and Marissa's experiences in Compton and Lancaster (another city in Los Angeles she lived in) shaped how she mothered/raised Fe. She had to teach her how to navigate the community of Compton as a young brown girl. Central to this pedagogy was discipline, from the ten mother-daughter dyad's Marissa and Fe spoke the most on the theme of discipline. Marissa explained the importance of discipline in the following way:

> …como una planta que crece así nada más sin rumbo, vea hasta la planta si no les da forma como crecen, con los brazos para allá o para acá, por todos lados crece la planta, pues así de la misma manera van a crecer los hijos si uno no los lleva rectos, mira asi, mira, dales consejos, todo va combinado los consejos con la disciplina y el cariño también porque de todo tiene que haber, mira esto te lo hice por esto, no nada más vamos a suponer que yo solamente la hubiera maltratado y la hubiera maltratado y no le hubiera dicho mira te quiero y enseñado amor también, pues ella hubiera crecido con la mente pues mi mamá no me quiere nomas me pega, no me quiere, pienso que tiene que ser de todo…
>
> *…like a plant that grows without direction, even a plant if you don't give it shape look how it grows, with the branches that way or this way, the plant grows many different directions, well in a similar way kids will also grow up that way if one does not provide direction, look like this, look, give them advice, everything is mutual, advice with discipline and love too because there needs to be a little bit of everything, look I did this because of this, let's suppose that I would have only mistreated her and I would have mistreated her and I would not have told her look I love you and showed her love as well, well she would have grown up with the mindset that well my mom doesn't love me because she only hits me she doesn't love me, I believe that it has to be a little bit of everything…*

Marissa's excerpt shows that discipline is an expression of cariño (care). In raising Fe she had to be both tough but loving at the same time. I begin with Marissa's explanation on discipline because it shows how she makes sense of it. As a mother, she feels strongly about

guiding her daughter's growth and development. Marissa focused on providing Fe with the tools and resources she would need to be successful not only in school but in life. This passage also shows how Marissa does not discipline blindly; she points out how she would explain herself to Fe when she had to discipline her. Balance is important. Marissa points out that as much as she is a disciplinarian she is also very loving; this aligns with Fe's feelings in the epigraph. The way Marissa talks about how a plant grows serves as an analogy for a discipline of the body; in this section I will explain how I conceptualize this idea.

During the mother-daughter plática with Marissa and Fe I shared with them my preliminary analysis of the role of discipline in mother-daughter pedagogies. I explained to them that our mothers had to be disciplinarians because they knew that as Women of Color the consequences of "messing up" were much more dire in comparison to white youth. They agreed with my analysis and Marissa explained that this was the reason she decided to bus Fe across town, since the schools in Compton lacked opportunities and were struggling with gang issues.

At the beginning of her chapter on Black feminist motherhood Collins (1994) shares the following quote from an anonymous African-American mother in 1904, "I dread to see my children grown, I know not their fate. Where the white boy has every opportunity and protection, mine will have few opportunities and no protection. It does not matter how good or wise my children are, they are colored" (p. 45). Even though this is a mother speaking over a hundred years ago, her words still ring true today.

For example, with the exception of Black women, Latinas are more likely to grow up in high-poverty communities and segregated schools than any other women. Schools that are in high-poverty and segregated communities are more likely to have fewer resources, inadequate facilities, lack of high-level curriculum, underqualified teachers with less experience, more

behavioral problems, lower expectations of students and high student and school personal turn over (Gándara, Alvarado, Driscoll, & Orfield, 2012). This shows what present racism looks like today, schools like these mean fewer opportunities and resources for students to thrive, thus "it does not matter how good or wise my [our] children are" they will still have to navigate white supremacy in and out of schools.

All the mothers in my study were well aware of the conditions of their community and local schools. This is why Marissa and Marimar bussed their daughters to other schools or why Rosario put her daughter in a magnet program. The mothers did what they could to get their daughters to attend schools in wealthier communities or with more specialized programs, because they realized they would have better opportunities.

I argue that this conocimiento of how racism, poverty, and heteropatriarchy (among other forms of oppression) governs opportunities for Women of Color led the mothers to be strict disciplinarians. They needed to raise muxeres truchas that could navigate oppression but also resist and transform it. Since a young age Marissa taught Fe about how to physically navigate spaces as a brown woman. We often do not consider the body when it comes to pedagogy but when it came to Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies it was central. I illustrate this in the following excerpt from Fe.

> I think in the 80's and 90's, things were really crazy in Compton. People would do things out in the open…I think things have changed a lot, and I think things are a little bit different, but I remember several times she was mugged by African-American males. And I don't like to paint the stereotypical image of what that's like, but I remember she would tell us, "you can't just walk, and not look around your surroundings, you need to make sure you know where you're walking and who's around." So because of her experiences of being mugged... I remember she would tell us... there's like this street, and I know the street, she was like no se podia caminar ahi [you couldn't walk through there] because people would just come. And I remember her throat; I remember it being like scratched, because le quitaron la cadena [they took her necklace] and stuff like that. So I remember she would also talk about not wearing earrings and not wearing pretty

> necklaces because you don't know what's going to happen. So I think that had to do with a lot of how hard core she is came from that and living in this new context.

By a discipline of the body I refer to the way our mothers have taught us how to regulate or control our bodies. Although this form of discipline could be understood as upholding heteropatriarchal notions of women's bodies, I learned that the mothers did this as a way to protect their daughters. Discipline can both be oppressive and protective; this is a contradiction of Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies. Yet I am less interested in categorizing whether discipline is a good or bad rearing practice and instead want to focus on how the mothers and daughters made sense of it. After all, this dissertation uses Chicana/Latina feminist theory and muxerista portraiture as a way to challenge such binaries.

In Fe's excerpt she contextualizes where her mother's discipline of the body comes from- her experiences of living in Compton as a young immigrant Mexicana. Marissa's experiences of being mugged, physically assaulted, and continuously dealing with the anxiety of being deported informed what she taught Fe. She taught her to constantly be aware of her surroundings and to not wear pretty jewelry that would bring attention to her when she was walking in her neighborhood.

Fe also shared how her mother showed her when it was appropriate to smile or not as this often could be read as a sign of disrespect, and how she should "…hold your head up high, or make sure you're not looking at someone the wrong way." As Women of Color, these lessons on the body are crucial to our everyday survival. Although Cervantes-Soon (2016) did not talk much about the body in her conceptualization of "mujeres truchas," I found that such lessons are crucial to raising muxeres truchas. This discipline of the body helped the daughters recognize the injustices that as Women of Color we must deal with on a daily basis, and it propelled them to transform these injustices through their educational attainment.

Through a discipline of the body the daughters developed what Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) refers to as la facultad, "the capacity to see in the surface the phenomena the meaning of deeper realities, to see the deep structure below the surface" (p. 60). La facultad is a deep and quick awareness mediated by the body. Anzaldúa describes it as a survival tactic that we unknowingly cultivate "…so that we'll know when the next person is going to slap us or lock us away" (p. 61). This shift in perception deepens the way we see people, "the sense becomes so acute and piercing that we can see through things." Thus a discipline of the body becomes a way for Mexicana/Chicana mothers to teach their daughters how to take care of themselves, be alert, and recognize the dangers that surrounds them. I now turn to the mother-daughter portrait of Rosario and Maria to discuss a discipline of the mind.

A discipline of the mind

Maria was the first daughter I had the privilege of sitting down with to talk about her mother. She has short jet-black hair with rosy cheeks and both times I met her she had on bright red lipstick. I had never met Maria prior to this research project and was therefore a little bit nervous before she arrived. She was very easy going and made me feel very comfortable. Our plática took off as if we were old friends catching up. We discussed music, our McNair experiences, tattoos, and oh yes- her mom. Her mother, Rosario, was also very warm and welcoming. I met her in her home in South Gate, another predominately working-class Latinx community. As I entered her home I noticed a large frame in the living room with acceptance letters from various universities. I later learned that those were Maria's from when she had applied to college as a high school senior.

Rosario is a great exemplar of what I mean by a discipline of the mind. She nurtured a sense of creativity and love for learning in all her children. As a teacher's assistant, Rosario was

aware of the importance of education but also of what schools were not providing her children with. She enhanced their learning through her own lessons, science projects, trips to museums and libraries, and a lot of play. She forced her children to go outside and play, to get dirty, to experiment, to volunteer their time at local schools, and to practice reading in Spanish. Although the family was working-class she found ways to get her children into summer camps or programs to keep them busy.

By a discipline of the mind I refer to how the mothers took it upon themselves to enrich their daughter's education. In other words, they did not alter the learning that was happening in school but they added to it by teaching them what they thought was important for them to also learn. They took control and ownership of their daughter's learning. What follows are some examples of Rosario's discipline of the mind. You will notice that Rosario taught her children skills that could be applied in schools but also in everyday life. I would categorize these skillsets as part of raising muxeres truchas.

> The thing is that I had a big mess of checks that were no good anymore. So I sat them one day, all five of them and said, "You guys, today we're going to learn how to fill out a check." So I had them in my board, I had made a big check and I go step by step and then later on, they were writing checks to each other.
>
> Although I didn't drive, I would take them to libraries. If we had to do it walking, we did it. Libraries, they had their first library card when they were like three. They had their California I.D. since they were little. I would take them to museums. Their outings were always museums, libraries, always exposed to arts.
>
> …everywhere we went I didn't pay for their things. They would pay for their own things. I got them their I.D. I got them their library card. I gave them a wallet and I would give them money. We would go to stores and if they wanted a book, they would have to stop and think. This is fifty cents, I have one dollar and they would come and ask me, "Mom can I buy this book?" I would ask them "Can you?" And I would answer, "Can you? How much do you have?" "I have one dollar, mommy. I have one dollar." "How much is the book?" "Fifty cents. You have to think taxes. Have you thought about the taxes?" "No mommy." And so the cashier would get so upset because five kids paying one each or one book or whatever they chose to buy…

As a working-class family Rosario thought it was important that her children learn how to manage their finances. She therefore taught them how to write checks, how to save up, and how to account for taxes when paying for things. The last passage shows how they were responsible for buying their own things. If they wanted something they had to save up or as she also communicated, sometimes the kids would put their money together to purchase something as a group. She knew that Maria and her siblings were not learning about finances in school so she took it upon herself to make sure they understood how money worked. She tried to teach them to be responsible for their own spending and actions. When fights broke out among them she stayed out of them so that they could learn how to problem solve. They also learned about the purpose of identification cards (I.D.) by having their own library card and California I.D.

From working in schools Rosario also noticed the lack of arts, science, and Spanish literature that was available to her children. She therefore nurtured these aspects of learning at home. There were always science projects happening in and outside of the house. Rosario mentioned how Maria would always leave notes around the house that read, "do not touch," warning others that this was her science project and should not be confused as trash. I laughed when Rosario shared that she often forced the kids to go out and play by tricking them to go outside and then locking the door to the house. She really wanted them to explore.

They would start projects outside by observing ants and snails, playing with mud, or experimenting by building small homemade explosions. When Maria was struggling with subtraction in school, Rosario also took it upon herself to teach her at home. She set up small lessons every day for her, organized in different ways to help her understand. What makes this disciplined or a ritual is that Rosario organized these pedagogical moments. She structured this into Maria's everyday routine. It was expected that she practice reading in Spanish or that she

learn how to handle money. With an awareness that schools may not always provide the education that young brown girls need, the mothers made sure to take care of this at home. It became part of their character as disciplinarians, to provide lessons from the home or what Delgado Bernal (2001) refers to as pedagogies of the home.

A discipline of the spirit

The last form of discipline that I will discuss relates to spiritual practice. I recognize that this discussion will easily blur into my conversation on religion/spirituality. Yet I felt that it was important to point out how religion/spirituality was often structured in the everyday lives of the daughters. This also became a point of contention at times. In conducting the pláticas I also noted a shift in the daughter's identification as religious to spiritual. I turn to the mother-daughter portrait of Sofia and Olivia to introduce the concept of a discipline of spirit.

Olivia and I shared our affinity for the Harry Potter series, although she is by far a much bigger fan than I am; her daughter's middle name is Hermione, one of the principal characters in the series. Olivia did most of her schooling in West Covina and shares that her grandmother was her primary caretaker because her parents worked so much. She is someone who talked in length about the generations of strong women in her family and how they had all influenced her upbringing. I will talk more about this when I get to the interactions of a pedagogy of the borderlands.

Her experiences as a former elementary school teacher led her to pursue a doctorate. We share coffee in both of our meetings, her laugh is infectious and I find myself chuckling throughout our entire plática. The way she retells events has a comedic affect. My plática with her mother, Sofia, took place in their kitchen, as most of the pláticas did. In my visits to their home, I met Olivia's sister, brother, dad, and grandfather, unfortunately I only got to see pictures

of Hermione. They seem like a very close family, despite the two daughters (Olivia and her sister) no longer living at home.

Central to Sofia and Olivia's pláticas was the role of religion/spirituality. Olivia grew up Christian and religion continues to be a central part of her life today. We spoke a lot about the role of faith and religion in their lives and in their mother-daughter relationship. Olivia shared that the most important thing her mother has taught her is faith in God. I use the following passages from the mother-daughter plática to illustrate what I mean by a discipline of religion/spirituality. Pay attention to the connection between faith, service, and education in the excerpt. You will see that Sofia often falls back to the importance of believing and trusting in God during testing times.

> Sofia: That has to be number one (referring to God) cause I feel that without him we are just plain zero, you're lost, you're like a lost little soul, lost little sheep, in whatever you do in your life, if you have him in your life everything else is just going to fall into place, it's like a puzzle, he's going to help you in your education cause all you have to do is…let's say you're going to have a test, like Olivia every time she goes to do something like her dissertation or a test, "Oh mom I have this test and it's really important if I don't pass it that's it I am out of the program."
>
> Olivia: Quals (laughs)
>
> Sofia: Go and get on your knees and pray about it, you'll be fine, sure enough I go, "I told you!"
>
> Olivia: I think I also rely on it (referring to religion) to help make meaning of what I am doing. I feel like I try to pray that God speak to me and tell me what it is I am suppose to with my life. And like how to serve his purpose and live a pleasing life to him, and so I feel like in answer of my prayer this is what I am supposed to be doing, but like how? How is it work that does stuff for him and pleasing for him, because I don't want to live a life where it's about publishing papers and getting my name out there, that to me wouldn't be very fulfilling. I mean I went into it (referring to the Ph.D.) because I felt that as a Christian the work that I was doing as a teacher there was alignment there. When I would have students that were also Latinos and I would tell them, "si se puede!" like I felt like I wasn't really pushing that without modeling it. Attaining a Ph.D. would show yeah, "si se puede!" so that's why I went into this program, but there's also different sides of it like there's the side where you are genuinely trying to do work that's gonna do something but how do you do it? It's different for everybody, so I turn to God

> a lot for that, I am like how do I? How is this doing something? Cause the last three years has been a lot of writing, a lot of reading, and it's not the same as like seeing kids everyday like say they give you a smile or a light bulb will go off when they get something, and I rely a lot on my prayer, like God is this what I am supposed to be doing?

Sofia raised her daughter Olivia to have faith in God in everything she does. To understand that there is a greater reality beyond that of school, work, or everyday life. The family attended church routinely and has always centered their identity as Christians. When they are faced with challenging obstacles they turn to their prayer and faith in God. From Olivia we learn from her passage that religion even informed her decision to become an elementary school teacher. She identifies the connection between being a Christian and teacher; they are both service-oriented identities. Also important in her passage is her description of how she is currently struggling to grasp her purpose as a graduate student. She discusses how it has been difficult to see the deeper meaning in all the writing and reading she has been doing in her program. In contrast to her former career as a teacher where she was able to see the change she was making in kids' lives- how she was helping others.

Olivia has embraced her identity as a Christian through service to others; it has also helped her make meaning of what she does. Therefore as a doctoral student where your first three years are largely made up of coursework involving a lot of reading and writing, I understand her struggle to see the connection to service or Christianity. It is clear that there is a clash between academia and religion. Olivia went into the doctorate to model to her students the meaning of "si se puede," (yes you can) by pushing herself to do something challenging. However now that she is in the program she is faced with the demands of writing, reading, publishing, or as she put it "getting your name out there." It is her faith in God and prayer that has helped her navigate this tension.

In her study of undocumented Chicana college students Lindsay Pérez Huber (2009) found that the women relied heavily on their faith or spirituality to navigate their education. Drawing on Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth model, Pérez Huber presents spiritual capital, defined as "a set of resources and skills rooted in a spiritual connection to a reality greater than oneself…[it] can encompass religious, indigenous, and ancestral beliefs and practices learned from one's family, community, and inner self" (p. 721). In essence this is what Olivia is describing, although Pérez Huber does not describe how spiritual capital is nurtured or developed, we learn from Sofia's passage above that it is often mothers that do this work. They are the transmitters of spiritual capital.

Sofia talks about encouraging Olivia to pray about her exams, to have faith in God that she will pass, and when Olivia does, she credits God and her faith in him. All of the daughters and mothers talked about religion/spirituality, and for many of them, their mothers were the ones that helped them maintain that connection. I argue that it became a form of discipline of the spirit because of how regularly the mothers would encourage their daughters to have faith or to turn to religion/spiritualty when faced with challenging obstacles. For Olivia and Sofia their prayer was a ritual they embodied on a daily basis.

Bodymindspirit

In this section, I have discussed the ritual of discipline through a bodymindspirit perspective. I showed that discipline did not only encompass dominance or control, how brown and Black mothers are generally portrayed in the media, but it went beyond that to include a regiment of how to discipline our bodies, minds, and spirits as Women of Color. Although perhaps this ritual at times may have seemed unfair to many of the daughters, ultimately what I posit is that the mother were raising muxeres truchas. This discipline of bodymindspirit is an

important element of a pedagogy of the borderlands because it helps create whole women who are aware of their bodies, minds, and spirits. When discipline is understood through this framework, we can see how it can help Women of Color navigate heteropatriarchal white society in a manner where they are able to keep their bodies, minds, and spirits intact. From Marissa I learned how a discipline of the body was her way of helping Fe navigate Compton as a young brown girl. Rosario's own teaching agenda filled in the void in Maria's education through lessons that she thought were central to her own survival- like learning how to manage her money and read in Spanish. Lastly Sofia and Olivia's narrative showed how religion can be a source of strength and hope to continue navigating the world, but also transform it as Women of Color.

Educación- *"Entre más educado más pendejo" (The more educated the more stupid)–Fe's grandmother, daughter of Marissa*

Valenzuela's (1999) three-year ethnographic study of academic achievement and schooling orientations among immigrant Mexican and Mexican American students at a high school in Houston, Texas revealed the importance of the concept of educación in how students understood authentic caring in student-teacher relationships. She described educación as "a foundational cultural construct that provides instructions on how one should live in the world" (p. 21). It goes beyond its English translation (education) to include the social, moral, and personal responsibilities that Mexican families inculcate in their children- it is a holistic and moral form of education. Although inclusive of formal education, it serves as the foundation for all learning and focuses on how one should navigate the social world- by acknowledging the dignity of everyone. Valenzuela finds that when teachers lack knowledge of this cultural concept they dismiss this definition of education that Mexican and Mexican American young

people embrace and thus they lose an opportunity to foster achievement by building relationships.

All of the mothers in my study talked about educación, some actually named it and acknowledged the difference between the two (educación versus education), while others talked about the importance of morals and values in raising their daughters. Alejandra described educación in the following way, "yo digo que de nada me sirve un doctorado si no se como tratar la gente, si no me acomido…fue (en referencia a la educación) base de todo" (I say that a doctorate is worthless to me if I don't know how to treat people, if I don't know how to serve or help people…it (referring to educación) was foundational to everything). Quetzali, daughter of Chata, talked about how her mother taught her to stand up for others, to use her voice to name injustices, and to recognize that other people's struggles are her struggles too. The narrative of Quetzali and Chata is similar to the Mayan moral concept of In Lak'Ech which points to the interconnectivity in communities: "You are my other me. If I do harm to you, I do harm to myself. If I love and respect you, I love and respect myself." Quetzali learned this ethic from her mother, not from schools, and it continues to guide her work now as a recently minted doctora.

In this section I discuss educación as a ritual that the mothers embodied. While there are many morals, ethics, or lessons that make up what educación is, I focus on three that were prevalent in my pláticas with the mothers and daughters: respect, responsibility, and valerse por si misma (to be self-reliant). These morals add to the body of work that has explored what educación entails (See Burciaga, 2007; Godinez, 2006; Ley, 2006; Villenas, 2001, 2002; Valdés, 1996; Valenzuela, 1999). More work is needed to understand how educación plays out in the educational trajectories of Chicanx students, specifically how it is gendered and how it plays a

role at different junctures of the educational pipeline. I highlight these points by showing what educación means to high-achieving Mexicana/Chicana students.

I argue that educación provides the daughters with the morals and ethics to be muxeres truchas. Despite the way popular media portrays what ponte trucha means (just do a google search of ponte trucha to see what I mean) as "tough" or "hard-core cholas," muxeres truchas *are* this- but much more. To be trucha or ponerte trucha encompasses not only this popular image of the hard-core chola but it is also rooted in the morals of respect, responsibility, and self-reliance. I return to the portraits of Fe and Marissa, and Huitzilin and Flor to talk about educación.

Educación as respect

The importance of not forgetting where you come from or acknowledging your Mexican humble roots came up across all the mother-daughter pairs. I will talk more about this when discussing muxerista stories in the next chapter, however I bring it up here because it is connected to respect. Both Fe and Marissa identified the importance of respect, Fe pointed out that her mother taught her this since an early age, and Marissa explained to me why respect was important to her. Below are two passages, one from Fe and the other from Marissa talking about respect.

> By the time I started to talk, she would point out things like, I remember a lot of things from when I was growing up, you don't talk to people disrespectfully. If you tap someone you say, "I'm sorry," because that's really disrespectful for you to step on someone's toes or tap someone, like you don't do that. You don't walk by and just not acknowledge peoples' presence, like you say hi or you say excuse me.

> Cuando ellos iban creciendo siempre les decía siempre respeto a sus mayors, siempre si hay una persona que necesita ayuda, ayúdenla, nunca se les olvide que si hay una persona que necesita una traducción de Español – Inglés o Inglés – Español ustedes no se les olvide, no sean ese tipo de personas que, "Oh no se hablar español," y les de vergüenza traducir a las personas que necesitan ayuda, si ustedes un día en la vida llegan a ser alguien no se les olvide de donde vienen, siempre se los dije.

When they were growing up I would always tell them respect your elders, always if there is a person that needs help, help them, never forget that if there is a person that needs help translating from Spanish to English or English to Spanish don't forget, don't be the type of person that's like, "Oh I don't know how to speak Spanish," and get embarrassed of translating for people that need help, if you all get to be someone one day don't forget where you came from, I always told them.

Fe describes respect as acknowledging people's presence; to deny someone's existence is to dehumanize that person. In her excerpt I understand respect as recognizing every individual's humanity and dignity. She describes how respect is tied to valuing each person she encounters by greeting them. I recall as a little girl my parents continuously reminding me that it was bad manners to not saludar (greet) people. Paloma, Carolina's daughter, adds to this understanding of respect. Her mother Carolina dedicated her life to being a housekeeper and nanny. From her mother's stories she learned that her job often entailed dealing with racism, but despite this her mother found ways to keep going and make it work. She taught her that dignity and respect were inseparably connected and that even in the worst situations you still hold your head up high and continue to push forward. Witnessing her mother being disrespected or rendered invisible in her job gave her a true conocimiento of what it means to be a service worker. It is her mother's experiences that taught her to have the outmost respect and gratitude with service workers on and off campus- they are reflections of her mother. Respect is therefore tied to recognizing individuals' self-worth either with a simple greeting or another form of acknowledgement.

Fe's mother, Marissa further elaborates on what respect means to her. She adds that it means respecting your elders. This is synonymous to Guadalupe Valdés' (1996) ethnographic work with Mexican immigrant families in which she found that respect was a central value in the lives of these families. She described respect as honoring parents and being grateful for what they had done for the children (p. 180). Valdés' work also speaks to how Marissa links respect

to being acomedido (helpful/serviceable). She says that it is important that her children learn to help others when needed.

What Marissa sheds light on that is different from Valdés' work is how she associates respect to not forgetting where you came from. She gives the example of helping translate for people and not being embarrassed about it. She brought this up both in the individual and mother-daughter plática; how disappointed she felt when people pretend to not be able to speak Spanish or English to avoid translating for others. She shared an experience of where she asked for help in Spanish and was turned away because the person "did not speak Spanish," only to later hear her speak Spanish. Thus, to be respectful also means to be proud of your Mexican roots, to use your cultural skills like bilingualism to help others, to never let your ambition diminish your familial/cultural origins. Next, I describe the moral of being responsible.

Educación as responsibility

Half of the daughters in my study were the oldest among their siblings, which meant they had a lot more responsibilities than their younger siblings. Marissa described Fe as "una segunda mamá" (a second mother) to her siblings. When Fe left to college up north she remembers her mom telling her that she felt like she was literally losing her right arm. This shows how closely the two worked together in raising her siblings. Fe not only attended to her school responsibilities, she also handled a lot at home. This was the case for Paloma as well, who helped raise three younger siblings. Both Fe and Paloma learned how to cook at a very young age, Catalina, daughter of Camila, learned early on how to pay bills or how to interact with adults since often she was her family's translator. As the oldest of three siblings, I can also relate to Fe, Paloma, and Catalina, I was left to care for my younger siblings as young as ten years old.

What I found from the mothers and daughters accounts was that la responsabilidad was a crucial component of raising muxeres educadas or educación. Being responsible was not deliberately taught but instead it was assumed that as the oldest, the daughters would learn as they observed their mothers- se van enseñando (they learn as they go). I recall asking Fe and Paloma how they learned to cook at such a young age (both started cooking as early as eight years old); it was through close observation of their mothers. The responsibility they learned at home transferred to how they managed their responsibilities at school too. This shows how educación is applicable in education, but not necessarily vice versa. I heard this a lot from the daughters, that what they learn at home applies in school but what they learn in school does not always apply at home. Fe was someone who spoke in depth about this. In the following passage she speaks to what it was like to be oldest and how the educación she received at home transferred to her schooling.

> Yo pienso que ser la más grande tienes responsabilidades entonces desde una temprana edad aprendes a saber lo que es ser responsable, hacer cosas que se deben hacer porque se tienen que hacer y entonces cuando vas a la escuela para mí la escuela o la educación y estamos hablando de la educación en el contexto de las escuelas es como fácil a comparación de otras responsabilidades porque cuando vas a la escuela te dicen siéntate y as tu tarea o llena esta página, toma notas, son cosas simples que llegas y las haces and that's it so yo pienso ser la más grande siempre aprendí a ser responsable, claro que también soy hija so no siempre he sido responsable a veces soy…tremenda
>
> School in comparison is so easy and so yeah aprendí a ser responsable, so en el contexto de la escuela siempre eh sido responsable like vengo a la escuela voy a ser mi trabajo me propuse a estudiar una carrera and that's what I am here to do, you know to finish a career that I started and I think you know tener las experiencias que yo eh tenido en mi familia el crecimiento me ah ayudo siempre a mantener responsabilidades como mi prioridad y el respeto a la otra gente también.
>
> *I think as the oldest you have responsibilities so at an early age you learn what it means to be responsible, do things that need to get done because they need to get done so when you go to school for me school or education and we're talking about education in the context of schools it's like easy in comparison to other responsibilities because when you go to school they tell you sit down and do your homework or fill out this page, take notes, they are simple things that you get there and you do them and that's it so I think that*

being the oldest taught me to be responsible, of course I am still a daughter so I am not always responsible sometimes I am…mischievous

School in comparison is so easy and so yeah I learned to be responsible so in the context of school I have always been responsible like I came to school I am going to do my work I set out to study a career and that's what I am here to do, you know to finish a career that I started and I think you know having the experience that I have had in my family the rearing has helped me to always maintain my responsibilities as a priority and to have respect towards others too.

Fe talked about how since a young age her mom always treated her like an adult. When her mom remarried her family of three became a family of six, which meant that Fe now had to help her mother raise three younger siblings. She helped clean, cook, and maintain the household while her mother worked or was away. Her excerpt shows what the four other older daughters expressed, which is that they learned about what it meant to be responsible since they were young. Paloma jokingly shared that she changed diapers for years because she really was a second mother to her siblings. Fe also explained responsibility in the way the other women expressed it, you do things because they need to get done. Although some of them admitted complaining at times, the complaining often came from noticing the unfair amount of responsibilities between them and their brothers, or the coddling their mothers partook in with their brothers. I will talk later about how heteropatriarchy was a huge point of contention with the daughters and their mothers.

It is also important to note how Fe distinguishes education in the context of schools versus educación. She says that education was easy in comparison to the educación she received at home which included learning to be responsible. The tasks at school were easy and direct, where at home they perhaps were not taught as directly or as easily. There was also much more at stake at home compared to at school; at home Fe was responsible for the welfare of her family not just herself. This sense of familia or familism has been linked to greater academic effort.

Even more when mother's educational level is low, as is the case with all the mothers, it is positively associated to students' academic grades (Esparza & Sánchez, 2008).

We see this in Fe's excerpt as she explains how her sense of responsibility transferred to her academics. She explains how she comes to school, focused, aware of what needs to get done and points to how this developed at home. She links respect and responsibility as part of the educación she received at home, and as two things she has always prioritized. The last thing to point out is how she mentions that she was also tremenda (mischievous), this is important because it shows her humanity and demystifies the idea of being a "perfect daughter." It is critical to highlight this because again, this dissertation works to challenge such dichotomies (good vs. bad daughter). These women resisted, struggled with, and loved their mothers all at the same time.

Educación as valerse por si misma

The last principle of educación that I want to talk about is valerse por si misma (to be self-reliant). This idea came up in many of the daughter's platicás. They learned this principle from witnessing their mother's lack of opportunities and financial dependency on their fathers because they were not able to pursue an education. Half of the mothers are single mothers (not counting Fe's mother who remarried), all of them had divorced by the time they were raising their daughters and for the most part the fathers were fairly absent from the daughter's lives.

For Huitzilin who saw her mother suffer from domestic violence and migrate to another country in order to escape the abuse, the lesson of being self-reliant was pivotal to her upbringing. If there was one thing her mother wanted to instill in her it was to never depend on a man or anyone- to valerse por si misma. She wanted her to be financially independent so she could make her own choices. In short, she did not want what she had experienced with her

husband to be Huitzilin's experience. When I asked Huitzilin what she thought education meant to her mother, the idea of valerse por si misma was what she articulated first. She later spoke more about it during the mother-daughter plática and her mother confirmed how important this lesson was. The excerpt below comes from my individual plática with Huitzilin when she is discussing what educations means to her mom.

> I think one of the biggest things is as a woman, as a mujer, being financially independent is very important. So, to instill that in my sister, to instill that in me, has been huge, and has been one of her goals, particularly with me, she would tell me, "I don't want you to ever rely on a man to give you anything. You need to be able to have that for yourself. Because, the moment you rely on a man to give you something, you have to be at their mercy. And they can treat you however they want, because, guess what you depend on them for your livelihood. So get an education, get a stable job, look out for yourself." So it's really about that, when it comes from her.

Part of a muxer-oriented form of educación involves not only respect and responsibility, but also learning to be self-reliant. Villenas and Moreno (2001) first introduced the concept of Latina mother-daughter pedagogies through their ethnographic work with Latina mothers in rural North Carolina. Part of their findings included how mothers taught their daughters to valerse por si misma. They described this principle as a "counter-consejo" or the "counter-lesson" for surviving racism and sexism as Women of Color (p. 681). This lesson of being self-reliant that Huitzilin and the other daughters learned is rooted in their mother's experience of navigating racism, capitalism, and patriarchy both in and outside of the United States.

Flor's experiences of abuse, poverty, and racist nativism shaped the educación she inculcated in Huitzilin. Huitzilin's excerpt illustrates that education means something different for Women of Color. For Huitzilin it means resisting heteropatriarchy by gaining the leverage that men often use against women- financial enslavement. Flor struggled a lot working arduous jobs and long hours because she decided to leave her husband. I admire her courage because I cannot imagine how difficult that decision must have been. There are many women that stay in

unstable and often abusive marriages because of this- that they cannot financially make it on their own without their husbands. I heard different versions of "never depend on a man" over and over again in the daughter's and mother's narratives. It was a way to raise assertive and self-reliant women, as the chapter's epigraph from Collins speaks to. I would argue that this was the most significant value of educación the daughters received- to valerse por si misma, because it directly challenged heteropatriarchy. Learning to be self-reliant is significant to the educación of muxeres truchas because the work of Mexicana/Chicana mothering is about raising daughters in a society that is framed by interlocking structures of oppression shaped by racial domination and economic exploitation (Collins, 1994).

In this section I presented the ritual of educación, which goes beyond school or book learning (traditionally understood as education) to include both manner and moral values. Educación is inclusive of what is taught and learned in home and community spaces, all social spaces, even work places as it was discussed in the previous chapter. My findings support Villenas and Moreno's articulation of educación as a form of mujer-oriented knowledge. Educación is by definition a feminista or muxerista concept because it begins in the home with our mothers as teachers and because it is rooted in their everyday experiences. It is important to highlight this point because often academia credits male scholars as the founders of critical pedagogy. However, my findings shows that it is Women of Color that have theorized and modeled what transformative and critical pedagogy is.

A borderlands pedagogy encompasses the ritual of educación to raise muxeres truchas. I see educación as a ritual because it is an established and embodied practice. Although it may not have been formally taught, the mothers demonstrated to their daughters what being respectful, responsible, and self-reliant involved. Educación is not limited to these three values, but in my

findings I found them to be the most prominent. As discussed earlier, to be trucha does not only mean to be "hard" or to know how to confront systems of oppressions, but to do it con una buena educación. You can resist and transform such systems and still embody these values- respect, responsibility, and valerse por si misma. Una muxer trucha resists what formal education often values like rivalry, meritocracy, and individualism.

The quote at the beginning of this section comes from Fe's grandmother, "Entre más educado más pendejo" (The more educated the more stupid). Fe shared it with me when we were discussing how there are people in graduate school that are perhaps book smart but are mal educados. They do not respect others, are self-centered, and for them the idea of relationship building is merely tied to networking rather than nurturing true friendships. I have heard this dicho used in my family when people with degrees are arrogant and make others feel less than- son mal educados. The way formal education is currently set up will always compete with educación, but these women have all managed to stay true to the eduación they received at home and challenge this dichotomy.

Religion/Spirituality- *"It became more important to me to understand that church or that religiosity or spirituality was not a place but a practice" –Maria, daughter of Rosario*

Rosario is originally from Jalisco, from a small town near that state's capital of Guadalajara. Her daughter Maria still visits their hometown a lot and the family remains strongly connected to their Mexican heritage. At a young age Rosario lost her mother, and her father was left to care for her and her four other siblings. Because much of their money had gone to pay for her mother's illness money was scarce. Her father struggled to support the family so he migrated to the states to work and send money back. After two years of her father being away, Rosario and her siblings left to Tijuana to prepare to cross over to the U.S. During this

time Rosario's cousin was supposed to be caring for her and her siblings but unfortunately the cousin was pocketing the money her father was sending.

Rosario shares how hard this time was in her life. She suffered from hunger and experienced a lot of poverty. Her dad was only able to bring over one sibling at a time, depending on how much money he had saved, little by little they all made it over. Rosario was fifteen when she finally arrived to Los Angeles, and although she was reunited with her family adjusting to the U.S. had its own challenges as well. I share part of Rosario's story because she explained that this is where her faith comes from- from overcoming all these struggles. She explained in her plática, "faith carried me through all the obstacles I've had to overcome." This she shared is the biggest gift her father gave her, her faith, and it is something she has also instilled in her daughter Maria.

Both Maria and Rosario talked about the role of religion/spirituality in their pláticas. Maria is the youngest of five; at 24 years old she is also the youngest of the daughters in my study. She is a pastor's kid; both of her parents were very involved in the church. She shared the following, "Church has always been really central to my experience, and I think it's part of where my initial commitment to social justice came from." Rosario and Maria are not the only ones that talked about religion/spirituality; this was a central theme in all my pláticas and unquestionably a significant element of Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies.

I use the dash between religion and spirituality to highlight the spectrum of identification as religious or spiritual in the mothers and daughters narratives. There were cases like Sofia and Olivia who strongly identified as Christian and religious, or Nati, mother of Cecilia, and Flor who identified strongly as Catholics or Guadalupanas. Yet there was also Felicia and Marimar who were Buddhist and described their practice as spiritual rather than religious. The majority of

the daughters, with the exception of Felicia and Olivia who identified as either spiritual or religious, fell in a spectrum between religion and spirituality, or they straddled both.

For the purpose of this dissertation, I understand religion to be tied to an institutional structure or organization; it is a particular system of faith, prayer, and worship- it is a belief in a higher power like a God. I understand spirituality to be more concerned with qualities of the human spirit. Lara Medina (2006) defines it as "the multiple ways in which persons maintain and nurture balanced relationships with themselves, others, the world and their creator or creation" (p. 257). In this case religion and spirituality are not necessarily the same thing, however I do not completely separate the two because I believe that you can be both. The findings of this work have helped me think about religion and spirituality on a spectrum, that is in constant flux, messy, and not necessarily so clear-cut.

The majority of the daughters had been raised Catholic, but many of them talked about moments of contention with the church that caused them to distance themselves from it. For example, as a young queer brown girl Huitzilin struggled to find her place in her church or grupo de jovenes (youth group). The priest had made some unwelcoming remarks about the LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) community that had made her question her participation in the church. Many of the women talked about incidents similar to this one, which made them question their religious affiliations. Yet I would say that all of them remained spiritual, some closer to religious while others much less. It is for this reason that I see religion/spirituality as a ritual because it was an engrained or established custom in their homes. Although this practice may have evolved through time, it still remained a significant ritual for them.

What I found interesting in my analysis of religion/spirituality was how often the women connected it to their activism or commitment to social justice. As Maria's earlier quote expressed, religion became her pathway to activism and social justice. This was noted in Olivia's excerpt earlier as well, where she expressed her desire to seek out a career that was service oriented, where she could enact social change. C. Alejandra Elenes (2014) asserts that,

> Spirituality, then, means more than one's relation with a God or a Creator because it is tied with struggles for social justice and gender equality. Spiritualty is a way of understanding someone's (or a community's) position in the world by trying to make sense of unfair economic conditions and gender inequality, and to do something about it (p. 4).

From my pláticas with Rosario and Maria I became aware that this is how they understood the role of religion or spirituality in their lives. It went beyond their relationship with God and was much more about carrying out the ethics of love, compassion, and justice in the world.

Rosario's religiosity/spirituality informed how she mothered. For example, service was central to how she raised Maria. Every summer she had her kids volunteer in local schools or organizations to give back to the community. One central lesson she inculcated in Maria was to give back without expecting anything in return. She shared with me how she would tell teachers to not reward her kids for their volunteerism because it was important that they truly understand the value of service. I can attest that Maria has really embraced this lesson through her willingness to participate in my dissertation. Prior to selecting my collaborators for this study I asked all the women why they were interested in participating and Maria's response involved the importance of supporting each other through our doctoral journeys as Chicana students. Helping others in whatever way she can continues to be a substantial part of Maria's everyday life.

During the mother-daughter plática I asked both Maria and Rosario about the role of religion/spirituality in their relationship and lives in general. Maria spoke about how it informed

her activism and commitment to social justice and how it continues to inform that type of person she is today. Below is an excerpt from the plática.

> The first place I learned about political organizing or any kind of organizing towards some kind of social change was in church, whether that was doing the ventas or doing a retiro or whatever but that's where in me the seed was planted that if people come together and they do things something can be done and like you always say (referring to her mom) whether it's someone sweeping the bathroom or someone giving the sermon like everyone has a role and it's all important and I think I've always carried that with me both I think the teachings of social justice, love, and compassion in all the work that I do, hopefully right, and also just the idea organizationally like if we all come together and do what we can do, well we can carry this out so both of those things I think have been really important for me not just within school but also like in organizing and I think in terms of current education…I try my best to carry those lessons over there too (referring to her current and previous institution) in terms of like when we did on campus activism and that kind of stuff like trying to play to people's strengths…

Maria has recently received a lot of local attention for her activism around environmental racism in her community. She has been an organizer and activists since a young age and credits her involvement in her church as the impetus for it. In her undergraduate institution she helped organize a campaign to support service workers. Currently, she runs a social justice research collaborative to support Students of Color who are first-generation college and are interested in conducting social justice oriented research.

In the passage, Maria explains that the church taught her how to successfully organize around issues of social justice. She learned that everyone must play a role and that it is important to work with each other's strengths. For example, she shared that when it comes to organizing she likes to do more of the behind the scenes work, she acknowledges that this is her strength, while others perhaps are more comfortable being on the megaphone. The church taught her about leadership and how it can look differently for everyone, yet above all it showed her the value of working in community. As we continued our plática I asked her what role religion/spirituality plays in her life today. She shared the following.

> Those ideas, like social justice, love, compassion, which I think I've actually drawn a lot more away from the church because at a certain point I felt like people were speaking of those things but not necessarily living them and I think it became more important to me to understand that church or that religiosity or spirituality was not a place but a practice and even my mom would always say that about our abuelito. He didn't ever read the bible but he was a very religious man, in that if he saw someone hungry he would give them a taco you know and I think to me that's the driving force…how I try to treat people…the role I see myself playing in students' lives in the future like I don't want to just go up and lecture and be done…I hope my biggest intervention isn't just a book. I hope it's being able to be there and be a source of love and justice and compassion in an institution that does not offer any of those things for historically marginalized communities. And again that goes back to always seeing it practiced and understanding that that was something I could do too and I remember very clearly walking down the street as a little kid and seeing a homeless person and I remember looking at you (referring to her mom) and saying one day when I am rich and I am older like I am going to do something to change that. And I remember her looking at me and saying why do you have to wait until your rich or your older, she was like everyone can make a difference, everyone can change the world and both of those things have always stayed with me…

From this passage Maria shares how she realized that some people in her church were not necessarily embracing the values they preached, like justice, love and compassion. While this pushed her away from the church she learned that spirituality or religiosity was not necessarily tied to a place like the church but instead was a practice. It is how you live in the world and how you relate to others. The example of her grandfather further drives this point by showing how religion/spiritualty is practiced every day and not necessarily only during mass or while you are at church. You can be spiritual through your actions and values; like the way you treat people. In this way Maria is more concerned about a spiritual praxis rather than the theory of it. For her it becomes more about changing people's lives. We also see how her spirituality has informed the type of professor she hopes to be. I love that she says, "I hope my biggest intervention isn't just a book," because it shows the type of education she is interested in- a humanizing one.

I would like to end my discussion on the ritual of religion/spirituality by bringing in Anzaldúa's concept of spiritual activism. Keating (2002) described spiritual activism as

beginning with the personal yet moving outward, acknowledging our radical interconnectedness. "This is spirituality for social change, spirituality that recognizes the many differences among us yet insists on our commonalities and uses these commonalities as catalysts for transformation" (p. 18). The daughters linked their spirituality with service to others, especially to their communities. Spiritualty for Maria was connected to her quest for social justice and as the drive to use her agency as a Woman of Color to change the world. In many ways, Maria displayed spiritual activism through her commitment to help her community, whether that was her community of South Gate or her community of Chicana doctoral students. Her mother was her first spiritual teacher who taught her to look for our commonalities or connections with each other through service. The example of the homeless person is a reminder that we all can participate in small acts of transformation.

If we understand spiritualty in this manner it is easy to see how it links to raising muxeres truchas. Muxeres truchas are guided by their religion/spiritualty as a means to create social change. Thus, part of the rituals of a borderlands pedagogy is religion/spiritualty. As Anzaldúa (2000) noted, "Spiritualty is oppressed people's only weapon and means of protection" (p. 10). Spiritualty is what gave the daughter's their vision, desire, and energy to actively work for social change. They embody their religion/spiritualty through their activism, writing, actions, and unwavering commitment to serve to their communities. What I learned is that it is our mother's patience, faith, prayers, and love that have showed us how central religion/spirituality is to our survival as brown women in and out of academia. As such, we cannot talk about Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies, a borderlands pedagogy, or raising muxeres truchas (all intimately connected) without talking about religion/spirituality.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have addressed the rituals of a pedagogy of the borderlands which included a discipline of bodymindspirit, educación, and religion/spirituality. The previous chapter focused on the actions of a pedagogy of the borderlands that encompassed working with mamá, a rasquache aesthetic, and an embodiment of hustle. The next chapter will address the final part of a pedagogy of the borderlands which are the interactions that it entails.

The goal of a pedagogy of the borderlands is to raise muxeres truchas, women that are not only "book smart" but who also have a critical conocimiento of how systems of oppression function. They have succeeded in their education because their mothers taught them how to navigate oppression. They modeled actions, rituals, and interactions that gave them the skills and knowledge to understand how to thrive in a heteropatriarchal white society but also how to transform it. A borderlands pedagogy helped them develop a trucha sensibility, to decipher racism, patriarchy, classism, and nativism, to name a few. This chapter addressed my first research question by discussing the rituals that Mexicana/Chicana mothers engage in to shape the educational achievement of their daughters. It also addressed my second research question on how Mexicana/Chicana daughters make sense of their mother's pedagogy by continuing to outline what a pedagogy of the borderlands is and its connection to raising muxeres truchas.

To conclude I return back to Patricia Hill Collins' (1994) opening quote "U.S. Black [Mexicana/Chicana] mothers are often described as strong disciplinarians and overly protective; yet these same women manage to raise daughters who are self-reliant and assertive" (p. 200). I argue that Mexicana/Chicana mothers are this way because they are determined to raise daughters into whole and self-actualizing women in a society that continuously devalues their worth. They engage in a discipline of bodymindspirit not only for their daughter's physical and psychological survival but also so that they can teach them how to transcend oppressive

boundaries. The educación they embody shows their daughters how to interact with others and the meaning of self-love, a quite revolutionary ritual given the subtractive nature of education for brown girls (Valenzuela, 1999). Lastly, they serve as their daughter's religious/spiritual teachers who inculcate in them a passion for social justice. This commitment is infused with deep feelings of love, compassion, and community; Mexicana/Chicana mothers are transmitters of spiritual activism. As such Mexicana/Chicana motherwork is revolutionary, it is activist work, as they are raising the next generation of resistors.

Chapter Eight

Mexicana/Chicana Mother-Daughter Interactions

"We are daughters of women who have been subject to a social system- compounded doubly by Mexican traditions and U.S. WASP dominance that prohibited us from opportunities that may have challenged our creative and intellectual potential in more ways than being wife, mother, and assembly line work" –Ana Castillo

Chata, Quetzali's mother, married at age eighteen and a year later started a family. Unfortunately, she suffered through an unstable marriage and later divorced. Quetzali is her youngest of three; she describes her as "lively, inquisitive, talkative, and emotional." Chata worked a variety of jobs and feels guilty that her kids grew up without her around. The other mothers expressed this shame or guilt as well; they all wished they could have been more present in their daughters lives. She is happy that as a grandmother now she gets to spend a lot of quality time with her grandchildren, most presently with Quetzali's beautiful little girl.

I met Quetzali during my first year of graduate school. Although we were in different institutions our paths crossed in a class we took together. The day I met her for her individual plática she had on these long stunning beaded red earrings with the United Farm Workers (UFW) iconic black eagle, as well as her UFW pin. Among her many talents are making earrings like the ones she had on that day. The day we met was César E. Chávez Day, hence the earrings and pin. Yet Quetzali's UFW accessories should not be taken lightly, she is someone that truly embraces the UFW's core values: a si se puede attitude and a sense of empowerment and integrity.

Chata, her mother, shares, "She always stands up for those less fortunate." She goes on to recount multiple examples of how Quetzali was so outspoken and how she wished she could be more like her. Interestingly enough Quetzali credits her for developing her voice. She

explained to me that her mother gave her the courage and confidence to speak up, even when no one is looking or when it is the unpopular thing to do.

In this chapter I present three central Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter interactions: 1) a muxerista voice, 2) muxerista story(telling), and 3) intergenerational sabidurias and tensions. This is the last central element of a pedagogy of the borderlands used to raise muxeres truchas. I define interactions as conversations and dialogue; they are social or communal actions. I posit that a muxerista voice is nurtured through conversations among Women of Color, more specifically through our mother's stories. Muxerista story(telling) is a social action shared among Mothers and Daughters of Color; they are stories that highlight the struggles and triumphs of Women of Color. These stories are often passed down from generation to generation, and it is mothers that become the tellers of these stories. Intergenerational sabidurias refer to the wisdom or insights that are shared through generations of Women of Color. Yet tensions also arise through generations, like the way heteropatriarchy manifests itself among families, or specifically between Mothers and Daughters of Color. These three interactions are interrelated; a muxerista voice is fostered through muxerista story(telling), and these stories are intergenerational and rich with sabidurias, but can also be contradictory.

This chapter focuses on addressing the last part of my first research question, the interactions: *What cultural/familial actions, rituals, and interactions do Mexicana/Chicana mothers engage in to shape the educational achievement of their daughters?* I also continue to address my second question through the theory that Mexicana/Chicana mothers use a pedagogy of the borderlands to raise muxeres truchas. This theory came about through the way the daughters explained their mother's influence on their education. My second research question

reads: *How do Mexicana/Chicana first-generation college students explain or understand their mothers' influence on their educational achievement?*

I continue with my use of portraiture collage to present my findings, where I focus in and out of mother-daughter dyads, or individual mothers or daughters (Curammeng, in progress). Muxerista portraiture also informs my collage by how these portraits are presented- bilingually, with my voice, and spiritually (Flores, under review). I use the portrait of Chata and Quetzali, Fe, and Rosario and Maria to talk about nurturing a muxerista voice. I present Nati and Cecilia, and Catalina and Camila to talk about muxerista story(telling), and I conclude with the intergenerational sabidurias and tensions through the portrait of Carolina and Paloma. Figure seven shows the interactions I have listed.

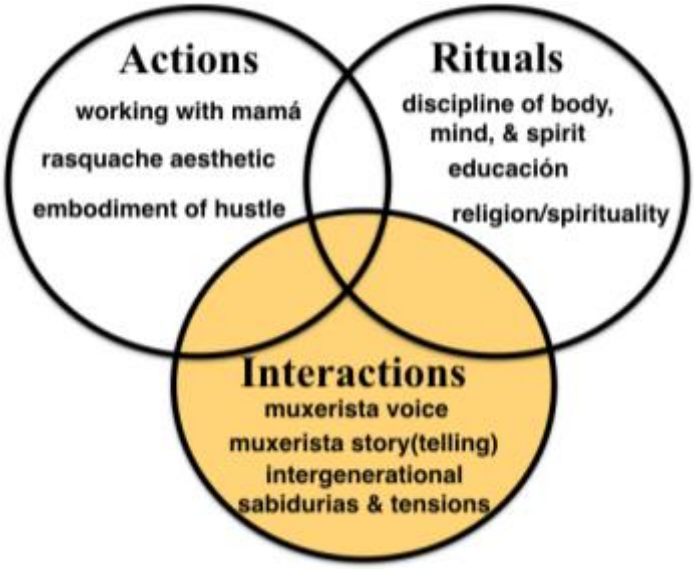

Figure 7. The Interactions of a Pedagogy of the Borderlands

Nurturing a muxerista voice- "*My mom encouraged me to develop my voice, to speak with strength, and not just for no reason, like if I saw that something was happening and someone was getting hurt, or if I felt like someone was hurting me or something. I felt like she really encouraged that." –Quetzali, daughter of Chata*

Nurturing a muxerista voice and muxerista story(telling) are intimately related, because it is through storytelling that the mothers nurtured their daughter's muxerista voice. One of the most prominent themes that came up across the mother-daughter dyads was the notion of "speaking up" or "using your voice." The daughters gave examples of how their mothers ingrained in them the importance of speaking up. Often they were told directly, "habla!" (speak!) or they learned through stories or by their mother's examples.

This resonates a lot in my own mother-daughter portrait. If there is one thing my mother taught me, it is to use my voice. When we moved to the U.S., I struggled a lot to speak, mainly because I was intimidated by the fact that I could not speak English or was embarrassed of mispronouncing words. My mother who is bilingual would often put me in uncomfortable situations where I had no choice but to speak in English. I remember getting angry with her, now as I am older I realize that this was her way of teaching me to use my voice. It is through my mother that I was able to get over the fear and apprehension of speaking in English and instead embrace my bilingualism

Experiences like mine are not singular, the mothers shared why it was important that their daughters learn to speak up. Many discussed how as Women of Color, especially petite ones, our voices are often rendered silent, or that we live in a society that does not support our dreams or desires, so it is important to name them loudly. They wanted their daughters to speak up for others and injustices. Again this lesson of speaking up is rooted in their own experiences as Women of Color. I know my mother's insistence to teach me to use my voice comes from incidents when she was silenced. In the following quote Fe describes her mom's determination that she learn to speak up.

> A lot of my trouble I think when I was growing up was that I was really quiet. And I feel like I'm still quiet, but a lot of me not being quiet now has to do with how she raised me.

> Because I was really quiet and I remember her que me regañaba (reprimanded me), "You need to speak up; you're not speaking up. If you don't speak up, who's going to speak up? No one's going to speak up for you." So she would, I remember que me regañaba (that she would reprimand me) in public like, "Talk! What are you thinking?!" Yeah, so I felt like she did that a lot.

Important in this passage is Fe's memory of her mother's words, "If you don't speak up, who's going to speak up? No one's going to speak up for you." This shows Fe's mothers awareness that Women of Color are often silenced. It goes back to the moral of valerse por si misma (to be self-reliant), to use your own agency to speak up, to not depend on anyone else to do it for you. The fact that Marissa, Fe's mother, la regañaba (scolded her) when she would not speak up shows her urgency in nurturing her voice. As my own story shows silence is often tied to humiliation or internalized shame. Therefore, oppression is not necessarily limited to political or institutional discrimination but can also be marked in mental, physical, spiritual and emotional ways. Our mothers must have known this from their lived experiences and understood how critical it was to nurture our voices. It was their way of challenging these manifestations of oppression and raising resistors- muxeres truchas.

During elementary school Quetzali often got in trouble for talking too much in class. The one complaint her mother Chata received from teachers was that she talked too much. Her teachers would switch her to different tables or seats but Quetzali would not stop. When I was discussing this with her she expressed a disconnection between what she was learning at home versus what she was learning in school. For example, her mother created what Quetzali referred to as a very "diplomatic household, a democratic household," which she explained helped strengthen her voice and understand the value of it. Her mother, for the most part, allowed Quetzali to make her own choices, even those that could be categorized as "adult decisions."

Quetzali shared this connection with the daughters, they all talked about how their opinions or choices were valued and respected by their mothers.

When Quetzali started school she experienced a clash and realized that her decisions or voice were not always honored. Everything she had to say did not necessarily merit attention or dialogue, as was the case in her home. Thus she struggled with the idea of not being allowed to talk in school; she did not understand this rule. She laughs and says that she later asked her mom how come she never got mad at her for this. Despite all the complaints Chata received from teachers she never chastised Quetzali. Below is an excerpt from Quetzali's plática where she shared more on this.

> And so then in school I would go and get in trouble for talking all the time. And I later asked my mom why didn't she get mad at me for always getting in trouble for talking. And she said…I thought it was unnatural to silence children. And I was like, wow, thank you! Cause I just felt like I was a problem child at school, but at home I felt like it was valued that I talked, that I was told to like develop my leadership abilities.

When teachers silence youth in their classroom, especially young brown girls, the message they receive is that they do not matter. Teachers are often concerned first with curricular content and only secondarily, if at all, with the subjective realities of students. It is in this way that schooling becomes impersonal and irrelevant to Chicanx students (Valenzuela, 1999). My experiences of working with elementary age youth are that they are excited to share and want to be listened to. It makes me sad to then see high school or college age students who struggle to share or participate in class. This subtraction of voice or agency is prevalent in schools, especially for Chicanx students (Valenzuela, 1999). As such, I find Chata's pedagogy revolutionary, she goes against this dehumanizing practice in schools. Instead, she allows Quetzali to talk, to own her ideas and choices, and most importantly she listens to her. In Quetzali words, "she strengthened my voice."

The reason why I refer to voice as a "muxerista" voice is because I argue that the mothers are nurturing a womanist or feminist voice in their daughters. Muxerista literally translates into womanist; the x replaces the j to signify a connection to the ancestry and languages of México and Latin America (Revilla, 2004). Villenas, Godinez, Delgado Bernal, and Elenes (2006) describe it as an "…approach to power, knowledge, and relationships rooted in convictions of community uplift." They explain that they use the term mujerista (they spell it with a "j") rather than feminista because often el feminismo is not part of the everyday realities of ordinary women.

Thus I use muxerista instead of feminista to recognize that this voice is nurtured through the mothers' everyday lives. A muxerista voice is rooted in feminisms, but feminism as understood and lived through their mother's experiences. It is a form of voice dedicated to challenging patriarchy and other forms of oppression. As the examples so far show from Fe, myself, and Quetzali developing this voice is an urgent matter to our mothers. As they themselves have experienced being silenced or are aware of the realities that we face as Women of Color.

Often this voice is developed through muxerista story(telling)- our mothers' stories. During Chata's individual plática she shared how she wished she could be more outspoken like her daughter, that she admired her courage for standing up for others. I found this interesting given that when I had my plática with Quetzali she credited her mother for teaching her to be assertive and to use her voice. What I learned is that Chata found it important to teach Quetzali to use her voice because of her experiences. She explained this in the following excerpt.

> My life took a certain direction because I wasn't assertive enough to know what I really wanted and to express my feelings and say no I really don't want to get married now. I want to go to school, I want to get a degree, I did want to go school but it just so happened things worked out a different way and that's not what I wanted for Quetzali.

Chata felt that she did not have much of a choice in getting married. For her, marriage was an escape from a difficult home life and an opportunity to start something new. However, she had dreams of going to school but did not feel like she had the support or encouragement to pursue those goals. Chata worked at the University of Southern California (USC) for some time and has fond memories of working among students every day, this was the closest she got to going to college. Working at USC made her realize how much she really did want to go to school and invigorated her even more to make sure Quetzali did go to college. Her experience of getting married so young and not being able to pursue her educational ambitions compelled her to nurture Quetzali's voice. To make sure she felt supported in voicing her opinions and making her own choices. This is why she never silenced Quetzali or why she always gave her as much attention as she could, she felt it was necessary to nurture a muxerista voice.

In the following passage, Quetzali describes where she thought her mother's urgency to use her voice came from.

> I think it definitely comes from her experience of being silenced, of not having anyone listen to her, of having a lot to say and being amazing and brilliant like I said she is and just having to sit quietly, I guess in her home it was not a child-centered home…she wanted us to be free and to be able to speak our minds.

Chata's experience of being silenced is one of many accounts that were shared with me, many of the daughters talked about how their mothers often had to keep quiet in the face of racism or heteropatriarchy for their own survival. Yet knowing this motivated the daughters to use their voice. They recognized the privilege they had and it became a responsibility to make sure they did use it, not just for them but for their mothers as well.

Quetzali and Chata both used the word "freedom" throughout their pláticas. Chata used it to describe the lack of freedom she felt because she had not been able to go to school. She felt

like not having an education restricted the choices and opportunities that were afforded to her, yet she expressed that seeing Quetzali pursue her Ph.D. made up for it all. Quetzali also used the word in relation to her education. She joked that for the longest time she was afraid of getting married because she thought it would mean the end of her education, since this had been her mother's experience. She waited to get married once she was in the Ph.D. program and was very careful in selecting a partner that supported her educational endeavors. The passage above shows how a muxerista voice is an expression of freedom and is connected to being able to speak your mind. This is why Chata did not want to silence Quetzali because she wanted to make sure she felt free.

As described earlier a muxerista voice is used to name oppression, it is also a voice for others. The daughters often spoke about using their voice to honor their mothers' struggles. This shows how a muxerista voice is rooted in community; it aims to name oppression and to transform it. Maria learned from her mother's muxerista stories that often she faced racism as a teacher's assistant in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), yet she never said anything because she was afraid of losing her job. Knowing this encouraged Maria to use her voice to name oppression. When she attended college as an undergraduate she became an activist. She helped organize rallies, campaigns, and protests to improve the campus racial climate. In the following quote she describes the privilege she feels to be able to use her voice.

> I am in a position right now where I am a student, I am paying to be here, I am their customer, they better fucking listen…and so I felt like again owing it to the people who come before you, it's like maybe I can't change LAUSD for you, maybe I can't change the world for you, but I owe it to everyone before me who's had to put up with this kind of bullshit to start speaking and to start talking about well even the cup policy at the local coffee house like this is classist…

As a teacher's assistant, Maria's mother, Rosario, often put up with teachers that were condescending or racist. They would yell at her or belittle her in front of students. Hearing these

stories of injustice, a muxerista story, made Maria realize what a huge privilege she had. She was not only pursuing a college degree but she could also use her voice without the pressures her mother faced. What is important to point out in Maria's excerpt is how she connects her voice to "owing it to the people that come before you," which shows how a muxerista voice is not individualistic but communal. The daughter's realization that many Women of Color that came before them were not always able to use their voice invigorated them to "start talking," as Maria put it. To name all the injustices they witnessed, in Maria's case she calls out the campus coffee house cup policy as classist. As the previous chapter showed, Maria continues to use her voice through her activism, more recently focusing on improving her community of South Gate.

I categorize a muxerista voice as an interaction because it is a social action; it is nurtured through dialogue with other Women of Color or with our own mothers. As I have explained it is often developed through muxerista story(telling), which I will discuss next. Part of a pedagogy of the borderlands encompasses interactions like this one, it is fundamental to raising muxeres truchas. As muxeres truchas we use our muxerista voices in spaces both within schools and beyond them, to name oppression and to transform it. Even if at times we are the only voice we acknowledge that through our voices we channel our mothers and generations of Women of Color that have been silenced for too long.

Our muxerista voices have at times gotten us in trouble in school, as was the case with Quetzali, but they have also helped improve the lives of People of Color like Maria has done through her activism. Chata and Quetzali's narrative showed how schools often silence young brown girls and how our mothers' make up for this through their own pedagogies of the home (Delgado Bernal, 2001). Chata's own experiences of silence informed her dedication to making sure Quetzali learned to use her voice. Fe's mother Marissa illustrated that our mothers are

aware of how oppression, not just institutional, but also emotional and mental oppression can silence us. The urgency to "speak up" or "hablar" (talk) is a direct response to oppression. As Women of Color we cannot afford to be quiet or shy, heteropatriarchal white society already functions to do this. Therefore, to be trucha you have to not only identify oppression but also name it loud and clear, because transforming oppression begins with calling it out.

Muxerista story(telling)- *"Her stories are with me every day and with the decisions I make." – Quetzali, daughter of Chata*

In her influential book (1995), *Over the ivy walls*, Patricia Gándara finds that family stories served as cultural capital for the educational mobility of low income Chicanx students. She explains that these family stories became the clearest form of cultural capital because they transmitted cultural values about "self-worth, competence, and hopefulness" (p. 54). Gándara finds that mothers are not only the ones that are most supportive of educational goals and the ones behind their children's powerful educational ambitions, but they are also the ones who tell these stories. Many of the daughters described their mothers as great storytellers. I found that stories or cuentos often served as a pedagogical tools- ways of instilling sabidurias (wisdom), or nurturing a muxerista voice. Gándara used a Bourdieu framework to explore the role of stories in her study, hence her use of the term cultural capital. However, I found that a Chicana/Latina feminist framework better illustrated the role of storytelling in Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies.

Muxerista story(telling) is part of the interactions of a pedagogy of the borderlands. I use the term muxerista again because it recognizes it as a muxer-oriented practice. Muxerista story(telling) are communal or social interactions among Women of Color. They are stories that highlight the struggles but also the beauty and strength of Women of Color. These stories cover

themes like migration, love, oppression, morality, persistence, and survival. I put a parenthesis around the word "telling" to acknowledge the difference between the story and the telling of the story, yet the two are inseparable. Muxerista story refers to the story itself, however muxerista story(telling) refers to the actual sharing and exchange that happens during or later as a result of the story. Sometimes the story is shared more than once but each time the interactions are different, or something new is learned or highlighted. Some of these stories serve as connections to the past or as ways to embrace the daughter's Mexican roots. For instance, although Maria never met her grandmother since she passed away before she was born, she still felt a very close connection to her because her mother continuously shared stories about her. In this section I will share the role of muxerista story(telling) in Camila and Catalina, and Nati and Cecilia's mother-daughter relationship.

Catalina grew up in South Gate a predominately Mexican community. Her family is from a pueblo (town) in Michoacán and they remain deeply connected to it. Growing up Catalina would travel yearly to visit family and has many fond memories of her time in México. It is important to note that many of the mothers and daughters come from pueblitos not cities from México, these experiences are vastly different, for one, families from pueblos tend to be more working-class. My parents are from a pueblo called Tepehuaje de Morelos, an hour away from Guadalajara. When they married they moved to Guadalajara to start a family, which is where I was born. On our yearly visits to México we divide our time between visiting family in Tepehuaje and Guadalajara. Thus I understand how different these experiences are, pueblo life versus city life.

Catalina is the oldest of three; she has two younger brothers. She also recently became a tía. As a former elementary school teacher she has always been invested in the education of

Latinx students. Her mother Camila worked as a seamstress when Catalina was growing up. She has since transitioned to working as a medical assistant. Camila continues to be very involved in her church; she is part of a prayer group that regularly volunteers at a convalescent home in Tijuana, México. But above all Camila is a great storyteller; Catalina talked a lot about her mother's stories and how much she enjoyed them. Her mother would often get her to do chores around the house in exchange for a story. Any event or action often prompted a story from her mother. For example, they would be tortiando (making tortillas) and her mom would share a story about her childhood. Some of the stories touched on issues of morality, like adultery, and the importance of being loving and compassionate to others, others were more fun and laughable. Catalina enjoyed all of them.

During her trips to México she remembers as a child standing by the adult table and just listening to the stories shared among family. She explained how they were probably not "age appropriate" but that she was allowed to listen as long as she was not a "salero" (salt shaker). She described it the following way, "Don't be in the middle of the table, like the saleros are in the middle of the table, just move to side, as long as you're quiet you can listen." I have similar memories of watching and listening to the adults in my family share stories, as I stood in the corner of the table hoping no one would see me and tell me to go play. This shows how storytelling is a communal interaction, it is an exchange shared among family members. Yet I argue that muxerista story(telling) is done among the women of the family and serves as a pedagogical tool for mothers to raise muxeres truchas.

A prevalent muxerista story that the daughters talked about was their mother's migration story. Although many children of immigrants will at one point in their lives hear their parent's migration story, when it is told through the vantage point of Women of Color it is a very

different account. Catalina shared how hearing her mother's migration story impacted her ambition to succeed in school. In the following passage from her individual plática she touches on her mother's migration story.

> Catalina: Well when I think about her struggles, and as I get older, growing up my mom would tell me things that maybe sometimes she shouldn't have, I don't know, right?
>
> Alma: Yeah.
>
> Catalina: But in a lot of ways, I feel that that's why I am how I am because I feel like she wouldn't filter things like in her experiences, like she told me when they crossed and she has this big scar on her head because she said, I was pregnant with you, I was feeling nauseous, we were going through the fence and she's telling me the story, and she says then I got hurt, we had to go under it and I got a big gash.
>
> Alma: Yeah.
>
> Catalina: But I think in hearing her telling me those stories it's like if she's done all of these things in less than prime conditions like why wouldn't I be able to and that I feel is constant with her, it's a reminder to me.

Camila's migration story is a muxerista story because it highlights how she experienced crossing the border as a Woman of Color. To begin, she was pregnant with Catalina when she crossed, making the experience more stressful. She describes feeling nauseous which could be either from the anxiety of crossing, from her pregnancy, or both. We can assume that Camila crossed as undocumented given the fact that she is going under a fence. Camila ends up getting hurt and now has a scar on her head that serves as a reminder of the struggle of making it over to the U.S. Her scar became the impetus for this story.

Cindy Cruz (2001) explains that, "The body prompts memory and language, builds community and coalition. The body is a pedagogical devise, a location of recentering and recontextualizing the self and stories that emanate from that self" (p. 668). Camila's migration story is written in her body, she is marked by it through her scar, but also through Catalina, who in a metaphoric way crossed with her too.

Corina Benavides López (2010, 2016) has written about pedagogies of migration and the impact they specifically have on undocumented students as they navigate their education. She defines pedagogies of migration as "immigrant ways of teaching and learning" that encompass pedagogies of historical context described as a "historically informed social, cultural, and racial awareness an immigrant or migrant-identified individual develops as a result of familial (undocumented) immigration history intentionally and unintentionally taught by family and community" (2016, p. 89). Camila's muxerista story is an example of a pedagogy of historical context, although it is only a fragment of her migration story, it does foster racial awareness. While Benavides López does not mention a gender consciousness, in the case of Camila we see how her story also nurtures an awareness of how gender and immigration status intersect.

Catalina does mention that perhaps her mother should have waited to share this story when she was older, but she then says, "but in a lot of ways, I feel that that's why I am how I am because I feel like she wouldn't filter things." When she says "I am how I am" she is referring to the strength she has inherited from her mother and how her mom not "filtering" things for her as a young girl made her understand the world more critically. She also adds that knowing the hardships her mom went through to get to the U.S. made her realize how privileged she is; in other words in the context of her mother's struggles she feels her opportunities are limitless.

Catalina also shared with me how her mother's story of not being able to go school in México created a drive in her to succeed in her education. In the following excerpt I asked Camila why she was not able to continue going to school, my first guess was that she had to work to support her family but she clarified that it was her father that did not let her go to school.

> No él (in reference to her father) no me dejo trabajar allá, decía no porque cuando el pasaba [la escuela] veía a las muchachas con los muchachos ahí y no no le gusto, entonces yo no más estudie primaria. Aquí cuando vine empecé a estudiar Inglés y fue

> que me gradué de la high school, porque hice el GED y me gradué de la high school pero de adultos.
>
> *No he (in reference to her father) didn't let me work over there, he said no because when he would drive by [the school] he would see the young girls with the young guys there and he didn't like it, so therefore I was only able to go to elementary school. When I came here I started to study English and that's how I graduated from high school, because I did my GED and I graduated from high school but for adults.*

This is another example of a muxerista story as it shows how historically Women of Color have been denied the opportunity to go to school because of heteropatriarchy. Camila's father worried that going to school with boys would be a distraction for her, never mind the opportunity to learn and grow. Unfortunately, and as I have described, Camila's story is the story of many other young immigrant Women of Color. It is a narrative that although difficult to retell, it often inculcates a drive or ambition in the next generation to surpass these heteropatriarchal notions and succeed in school.

Catalina also explained that witnessing her mother go on to get her General Educational Development (GED) certificate after being denied the opportunity to go to school in México had a profound impact on her. She learned how important education was to her mother through her stories and in seeing her go on to complete her education as an adult. Muxerista storytelling nurtures a conocimiento of what it means to be a Woman of Color. For Catalina her mother's muxerista stories taught her about the value of education, heteropatriarchy, and the immigrant struggles as a Woman of Color.

Cecilia is another daughter that talked about her mother as a storyteller. Cecilia is the mother of two beautiful babies. I have seen her babies grow up since they were born and witnessed her love and devotion as a mother. I admire the way she has been able to navigate academia as a mother; she gives me hope that it is possible to be both- a mother and a scholar. Cecilia was born in Durango, México and completed some of her schooling there. She began

fourth grade in the U.S., more specifically in Inglewood, a city located southwest of Downtown Los Angeles. Her mother Nati is a very spiritual and religious mother of three. Cecilia specifically described her as a Guadalupana referring to a more women centered devotion to Catholicism. Guadalupana is a reference to la Virgen de Guadalupe, in Mexican culture she has served as a symbol of femininity, justice, and liberation.

Cecilia's family is an example of a mixed status family, her father and two younger brothers were born in the U.S. making them citizens, however Cecilia and Nati were born in México and when they immigrated to the U.S. they struggled to establish residency, making them undocumented. A few years later after Cecilia had graduated from high school and enrolled in El Camino Community College, her and her mother left to México to try to fix their immigration papers. The process was supposed to have taken at most three years but it ended up taking five years. During this time Cecilia and Nati lived in Durango with her uncle and from time to time her father and brothers would visit. Although Cecilia and Nati became closer during this time, Cecilia mentioned that now as a mother she could not imagine what that was like for her mom to be separated from her sons. Similar to Huitzilin and Flor, their experience as immigrants is central to their narrative. Their account shows the troubling repercussions of a broken immigration system.

Cecilia's deep connection to México and her family there is partly due to her mother. Even when they moved back to the U.S., Nati kept the memory and essence of the family in México through storytelling. Storytelling has always been a central part of Nati's way of being. As Cecilia put it, "she has a story for everything." Nati lost her mother at the young age of 15 however she has kept her memory alive for Cecilia through stories of her. In the following quote

from her individual plática she talks about her grandma based on the stories her mother has shared with her, and what these stories mean to her.

> Mi abuelita era muy fuerte (My grandma was really strong), my grandma had a little store in the pueblo and she was like the one who was the provider, my mom says, "your grandma had a very stern look pero tenia un corazon bueno, she had a really good heart, and your grandpa tu abuelo era tan menso (was so stupid)." She would say, "tu grandpa se dejaba, venia la gente a la tendia y que señor no tengo para pagarle esto, lleveselo, lleveselo (your grandpa was a pushover, people would come to the store and be like sir I don't have money to pay for this, take it, take it)." And she remembers being in the little store in the back and seeing her mom be like to my grandpa, "no puedes hacer eso con todos, mira el no ha pagado desde la vez pasada (you can't be like that with everyone, look he hasn't paid since the last time), like you can't just let people walk over you." So my mom always wanted to be like my grandma strong like really just strong and physically strong, my grandma was picking up costales de maiz (sacks of corn) and having them ground y todo eso (and everything else), so my mom always talks about my grandma about her strength. So I think the one thing I learned is that I come from strong women, so to me even though she didn't tell me learn from these strong women in your family the fact that anytime she would always refer to a story of grandma or my other tía who se vino al otro lado (came to the other side) and built her little house over here, I learned that there was always an example of something I could do with the women in my family. I never picked up the idea that women couldn't do something. I never felt like I couldn't do something because there was always a story of someone who did it, so I think that's like the one lesson, like ok she never said this is a lesson y esto se hace haci (and you do this like this), but whenever I told her like I couldn't do this or me dijieron esto que crees que haga (they told me this what do you think I should do) like she would always tell me about grandma or my tías, the way they did it.

Cecilia explained that her mother's stories were examples of how strong the women in her family were and how her possibilities as a Woman of Color were limitless. This is another illustration of muxerista stories or storytelling. These are stories of (im)migrant Women of Color that assert their strength and agency. In the context of U.S. heteropatriarchal white society these stories are radical and go against the grain because they challenge majoritarian deficit notions of immigrant Women of Color. Cecilia was never able to meet her grandmother but her mother has kept her memory alive through her stories. She learned that her grandmother was the one that kept their business running successfully, that she was not afraid to use her voice, and that she was both mentally and physically strong. Nati wanted to emulate her mother's strength

and in a similar way Cecilia wanted to be like her mother and grandmother- strong. It is essential to point out that Cecilia mentions that she never picked up the idea that women could not do something because of her mother's muxerista stories. This shows the importance of these stories in raising muxeres truchas; they help them develop a critical conocimiento of the world through a lens of empowerment.

Muxerista storytelling challenges heteropatriarchal white society and teaches Women of Color about their herstories and the intergenerational strength, wisdom, and beauty they have inherited. Given that most schools do not provide examples of resilient, beautiful, and intelligent Women of Color in books or curriculum, these stories are a central pedagogical tools in raising muxeres truchas. They are important because they serve as counternarratives to white supremacy and give Women of Color a sense of themselves and how to navigate society. For the daughters they often served as their purpose to achieve in their education. Although Cecilia says that her mother never told her directly "to learn from these women," her mom would often offer a story to help her be reflective when she was faced with an issue. These stories helped her make sense of how to resolve or navigate issues often tied to class, racial, gender, and immigrant struggles. They nurtured a critical conocimiento of how to navigate systems of oppression and inculcated ambition and resiliency. Furthermore, as discussed earlier muxerista stories also directly nurtured a muxerista voice. The stories taught them how systems of oppression informed how the women in their family negotiated their voices- when they used them or when they could not use them.

Muxerista stories are also intergenerational and have the potential to be healing. In the next section I will discuss intergenerational sabidurias however before that I would like to connect them to muxerista stories. As mentioned earlier, Cecilia is a mother of two and

discussed how she continuously thinks about how she will tell her mother's stories to her children. She has also tried to become a muxerista storyteller for her own children by paying attention to the way her mother tells stories. Storytelling has been so central to Cecilia that she even explained how it has helped her with her schoolwork. She described how she builds a story when she is trying to memorize or understand something; she also added that she tries to create stories through her research. In the following passage Cecilia and her mother are talking about what stories mean to them. Cecilia touches on the intergenerational aspect of it and Nati on how it can be a healing process.

> Cecilia: Me cuenta de personas, me cuenta de cosas que pasaron and it helps me think of a way of then retelling that story to my daughter and to my son so I think I ask for details that sometimes she gives and sometimes she doesn't remember and that's fine and I ask for those details so I can make like a composite story for my kids.
>
> Nati: Bueno ahi muchas cosas (in reference what kind of stories she tells) creo que lo se me hace mas fácil es los recuerdos, aunque duelan todavía, a veces me doy cuenta que cuando cuento digo ahi necesito algo de sanación porque como que hay dolor, verdad, pero es bueno recordarlos porque este pues recordar la niñez y los sucesos que pasaron y a donde estoy ahora, verdad, lo que tengo como familia y pues lo que puedo dar, verdad.
>
> *Nati: Well there are a lot of things (in references to what kind of stories she tells) I think what comes the easiest to me are the memories, although they still hurt, sometimes I realize that when I am telling something that I need to heal because there is pain there, right, but it's good to remember because well to remember your childhood and all the events that happened and how far I have come along, right, what I have like my family and well what I can give, right.*

As Cecilia's excerpt shows muxerista stories are passed down from generation to generation and it is usually the women that do the telling. Cecilia asks for details from her mother's story so she can remember them and be able to share them with her own children. She refers to them as composite stories to reflect the evolution of the story. As each woman retells a muxerista story she gives it her own shape, perhaps she adds her own interpretation or her own points of focus. As such the story begins to become a composite of various interpretations as it

gets passed down from generation to generation. Cecilia expressed that there is no way she could retell the story exactly the way her mom does, her body language and cadence for example cannot be replicated. Additionally, as a bilingual speaker she may add more of one language when she retells it, and her own children may tell the story in a different language, but the point is that muxerista stories live on for generations and essentially help mold a trucha identity. They teach Women of Color how to survive, thrive, and transform oppression- and can also be healing.

Nati's quote shows the potential for muxerista stories to be healing. She explains how sometimes it is painful to retell or share certain stories; but that it is only by retelling them that she realizes she needs healing. She is able to heal her pain by recognizing how far she has come. As described earlier Nati went through a difficult separation from her husband and two sons, for five years she mothered across borders- she was a transnational mother (Abrego, 2014). Cecilia also shared how the family went through difficult financial moments. So in all, Nati has been able to overcome a lot and even though revisiting these moments through stories can be painful, she is able to heal her pain by recognizing her own resiliency.

Muxerista story(telling) is part of a pedagogy of the borderlands to raise muxeres truchas. They are stories that have the ability to empower, heal, agitate, and transform Women of Color. They are often filled with wisdom on how to navigate, thrive in, and transform oppression. For the daughters, their mothers' muxerista stories were often the incentive to succeed in their education and surpass all boundaries. I shared how Camila's migration story shaped Catalina's understanding of her own capabilities. If her mother could survive crossing the border, she could do anything. Her mother's story of stolen educational opportunities also informed her commitment to achieve everything her mother was denied because of heteropatriarchy. Cecilia and Nati showed how muxerista stories are counternarratives to heteropatriarchal white society.

These stories show the agency, resistance, and strength of Women of Color. Cecilia and Nati also showed the intergenerational and healing aspect of muxerista storytelling. As Quetzali's opening quote expresses, our mother's muxerista stories are with us every day and inform the decisions we make. For me personally, my mother's muxerista story has validated my right to think and trust myself as a Woman of Color in academia. In the next section I trace intergenerational sabidurias and tensions through the narrative of Paloma and Carolina.

Intergenerational sabidurias & tensions- *"Inconsciente o consciente yo hice lo mismo que hicieron mis papás conmigo." –Carolina, mother of Paloma*

"Unconscious or conscious I did the same thing my parents did with me." –Carolina, mother of Paloma

Carolina is from a small pueblo in Jalisco and immigrated to La Puente, California when she married at the age of seventeen. She had big dreams of going to school but due to her family's economic struggles at age 13 she left her small pueblo to the neighboring city, Guadalajara, to start working. She was delighted to find work as an in-house maid with a distant family aunt who seemed supportive of her educational goals. She promised her that after a year of working for her she would pay for her to continue going to school. Unfortunately, Carolina explained that because she was so good at her job her aunt changed her mind and never followed through with her promise. Carolina never brought it up and regrets not doing so. As she reflects back on her childhood she explains that she is proud to have been able to provide for her parents. She owes her strong work ethic she developed at such a young age to her parents, as well as her faith and optimism. Her experiences shaped the sabidurias (wisdom) she passed down to her daughter Paloma.

In this section I discuss the final interactions of a pedagogy of the borderlands, what I refer to as intergenerational sabidurias and tensions. Sabidurias translate to wisdom and are developed from communal and life experiences. Often they are acquired from sacrificial or painful experiences, but as well as from happiness and transitions. Unlike knowledge, sabidurias are a more spiritual and intuitive way of knowing that creates a sense of purpose. Although they arise from personal experience they are used to navigate everyday life. The sabidurias I will talk about here are intergenerational; women in the family have passed them down from generation to generation.

The sabidurias the women spoke most about were the value of an education, the importance of voice, and knowing how to be resilient and resourceful. I would say that all the actions, rituals, and interactions of a pedagogy of the borderlands are to some degree intergenerational. However, each generation has molded that sabiduria to fit their own context. For example, many of the mothers experienced poverty, which created a sabiduria of how to be resourceful; the rasquache aesthetic and hustle that I spoke about in the actions of a pedagogy of the borderlands. Their daughters used this sabiduria to fit their own context, how to hustle in graduate school for instance, and their daughters will continue to mold it to fit their own realities.

Yet in recognizing sabidurias I must also point to intergenerational tensions, ways of being and knowing that can be problematic. For example, how heteropatriarchy is passed down from generation to generation. Some of these intergenerational tensions are framed by the immigrant experience; mothers having to navigate how to raise their daughters in a country they did not grow up in. For instance, many of the daughters spoke about how difficult it was for their mothers when they left to college. This experience although new to them too, was even newer to their mothers. Unlike the U.S., in México it is very uncommon for young people to

leave home after high school for college, most colleges and universities do not have dormitories. These tensions are not necessarily "bad," but are difficult and at times contradictory. However, they also have the potential to be transformative. In the next chapter I will address more of the tensions and contradictions in Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies, in this section I focus on how they can be intergenerational.

Carolina had very high expectations for her daughter Paloma, both at home and in school. In school only A's were acceptable and at home Carolina expected Paloma to keep up with her domestic responsibilities. Paloma is the oldest of four and similar to Fe and Catalina she often acted as a co-mother to her siblings. One of the intergenerational tensions that came up in Carolina and Paloma's narrative was the amount of home responsibilities Paloma was expected to attend to as the oldest daughter. While Paloma expressed no anger about it as we talked about it in the mother-daughter plática, I realized how expectations of what it means to be the oldest daughter were intergenerational and related to heteropatriarchy. The following passage describes what it was like for Paloma when her mother tried to go back to school.

> Paloma: She tried to go back to school.
>
> Carolina: I tried to go back to school cuando el niño era chiquito, esa vez tuve que dejar de ir porque vi una presión para Paloma, ponerlos en la cama, bañarlos, leer, que se bañen y cuando no estaban bañados y estaban en la misma ropa que yo los deje a las seis de tarde que me fui, yo no iba contra mi esposo, yo iba con ella, pero muchas de las veces yo me fui acostando me como pero quien lo hace por mi? Y fue cuando yo tuve que parar porque me dijo mi esposo pero es que estas bien, estas empezando, que no tienes que parar. Si tu no estas aquí, tu deberias hacer el trabajo que esta haciendo la niña pero tu no estas aquí para hacerlo.
>
> Paloma: Pero yo siento como que yo me acuerdo que era mi papá que no quería que estuvieras en la escuela, que había la tension de que había cosas que hacer en la casa…
>
> Carolina: Y yo me iba
>
> Paloma: Aja

Carolina: El dijo no pares, yo te voy ayudar, pero no, era diario la responsabilidad, pero siempre ha sido asi y quizás tiene mucho que ver el tema de la manera que yo fue criada que el hombre no admite tanta responsabilidad

Paloma: She tried to go back to school

Carolina: I tried to go back to school when the boy was little, that time I had to stop going because I saw the pressure Paloma was under, put them to bed, shower them, read to them, that they take a shower and when they were not showered and they were in the same clothes that I left them in when I left at six in the afternoon, I wouldn't hold it against my husband, I would go to her, but a lot of those times I would go to bed asking myself who would do it for me? And that's when I had to stop but my husband told me but you're doing well, you're just starting, you don't need to stop. But you're not here, you should be the one doing the work the girl is doing but you're not here to do it.

Paloma: But I feel like I remember that it was my dad that didn't want you go to school, that there was that tension that there was stuff to do at the house…

Carolina: And I would leave

Paloma: Aha

Carolina: He said don't stop, I am going to help you, but no, the responsibly was daily, but it's always been like that and perhaps the topic has a lot to with the way I was raised that the man doesn't take on a lot of responsibility.

This passage shows how heteropatriarchy is intergenerational. Similar to Paloma I also share some of these tensions with my own mother. Carolina's attempt to go back to school shows la sabiduria del valor de la educación (her wisdom of the value of education). As I shared earlier she wanted to go to school but was not able to because of economic hardships. When she goes back to school Paloma picks up all of her responsibilities at home, instead of her husband. In addition to her schoolwork, Paloma became responsible for her siblings, cleaning, and cooking. Carolina admits that when things were not done by the time she got home she would not hold it against her husband who is the other parent at home, but instead would blame Paloma. Carolina struggles with this, she mentions going to bed and feeling like no one else can do it but Paloma. It is noteworthy that Paloma says that she remembers her dad not being supportive in

general, that he did not want her mother to go back to school. Carolina however still suggests that he was supportive by saying, "He said don't stop, I am going to help you."

The issue is not about whether Paloma or Carolina is right but more about how heteropatriarchy affected the way Paloma was raised. As the oldest it was expected that she take on the parenting responsibilities when her mother Carolina was absent, rather than her father. At the end of the excerpt Carolina admits that it has to do with the way she was raised. Although she does not name it "heteropatriarchy," the idea that a man should have less parenting responsibilities is rooted in a system of hierarchy and power, where women are always at a disadvantage. Carolina must have seen this in her own home growing up and thus replicated it with her own family. Later in the plática Paloma discusses how she also started perpetuating heteropatriarchy in her romantic relationships. In the following quote she discusses what her relationship was like with her last boyfriend.

> Paloma: When I had my last boyfriend I still had these domestic responsibilities that he was like si esta fria mi sopa yo me la caliento (if my soup is cold I can heat it up), he had to say I am not your dad muchas veces (a lot of times).
>
> Carolina: Nice! Nice!
>
> Paloma: Because I had these feeling still of like, he was like I actually don't like how you iron you know pero it was such a mind thing for me, cause I was like what? So you wanna do something for me?
>
> Carolina: But I was raised differently so…

This passage shows how ingrained heteropatriarchy is in our homes and in society. Our mothers are not necessarily to blame; heteropatriarchy is a systemic issue that has functioned for centuries. With that said however, as mothers and daughters we can work against heteropatriarchy together. This is not easy and I recognize the pain and anger that sometimes arises from such attempts. Yet I believe in our courage and agency to be that spark of

transformation. What this excerpt also shows is how heteropatriarchy is intergenerational; Paloma realizes that what she is doing is the same thing her mother does with her father, being at his service. What is interesting is Carolina's expression of joy to hear Paloma's then boyfriend tell her that he can do it himself. This shows that Carolina is aware of how problematic this is, that we are so serviceable to men. Yet again Carolina ends the discussion by pointing out that she was raised this way, which shows not only the intergenerational aspect, but also how difficult it can be to challenge heteropatriarchy when it has been so ingrained in our lives.

Yet with tensions there are also empowering sabidurias that are passed down from generation to generation. These sabidurias are often imparted through muxerista stories or are embodied or performed. One central sabiduria that was passed down to not just Paloma but to many of the daughters is the power of your voice, or what I referred to earlier as a muxerista voice. Carolina described Paloma as "callada" (quiet) and although that is not necessarily a negative thing, from Carolina's lived experiences she knew that it was also important to teach Paloma to use her voice- to speak up. Similar to my own mother, she often put Paloma in uncomfortable situations to teach her to use her voice.

One specific incident Carolina spoke about was when Paloma went to pay for an ice cream and returned with candy as change instead of money. The paletero (ice cream man) thought it was acceptable to give her change this way. Upset, Carolina sent Paloma back to get her change in money. Paloma remembers not wanting to go and being frustrated at having to do this. Carolina explained that it was not so much about the money but more about teaching Paloma to use her voice and to not let anyone take advantage of her. In the following quote Carolina is explaining why teaching Paloma to use her voice was so important to her.

> Entonces a mi desde muy joven se me dieron muchas cosas que yo no quería y si yo halla tenido alguien que me reforzada no quiero esto, yo quiero esto, yo halla tenido más la

> oportunidad de saber expresarme mejor, yo allá obtenido un poco más de lo que yo quería en la vida. Entonces con ellos yo quiero estar seguros de que si estas obtenido de lo que tu quieres, de que estas contenta.
>
> *So for me since I was young they gave me a lot of things that I did not want and if I would have had someone to reinforce that I didn't want that, that I wanted that, I would have had more of an opportunity to express myself better, I would have had a bit more of what I wanted in life. So with them I want to be sure that they are getting what they want, that you are happy.*

As discussed at the beginning of this section Carolina regrets not ever speaking up about her aunt's promise to support her education. Her aunt changed her mind once she saw how much work there was and the hard worker Carolina was. Therefore, when she says, "I would have had a bit more of what I wanted in life," it shows the consequence of not using your voice, you miss out on the opportunity to shape your own life. As outlined often sabidurias are born out of painful experiences, such as this one, but they become powerful when they are transmitted to the next generation. Carolina made sure Paloma understood how important it was for her to express herself and for others to respect her decisions. As we continue talking Carolina adds that in life there will always be people that intimidate you but it is important to not let them diminish your voice. Paloma admits that she still struggles with this, but witnessing her mother model this for her has definitely helped her become more assertive and demanding of her voice.

The immigrant experience also shaped the sabidurias the daughters received from their mothers. The value of an education was a sabiduria that came from their personal experience of not being able to go to school. It was also understood that there were a lot more opportunities in the U.S. compared to México. Central in Paloma and Carolina's mother-daughter narrative were books. When you dig deeper into Carolina's story you understand why her love and respect for books became a sabiduria that she passed down to Paloma. As described earlier Carolina left to Guadalajara to work as an in-house maid. She shared with me that she has always loved books;

she says "te transportan a un mundo diferente" (they transport you to a different word). As a maid she could not afford a library card to check out books, thus she would often resort to stealing books from the house she worked in. She explains more,

> Cuando estaba en Guadalajara, yo creo que tenia como 15 años, yo le robaba los libros y en tiempo me cachaban y yo se los pedía prestados para en la noche yo leerlos pero como era responsabilidad, ósea como yo saco un libro de la biblioteca yo tengo que regresarlo en buen estado, entonces si yo lo regreso en mal estado y si yo lo estoy prestando a la house keeper me lo va regresar mal, ósea era su responsabilidad, por eso no podía rentarme libros para mi ella, entonces me decía así como te estoy prestando el libro mira fíjate no tiene ninguna pagina rota so yo tenia que regresárselos así.
>
> *When I was in Guadalajara, I think I must have been 15 years old, I would steal the books and at times she would catch me and I would ask to borrow them to read them at night but because it was her responsibility, like if I borrow a book from the library I need to return it in good condition, so if I return in bad condition and if I am lending it to the housekeeper if she returns it in bad condition, well it's her responsibility, that's why she couldn't check out books for me, so that's why she would tell I am letting you borrow this book look at how none of the pages have tears so I had to return it like that.*

From this quote we again see how these sabidurias are often born out of painful experiences. Carolina had such a deep interest in reading and learning but as a maid, she did have not access to books. She was only allowed to read books if the homeowner was ok with lending them to her. Again, recall how badly Carolina wanted to continue going to school when she moved to the city but was not able to.

La sabiduria de leer (the wisdom of reading) was strongly inculcated in Paloma. Both Paloma and Carolina spoke about their weekly trips to the local library. Below they are discussing this:

> Carolina: Entonces cuando yo me vine aquí (los E.U.), cuando íbamos a la biblioteca con Paloma, Paloma agarraba libros para ella y yo los mío, no se cuantos podías agarrar…
>
> Paloma: Pero agarrábamos muchos, we had bags! Bags full of books
>
> Carolina: Agarrábamos el limite de libros, era increíble

Carolina: So when I came here (the U.S.), when we would go to the library with Paloma, Paloma would get books for her and I would get mine, I don't know how many you could get…

Paloma: But we would get a lot, we had bags! Bags full of books

Carolina: We would get whatever the limit was, it was incredible.

This sabiduria is framed by Carolina's immigrant experience of coming from a country where access to books was challenging. Therefore when she came to the U.S. she passed on her love for books to Paloma, she made sure she had access to as many books as she wanted. They read together every night. Carolina shares that because she could not read in English she would make the stories up for Paloma based on the illustrations in the books. This shows her dedication to reading to Paloma. She chuckles and says that there came a point when Paloma started reading in English and realized that she was making up the story, not following the one written in the book. As such, Paloma started reading to her mom instead. Now older, Carolina and Paloma have their own book club where they both select books to read and discuss together. Paloma looks for books that are in both languages, English and Spanish, so that they both can participate.

This sabiduria of literacy or the value of education was central to all the daughters' narratives. They understood how important education was because of their mother's sacrifices, denied access to education, or impoverished experiences. As immigrants, or daughters of immigrant mothers, we view education as a privilege because of what our mothers went through. This is a sabiduria that has carried us forward in our own education; it has served as a sense of purpose.

In this section I discussed intergenerational tensions and sabidurias. I consider these interactions of a pedagogy of the borderlands because they are developed socially and are passed down collectively. I started by discussing how heteropatriarchy is so ingrained in our families

and society that it becomes intergenerational. Although it may look different through each generation, as we saw how it revealed itself in Paloma's relationship, it continues to influence our lives as Women of Color every day. However, these tensions are not necessarily static and can be changed. It may be difficult when it comes to heteropatriarchy but seeing how the mothers and daughters engaged in dialogue around the topic gives me hope that we are at least in transition or working towards change.

I focused on two sabidurias that are central to a pedagogy of the borderlands, the importance of voice and the value of an education or literacy to be more specific. These sabidurias are developed through painful or sacrificial experiences on behalf of our mothers or their own mothers as well. Through these sabidurias each generation makes strides to accomplish more and learn more about how to navigate the world as Women of Color. This is why intergenerational sabidurias are important to raising muxeres truchas. They are sources of wisdom that are born out of generations of Women of Color and experiences.

The three daughters that were mothers themselves all spoke in depth about how their mothers have informed their own mothering practices. Carolina's opening quote points to how often, "unconscious or conscious" we do the same thing our parents did. Although it may not be the exact same thing, we adapt it to our own circumstance as mothers and daughters. The mothers and daughters showed that we cannot entirely understand Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies without considering grandmothers and other women that came before them- this pedagogy is shaped by generations of women.

Conclusion

This chapter covered the final element of a pedagogy of the borderlands- the interactions. I described a muxerista voice, muxerista story(telling), and intergenerational sabidurias and

tensions. A muxerista voice refers to the manner in which mothers develop a feminist voice in their daughters. Based on their lived experiences the mothers make it an urgent matter to teach their daughters to use their voice, to stand up for themselves, challenge oppression, and help others. A muxerista voice is often fostered through muxerista story(telling) which refers to stories that center the experiences of Women of Color. These stories highlight the struggles Women of Color face, but are also filled with the wisdom of how to navigate, thrive in, and transform oppression.

I described three different types of muxerista stories: migration stories, educational stories, and stories of resiliency. I also explained how these stories are intergenerational and have the potential to be healing. These stories become sources of strength, ambition, and resiliency for the daughters. Lastly, I described intergenerational sabidurias (wisdom) and tensions. I showed how heteropatriarchy is an intergenerational tension that as Women of Color we continuously have to figure out how to navigate and transform. I discussed two central sabidurias, developing a muxerista voice and the value of an education. These sabidurias are established through experience, often sacrificial and painful. Yet when passed down to the next generation they become transformative.

As shown, these three interactions are intimately related and work together to raise muxeres truchas. These are women who embody different forms of being smart, not only in school, but also in how they have learned to read and navigate the world as Women of Color. As Ana Castillo wrote in the epigraph of this chapter we are daughters of women who did not have the opportunity to be more than wife, mother, or assembly line worker. Yet from these marginalized positions our mothers developed this pedagogy of the borderlands to raise us-

muxeres truchas. Helping us to succeed in our education but also develop a critical conocimiento of the way systems of oppression function. This is our mother's inheritance to us.

Chapter Nine

The Role of Heteropatriarchy in Mexicana/Chicana Mother-Daughter Pedagogies

"Through our mothers, the culture gave us mixed messages: No voy a dejar que ningún pelado desgraciado maltrate a mis hijos. [I am not going to let any lowlife mistreat my children]. And in the next breath it would say, La mujer tiene que hacer lo que diga el hombre. [The woman has to do what the man says]. Which was it to be- strong, or submissive, rebellious or conforming?"
–Gloria E. Anzaldúa

I was half way through writing this chapter, initially titled *Mexicana/Chicana Mother-Daughter Tensions and Contradictions*, when I realized that all along this chapter was really about one single tension and contraction- heteropatriarchy. Although I had teased out various ideas to discuss I realized as I was writing the analysis that they all lead me back to heteropatriarchy. Furthermore, in the midst of writing this chapter another two Black men were killed by police officers- for no reason at all besides the color of their skin. While much of the discussion on the tragedies focused rightly so on racism, I did wonder how heteropatriarchy fit into the conversation.

Missing was the recognition of the widespread problem of male violence or our refusal to acknowledge how boys and men are socialized every day to believe that they must be violent, whether psychologically or physically, to prove that they are men. Our gun culture is closely connected to heteropatriarchy- the need to dominate, control, and "protect" others. In a heteropatriarchal society men are directed to channel their frustration to those with less power, often women and children, in this case People of Color. In this way, heteropatriarchy and masculinity need to be a part of the dialogue. Yet it must be clear that we are all implicated under heteropatriarchy- men and women.

While these incidents left me feeling paralyzed and deeply saddened, I acknowledge my own privilege as a light-skinned meXicana who will never be the target of anti-black violence.

In these moments of pain and rage we must look to love- to building community. I rewrote this chapter as a way to name heteropatriarchy, to not shy away from it. As hooks (2004) writes, "We have to acknowledge that the problem is patriarchy and work to end patriarchy" (p. 33). This chapter still addresses the tensions or contradictions of a pedagogy of the borderlands, however I focus on the most prevalent conflict- heteropatriarchy. I tease out three ways in which manifested itself in Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies- in relationships, education, and religion.

Anzaldúa described the Borderlands as "potentially transformational spaces where opposites converge, conflict, and transform" (Keating, 2009, p. 10). This chapter highlights the differences in the mothers and daughters accounts. The previous three chapters addressed the actions, rituals, and interactions of a pedagogy of the borderlands. I did this by showing how both the mothers and daughters accounts connected- they were in rhythm with each other. Yet during both my individual mother and daughter pláticas, as well as in the mother-daughter pláticas I sensed moments of tension. Just as I witnessed expressions of love, happiness, and sadness, I also perceived frustration and resentment. Thus mother-daughter pedagogies are not simple, they are nuanced and complicated.

As a muxerista portraitist the mothers and daughters' spirits and comfort always came first before the research. I was "la amiga de la escuela" (the friend from school) before I was a researcher and thus I navigated these tensions cautiously and respectfully. I honored them as moments of possible exploration but also did not pry. In this chapter I address my last research question, which really is two questions: *Where do Mexicana/Chicana mothers and daughters' accounts differ? What do these differences reveal about Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies?*

I argue that Mexicana/Chicana mothers and daughters' accounts differ when discussing issues related to heteropatriarchy. These moments of struggle are part of a pedagogy of the borderlands; they are embraced as a process of conocimiento (consciousness raising) and honored as potential moments of transformation. Figure eight illustrates how heteropatriarchy is a part of a pedagogy of the borderlands.

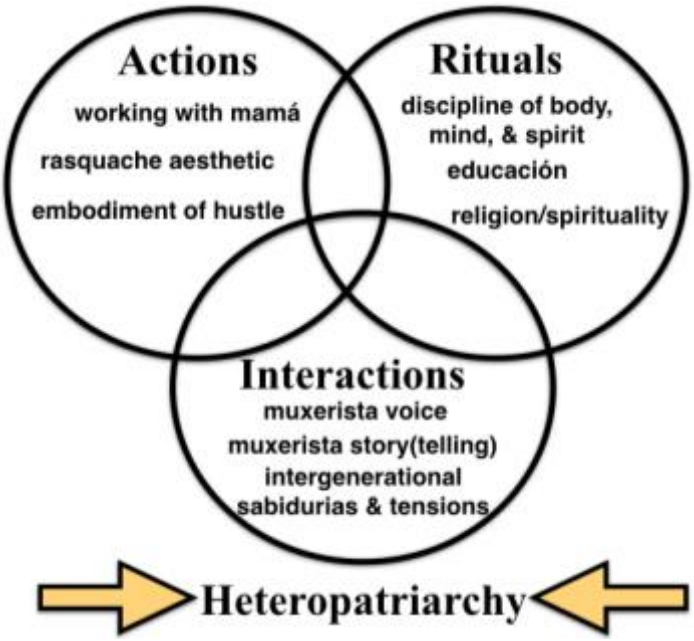

Figure 8. Patriarchy in a Pedagogy of the Borderlands

The borderlands as a pedagogical framework is by no means perfect or static, there are moments of pain and tension. It is significant to understand these moments to be in constant flux rather than "solved." Part of raising muxeres truchas is negotiating these tensions or contradictions. Sometimes we do this through dialogue but at times we ignore them. As daughters we learn when we have crossed that "line" with our mothers and must figure out how to do it lovingly. This is different for each of us and there really is no right way of doing this.

By this point, you have met the twenty collaborators of this work- the mothers and daughters. I continue with my use of portraiture collage by engaging different portraits of

mothers and daughters- individually or in pairs (Curammeng, in progress). Muxerista portraiture guides how I engage the data- bilingually, with my voice, and spiritually (Flores, under review). I begin with an introduction that lays out how heteropatriarchy fits into my family and how I define it. I then talk about heteropatriarchy in relationships specifically with our fathers, brothers, and partners. Secondly, I show how heteropatriarchy informed the educational experiences of the daughters. I conclude with discussing how heteropatriarchy and religion work cohesively to police the daughter's sexualities.

Naming Heteropatriarchy- *Y el novio? And the boyfriend?*

I cringe and glide down in my chair. My family is once again asking about el novio (the boyfriend). The questioning started as early as elementary school and still continues today, although the question has now evolved to when I plan to have kids. I hated the question then and I hate it now too. Not because I do not care to share details about my love life, but mainly because of how toxic this question was for my development as a young brown girl. I began to truly believe that my self worth and value as a woman depended on how desirable I was to men. In other words, not having a boyfriend automatically meant something was innately wrong with me or that I was failing to do something my family had so much interest in. It took a lot of self-love to heal from this and it is something I continue to work on. This is just one way in which heteropatriarchy revealed itself in my family. I begin with this personal story because it shows how heteropatriarchy is a system that both women and men are affected by, even if men receive more rewards from it.

In this chapter I explore an overarching tension and contradiction that the mothers and daughters continuously negotiated- heteropatriarchy. According to hooks (2004) patriarchy is:

> a political-social system that insists that males are inherently dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak, especially females, and endowed with the right to

> dominate and rule over the weak and to maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence (p.17).

hooks' definition is important because it shows how patriarchy is systemic and how we are all implicit in it. I add to hooks definition by acknowledging the dominance of heterosexuality as well. By using "heteropatriarchy" instead of just "patriarchy," I extend the critique of domination to not only gender but also sexuality. Heteropatriarchy acknowledges male dominance as inherently built on a gender binary system that presumes heterosexuality as the norm. While none of the mothers and daughters used the word heteropatriarchy, many of them spoke to it. Furthermore, two of the daughters identified as queer, thus I choose to use heteropatriarchy to also recognize their experiences. The next three sections will interrogate heteropatriarchy through the lens of relationships, education, and religion in the lives of the mothers and daughters.

Relationships & Heteropatriarchy- All in the family

One way the daughters first learned about heteropatriarchy was through the different treatment their brothers and fathers received. Recall Paloma and Carolina's narrative from the previous chapter where Paloma's father was excused from parenting responsibilities. Heteropatriarchal thinking encourages women and men to believe that contributions from fathers are never as important as that of mothers (hooks, 2001, p. 141). The prevalent belief in society is that fathers exist to provide material sustenance and little attention or concern is given to the emotional nurturance of fathers. This is why fathers are traditionally seen as the disciplinarians, since they are encouraged to be emotionless. When I use disciplinarian here, I do not refer to the ritual of a discipline of bodymindspirit that I spoke about earlier but rather about the act of physical punishment.

During my individual plática with Catalina, daughter of Camila, she talked about the tension that arose from the way her mom treated her brothers differently. Many of the daughters spoke about this tension, how unfair it was to be raised in a home where their mothers often excused their brothers from domestic responsibilities or where they expected much more from them in comparison to their brothers. In the following passage Catalina describes this tension.

> Well, my brothers, one of them moved away. He had a girlfriend. They lived together. Then when my dad got sick, he broke up with the girlfriend and he came back home. He came back home but it wasn't like to support. It became like, "Oh, now we have to take care of him too." And then my little brother has never lived away from my mom. He's 29, you know. His girlfriend lives at home. And so my mom is taking care of them. So sometimes it's frustrating because I see my mom like she's still working and she struggles. But you know, they don't help her financially. They never have. And so that's what I mean by like "Oh I understand you love them but you're enabling them."

This is just one of a handful of examples that Catalina gave to describe how her mother treats her brothers differently. As the oldest of three, she was also expected to care for her two younger brothers. If they did anything wrong while her mom was away Catalina always received the blame, regardless of who was at fault. Camila worked and went to school while she raised three children. During this time she relied on Catalina to help her keep up with the cooking, cleaning, and caring for her brothers at home. Similar to Carolina she did not bother or ask her husband but instead turned to Catalina.

In the quote above Catalina shared that when her father got sick she came back from the east coast to help care for him, even though her two brothers were living at home. Her mother never anticipated her brothers to help out financially or in any other away with their father, yet Catalina who was living on the other side of the country was expected to help out. This frustrated Catalina and it became something she often argued about with her mother. Catalina's annoyance came largely from witnessing how hard her mom was working and how much she was struggling to make ends meet, but would refuse to ask for help from her brothers.

I would argue that out of all the different systems of oppression (i.e. racism, classism, etc.) heteropatriarchy is the one the daughters learned most about growing up, even if they did not know what to name it, their accounts of it begin as early as elementary school. This is because heteropatriarchy determines the way our parents raise us. Daughters, like mothers, are expected to serve and to nurture, sons on the other hand are taught to be served, to provide, and to refuse to be a caretaker or nurture others (hooks, 2004). In writing this, the contradiction is blatant, as I have written tirelessly about how these mothers raised muxeres truchas- strong resilient women. Yet it would be unrealistic to not show how they also grappled with heteropatriarchy; we all do.

Camila reinforced a gendered script in which Catalina was expected to be the caretaker of her father and brothers. This made it difficult for her to witness her mother's hard labor and see how she expected nothing from her brothers. Camila was enabling them to continue following this script. In service to heteropatriarchy, her task as the mother was to reinforce these expectations. Fe, similar to Catalina, recalls complaining to her mother about this unfair arrangement. She shares below,

> When you're growing up in a traditional Mexican household where the guys don't do anything, the girls have to do everything. I think some of the arguments that we've had are because of that. Because I'm like, "No, you also work, they work, but you also work, and they also need to do their part." Her response is just like you know it's nice to cook food for someone, [laughing] like no it's not, not when you're tired. I think I would help my mom out a lot because I saw that she was the only one doing everything. I was like, "No, if someone needs to grab a fork, they can grab it themselves." But nobody would do it, so I started to help out when I was really really young.

When the daughters would challenge their mothers on their own heteropatriarchy often they were disappointed by their lack of agency or resistance. They were regularly told that they "enjoyed" serving their fathers and brothers or that they really did not mind doing it. In the passage above Fe pushes her mother, reminding her that she works just as hard as her brother and

step-dad so why is it that she also needs to cook and clean for them. When her mother brushes off the question she realizes that if she does not help her no one else will. Because boys are raised to deny their emotions it would go against heteropatriarchal gender norms to "feel" for their mother's struggle. The mothers exemplified the principles of heteropatriarchy- blind obedience, repression of emotions, and destruction of willpower. As hooks (2004) points out it is often our mothers who teach us these heteropatriarchal attitudes.

I got engaged in September 2015 around the time I was wrapping up the mother-daughter pláticas. I noticed how much attention I began to receive from the mothers when they noticed my ring. The mothers would share matrimonial advice, ideas for the wedding, but also transition to talking about their own marital wishes for their daughters. This often made me feel uncomfortable because it was a harsh reminder of how much heteropatriarchal culture values marriage for women. I admittedly was participating in it but I could not help to wonder how I was making the daughters feel. During the individual pláticas I had mothers express their desire for their daughters to marry soon or to find a partner. They worried that they would be alone forever, as if this was unacceptable. It is complicated for me to write about this because I am continuously trying to unlearn heteropatriarchy and heal from it, but it is something I have to consciously work at.

In the previous chapter, we saw how Carolina's daughter Paloma struggled to unlearn the heteropatriarchy that her mother modeled for her. She shares her harsh realization of how serviceable she was with her previous boyfriend. Discussions on partners came up during our pláticas. For the women that were in relationships or married they shared that their partners were supportive, yet how they still wrestled with heteropatriarchy. I know this is the case with my own partner.

During the mother-daughter plática with Quetzali and her mother Chata we began to talk about marriage. Recall that Quetzali feared marriage for the longest because of her mother's experience of getting married young and not being able to continue with her education. Quetzali got married about four years ago and is now the mother to a smart baby girl. Our plática took us to a space where we both were struggling to name the contradiction and conflict we experienced with our engagement. Below is a part of the plática,

> Quetzali: I don't know if you feel like this but I feel like there is a whole world out there that will celebrate that I am a mom and celebrate that I am getting married and celebrate these traditional gender roles…I am saying in general in society what we're expected as women to do and how certain things are celebrated, a wedding is so amazing you know and having a baby is so awesome and all these people will surround you and support you and congratulate you but other things…
>
> Chata: Like your education?
>
> Quetzali: I think, yeah my education, but also just like my views…they're not really celebrated, it's been hard to believe the things I do and my actions and the person I am and yet if I do something that is accepted and traditional, in line with gender roles, then it's like oh it's so awesome
>
> Alma: Yeah! It's like family being so happy for me [in reference to my engagement] but it's like hey I've been doing all these other cool things too
>
> Quetzali: YES!!
>
> Chata: Yes all these great things you guys do and those don't get celebrated, that's what you're talking about!
>
> Quetzali: YES! Seriously!

The struggle with the attention we received because of our engagement was that we wanted to feel that same celebratory feeling when it came to other things in our lives, like our education. We both admitted that part of us felt happy because as Quetzali put it when you are always going against the grain and you feel like such an outsider all the time, it is nice to feel "normal" once in a while. Yet with admitting this we also realize the painful truth that we are embracing

heteropatriarchal attitudes through our feeling of normalcy. We recognize this contradiction that marriage is often more celebrated than our ideas or ways of thinking in our families, or society in general.

I struggled with the mothers when they expressed to their daughters that they wish they would be as accomplished in their personal lives, not just in their education. They wanted them to get married and become mothers. Chata's response in the excerpt shows her willingness to try to understand what we are trying to communicate and ultimately she is the one that names it for us, "all the great things you guys do and those don't get celebrated." Chata and Quetzali often engaged in conversations like this one and one thing I really admired about their relationship was their willingness to learn and grow together. These are the moments of transformation that a pedagogy of the borderlands can offer to mothers and daughters.

Throughout this work I witnessed the contradiction in the mothers' willingness to break heteropatriarchal norms but also in their willingness to uphold them. Undeniably they were raising muxeres truchas but through it all they were also struggling with how to dismantle or navigate a system that has been so entrenched in our families and society. Heteropatriarchy requires heterosexual male dominance but it also requires embracing the values listed earlier- blind obedience, repression of emotions, and destruction of willpower. Yet heteropatriarchy can function even when there are no heterosexual men present, we need to recognize that dismantling heteropatriarchy is work that both men and women must do together. We must hold our fathers, brothers, and partners accountable but we must also hold our mother and ourselves accountable with compassion.

In this section I reviewed how heteropatriarchy revealed itself in relationships with brothers, fathers, and partners. I pointed out that as mothers and daughters we are also

sometimes complicit in upholding heteropatriarchy. Our mothers both teach us how to fit into heteropatriarchy but at the same time resist it (Collins, 2000). In the next section I present how heteropatriarchy influences our educational experiences as Mexicana/Chicana students.

Education & Heteropatriarchy- The threat of being an overly ambitious Mexicana/Chicana

According to Pérez Huber et al., (2015) from 100 Mexicanas/Chicanas that begin elementary school only .2 will go on to complete a Ph.D. While this says a lot about the educational status of Mexicanas/Chicanas it is limiting in other ways. This number alone does not reveal the tensions and contradictions that as Mexicanas/Chicanas we experience as the .2, specifically how we negotiate them with our mothers. In this section I explore how heteropatriarchy informs the educational experiences of Mexicana/Chicana students. Specifically, I discuss what it means to be first-generation college student and a Woman of Color, the relationship between health, education, and heteropatriarchy, and how being too ambitious often troubles our mothers.

All the daughters were first-generation college students and while they were seen as trailblazers in their mother's and families' eyes, tensions arose in navigating college and later on with graduate school. These tensions were related to heteropatriarchy. For example, the idea of moving away for college was difficult for the mothers to understand. For those that stayed in the Los Angeles area for college, in their mother's eyes, it made more sense for them to commute and not live in the dormitories. Part of not allowing the daughters to move out was connected to the way the mothers policed their daughter's sexuality. Society praises girls for their virginity but we do not necessarily do the same thing with boys. Daughters are traditionally anticipated to live with their family until they get married and to remain actively involved in all family

functions. "Good daughters" remain by their parent's side and are expected to always help out- to put the family needs before their own.

The daughters shared how it became difficult to explain the demands of higher education. Now that their daughters were all back in Los Angeles pursuing their Ph.D.'s, many of the mothers expressed how they felt like they did not visit them enough. The contradiction became clear- they were proud of their daughter's accomplishments and wanted to support their ambitions, but not if it meant challenging heteropatriarchal norms.

Carolina was one mother in particular that struggled with the changes that came as Paloma started college. Paloma attended college not far from home and therefore chose to commute; yet she quickly realized how difficult this became. In the following excerpt Paloma and Carolina are discussing the experience.

> Paloma: The structure of college is so unstructured and there is no schedule sometimes and I am doing homework on weekends and I am doing homework on a Friday night, suddenly there is work all the time if you had a lot of homework, but then you also have a relationship so I think my parents also wanted to see me in a seven to three schedule and be home y a veces no se podia (and sometimes that wasn't possible) and I had a boyfriend so I also wanted to be in a relationship and I think there was always the tension o estas en la escuela o estas con tu novio? (are you in school or are you with your boyfriend?) And honestly I felt like if I am doing well in school and I am doing all these things why can't I also then go out, I feel like I worked for it.
>
> Carolina: Si nos costo mucho trabajo pensar que ya cambio todo, que no era high school. Cuando fuimos a visitar varias veces a Paloma en la escuela, como yo decía, no es que ya se me Americanizo y no sentía yo que la perdía pero yo sentí como esto no hubiera pasado si hubieras estudiado en México and I was wrong hubiera pasado lo mismo…pero no es fácil convencer a mi esposo. El decia es que no puedes combinar las dos cosas (in reference to being in school and having a boyfriend).
>
> *Carolina: It was difficult for us to think that everything had changed, that it wasn't high school. When we went to visit Paloma various times at school, I would tell myself, well no it's because she's become Americanized and I didn't feel like I was losing her but I did feel like this wouldn't have happened if she had studied in México and I was wrong the same thing would have happened…but it's not easy to convince my husband. He would say you can't combine both things (referring to being in school and having a boyfriend).*

There are two tensions that are apparent in this passage, but both are related to heteropatriarchy. The first is the shift in Paloma's schedule due to her starting college, which makes it more difficult for her parents to supervise her whereabouts. In high school Paloma's parents knew that she was in school from seven to three and after that she was home with them. Carolina admitted that part of the reason why she continued to be so involved in Paloma's education during high school was so that she could "keep an eye out" on boys. Paloma shared that she had a boyfriend in high school but that she was not allowed to have one. This monitoring of Paloma's romantic relationships became inseparably connected to her educational experiences. Thus, when Paloma started spending so much time away from home because of college her mother became concerned that she had a boyfriend and perhaps was spending more time with him than actually studying.

What Carolina did not understand were the norms of college- that classes are sporadically scheduled and that homework does increase despite the decrease in class time. Paloma had a hard time explaining to her mother that even though she was not in classes for the entire day, during the time she was not, she was studying or working on her homework. Yet her mother insisted that she study at home, mostly so she could be sure that she was not lying to her. Paloma explained that it became challenging for her to get work done at home because her mom would often ask her to do things around the house. At times, Paloma would stay late into the night studying on campus. This was unacceptable to her mom- young women should not be out that late. As such Paloma's experience as a first-generation college student and as a Woman of Color were directly linked to heteropatriarchy. Her mother not fully understanding the demands of college and negotiating heteropatriarchal gender norms created a tension between the two of them.

When Carolina uses the expression, es que ya se me Americanizo (she's become Americanized) to explain how she felt about these changes, she uses it to contrast her views of Mexican versus American young women. Through the perspective of Mexicana/Chicana immigrant mothers las Americanas (white American women) are seen as more sexually promiscuous and less concerned with family, whereas young Mexican women are the opposite- celibate and deeply seated in family. She says this would not have happened if she had studied in México, making a reference to how in México women do not leave home to go to college. Yet she corrects herself, "I was wrong the same thing would have happened." Ultimately pointing to how heteropatriarchy functions across borders, not just within U.S. society but around the world.

Paloma did have a boyfriend in college, yet this never affected her academic performance, as her mom so strongly believed. This is the second tension in this excerpt- you cannot have a boyfriend and do well in school. Having a boyfriend just exacerbated the disagreements between Paloma and her mother. Carolina continuously questioned her: are you in school or are you with your boyfriend? It is astonishing to me that our mothers expect us to bring home the "perfect man" yet are often against dating or having a boyfriend. I am not exactly sure how that is supposed to work. Paloma makes a good point in the passage- why can't she have a boyfriend? She is doing well in school and works hard to make time for a relationship. Paloma's romantic relationships had always been a topic of tension at home. When talking to the mothers and daughters about disagreements they had- relationships and school tended to be a central one.

Perhaps the mothers' feared that having a boyfriend would divert their daughters from pursuing their educational goals, or it was just another manifestation of heteropatriarchy where

we police girls in a different way than boys. Boys are allowed and expected to be sexual beings early on, where girls are taught it is shameful. It could have been both, but the point here is that heteropatriarchy informs the way Women of Color navigate their education. For the mothers' heteropatriarchy was the reason why many of them were not allowed to pursue an education and interestingly enough it now continues to affect their daughters' educational experiences.

Although from the quote above Paloma's father seems to be the one most concerned about her, we see how Paloma's mother is implicit in it as well. However I should note that I also saw how Carolina served as a mediator between her husband and Paloma. She often found ways to resist his heteropatriarchal concerns while not disrupting his dominant position in the family. The strict gender roles that were imposed on Paloma made it even more challenging for her to navigate college as a first-generation college student. Her narrative shows the importance of disaggregating data by gender when it comes the experiences of Chicanx first-generation college students.

Another contradiction that presented itself was related to health. The mothers regularly shared with me their concern for their daughter's wellbeing. I especially heard it from the mothers that had their daughters living with them at home. Most of them began to notice the demands of higher education on their daughter's bodies, minds, and spirits when they started college, and now that they were in Ph.D. programs it had intensified. They spoke about how little sleep they got, the never ending work, and how stressed out they were. I saw the mothers grapple with this, they wanted their daughters to pursue their academic dreams, but not at the expense of their health. Some even told their daughters that it was ok to stop- to not finish the Ph.D. It became a source of tension, not necessarily a "bad" one, but one they were constantly trying to make sense of. What I will show is that we learn these habits from our mothers. As

daughters of immigrant Mexicana/Chicana mothers we learn to be self-sacrificing and the idea of self-care is not something we grow up seeing. Heteropatriarchy normalizes this for us, women are supposed to be like this- stressed, tired, and giving.

Some of the daughters spoke to how they would try to mask their stress to not worry their mothers. The mothers did the same thing when they were going through hard times with their husbands or financially- they hid it from their daughters. During college it had not been an issue to stay up all night studying, to eat poorly, or to stress out, because their mothers were not there to witness it. I recall lying to my mother my first year of college, telling her that everything was ok even though I was going through a lot of self-doubt. I did not want her to worry; this experience was new for the both of us and I expected she was going through her own apprehensions.

The literature shows that Latinas face unique challenges and stress in earning advanced degrees and often they are not accounted for due to the fact that they outperform their male counterparts (Gloria, Castellanos, & Orozco, 2005). A lack of finances, limited familial support, few mentors, cultural stereotypes, inhospitable campus climates, low expectations, a sense of being a cultural misfit are among the many stressors that influence how they navigate college (Gloria & Castellanos, 2012). Many of the daughters spoke of these stressors, especially a lack of finances, hostile campus climates, and the demands of balancing family and school.

Alejandra was the only professor among my collaborators; the other nine were doctoral students. She recently finished her second year teaching at a local university in Los Angeles. After receiving her Ph.D. she moved back home to San Pedro to live with her mother Socorro. Both in the individual and mother-daughter plática Socorro discussed her concern for Alejandra's wellbeing. Although she was incredibly proud of Alejandra she questioned if it was

all worth it now that she saw how overwhelmed she was. Below is an excerpt from the mother-daughter plática where the two are negotiating this tension.

> Socorro: Pues si ah cumplido mucho pero yo quisiera que tuviera un poco más de descanso para su salud verdad, porque a veces esta tan estresada que halla a loca no halla ni que hacer y pues tiene que tranquilizarse un poco. Ella también debe de pensar en ella misma pa' poder seguir adelante. Le digo que se duerma pa' que así otro día amanezca más con la mente mas despierta y pueda aplicar lo que esta haciendo, porque a veces si se duerme un rato trabaja mejor ya en el día.
>
> Alma: Es un balance difícil.
>
> Socorro: Si es balance pero si se necesita para poder seguir.
>
> Alejandra: Y también te platique de esto la primera vez (referencing her individual plática), siento que también siento lo mismo de mi madre que también necesita descansar, no si mami yo también le había platicado de eso que esta bien que nos aguantemos y todo pero a la vez hay que ser realistas y encontrar ese balance verdad.
>
> Socorro: Yo si descanso. [laughs]
>
> *Socorro: Well yes she has accomplished a lot but I would like it if she got a bit more rest for her health right, because sometimes she's so stressed out that she starts going crazy and doesn't know what to do with herself and well she needs to relax a bit. She also needs to think about herself so that she can keep going. I tell her to get some sleep so that the next day she can wake up with a fresher mind and she can focus on what she is doing, because sometimes when she sleeps for a bit she works better during the day.*
>
> *Alma: It is a difficult balance.*
>
> *Socorro: Yes it is a balance but you need it so that you can keep going.*
>
> *Alejandra: And I also spoke to you about this the first time (referring to her individual plática), I also feel the same way about my mother that she also needs to rest, no yes mami I also had talked to her about this that it's ok that we put up with each other and everything but at the same time we have to be realistic and find that balance, right.*
>
> *Socorro: I do rest. [laughs]*

This passage shows Socorro's concern for her daughter. She worries that she is forgetting about her needs. She shared that Alejandra is very dedicated to her students and work but that she often forgets to take care of herself. Alejandra shared that not much has changed since she

started working as an assistant professor- the demands from her new job are very similar to those she had in graduate school. What has changed is that her mom is now able to witness the toll graduate school and academia takes on our bodies, minds, and spirits. She would do the same thing while she was in graduate school- not sleep much and stress out. The difference is that she is now living back at home and cannot necessarily hide it from her mom. In the plática I add that it is a difficult balance, to care for yourself and stay on top of your work. Socorro agrees but also adds that if we do not take care of ourselves we will not be able to keep going.

Additionally important in the excerpt is Alejandra's concern for her mother. During our individual plática she shared how her mother even at age 75 is still very involved in doing things for the family and the community in general. She does not take much time to rest herself either. The contradiction is that the mothers would ask their daughters to take better care of themselves but they themselves were not modeling it for them. Instead the mothers often showed the daughters that despite how exhausted and overworked you are, as women it is still their duty to be self-sacrificing and serve the needs of others, especially men. In the process of giving it all to their families, the mothers often forgot to give enough to themselves. As daughters we are socialized to believe that this is what we should aspire to and although it propels us to achieve in our education it can also be damaging.

The daughters admired their mother's strength in being so relentless, hard working, and self-sacrificing- they wanted to emulate them. Yet this often translated to surrendering their entire selves to school, their careers, and families, and not accounting for their own needs. From our mothers we learned the narrow definition that womanhood or motherhood is defined by how much we give. This narrow heteropatriarchal construction of Women of Color, I would argue, affected how, if at all, the daughters cared for themselves as they navigated higher education and

academia. We learn that like our mothers we must give everything and leave nothing for ourselves. Thus, Alejandra asks her mother for the same thing, that she take care of herself too, that together they challenge the heteropatriarchal confine that Women of Color should always put themselves last. Heteropatriarchy affects how we care or do not care for ourselves as Mothers and Daughters of Color. We must work to resolve this conflict and begin to model self-care for other Women of Color- it is integral to our educational success and our health.

Through their mother's muxerista stories the daughters learned how marriage often made it challenging or in some cases impossible to pursue an education. The mothers shared how many of them were not allowed to go to school because of their father's heteropatriarchal ideas that women did not belong in school. For others when they tried to go back to school their husbands were not always supportive or helpful. The daughters learned through their mother's educación to valerse por si misma- to be self-reliant. The mothers did not want them to ever depend on a man. In all, the daughters saw the tension between marriage and education, how both of these things did not always worked cordially. As Quetzali put it, "I wanted to just run through the [educational] pipeline," because of her fear of getting married or having kids and then not being able to achieve her educational goals.

Now that the daughters were in Ph.D. programs or professors the mothers worried that they would not find a husband or partner. They wanted them to get married and have children. This was another contradiction that became clear to me, especially after my engagement and the interactions that this brought on. On the one hand the mothers had raised their daughters to not worry about men or be cautious of marriage, but now they wanted them to marry and have kids. This is the threat of being an overly ambitious Mexicana/Chicana- you can have ambition but not too much that it disrupts heteropatriarchal norms. One question I posed to all the mothers during

the mother-daughter plática was if there was something they wanted to tell their daughters that perhaps they had not told them or expressed to them enough. I heard a handful explain something similar to what Paloma's mother Carolina expressed below.

> Siempre lucha por lo que quieres, me alegra, estoy orgullosa de tus logros, se la mujer que eres, estoy orgullosísima de ti y más de los logros que has hecho, pero también me gustaría verte desarrollada en la otra, como mujer- que tengas tu pareja, todo eso, todo eso también me gustaría ver.
>
> *Always fight for what you want, I am happy, I am proud of all your accomplishments, I know the woman you are, I am incredibly proud of you and everything you have achieved, but I would also like to see you advance in the other, as a woman- that you have a partner, all of that, all of that I would also like to see.*

In response the daughters typically gave a smirk letting their mothers know that they heard what they said but were not really concerned. I had a similar reaction given how much my mother instilled in me to get an education but yet also continuously talked about the day I would get married and start my own family- what if I did not want to get married or have a family. Heteropatriarchal society socializes women to aspire to marriage. As Adichie (2014) explains in her own experiences as a Black woman, "I am expected to make my life choices always keeping in mind that marriage is the most important" (p. 29). While marriage can bring joy, love, and support, why is it Women of Color are taught to aspire to marriage and Men of Color are not?

Furthermore, heteropatriarchy teaches Women of Color that if at a certain age you are not married to see it as a deep personal failure. It was difficult to hear the mothers maintain heteropatriarchal norms in this way. While I understood where they were coming from I felt for the daughters- how unfair to be so accomplished but to still be told that you need to work on your personal life or more specifically in finding yourself a husband. This contradiction is a challenging one- our mothers raise us to never depend on a man but yet still expect us to find a man. Carolina's expression is not unique, other mother's shared similar feelings. I struggled the

most with this contradiction. It was very evident how proud Carolina was of Paloma, she could not stop smiling when I sat down with her for the first time. As much as our mothers teach us to challenge heteropatriarchy they also continue to model it for us, so it becomes a continuous battle to make sense of it and to transform it.

In this section I illustrated how heteropatriarchy informed the educational experiences of the daughters as first-generation college students. I began by discussing the difficult transition that Carolina had when her daughter Paloma started college. The change in Paloma's schedule made it more difficult for her mother to monitor where she was. This policing that mothers and fathers both participate in, is typically directed towards daughters because of the way heteropatriarchal culture values women's chastity. Closely related, Paloma's desire to have a boyfriend made these changes even tougher to navigate. Her mother questioned her even more and reminded her that having a boyfriend *and* going to school was impossible.

I then talked about Socorro's concern for her daughter Alejandra's health as a professor. She worried that she was under too much stress and not taking any time to care for herself. However, Alejandra shared the same concern- that her mother did not care for herself. What I show through the portrait of Socorro and Alejandra is that mothers model for us self-sacrifice and suffering, but not self-care. Although all the daughters admired their mothers for everything they had done for their families and their undeniable strength, it became problematic when they themselves started doing the same thing but in the setting of their education or careers. It is therefore important that our mothers' model for us that we do not have to relinquish ourselves to anything (i.e. partners, families, careers) and that our wellbeing is just as important.

I concluded with Carolina and Paloma to show the painful reality that overachieving Mexicana/Chicana students face- although they are highly accomplished in their education, their

mothers still want them to be "accomplished" through marriage and motherhood as well. These are the same mothers that raise daughters to challenge heteropatriarchy. The final section of this chapter engages religion and heteropatriarchy to show how it affects perspectives on sexuality and sex.

Religion & Heteropatriarchy- Ni santas, Ni putas, Solo mujeres

Two of the daughters specifically discussed how being queer affected their relationships with their mothers. Huitzilin particularly spoke about how this created a tension with her mother. During high school Huitzilin's tennis coach went behind her back and told her mother that she was dating a girl and that she would never be able to get into college if she continued doing so. Her mother who always regarded Huitzilin's teachers with the outmost respect believed the coach and immediately prohibited her from seeing her girlfriend. Huitzilin was angry, not only did her coach out her, robbing her of the opportunity to come out to her mother, but she also lied to her mother aggravating the situation even more. What followed were many arguments, silences, and a lot of pain that Huitzilin said took her a long time to heal from. Her mother got so frustrated with Huitzilin that she asked her to go back to México with her father- the same man that had abused her.

Huitzilin's sexuality also affected her Catholic identity. When she and her mother immigrated to the U.S. Huitzilin actually asked her mom to pay for Catechism or to take her to mass, she wanted to pick up on her faith where she had left off in México. Her mom told her that the classes were too expensive and that she did not have time to take her to mass. However Huitzilin knew that it was not so much about cost or time but more about her mom's struggle to make sense of her recent separation from her father as a Catholic woman. As a devout Catholic, Flor battled with how to make sense of her separation since in Catholicism women who divorce

or separate are often frowned at. When Flor finally paid for Catechism, Huitzilin was disappointed because of the prevalent homophobia in the classes and at mass. Ultimately Huitzilin completely separated herself from the church. Her mom eventually went back. This is when it became a conflict because now she demanded that Huitzilin go with her. In the following passage Huitzilin sheds light on this experience.

> Huitzilin: I think she didn't want to be involved with church because she was divorced or because she was separated from my dad and so she felt like that was wrong so her beliefs were deeper than her practice kind of deal. So later, she finally took me to confirmation classes when I was in high school and I did my confirmation. That was also the time that I started coming out and I was like mom I don't want to go to confirmation anymore they talk shit about gay people. She was like ni modo ahora te aguantas porque ya pague (too bad now you bear with it because I already paid) so we did that. When I was in college I think because she was really alone at home, cause I wasn't living at home I was living on campus she started going to the mass all on her own and then she started like exigiendo me (begging me) like not even suggesting like you have to go to the mass with me. When I would be home on the weekend she would be like, come on get up we're going to go to church now. I was like no mom you're crazy like you can't tell me what to do. And then later you know we went through like that whole coming out thing, I was look this why I'm not going to church because they don't want me there. I was actually really involved with the youth group and they asked the gay people from the youth group to leave, so yeah.
>
> Alma: So she left it alone?
>
> Huitzilin: Yeah until recently like last year or the year before that she was like guess what mija el padre dijo que todos estan bienvenidos que no importa a quien quieran, como ves? (the priest said that everyone is welcome that it does not matter who you love, what do you think?) Oh finally, now they want gay people…

This excerpt shows how Huitzilin's sexuality became a point of contention between she and her mother, but also with Huitzilin's own Catholic identity. As I shared earlier Huitzilin tennis coach outted her and then lied to her mother that she would never be able to go to college because of her sexuality. This happened around the same time Huitzilin was trying to reconnect with her faith and realized that the church was against LGTBQ people. It was hard for Huitzilin- her church and mother ostracized her. What I argue is that this experience of marginality is a

direct outgrowth of heteropatriarchy. We learn heteropatriarchal thinking through religion. As hooks (2004) writes, "We are taught that God created man to rule the world and everything in it and that it was the work of women to help men perform these tasks, to obey, and to always assume a subordinate role in relation to a powerful man" (p. 18). We are also taught that it is only acceptable for men and women to love each other and that as women our central duty is to be mothers. Most western religions are male dominated and promote sexism in one way or the other.

Heteropatriarchal religions, like Catholicism, have a profound impact in the way parents raise their children. Many of them operate through the assumption that the world can only be understood in binary categories- the most prominent being good versus bad. Loving someone from the opposite sex is considered "bad" in most Catholic churches. Divorce is also deemed "bad," because you are breaking the vows you made to God when you married. These heteropatriarchal notions put a strain in Flor and Huitzilin's identities and relationship. For Flor she became unsure of how to reconnect with Catholicism after separating from her husband. This conflict is problematic and shows how powerful heteropatriarchy can be. Recall how Flor's husband was abusive, and the fact that she became unsure about her separation demonstrates how as women we are socialized to always defend men. When Huitzilin decided she no longer wanted to go to church because she did not feel welcomed or respected her mother still pleads that she go with her.

The imploring still continues to this day, I myself witnessed it during the mother-daughter plática and Flor's individual plática. Flor continues to request that Huitzilin be more involved in church. Huitzilin remains spiritually connected to her faith but has chosen to not be involved in organized religion. She does not see how her identity as a queer Woman of Color is

valued in such a space, even though if her mom tells her that the priest is now open to LGBTQ people. Religions often works to maintain heteropatriarchy in our homes, it especially informs how our mothers raise us. While in the previous chapter I wrote about how important religion/spirituality was to Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies it was significant to also point out the troubling ways it functions to maintain heteropatriarchy. It has worked as a way to control the daughter's sexuality- how they can express it and who they can express it with.

When discussing the ritual of religion/spirituality I brought up the mother-daughter portrait of Rosario and Maria to discuss the way Maria infused her spirituality with social justice. However, I want to also show how religion became a point of contention between her and her mother when it came to issues around sexuality. Maria has an older sister that has a mental disability and both her and her mother serve as her legal guardians. As such, Maria has acted as a co-mother to her sister. While Maria and her mother have parented for the most part in a similar fashion the one area where they both disagree is around sex. They perceive sexuality differently. In the excerpt below Maria discusses this.

> There have been a lot of tense arguments about how to best navigate that (in reference to raising her sister). Recently she has been developing in her own ways, so her mental disability means that sometimes she acts like a five-year-old, but sometimes has the attitude of a fifteen-year-old. Part of it is preparing her if she is feeling like a fifteen-year-old and wants to become sexually active eventually, even though she's thirty something. My mom coming from a religious aspect is like "No!" And me being in terms of just health, let's deal with it that way. So that's something that we've gone back and forth about, about how to like parent that situation, and I've always been an advocate for my sister in terms of, I am the one who talks to her about like sex education and or answers any questions, how she can always come to me, it's not something to be ashamed about, it's not something that you have to feel gross about and I will never judge you. So giving her that space when my mom gives her the dialectical opposite of "Jesus and God" and like "Ah your vagina is holy!" You know what I mean?

Rosario is very religious and continues to be active in her church. She talked in depth about how important religion was in raising Maria. While she has been very respectful of Maria's decision to practice her faith in her own way, when it comes to sex education she feels the only moral option is abstinence. Catholicism has informed her ideas about sex. For example, traditionally La Virgen de Guadalupe (The Virgin Mary) serves as a Catholic symbol of what traits are acceptable for women- unselfishness and motherhood (Rebolledo, 1995). The purity and desexualizing of La Virgen becomes a way to regulate Mexicanas/Chicana's sexuality. As Paloma's earlier excerpt showed a daughter's virginity is highly regarded, policed, and protected. Because heteropatriarchal religions often adopt dichotomies, La Virgen has come to represents two choices when it comes to sex- either you are a virgin or a whore. Chicana feminist scholars have rewritten La Virgen as a way to reclaim their sexualities, pointing to how the Spaniards took a once indigenous deity, desexed her, stripped her of her femininity and strength, and made her into La Virgen we now know today (Herrera, 2011).

This excerpt shows how our mothers teach us (or do not) about sex and how this is informed by heteropatriarchal religious ideas. Rosario's idea of sex education for Maria's sister was limited to abstinence. Whereas Maria approached it through a health perspective, a more empowering way, where she felt it was necessary for her sister to understand that sexuality is nothing to be ashamed for. Adichie (2014) writes that, "We teach girls shame. Close your legs. Cover yourself. We make them feel as though by being born female, they are guilty of something. And so girls grow up to be women who cannot say they have desire" (p. 33). Maria was working to avoid this, to make her sister feel comfortable when it came to talking about sex or her sexuality. Yet this created a tension between her and her mother. I saw this reflected in many of the mothers and daughters, how discussions on sex or sexuality were heated or

controversial. They could never come to an agreement and from my analysis much of the disagreement came down to the way religion embraced heteropatriarchy and shaped Mexicana/Chicana mothering.

In this section I showed how religion and patriarchy are interconnected and how this informed the mother's ideas on sexuality or sex. The story of Huitzilin showed how religion, and her mother at one point, marginalized her for being queer. Her sexuality became an issue of conflict in their relationship. Her mother who also struggled with her Catholic identity because of her separation with her husband still insisted that Huitzilin continue to be involved in the church. Rosario and Maria showed more specifically how religion informs mother's perspectives on sex. I discussed the heteropatriarchal way religion operates by setting up dichotomies that shame and regulate Mexicanas/Chicana's sexualities. The mothers, most whom are devout Catholics, felt strongly that abstinence was the only right option when it came to sex. In this way, we learn how religion helped reinforced heteropatriarchy in Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies.

Conclusion

This chapter focused on addressing the most prevalent tension and contradiction in Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies: heteropatriarchy. I discussed how heteropatriarchy revealed itself in the daughter's relationships with their brothers, fathers, and partners through the narratives of Catalina, Fe, and Quetzali. I showed how the mothers reinforced heteropatriarchy by how different they treated their sons and daughters, expecting more from their daughters. The mothers also normalized the heteropatriarchal belief that mothers are supposed to have more responsibilities than fathers. Engagements, marriage, and

motherhood were often more celebrated than the daughter's educational accomplishments because of how they fit gender norms.

I also presented how heteropatriarchy influenced the educational experiences of the daughters. I talked about the way Carolina struggled when Paloma started college. It became more difficult to be in control of her whereabouts. Paloma having a boyfriend only intensified this tension. The policing of women's bodies is a manifestation of how heteropatriarchy controls our sexualities. I illustrated how Socorro worried for Alejandra's wellbeing because of the stressors from academia and higher education. Yet, Socorro as a mother also did not practice self-care. Heteropatriarchy teaches us that as women we must be self-sacrificing even if it affects our health. While examples of strength and perseverance helped the women succeed in their education it became a danger when they overworked themselves in trying to be like their mothers.

I returned to Paloma and Carolina's portrait to show how overly ambitious Mexicana/Chicana students are a threat to heteropatriarchy because they disrupt the idea that marriage should be the ultimate goal for Women of Color. Despite Paloma's incredible achievements her mother still wanted her to be as accomplished in finding a partner. Lastly, I talked about how Catholicism as a heteropatriarchal religion controls women's sexuality- how they can express it and with whom. Huitzilin's identity as a queer Woman of Color conflicted with Catholicism and her mother's views. Maria's desire to provide her sister with a more liberating form of sex education challenged her mother's religious beliefs. These portraits showed how interrelated religion, heteropatriarchy, and ideas about sexuality and sex are. Ultimately, my goal in this chapter was to present how central heteropatriarchy was in the majority of the tensions and contradictions the mothers and daughters grappled with.

Tensions and contradictions are a part of a pedagogy of the borderlands. While they can be painful, they are also potential moments of growth or transformation. To raise muxeres truchas encompasses these tensions and contradictions, they become pedagogical moments where the daughters learn more about how to navigate the world as Women of Color. The daughters must understand first what heteropatriarchy is- what it looks like- before they can work to transform it. We cannot dismantle a system if we cannot name it. Our mothers therefore both indoctrinate us into heteropatriarchy, but at the same time teach us how to thrive in it and transform it. Gloria Anzaldúa's opening epigraph shows this perfectly- the mixed messages we receive as daughters of Mexicana/Chicana mothers. Nevertheless, there is beauty in the contradiction.

Chapter Ten

Conclusion- A Letter to my Colegas

Dear Colegas,

I write weary from writing but with a longing to engage in conversation with all of you. You have all inspired and shaped this work and now that it is complete I struggle to find a way to conclude. Perhaps it is all the stress or pressure I have put on myself to "finish strong," or maybe it is the fact that I just finished a marathon of writing and my bodymindspirit is feeling the effects. I figured perhaps writing a letter would make it easier for me to express what I have learned from this work, what still needs to be done, and where I hope this work takes me next. As you will probably see though, I feel like I have more questions than answers. I address each of you individually as a way of acknowledging you but also as my attempt to give some structure to this letter.

Dr. Sofia Villenas, your work on Chicana/Latina mother-daughter pedagogies paved the road for me to embark on this project. On a personal level, you also gave new meaning to my relationship with my own mother. It is my hope that you find the findings of this study to have done justice to the work you began with mothers in North Carolina. I think this work illuminates how significant mujer-oriented knowledge and pedagogies are for the educational success of Chicanas/Latinas. When I reflect on my findings I realize that I entered this project looking to create a list or a handout to give to Latinx parents on how to support their daughters in their education. My experiences conducting workshops for parents pushed me in that direction. Yet what I found is that it is much more complicated than a list. Mother-daughter pedagogies go beyond these conventional measures of success or a "how to" frame of thinking. I am sure you are well aware of this from your research experiences.

The findings of this work adds to what you call mujer-oriented knowledge like consejos, la experiencia, educación, y cuentos to include the aspects of a pedagogy of the borderlands that I discussed, like a discipline of bodymindspirit and a rasquache aesthetic. I noticed that you have not really talked about religion or spiritualty in the role of Chicana/Latina mother-daughter pedagogies, has this not been central in your experiences working with mothers? I ask because this was central in my pláticas with the mothers and daughters, although it was also a big point of contention.

The opportunity to approach this study through a mother-daughter paired perspective also proved to have shown new dimensions of mother-daughter pedagogies. For example, many of the daughters talked about their experiences of working with their mothers and how this instilled a conocimiento of how to navigate the world as Women of Color. The story of Huitzilin is especially powerful because of the way race, gender, and immigration status intersected. I don't think I would have been able to capture this though if I had only facilitated pláticas with the mothers, largely because they felt very guilty and shameful in sharing that they had to take their daughters to work with them. During the mother-daughter pláticas the daughters had the opportunity to tell their mothers what these work experiences meant for them. How it instilled a strong work ethic, how it helped them realize the sacrifices that were being made on their behalf, and how it brought them closer to their mothers. The mothers were taken back as they had always felt bad for this; I hope it helped heal the shame.

In your chapter for (2006) *Chicana/Latina education in everyday life*, your conclusion essentially ask us, as daughters, to not give up on our mother's ambiguous and contradictory lessons- to look for those third spaces. I hear you, and I know all the daughters in the study talked about moments in their lives where they could not understand their mother's ways of

being. I guess I worry for young brown girls who maybe do not know how to quite navigate these lessons yet. I don't want them to feel distant from their mothers. What I am trying to say is that I would love to facilitate mother-daughter programs in schools so that mothers and daughters can learn more about each other and in the process perhaps understand each other more. The mother-daughter pláticas were so powerful that I thought how great would it be to facilitate something like this in schools. I say young brown girls because from the daughter's narratives it seemed like it was around junior high when things got difficult with their mothers. I get it, junior high is when issues of identity and body image begin to become more pronounced.

I just want to see more young brown girls love themselves and for them to know that their mothers, even in their silences or mixed messages, also deeply care for them. Conducting this study has definitely given me ideas of how I would structure such programs or classes. I want a class or space where we can explore issues that affect Women of Color every day. What I would give to have had something like that in my k-12 education. I felt so lonely and misunderstood during this time because I was often the token brown girl in my classes.

Dr. Patricia Hill Collins, your book (2000) *Black feminist thought* was extremely helpful, thank you. Your work helped note many similarities between Black and brown mothers, but also the differences. You especially assisted me in my thinking of a discipline of bodymindspirit. I struggled to describe the role of discipline in Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies without adding to the problematic image of the angry Mexican mother. I mean those memes, yes they can be funny, but they also reduce mothers to one single image. I wanted to give more context and depth to why our mothers are strong disciplinarians.

For the daughters, discipline was the way they learned how to navigate oppression. I think the mothers knew that their daughters as young brown girls had less of an opportunity to

mess up and still "make it" in their education. That type of privilege is reserved for white girls (or white people in general), they can mess up in school or outside of school and still do well in life. The mothers needed to teach their daughters to be alert and aware of how they navigated spaces- they needed to be trucha. Discipline is also a product of the communities these young women grew up in, as Fe put it, in Compton looking at someone the wrong way could get you into trouble.

Your work also helped me in writing this last chapter on heteropatriarchy. I think the way you name the contradictions and tensions in Black mother-daughter pedagogies is so true for the Chicana/Latina experience as well. Our mothers one moment tell us to be cautious around men, but the next moment are asking when we plan to get married. It is tiresome, difficult, and to be quite honest sometimes hurtful to understand these contradictions. Something I began to think about in writing this last chapter is how can mothers raise feminist sons? Has anyone looked at mother-son pedagogies? I mean cause I can tell you mothers raise their sons differently. I see it in my own mother and my brother; she is like a complete different mother to him than she is to my sister and I. What if our mothers raised our brothers the same way they raised us?

Or how about father-daughter pedagogies? It is incredible how emotionally alike I am to my father, but because of heteropatriarchal norms he is not always very emotionally expressive with me. I use to think I got my chillona personality from my mother but the older I have gotten the more I believe I get it from my dad. I mean we both could not stop crying at my recent graduation ceremony. I ask all these questions to say that I think this is a direction I would like to venture into the future, exploring more around mother-son and father-daughter pedagogies. Have you done any work around this? Or who do you suggest I look at to begin this work?

Something else that was in my mind as I wrapped up that last chapter was how we need to address the prevalence of anti-blackness in the Chicanax/Latinx community. In the midst of writing that last chapter another two Black men were killed by police officers unjustly. I witnessed brown folks struggle with this. If a pedagogy of the borderlands is truly committed to challenging all forms of subordination we need to think deeper about this. How can a pedagogy of the borderlands combat anti-blackness? Or why aren't more Chicanx/Latinx scholars thinking more about this? Maybe that's an unfair statement, perhaps we are thinking about it but have not written or published on it yet. I am interested in learning more about how to address this pedagogically within our families, there were instance of it during the pláticas. How can Mexicana/Chicana and Black mothers work together?

One last thing, in thinking of othermothers I noted that the mothers of the daughters acted as othermothers to their grandchildren. While the daughters were very grateful and happy about this, they were also disappointed that their Ph.D. programs did not support them as mothers. This is another area I think needs more work. I know mi amiga Christine[41] and her collective have started that work. Both the mothers and daughters shared how they struggled to find affordable childcare. This is crazy, given the fact that these are two generations and arguably one is doing better educationally, you would think they would have more access and support.

Dr. Claudia Cervantes-Soon, mujer! Thank you, deveras this piece on muxeres truchas could not have come at a more perfect time. It's funny because I have a friend that always tells me "ponte trucha" when I tell her about the politics of academia, so this idea of a trucha identity had been in my mind a lot. I hope this work has added to your theorization of mujeres truchas.

[41] Christine Vega explores the experiences of Mothers of Color in academia. She is also part of a collective called Chicana M(other)work.

Juan's[42] work was also helpful in reframing notions of intelligence and smartness, le das las gracias too. At the beginning of data analysis I was struggling to understand how I was going to tie this to achievement. I realized that I was using a very narrow notion of achievement, one that is more familiar with traditional schooling. I had to go back to la madrina Gloria E. Anzaldúa and other Chicana/Latina feminist scholars like yourself to understand the form of intelligence that the mothers were instilling in their daughters. I needed to analyze achievement, success, and smartness through a mujer-oriented framework.

This trucha epistemology that the mothers instilled in their daughters helped them in their education because they developed a conocimiento of how to navigate, resist, and transform oppression. Their mother's taught them something schools were never able to- how to live in and transform the world as Women of Color. I wonder where we go from here? How do we teach schools that this type of smartness is important for the well-being of brown girls? I know ethnic studies is part of the solution, but I also wonder if there are other ways. It may take too long for ethnic studies to become the norm in all k-12 schools. This work has implications for reframing the connections between schools and families, especially with mothers and daughters. We need spaces that will nurture the community cultural wealth of Mothers of Color.

Gloria Anzaldúa, madrina, you have truly changed my life. The moment I picked up *Borderlands*, I began to love myself a little more each day. You are all over this dissertation and I wouldn't want it any other way. I would like to think that spiritually you guided me to this work and helped me finish it. From your scholarship I continue to think about pedagogy. Your conceptualization of the borderlands has proved to be a viable analytical tool for us to think about the education of Chicanx students. In thinking about the borderlands I wonder how we

[42] I refer to Juan Carrillo. For more see: Carrillo, 2011, 2013, 2016; Cervantes-Soon & Carrillo, 2016; Carrillo & Rodriguez, 2016.

avoid pain, or is just inevitable? Will heteropatriarchy always be a central feature of Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies?

I really struggled to write that last chapter on heteropatriarchy because I felt like I could not really say that all these contradictions and tensions would necessarily be transformative at the end. What if they are not? Derrick Bell (1992) uses the concept of racial realism to suggest that racial oppression and subordination, although it may take different shapes and forms, will never cease to exist. I wonder if that is the same for heteropatriarchy, is there heteropatriarchy realism? I feel like I need to explore more of the pain, emotion, or healing tied to a borderlands pedagogy. I have a colega in my program doing some work around this[43].

Something that really struck me in this work was the realization of how our mothers never modeled self-care for us. I don't blame them. They never had the space or privilege to care for themselves, but now as their daughters we struggle to take care of ourselves too. When I was first introduced to the idea of self-care it seemed so removed from my reality or my family's reality. Yet the more time I spend in academia, the more I realize how important it is. We have to take care of each other, mothers and daughters.

Dr. Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot, I wonder if I will ever get to talk to you about muxerista portraiture. I am glad I was able to meet you through your beautifully written portraits. As I shared, I went into graduate school with a desire to tell stories. I was raised with stories and I loved it, so I figured I could tell stories too. Your methodology of portraiture made that possible for me, thank you. I hope you don't mind that I gave it a Chicana/Latina feminist frame; it helped me tell the stories of the mothers and daughters in a way that was more true to them. Muxerista portraiture was my entry point to a borderlands pedagogy because it pushed me to really think about context. What is the context that these mothers and daughters are learning and

[43] Steph Cariaga explores pedagogies of healing with high school youth.

teaching in? It also allowed me to honor my connections and relationships with the women. The metaphor of putting Coyolxauhqui back together, similar to how you talk about the weaving of a tapestry as part of the aesthetic whole, put the research process into perspective for me as well. Although I had to "dissect" the data I felt more spiritually connected in the process when I was putting it "back together" to create the portraits.

I wonder how you also feel about the idea of portraiture collage. Ed[44] and I had talked about how we were going to use portraiture in the presentation of our findings. It didn't seem feasible for us to write such lengthy portraits in our dissertations- we would never finish. Ed came up with the idea of a collage of portraits and I think it worked here. Instead of presenting 30 individual portraits, I presented 10 short mother-daughter portraits or individual mother and daughter portraits, but together they make up one big portrait- a portrait of Mexicana/Chicana mother-daughter pedagogies. I think more is needed in this area of portraiture, what are the different ways of presenting the findings of your research using a portraiture methodology? For me using muxerista portraiture also meant that my findings were presented bilingually, with my voice, and spiritually.

Dr. Delgado Bernal and Cindy[45], thank you for your guidance with pláticas. The experience of facilitating these pláticas was the most enjoyable part of this study. I also found that they worked really well with muxerista portraiture. In thinking about the five principles of pláticas that you outlined I wonder where you see language fit? Or the power of language to be

[44] Edward Curammeng's dissertation, *Learning From the Outliers Within: Filipina/o American Teachers and the Possibilities for Ethnic Studies*, also uses portraiture collage.

[45] Cindy Ochoa Fierros is the first author of (in press), *Vamos a pláticar: The contours of pláticas as Chicana/Latina feminist methodology*.

more specific? I know that in Dr. Gonzalez's[46] dissertation she wrote that one of the most valuable methodological insights she gained from conducting pláticas y encuentros was the importance of language. She explained how as an English speaker she first approached her pláticas through an English speaking framework but soon into the project she realized she shifted to speaking and hearing more Spanish because of the young women that she was working with.

She describes that she started to think differently because of this shift. Similarly, language was also central in my experience of facilitating pláticas, especially because the majority of the mothers felt most comfortable speaking in Spanish. All of my pláticas expressed varying practices of the Spanish and English language; none were completely in one language.

The opportunity of using pláticas allowed me to embrace this practice of translanguaging[47], the enactment of dynamic bilingualism that often happens in social spaces where people embody a multitude of language practices. Translanguaging moves away from English monolingualism and challenges the condescending view of the variations of the Spanish language, such as Spanglish or code switching. In my experience the pláticas provided a space where the mothers, daughters, and I could express ourselves in whatever language we felt most comfortable in, free of judgment. In approaching the pláticas, I wanted to acknowledge the deep connection between language and identity and challenge the fracturing of identity that often happens when as researchers we only value or privilege English or a fixed way of speaking Spanish.

By embracing a translanguaging practice in the pláticas I was also able to nurture relationships with the mothers and daughters and create a space of trust and vulnerability. For

[46] I refer to Francisca Gonzalez's (1998) dissertation, *The formations of Mexicananess: Trenzas de identidades multiples the development of womanhood among young Mexicanas: Braids of multiple identities*.

[47] See García, 2009; García & Leiva, 2014.

example, whenever I struggled with translating words from Spanish to English or vice versa, I did not feel ashamed to ask the mothers or daughters to help me. I remember with Fe and Marissa I could not translate sobresaliente to English; I still can't. We talked about this during the mother-daughter plática and together we came up with a way to express sobresaliente in English but not necessarily a word. We decided it was just one of those words that did not have a direct translation. It was moments like this that made me realize how central language was in my pláticas. Anyhow, I offer this reflection as we continue to develop pláticas as method and methodology in educational research.

A las madres y hijas, the true collaborators y colegas of this project, gracias por todo. You all taught me a lot more valuable things than what I have learned in my doctoral classes. A las mamás gracias por sus consejos y por tratarme como si fuera su propia hija. To the daughters, my fierce xingona colegas, thank you for helping a sister out, you all remind me that sisterhood is possible even in colonizing spaces like academia. Together you all showed me how important relationships are in the educational success of Chicanx/Latinx students. We've known this, but why we are still struggling to put this into practice in our educational system is hard for me to say.

Lastly, para mi mamá. I can't even write this without tearing up. Thank you for your help, you were not only the inspiration for this work but my research assistant as well. Thank you for helping me translate documents, for being my soundboard when I felt stuck, and for feeding me as I finished this, not just literally but also metaphorically with your love and kindness. You never stop believing in me.

I end this letter with the dicho that is in the title of my dissertation, de tal palo tal astilla (the apple doesn't fall far from the tree). The mothers and daughters in this dissertation are proof

that we cannot understand the educational success of Mexicana/Chicana students without looking to their mothers. The daughter's resiliency, feminismo, and commitment to social justice comes from their mothers. As educators we must continue to find ways to work with student's families beyond parent-teacher conference meetings and the Parent Teacher Association (PTA). I truly believe that a familial approach to education that is rooted in relationships and community can transform lives.

Con cariño y siempre en la lucha,

Alma Itzé Flores

Appendix A: Recruitment Flyer
De Tal Palo Tal Astilla
A UCLA Dissertation Study on Chicana/Mexicana Mother-Daughter Pedagogies

- Do you identify as a woman of Mexican ancestry?
- Are you a first-generation college student? (Your parents highest level of education is a high school diploma or less)
- Do you identify your mother as integral to your educational achievement?
- Are you currently enrolled in the advanced stages of a Ph.D. program (3rd year or beyond) or a recent Ph.D. graduate (1 year or less post graduation) from UCLA, USC, or Claremont Graduate University?
- Do **you and your mother** live in the Los Angeles area?
- If so, would **you and your mother** be interested in sharing more about what role she has played in your education?

If you answered yes to all these questions please consider participating in a doctoral dissertation study that explores the teaching and learning practices between Chicana/Mexicana mothers and their daughters. The study involves interviews and a focus group **with you and your mother**, with approximately a five-hour commitment from each of you.

If you would like to participate please take a moment to contact me **OR** fill out this short form: http://goo.gl/forms/iZvcENZ5WP

For interest in participating, more information, or questions please contact me:

Alma Itzé Flores
Doctoral Candidate
UCLA Graduate School of Education & Information Studies
aiflores@ucla.edu

Thank you for your time and support!

Dulzura, Emilia García

Appendix B: Daugther Pláticas

INTRODUCTION

1. Tell me about yourself.
    a. Where did you grow up? Your family, educational trajectory, your program
2. Tell me about the photograph(s) you selected to describe your mother.
    a. Using the photograph(s) paint me a portrait of who your mother is.
3. Describe to me how your mother has impacted your education.
    a. How has she shaped your educational aspirations?
4. Describe to me what you think education means to your mother?
    a. What were her educational goals for you?
5. Tell me about some of the important things your mother has taught you.
    a. Why were these important?
    b. Can you select one of those things and tell me the story of how she taught that to you?
6. If we think about your mother as a teacher, how would you describe her teaching?
    a. How do her own lived experiences inform the way she teaches?
7. How would you compare the education you received from your mother in relation to the one you have received in school?
    a. Can you point to any similarities/differences in the education you received from your mom and the education at school?
8. Can you think about a big disagreement you and your mother had, can you tell me the story? How did you navigate or resolve it?

EDUCATIONAL PATHWAY

1. Go back to elementary (or junior/middle) school, what do you remember about your mother then?
    a. Is there a specific memory or story of her that stands out during this time period?
2. Go back to high school, what do you remember about your mother then?
    a. Describe to me the process of applying to college or your higher education plans, what role did your mother play?
3. If applicable, tell me the story of the day you left to college (or community college), what was that like?
4. Go back to college (or community college), what role did your mother play during this time period?
5. Now think about your experiences in graduate school, what role does your mom play right now?

REFLECTIONS

1. Tell me about what you think being a daughter means to your mom?
2. What would you say has been the most important thing your mother has taught you in relation to your education?
    a. Describe to me the advice she has given you that has helped you navigate your education.
3. What would you like others to know about the role of your mother in your education?
4. Why do you think mothers are so important for Chicana/Mexicana first-generation

college students?
5. Can you think of a dicho (saying), metaphor, song, image, or word to describe your mother?

FOR MOTHER SCHOLARS
1. Talk to me about being a mother, what role has your mother played in your role as mother?

CONCLUSION
1. Is there anything you would like to add that maybe I did not give you an opportunity to speak on?
2. Do you have any questions for me?
3. In order to protect your identity I need to assign you a pseudonym is there a name you would like to go by?

Appendix C: Mother Pláticas (Spanish)

INTRODUCION

1. Cuénteme sobre usted.
    a. Donde crecio? Su familia, su educacion, dentro y afuera de la escuela (o tanto formal e informal)
2. Cuenteme come usted (o su familia) llegaron a Los Angeles.
3. Cuenteme sobre las fotos que escojio para describirse a si misa como mamá.
    (Platíqueme de cómo se describiría a sí misma como una madre.)
4. Háblеme de su hija, pínteme un retrato de ella. Si alguien no conoze a su hija como la describiria
5. Háblеme de cómo define educación. En otras palabras, que significa educación para usted.
    a. ¿Por qué es importante para usted?
    b. Que han sido sus metas para su hija? (en el pasado o presente)
    (Cuénteme sobre las metas educativas que tiene para su hija.)
6. Háblеme de cómo describiría su participación en la educación de su hija.
7. Platiqueme sobre como a criado a su hija.
    a. Háblеme de cómo le enseñaba lecciones importantes a su hija.
    b. ¿Qué tácticas utilizaba?
        i. Por ejemplo usuaba historias, sus propias experiencias, o le modelaba ejemplos
8. Platiqueme como ha motivado a su hija en triunfar (tener éxito) en su educacion.
9. Platiqueme sobre que ha sido lo más difícil enseñarle a su hija y porque.
    a. ¿Cuáles son algunos de los retos que ha tenido con ella relacionados la escuela? Fuera de la escuela?

TRAYECTORIA ACADEMICA (camino academico)

1. Platiqueme sobre su hija cuando estaba en la primaria
    a. ¿Cómo cree que estuvo usted involucrada en su educación?
2. Cuénteme acerca de su hija cuando ella estaba en la secundaria.
    a. ¿Cómo cree que estuvo usted involucrado en su educación?
    b. ¿Quería que fuera a la universidad? (Que le decia o hacia para que ella supiera como usted se sentia sobre la universidad)
    c. ¿Qué papel cree que jugo en su decisión de continuar con la universidad? Como la apoyo?
3. *Si aplica*, cuenteme la historia de cuando su hija se fue a la universidad.
    a. Se acuerda cuando fue la primera vez que su hija se fue de casa? Que le aconsejo? Como se sentio?
4. Platíqueme de su hija cuando estaba en la universidad.
    a. ¿Cómo cree que estuvo usted involucrado en su educación?
    b. ¿Qué sentia en verla en la universidad?
    c. ¿Qué comprendia sobre sus experiencias en la universidad?
5. Cuénteme de su hija ahora que ella está haciendo su maestria/doctorado.
    a. ¿Cómo está involucrada en su educación?
    b. ¿Cómo se siente acerca de su búsqueda de un doctorado?
6. *Si aplica*, cuenteme sobre como se siente ver a su hija comoe profesora

REFLEXIONES

1. ¿Cuál cree usted que es la lección más importante que una madre puede enseñar a su hija cuando se trata de la educacion/escuela?
2. ¿Por qué cree usted que su hija la ve a usted como una persona tan importante en su logro académico?
3. ¿Qué le ha enseñado su hija a usted?
4. ¿Cuál sería su consejo para las madres que quieren apoyar a sus hijas en su educación?
5. Como describiria en el amor de una madre?
6. Hay un dicho, metafora, cancion, imagen, o palabara/frase que describe a su hija?

PARA ABUELAS

1. Cuenteme sobre como se siente ser abuela, como ha ayudo (que papel a tomado en) a criar los niño/a(s) de su hija?

CONCLUSION

1. ¿Hay algo que le gustaría agregar que tal vez yo no le di la oportunidad de hablar?
2. ¿Tiene alguna pregunta para mí?
3. Con el fin de proteger su identidad necesito asignarle un seudónimo (un nombre distinto) hay un nombre que le gustaría que utilize?

Appendix D: Mother Pláticas (English)

INTRODUCTION

1. Tell me about yourself.
    a. Where did you grow up? Your family, your education, both in and out of school
2. Tell me about how you (or your family) got to Los Angeles?
3. Tell me about the photographs you selected to describe yourself as a mother.
4. Tell me about your daughter, paint me a portrait of her.
5. Tell me about how you define education.
    a. What have been your educational goals for your daughter? (past or present)
6. Tell me about how you would describe your involvement in your daughter's education.
7. Tell me about the way you have raised your daughter.
    a. How would you describe the way you have taught her things?
    b. Can you give me an example of how you taught something to your daughter?
        i. For example, did you use stories, your life experiences, or did you model things for her?
8. Tell me about how you have motivated your daughter to do so well in her education.
9. Tell me about what have been the most challenging things to teach your daughter.
    a. Did you ever have any challenges with her in school? Outside of school?

EDUCATIONAL PATHWAY

1. Tell me about your daughter when she was in elementary school.
    a. How do you think you were involved in her education?
2. Tell me about your daughter when she was in high school.
    a. How do you think you were involved in her education?
    b. What did you say or do to let her know how you felt about college?
    c. What was the college application process like for you?
3. If applicable, tell me the story of the day your daughter left to college.
4. Tell me about your daughter when she was in college.
    a. How do you think you were involved in her education?
    b. What was it like to see her in college?
    c. How did you understand her experiences in college?
5. Tell me about your daughter now that she is in graduate school.
    a. How do you see yourself involved in her education?
    b. How do you feel about her pursuing a doctorate?
6. If applicable, tell me about what it is like to see your daughter as a professor.

REFLECTIONS

1. What do you think is the most important lesson a mother can teach her daughter when it comes to education?
2. Why do you think your daughter points to you as such an important person in her educational success?
3. What has your daughter taught you?
4. What would be your advice for mothers who want to support their daughters in their education?
5. How would you describe a mother's love?

6. Can you think of a dicho, metaphor, song, image, or word to describe your daughter?

FOR GRANDMOTHERS

1. Talk to me about being a grandmother, what role do you play in helping raise your daughter's baby(ies)?

CONCLUSION

1. Is there anything you would like to add that maybe I did not give you an opportunity to speak on?
2. Do you have any questions for me?
3. In order to protect your identity I need to assign you a pseudonym is there a name you would like to go by?

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