

Bridges Over Borders

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Overview

- Introductions
- Session Objectives
- Personal Context
- Borders in our institutions
- Relate, Generate, Create

Session Objectives

1. Understand Anzaldúa's concept of borderlands
2. Consider the existence of borders within their campus culture and processes
3. Identify ways in which students may be stuck when they do not possess the "proper" knowledge to successfully cross through institutionally created and imposed borders
4. Contemplate their power to build bridges over institutionally created and imposed borders

Who is Andee?

- Queer, Chicanx, Christian, Educated
 - Existing in the borders of
 - Self-identity
 - Societal expectations
 - Have to reconcile identities to live in peace in myself
 - “Oh we have a Pride Center on Campus”-ah no, that’s the Financial Aid office.

Who is Mayra?

- Latina, Mother, Wife, Professional
- Have to mute certain identities depending on the context
 - Not a mom when working, not a professional when mothering, I can't be a mom who works and loves and dances.
 - Can't be an administrator who is nice.

Borders in context: Andee

- So this one time... I went to a Chamber of Commerce Meeting and...
 - Made to feel like I didn't belong
 - Made to feel like it was an act of charity since I was given the chance to attend
 - Realization that I am invading spaces traditionally navigated by and filled with heterosexual white males

Borders in context: Mayra

- So this one time I became VP at 35 being Latina, a mom
- “Invading” a space traditionally held by white males
- Made to feel like I was hired to meet the diversity quota; because “she must be young and cute”
- Disregarding my work, experience, ability

Defining borders: People and Spaces

- “Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish us from them” – (Anzaldua p. 25)
- “ The only legitimate inhabitants are those in power” – (Anzaldua p.25)

Defining borders: Language

- Borders demand you speak the language of those in power once you cross over to their land.
 - May translate to campus policy language, acronyms, (c)overt rules, procedures.

Borders in Our Institutions

- “Education has generalized knowledge into practice, which results in the field of education being dominated by white (majority) discourse, the voices and perspectives of minorities left unaddressed all too often” – Hemphill, 2001

Borders in Our Institutions Continued

- “Schools have served as agents of cultural imperialism by contributing to the erosion of the indigenous cultures of the Southwest through the assimilation of Mexican immigrant and Mexican American youth. “ [Muñoz, p. 33]

Border Enforcement

- Causes fear of social and physical deportation
- Reinforces assimilation and disconnect from roots
- Denies access to services, scholarships, funding in education
- Invalidates experiences of people in the classroom

Borderlands

- The formation and implementation of borders creates and reinforces a binary system keeping those in power, in power
 - Native vs. Immigrant
 - Using language of those in power or Native tongue
 - Reinforcement of societal expectations of either Masculine or Feminine Identities
 - Safe vs. Unsafe
 - Queer vs. Heteronormative

Borderlands

- “Borderlands are physically present wherever two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races occupy the same territory, where under, middle, and upper classes touch, where the space between two individuals shrink with intimacy”

Building Bridges, Not Borders

- Help create and facilitate inclusive programming on campus to promote social belonging
- Cognizant of holidays and observations for students in the classroom
- Form or support clubs and organizations for minoritized groups

Building Bridges, Not Borders Cont.

- Understand not everyone has the same financial resources to education
- Knowing everyone comes from different linguistic backgrounds and reading levels (adjusting syllabus)
- Create environments that encourage individuals to speak their truths and validate their experiences

Relate, Generate, Create

- With whom can you begin to discuss borders on your campus?
- Who are these borders including?
Excluding?
- To whom is power given and from whom is it taken in these borders?

Thank you!

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