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“An Epic Testimonio,” “Critical Resistance and Cyclical Nature,” & “Representation Matters”

By Danielle Anne Sosías

An Epic Testimonio

Shhh. Can you hear them?
Can you hear the hum, the chant, the song
Can you hear the whisper in the wind,
from my ancestors, say,
“Mijita, eres mi sueño más salvaje”
My daughter, you are my wildest dreams.

I am a Mexica princess,
I am Tonantzin, a sacred mother, sister, and daughter.
I carry the fire and smoke that carries our voices to the heavens and the through the earth.

I am a Taino warrior.
Stepping up to the mantle to lead her people.

I am the first of many.
First generation
First daughter
First Futura Doctora

Through the testimonios of my ancestors, my family, and my own,
I share our view of the world through our lived experiences
An epistemology of making words jump off the page and into life.

My testimonio is based on lived experiences that are racially and ethnically identity-conscious
That challenges traditional theory and the white scholars who used my people.
Do you hear the silence? Do you hear the quiet of their voices?
Can you feel the deep-rooted pain?

Through storytelling and oral traditions,
Spoken word and fireside chats,
Rising scholars of color come together to share their experiences.
The collected consciousness uncovers systems of oppression and power structures.
Together they (re)construct past events, (re)claims identities, expose contradictions, and
build
community.
I code switch throughout the day,
Speaking the language of the oppressor and the oppressed.
A heavy burden and privilege to carry a language that has the power to “recover ourselves,
to
reconcile, to reunite, to renew” (hooks, 1989)

Yet we learn from each other through our stories and our lived experiences.

I hold on to and honor the testimonios of those who came before us
I reflect on my own experiences and share them with others
I remind myself that I do not have to sacrifice who I am to fit the status quo.

I am a reflection of my students
But I am a leader within the university
Yet, I have become a part of the systematic oppression inherent in higher education
hooks reminds me of the necessity of opposition and encourages me not to lose the
radical
perspective that shaped who I am

As a scholar-practitioner, I can transform and radically create spaces that affirm,
Who I am.
Who my students are.
From which we can articulate our sense of the world
While maintaining who we are
To own and reclaim our power.

Together we can create equitable spaces that disrupt and dismantle systems that have
historically
excluded Brown, Black, Indigenous, and Students of Color from the narrative.

References

hooks, b. (1989). Choosing the margin as a space of radical openness. *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media*, 0(36), 15-23. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4411660>.

Critical Resistance in Cyclical Nature

Each day, I wake,
Wondering what solutions I will have to find for the day.
What action will be put in place to transform the policies and procedures of the day?
Will a student come to my office,
In tears, that the resources needed for their event were not available,
Yet to look across the campus and see an abundance of resources used for other events?

Is it fair?
Did you reserve them in advance?
Did you ask for help?
Did you...
Did you...
Did you....
When I could say,
How can I help?
How long ago did you submit the reservation?
How can we ask our community for help?
The difference between you, I, and we can make the biggest difference.
Immediate solution focused first,

With the follow-up to identify policies and practices.
With plans to change the practice and preparation.
To change I to WE!
To come together to solve our local problems,
To bring together the experts,
To call out the oppression.
To go beyond the status-quo and superficial and temporary solutions,
wonder why and reflect
on why systems and structures are in place.
How can we change the structure?
How to change our approach?
To bring change alive,
To empower the community,
To push against the conservative, defensive, and self-protective institution.
With a critical spirit,
To push against the ways of doing and being in research.
To try again, again, and again.
The cyclical nature of action research,
The cyclical nature of being and changing.
A critical resilience in the face of adversity.
A call to action,

To rise to adversity.

Each day I rise,
Each day I pause,
Each day, I stay angry,
Each day, I stay woke.
I remain conscious and unconscious of systems of oppression,
To emancipate my students from the traditions, precedents, or self-deception.
Through critical self-reflection
And the voice of the people,
I can end the day with transformation.

Representation Matters

PDF after PDF,
I look for myself in the words of western, white, modern men
Funny
Do I look like a western, white, modern man?
Donde estás Doctora Lopez-Mara, Doctor Duran, Doctor Rodriguez,
I holla for hooks, Dr. Patton-Davis, Lauryn Hill,
“If I ruled the world!”
Namaskar for my Asian and Eastern philosophers, Dr. Bhattacharya, Queen B,
The importance of representation
To find myself woven into the curriculum,
To no longer being the participant

To be the researcher,
The Future Doctors, Doctoras, Dākaṭar

About Danielle Anne Sosías



Danielle Anne Sosías is an Associate Director of Fraternity Sorority Life at Arizona State University. Danielle is a first-generation Latina, rising scholar and practitioner, and doctoral student in Leadership and Innovation at ASU. In her professional role and research, she strives to create equitable, culturally relevant practices and outcomes for students. Originally from Denver, Colorado, she lives with her dog Shadow.

Connect with Danielle at dsosias@asu.edu.