

Interview with Roseann Dueñas Gonzalez

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Cristina and Isabel's invitation to be interviewed for this edition of the journal is an honor. I apologize to all readers in advance for a contribution that could have been much better with more time, but I'm grateful to have the chance to comment on a topic that has been the motivating factor in my personal life and my life as an educator and linguist. I will respond to a few questions that have been posed to me by Cristina and Isabel, frame the ethnic studies problem in a larger context, highlight NCTE and CCCC's work in this area, recounting the work of the Task Force on Racism and Bias in the important work of assisting teachers to recognize and implement a curriculum that authentically represents historic work, and comment briefly on Cruz Medina's insightful essay on the ethnic studies issue in Arizona.

1. How would you define NCTE's and CCCC's involvement in the issue of ethnic literature and ethnic studies? And in your discussion, can you tell us about your history with NCTE and CCCC in regard to the teaching of ethnic literature to language minority students and other students of color?

I am very proud to have been a part of NCTE and CCCC's members' efforts for three decades in the development and implementation of approaches to helping traditionally excluded students of color to develop their innate intelligence by engaging them in a curriculum that reflects and supports their home cultures, language, language styles, lore, traditions, values, histories, beliefs, and understandings of the world.

I was privileged to become a member of the Chicano Teachers of English Caucus, established in 1970 by Felipe Ortego and Carlota Cardenas Dwyer—two passionate, sophisticated literary scholars and teachers who were zealous in their dedication to inclusivity. In 1971, I attended my first NCTE convention, and, in Las Vegas, I found these like-minded souls Carlota and Felipe and others who shared my own goal of improving educational prospects for Latino students. I realized from my own experience that unless there is a connection with school created by a teacher, a text, a theme, a set of lessons, there is no chance of academic achievement and every chance of alienation from the larger society and their own communities. The lack of home-school connection through recognition of language, culture, and integration of familiar cultural ideas and themes fosters a passive acceptance of the school and larger culture's conception of a student's place in the world. Those stereotypes and negative images held by the larger society slowly begin to form the self-image of the student, and the lack of academic achievement becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, thus producing the decades of high attrition, lack of high school completion, and scarce postsecondary attendance. I saw this first hand in the high schools in which I did my student teaching. I saw the attitudes of the teachers and heard their disparaging comments about their students' smelly burrito lunches and their parents' alleged lack of care for the education of their children. I found myself privy to attitudes and stereotypes that are consistent with the colonial discourse of majoritarian educators in regard to a language minority.

Born to a working class Chicano family in Phoenix, school was a place I felt I belonged, and my mother's greatest dream for me was a college education and a profession that no one could take away. Mama spoke the little broken English she knew to me, intent that I

would not be punished like my brother and sisters for not knowing English when I entered school. I also had a role model in her as she assiduously studied the newspaper every day, with her new 1948 unabridged dictionary by her side on the floor. At five, I was already Mama's interpreter, and she was pushing me to learn to read fast so I could help her read too. I was the college scholarship girl, the girl who loved school, who worshipped her teachers, especially English teachers (González, 1993; 2000), and whose teachers for the most part were encouraging and positive.

Like other "scholarship" Latino children (Rodriguez, 1982; Villanueva, 1993), I was the hope of my family, the one who would make it in the white world, the one who would have a profession and bring the family the value their very existence had lost for them. I had experienced typical discriminatory treatment by other students, derogatory name calling, and I understood very well my family's place in the world. I knew that we were different, spoke Spanish, and we were not "Americanos" who everyone else was fortunate to be. We had been refused service in restaurants; my dad worked very hard and left very early in the morning to his construction jobs. He spoke only Spanish to me, and I knew he didn't know how to read and write. I knew from my sisters and brothers that I was lucky to be able to swim at the pool across the street, because there was a time when Mexicans couldn't swim at most public pools. I also knew that our family took their places at the back of the bus and that my mother was taking citizenship classes and learning English. My mother never talked to my teachers, because she couldn't, but she held them and the school in the highest esteem. School was a positive experience for me and the place where I excelled—unlike the very negative experiences of my brothers and sisters.

Therefore, when I did my student teaching at a Tucson secondary school with a Latino, African American, and Native American population of nearly 90%, I experienced firsthand the second class treatment of students of color and a curriculum that did not include their histories, literature, texts, or images of any kind. Particularly abhorrent to me was the institutional mistreatment of Mexican American students who were Spanish dominant English language learners. In fact, in 1969 and 1970, during my teaching experience as a student teacher

at a local Tucson high school, I saw literally hundreds of students whose educational opportunities had been severely limited by their misclassification as special education students and their substandard pedagogical treatment in alleged ESL classrooms, where no content of any kind was presented and time was passed watching movies and doing endless crossword puzzles with limited learning value, as well as learning parts of speech and the mindless drilling of sentence patterns.

I am grateful for my ability to witness this teacher talk in its full context during those two years of student teaching, with no one filtering discussions. In the teacher's lounge and workroom where teachers prepared between classes, I heard the teachers' negative comments about their students and the persistent perpetuation of stereotypes and negative labeling of students. My name, Roseann Dueñas, some aspects about my persona (I guess), and my unaccented English provided safe passage for me, and without any preplanning or design, I became privy to all. Had rhetorical research been in vogue in 1969 and 1970, this teacher talk would have produced an informative case study and contributed much to our understanding as a profession about teacher bias. As I look back, I can see these "agents of the empire" carrying out their culturally prescribed roles (Giroux, 1983). The "tracking" of the students into college prep, normal, and remedial/ESL added to the structural institutional racism that many of the teachers were not consciously aware of but who followed the stated and sometimes unstated rules rigorously, gatekeeping the highest level and reserving that space for the anointed. Although school culture is just a microcosm of the larger society, the intensity (8 hours daily) of the school experience makes its effects singularly toxic. This is what contributes to the overall effectiveness of using public schools as the indoctrination camps for all children, but in its most noxious forms, assimilation and indoctrination sites for immigrants, subordinated racial, ethnic, and language minorities. Moreover, the school's lack of equitable relationship with the community makes the effect on students that much more pernicious, as in these situations, the lack of communication and collaboration between school and parents is nonexistent or hostile, leaving the student no recourse. In these traditional relationships, parents are powerless and seen as enemies of the school culture. As Cummins (1986) contends, minority students' persistent school failure and the relative lack of success of previous attempts at educational reform have been unsuccessful because they

have not significantly altered the relationships between educators and minority students and between schools and minority communities. In his groundbreaking article in the *Harvard Educational Review*, Cummins (1986) presents the typical Assimilationist, subtractive, exclusionary, Transmission model versus the Intercultural Orientation, additive, collaborative, advocacy model, in which teachers and schools build a positive relationship with the community, thereby promoting the empowerment of students which can lead them to succeed in school. The intercultural model incorporates cultural and linguistic literature, language, beliefs, values, and other elements of the minority group and invites community participation. Cummins (2001) argues:

In social conditions of unequal power relations between groups, classroom interactions are never neutral with respect to the messages communicated to students about the value of their language, culture, intellect, and imagination. The groups that experience the most disproportionate school failure in North American and elsewhere have been on the receiving end of a pattern of devaluation of identity for generations, in both schools and society. Consequently, any serious attempt to reverse underachievement must challenge both the devaluation of identity that these students have historically experienced and the societal power structure that perpetuates this pattern (p. 650-651).

In 1971, I had already come to the conclusion that the only way to change the outcome for Latino students was to change the pedagogical model and recognize and respect the students' and parents' culture and language and incorporate them into the school culture. I realized that discriminatory treatment and poor expectations of students lead to academic poor self- concept, academic underachievement, separation from school, through failure or dropout, and alienation from family, ethnicity group, and mainstream society. The key was to create a multicultural, tolerant, respectful classroom environment and to introduce curriculum, materials, literature, and topics that spoke to the students' experience. Later my intuition that exploring students' understanding of the world through literature that reflected their lives and that of their families or forebears would help them find their voice, lead them to critical thinking, writing,

and discussion, and build their confidence as learners. Later I would find my intuition reified by the work of Paulo Freire (1970) with his magnificent critical pedagogy model, where students engage in a dialogic process towards understanding, honing their cognitive and verbal skills in the process of evaluating their world. I would also later refine my approach to include an anti-racist agenda, helping students understand this pervasive phenomenon and prevent the societal inclination to “otherize” members of other ethnicities or races (Nieto, 1992).

Finding the inclusivity mindset at NCTE, with my colleagues in the Chicano Teachers of English was the experience that shaped my academic trajectory. I had found a concrete way of including the language and culture of Latinos and other minority students: through literature. I realized at that moment that the best way to reach my Chicano/a students at the University of Arizona was to use Chicano literature as the core of the course and engage the students to respond to the literary themes and genres, and explore their own stories, reactions, and feelings about the events in a story, or the feelings captured in a poem based on their own experiences. For me, the Chicano Teachers of English and the curiosity and interest of members of the leadership in CCCC and NCTE in my colleagues and my experience and observations working with racial and ethnically diverse students was heartening and inspirational. And the battles we sometimes had to engage in at the national level were instructive not only to our opponents but to ourselves, as we gathered data and presented empirical arguments for the programs, seminars, and other activities of the Chicano Teachers of English. I also found comfort in the fact that I was not the only sole Chicana who was a member of a large department of English comprised of white men. I found much-needed mentoring in the wisdom and advice offered by a small group of Chicano and other Latino professors of higher education who also found themselves in the singular position of teaching composition and or literature or teacher education at a university of college, often being the only Latino (or any minority) professor in a department of English or program in composition or language arts teacher education. Some had interaction with Latino students or other students of color and had had great success in teaching the literature and had marvelous strategies and insights into all the major Latino works of the period. Others were members of affiliate NCTE

affiliates and had had experience teaching high school students and working with teachers regarding integrating this literature into their curricula.

Like the Bremmentown musicians, through the years, our numbers grew as we reached out to similar colleagues and assisted them in fully participating in NCTE and CCCC activities, providing their much needed insights to the larger membership (Kirklighter, 2009)

IMPLEMENTING THE GOALS OF *SEARCHING FOR AMERICA* FOR NCTE AND CCCC

Just before I came to a national NCTE conference in 1971, members of the Task Force on Racism and Bias in the Teaching of English, Ernece Kelly, Carlota Cardenas Dwyer, Felipe Ortega, and others had already made a monumental mark on the NCTE scene and in the national conception of American literature. This team of scholars and teachers reviewed the most frequently used textbooks and found the work of racial and linguistic minorities to be flagrantly absent or contain works that introduced or reinforced racial, ethnic, and linguistic stereotypes. The product of this committee's work and careful review of textbooks was a report and a groundbreaking statement *Searching for America* (Kelly, 1970). This short, powerful statement became the blueprint for NCTE and CCCC's commitment to expanding the notion of the American canon and the place of works written by people of color and by women. In addition to stating their findings, the Task Force provided an empirically sound rationale for the importance of including literature in textbooks, materials, and curricula that was inclusive and representative of the cultures, values, life experiences, language styles, beliefs, and viewpoints of ethnically, linguistically, and racially diverse students.

Of course, as in challenge to tradition, many saw the racial and ethnic literature inclusivity movement as an assault on pedagogical standards, the revered canon, and even on the totality of western civilization. Scholars and teachers alike were distressed at giving up space to the unknown literature of marginalized people. Scholars were affronted and teachers were very often resistant, fearful of learning new texts and attempting to understand a perspective and epistemology with

which they had little to no experience. Teachers were also afraid that the literature introduced topics that were unsavory (because of their truth telling in terms of poverty, discrimination, and alienation from the majority society). Teachers complained that there were words written in a foreign language and that this detracted from the value of the text. Others complained that the ideas were uncomfortable and might inspire student reaction. (Hallelujah, this is what we wanted – to engage students and inspire verbal and written response, anger, pride, inquiry—anything but passivity). This reaction magnified the lack of teacher understanding of the communities they served and the leviathan disconnect between school and the home cultures and languages of their students. Carlota, Ernece, Vivian Davis, Lawson Inada, and I, as well as many others, gave countless preconvention and postconvention workshops, seminars, talks at national, regional, and at local affiliate conferences – all aimed at assisting teachers to be better prepared to teach Chicano, African American, Asian American, and Native American literatures. There were battles in NCTE, within academia, in English departments, and as inclusivity became more entrenched, the battles shifted to recruitment of scholars who could teach this literature and mortal combat over their retention and tenure. Colonial rhetoric was used to brand scholars, from “he’s too radical” to “he’s not Chicano enough,” to “she has published only in the realm of Chicano literature and not broadly enough” to “she’s too much of a generalist,” and not committed to one area. There were myriad excuses for lack of inclusivity of criticism of literature in journals, even in the major organs of the NCTE. As Chicano Teachers of English Caucus president Felipe Ortego argued in his 1970 letter to Richard Ohman, Editor of *College English*, when Ortego’s essay, “Chicano Poetry: Roots and Writers” was rejected for publication,

Not to publish our expressions or to publish something about us by a non-Chicano is simply to perpetuate the worst features of racism and the colonial mentality that continues to permeate the country (Ortego, 1970).

Collaboration with members of the Black Caucus, the able and tireless assistance of Sandra Gibbs, Ph.D., NCTE Staff Liaison, and NCTE and CCCC executive directors, as well as interested NCTE

colleagues provided assistance and support in pursuit of introducing methods, techniques, approaches, research, and concerns regarding the literacy education of Latino students. The hard fought civil rights legislation passed in the 1960's, such as the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the 1965 Voting rights Act, the 1968 Bilingual Education Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act made the idea of a more equitable educational opportunity for African American students and language minority persons education and the promotion of bilingual education more palatable to NCTE members and begin breaking down somewhat the traditional stereotypes and misconceptions about Latino and other students of color.

The general ethnic literature movement, including the work of NCTE and CCCC in this area had myriad goals, including expanding the literary canon, broadening the breadth of text books that promulgated the almost exclusively dead white male-oriented tradition, and the use of ethnic literature as primary works for the teaching of literature and the development of critical reading, writing, and thinking for all students, K-12 and postsecondary to enrich and strengthen diversity and understanding of all of the facets of what it means to be an American. Most importantly, the underlying premise was that for traditionally underachieving populations such as Latino students, these techniques and methods would not only develop literacy skills but would also and most importantly bring about long term academic engagement and achievement thus reversing the longstanding history of low academic achievement by Latino students in the schools, thereby increasing opportunities to learn and excel. This in turn would provide an avenue for social mobility and significantly increase the ability of Latinos to participate in society in a more equal manner in terms of employment and have greater and more equal access to equal access to employment, civic life, and the political sphere. The sociological goal was acculturation rather than assimilation. Thus, literature, language, cultural information, and history would be used not only as a worthy curricular topic but a means to affirm the cultural and thus self- identity of language minorities and other students of color, thus promoting the overall educational goal of assisting students in meeting their individual potential and giving them the tools in critical reading, viewing, and thinking required to achieve academically and in life. (It is indisputable that in the 1950's and 60's, continuing to the present, Latino students had the lowest

academic achievement among all students in the U.S. and by state, with the exception of Native American students. In most heavy Hispanic population states and in the Latino southern diaspora, these same low academic achievement outcomes are still true today.)

ASSISTING TEACHERS IN IMPROVING THE INTELLECTUAL RIGOR OF LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULA FOR STUDENTS OF COLOR AND STUDENTS LEARNING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

I also worked hard to incorporate an understanding of the needs of English for second language students to be provided a cognitively challenging and enriching curriculum that was on par with their grade level rather than the often remedial and linguistically and intellectually stunted pedagogy and materials promoted by outdated English as a Second language methodology, textbooks, and curriculum. In my role as Chair of the NCTE Task Force Against Racism and Bias in the Teaching of English, I worked to change the perception of English teachers regarding limited and non-English speaking students. As a linguist specializing in second language pedagogy, this was a particularly important topic for me—as this failed educational strategy had adversely affected millions of Latino and other language minority children who had been relegated to dredges of ESL or remedial English curricula. Chicano caucus researchers and writers such as Kris Gutierrez and Lawson Inada served on the Task Force with me. Our work was supported by the Executive Council through the able liaison work of Sandra Gibbs, Ph.D., NCTE Staff Liaison.

Informed by current research in the areas of second language acquisition, bilingual and multicultural education, literacy and literacy development, and best practice in language arts, cognitive academic language development, and composition, the NCTE Task Force Against Racism and Bias in the Teaching of English (1986) published the pamphlet, “Expanding Opportunities: Academic Success for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students.” In this short brochure, Task Force members opined that many curricular approaches used with ESL students and other students of color have “impeded rather than fostered their intellectual and linguistic

growth” (p.1). The Task Force labels the educational approaches and methods typically used with ESL learners and other students of color “miseducation” and asks the following question, followed by a set of teaching principles to use instead:

How can educators reverse this miseducation and develop responsible ways to meet the needs of these students? Research shows that culturally and linguistically diverse students can achieve academic success if appropriate strategies for teaching reading and writing are used (p. 1).

TEACHING WRITING

Incorporate the rich background of linguistically and culturally diverse students by

- Introducing classroom topics and materials that connect the students’ experiences with the classroom.

Provide a nurturing environment for writing by:

- Introducing cooperative, collaborative writing activities which promote discussion, encourage contributions from all students, and allow peer interaction to support learning. (pp. 1-2)

NCTE and CCCC widely distributed the brochure to affiliates and through national and regional conferences and conference programs provided enough space and time to programs concerning language development. In the 80’s, the NCTE and CCCC joined several other professional organizations such as Teaching English to Speakers of other Languages (TESOL), Linguistic Society of America (LSA), Modern Language Association (MLA) and took a strong stand against the English Only Movement (González, Schott, and Vasquez, 1988), “eschewing any movement whose objective it is ‘to establish English as the official language....[and] to render invisible the native languages of any Americans.’” In 1990, NCTE published an anthology of essays, *Not Only English: Affirming America’s Multilingual*

Heritage, in which my article “In the aftermath of the ELA: Stripping language minorities of their rights” appeared (González, 1990a). In this essay, I explained the essential civil rights that would be lost for U.S. language minorities if the English Language Amendment proclaiming English the official language was passed.

During the mid- 80’s, the language rights and promotion of ethnic literatures and histories of minority students was loudly supported by various NCTE publications and policy statements. NCTE and CCCC worked to include Latino, African American, Native American and Asian voices and experiences in their major activities; therefore, I participated in numerous committees and commissions to prevent the ongoing neglect of the learning needs for this important and growing population and move them from invisibility and marginalization to the center of the discussion.

Although NCTE was devoted to the English language arts, its commitment to literacy and its research members’ understanding of the integral connection between students’ home language and culture with learning and academic achievement, bilingual education began to be slowly implicitly acknowledged as a salutary component of English language arts education. The idea of nurturing and supporting a students’ home language began seeping its way into the efforts of the NCTE. Although the Students Right to Their Own Language (CCCC, 1974) was a pronouncement of the educational importance of recognizing, respecting, supporting, and promoting students’ right to speak and write in their home speech styles, that document never really contemplated the role of the student’s home “native” language as a part of the language arts curriculum. However, those of us who supported bilingual and multicultural methodologies as a key approach to curriculum design for monolingual or dominant speakers of Spanish or those who came from bilingual homes where both languages are spoken began to invoke Students Right to their Own Language to advocate for that pedagogical solution. The work of Collier (1989), Heath (1983), Hakuta (1986), Skutnaab-Kangas, T. (1988), Cummins (1981) illuminated the critical importance of building on a child’s first language knowledge for rapid acquisition of the second language and most importantly, the understanding of the pernicious effects of withholding instruction in the first language

and forcing literacy development in language in which there is no oral proficiency (Cummins, 1986).

However, when the “standards” movement gained momentum in the 1990’s, NCTE was compelled by the membership’s wish to contribute standards informed by research and best practice to fashion national standards. As always, I sat on the Standards committee and took my customary position reminding everyone that the document we created must take into account the fastest growing school-age population – Latinos, and that the curricular considerations regarding the literatures and histories of students of color had to be taken. I also reminded the Committee of the continuing disparate educational outcomes for Latino students and other racial and ethnic minorities as well (see González, 1990b).

2. As a pioneer in the teaching of ethnic literature to Chicano/Mexican American students as a primary tool of inclusion and engagement in schools, how do you view the various language, immigration, and other educational policies established in the state of Arizona for the past decade?

As much as I understand the cycles of rejection and acceptance of ethnic racial, and language minorities in the U. S. as contingent on the state of the economy, unemployment, the presence or absence of war or threat of war (Heath, 1977), I am shocked and disturbed to my core at the vitriolic and patently hostile actions the state of Arizona has taken against Latinos embodied in Proposition 203 (English for the Children, 2000); S.B. 1070 (Support our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act); H.B. 2281 (Ethnic Studies Ban). It is inconceivable that these aggressive and shameful legislative initiatives have been generally accepted by the Arizona public. Even in the most cynical scenario, I could not have imagined the creation of these policies. Moreover, these legislative actions have been imitated by other states such as Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, and Utah (National Immigration Law Center, 2012) and in some cases, made even more toxic. As a sociolinguist, I understand intellectually the politics and processes that are taking place, but I

cannot accept them. My family has been in Arizona since before it was a state, and Mexican Americans feel that Arizona is a Mexican heritage state. They are the backbone of the ranching, the mining industry, agriculture, the hotel industry, the tourist industry; they are the labor upon which the state depends. Yet there is no allegiance to them. Arizona's expression of hostility to this productive ethnic group is beyond the pale. Moreover the educational, psychological, and economic harm caused to the children who have no access to education and the countless families who left the state out of fear and the damage to the economy is reprehensible and unrecoverable. Yes, I am disappointed in my state and feel helpless that nothing can be done to curb the hostile rhetoric and hate speech produced by a small but obviously powerful group of persons. Perhaps it is my deep understanding of the psychological effects and long term adverse effects and damages of these educational, language, employment, immigration, social and other critical services policies on children, families, and hard-working, industrious Arizonans that makes it particularly painful to accept.

As Cruz asserts in regard to H.B. 2281, legislation passed in Arizona in 2010 banning ethnic studies, the official language movement also utilizes the discourses of colonialism, an ideology that, in order to dominate, disempowers some social groups through subjugation and "subjectification" (González with Melis, 2000). I am also fully aware that for Latinos, language use is the central trait over which the dominant group can exert control. But in the case of Arizona, the English only act Proposition 203 eliminating bilingual education as an appropriate pedagogical approach for English language learners, this law was only the beginning of a series of aggressive legislative actions whose end goals was to cause a mass exodus, prevent additional immigration, decrease political power and prevent the growth of political power.

When I edited *Language Ideologies: Critical Perspectives on the Official Language Movement*, Volume 1 (González with Melis, 2000) and Volume 2 (González with Melis, 2001), the scholars I invited to contribute considered Proposition 203 English for the Children the most negative and adverse ballot initiative against bilingual education, Latinos, and local parental educational choice that they had seen. It was astonishing to see that Proposition 203, which eliminated the

option of bilingual education for limited and non-English speaking children in Arizona, was only the beginning of a set of hostile policies aimed at Latinos and eradicating equality of educational opportunity for Latinos and instituting ghettoization policies that led to a life of fear and lost opportunities for Latinos and a mass exodus of this population from the state. My two edited volumes published by NCTE examine the history of language policies in the U. S. and other countries in which there are territorial minorities (such as Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans) whose ancestral home was acquired through war or political treaties. The entire Southwest of the U. S. belonged to Mexico and was lost as a consequence of the Mexican American War (1846-48). This forced thousands of Spanish-speaking Mexicans to instantly become citizens of the U.S. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848) ceded 55% of Mexico's territory (present-day Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah as well as western portions of New Mexico, Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Wyoming) to the U.S., and the Gadsden Purchase (1853) finalized the acquisition of Mexican territory, adding to the U.S. present-day southern Arizona and New Mexico. While the Treaty guaranteed all persons residing on these lands "the free enjoyment of their liberty and property," the U.S. government was able to control and restrict Mexican land ownership, access to justice, education, employment, and other social benefits through the implementation of restrictive English-only policies and reinterpretation of the treaties.

For example, in 1851, the U.S. Congress passed the Land Act (known as the Gwin Act or California Land Act) (Clay, 1999), requiring all California landowners (indigenous peoples, *Mestizos*, and descendants of Spanish and Mexican settlers) to show proof of ownership in English. This Act therefore forced non-English speaking landowners to obtain the services of English-speaking lawyers and to participate in lengthy and expensive court proceedings in order to prove their ownership. Lacking English proficiency and unfamiliar with the U.S. legal system, almost all California property owners lost their land to the English-speaking majority; 40% "of the holdings were sold to pay the fees of English-speaking lawyers" (Crawford, 1992, p. 66). Moreover, in 1879, California declared English the required language for "all official writings, and the executive, legislative, and judicial procedures," becoming the first English-only state in U.S. history (Crawford, 1992, p. 67). Through these exclusionary

language policies, the Californian English-speaking majority solidified its political and economic position, while Spanish-speaking Californians became strangers in their own country, mere workers on their own land, and a disenfranchised minority.

Exclusionary educational and language policies for Latinos in the state of Arizona throughout its history have been documented in the work of many scholars. The infamous “1C” classroom in operation from 1919 to 1967 requiring children in the state of Arizona to enter an English immersion program before starting first grade has been studied and documented by Combs at the University of Arizona. This educational policy segregated Latino students and held them back one to several years until they learned English. Combs contends that Proposition 203 banning bilingual classrooms from Arizona’s public schools is essentially a return to a shameful era in education that resulted in unequal educational opportunity, high dropout rates, and poor educational achievement for generations of Latinos. University of Arizona Professor Mary Carol Combs found that throughout the existence of the program known as “1C,” the Hispanic dropout rate in Tucson schools never dipped below 60 percent (Weslander, 2000). In contrast, Combs reported that after almost 30 years of bilingual education, the statewide Hispanic dropout rate is 17 percent and the bilingual student dropout rate is less than 6 percent, according to statistics from Tucson Unified School District. According to Weslander (2000), Combs reported that “Under “1C,” minority children - even if they spoke English - were herded into the program automatically simply because of the neighborhoods where they lived. Students remember an oppressive environment where they were punished for speaking their native languages. The “1C” program mainly affected Mexican-American, Tohono O’odham, Yaqui and Chinese children in Tucson and in a handful of towns near the Mexican border. Similar programs were established in Phoenix and surrounding areas as well. Obviously, under this program, generations of Latino children and families educational and thus life achievements and outcomes were negatively affected.

MacGregor-Mendoza documents English-only educational policies in Las Cruces, New Mexico in which children were ethnically segregated on the basis of their limited or non-English speaking ability and punished for speaking Spanish, the only language in which they had

fluency. The methods of punishment included public humiliation, washing mouth out with soap, wearing a dunce hat, physical segregation, standing in the corner, and other physical humiliations. Physical and psychological measures are the most common punitive methods utilized to implement restrictive language policies. Ranging from individual to group application, such methods have been used in the U.S., Australia, and in many other linguistically diverse societies throughout their histories into the 21st century (Jacobs, 2006; Skutnabb-Kangas & Dunbar, 2010). In the Southwest, teachers and administrators punished children for speaking Spanish on school grounds, utilizing multiple forms of corporal and verbal punishments—including hitting with rulers and other objects, spanking, unabated bullying, name calling, “public humiliation... by denying students access to the bathroom until they could state their needs clearly in English,” and various forms of individual isolation and group segregation (MacGregor-Mendoza, 2000, p. 361).

As I recall in the Introduction to *Language Ideologies*, Volume I (2000), my own brothers and sisters were punished for speaking Spanish in school, although that was the only language in which they had fluency. My brother was held back in the first grade for three years until the teacher was satisfied that he could speak English. My sister remembers being monitored even on the playground, scolded, and punished for speaking Spanish. Gloria Anzaldua (1987) states the integral connection between language and self-identity and the damage that is done by restricting or prohibiting native language use: “I am my language.” Restricting language use and punishment tied to language use is a condemnation of self-identity in that language is the expression of self-identity and tied to the core of ego. Therefore, any restriction of native language use adversely affects self-identity and self-concept. These were not rare occurrences, but took place repeatedly throughout her entire primary education. By the time she reached high school, she thought of herself as unintelligent and always thought of herself as not cut out for school. My brother also regarded himself as academically deficient and never was able to attain his intellectual promise. These are lifelong harms that have unending consequences that are perpetuated for generations because of the cycle of economic distress for children and grandchildren that an insufficient education and poor self-confidence of one generation create.

3. What propelled the public rhetoric and support of legislation that have brought Proposition 203 and S.B. 1070, and H.B. 2181 into being?

For many Americans, the growing number of language minority persons in the United States signals a threat to the cultural fabric of U.S. society. For these individuals, English is symbolic of the assimilationist goal to ensure that foreign elements are normalized. The fear of the “other” is prominent in this framework and controlling the element that is seen as “foreign” or threatening, is a seemingly non-hostile way of reducing the power that self-identity provides to ethnic groups and individuals as well as reducing equality of educational opportunity, which limits social mobility. Similar restrictive language policies and equality of educational opportunity have been used with the alleged assimilation of other ethnic groups and Native Americans, using the schools as the primary institution of indoctrination (González, Vásquez & Mikkelsen, 2012). The schools remain one of the most ardent battlegrounds for the English language policy debate.

In Arizona, fear of disruption of the social order and the loss of political power prompted the hostile rhetoric and wide public engagement in the obvious ethnic hostility embodied in the Proposition 203 English for the Children (2000), Senate Bill 1070 “Support our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act” (2010) as well as the law prohibiting ethnic studies House Bill 2281 (2010). It is important to recognize that Proposition 203 was initiated and passed during a period of a dramatic demographic growth for the Latino population in Arizona through immigration as well as via natural birth rates. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of Latinos in Arizona increased by almost 50%, from 688,000 to 1.29 million — 1 million of Mexican origin, magnifying the Mexican presence in the state (U.S. Census, 2000).

The demographic growth of Latinos in Arizona was most evident in the school population. For instance, between 1998 and 2008, Hispanic enrollment in K–12 institutions “ballooned from 268,098 to 416,705; an increase of 148,607 students. This student increase represent[ed] 86.3% of the total growth in the K–12 student population” (Garcia, Öztürk, & Wood, 2009), leaving little doubt that Proposition 203

disproportionally impacts Latino students. Notably, Latino children in Arizona were segregated, attending schools that typically had “*four times* as many students classified as ELL [English language learners] as [did] the schools attended by the state’s white students,” and were significantly underachieving academically because of lack of proper educational support (Gándara & Orfield, 2010, p. 5). According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, only 23.1% of Latinos graduated statewide from high school, in comparison to 64.5% of enrolled majority students (The William C. Velásquez Institute, 2000).

However, in contrast to the popular misconception that Latinos were a drain on the Arizona economy during this period, they in fact made a significant contribution by providing cheap labor, paying taxes, and purchasing goods (Pavlovich-Kochi, 2011). For example, in 2004, Mexican immigrants as consumers spent \$6.1 billion; Mexican visitor spending was recorded at \$2.4 billion; and Mexican immigrants as workers contributed \$23.1 billion. Altogether, Mexican immigrants, residents, workers, and visitors contributed \$31.6 billion to the Arizona economy, including \$1.735 billion in direct tax revenue to state and local governments. During the same period, the “cost” of immigrants (i.e., hospital, educational, social services) was only \$1.1 billion. Discounting the positive role of Latinos in the Arizona economy, anti-immigrant and nativist movements blamed immigrants (especially undocumented immigrants of Mexican origin) for narrowing job prospects for U.S. citizens, abusing social services, and failing to pay taxes. Additionally, the drug war along the Arizona/Mexico border reinforced the intolerant attitude towards Mexicans among the general public.

Second, Proposition 203 identified non-English languages as the problem in education, on the false assumption that heritage language instruction hinders English acquisition. This view emanated out of a common but fallacious belief in the U.S., as well as in many other countries that heritage languages are a disadvantage to language minorities and thus need to be restricted and eliminated. Approaching native languages as a problem, Proposition 203 promoted English-only instruction as the sole means by which to assimilate the language minority population. Thus, a major goal of Proposition 203 was the elimination of bilingual education in Arizona as a viable instructional approach to learning English. However, since only 30% of LEP children were in bilingual

programs, and 70% already attended English-only schools, it is clear that eliminating bilingual education was not about language per se, but about deeper social issues. By impeding LEP children's access to education, Proposition 203 masked ethnic and racial animus as a result of a growing Latino presence in the state and succeeded in further marginalizing the Latino population. In fact, in their study, Huddy and Sears (1995) found that the societal majority's objection to bilingual education stemmed from both racial prejudice and the threat of the "spread of foreign language, customs, and habits that challenge the sense of pride and esteem that the societal majority derived from their identity as 'Americans'" (p. 142).

The seductive appeal of Proposition 203 lay in its alleged purpose of improving educational opportunities for children while Senate Bill 1070 promised safe neighborhoods and improved police service. The third bill passed in this same period, H.B. 2281 (the ethnic studies ban) is singularly venomous in its attack on an educational methodology that is empirically unassailable – permitting students to study their own history and literature. The ethnic studies program is indisputably an exemplary model of multicultural education, with critical thinking, reading, and writing goals, that engages students with the educational enterprise, attaining academic achievement and prevents attrition, and Cruz Medina views this legislative fiat as ultraconservative Arizona policy that continues the colonial subjugation of Latino/as in the Southwest. H.B. 2281 prohibits schools from teaching ethnic studies under the false assumption those courses "promote the overthrow of the U.S. government" and "ethnic solidarity" House Bill 2281, p. 1).

The inflammatory language employed in the bill suggests un-American treasonous and conspiratorial acts and stirs up similar animosity used to gain U.S. public support of the imprisonment of the Japanese American population during World War II. Any rational analysis of the bill and its proposal was successfully prevented by framing the ethnic studies curriculum as subversive. The text was enough to engage and enrage a public that has been fever-pitched into looking for ways to target a population they see as intrusive and in direct competition for their jobs and a threat to their political power.

No attention was paid to research, which identifies ethnic identity as a critical component of healthy, successful behavior among language minority members as opposed to poor ethnic identity that has been empirically determined to correlate with high-risk behaviors among adolescents, such as gang involvement, drugs, alcohol, early pregnancy, dropping out (Samaniego,& Gonzales, 1999; Sanchez, 1993). The opinions of experts who advised against the bill were rejected as self-serving (if they were Latino researchers) and if they were majoritarian researchers, irrelevant opinions of “ivory tower” scholars with no connection to reality and the needs of the state (González and Melis, 2000, 2001). To the astonishment of academics, students, teachers, devoted school administrators, a law that will eliminate positive educational outcomes was passed in a state whose largest school-age population is Latino. Over the protests of countless scholars at the University of Arizona, Arizona State University, and national professional organizations, the law was passed, and the road towards the shut-down of this much needed program was paved.

Students chained to their chairs during school board meetings professing the importance of the ethnic studies curriculum to them, their families, their sisters and brothers, their futures, and defending a program of study rather than demonstrating the abject apathy of many unengaged students, was not taken into account by the highest educational governmental agency. Empirical data showing the effects of the ethnic studies programs in terms of significantly decreasing attrition in Tucson Unified School District were also dismissed. Moreover, the law was punitive in that if the school district failed to comply with the law, schools would have 10% of their apportionment of state aid withdrawn. There is no doubt that Tom Horne, State Superintendent of Public Instruction and initiator of Proposition 203 (2000), introduced this initiative with the intention of eliminating the ethnic studies program in Tucson Unified School District No.1, which offered courses on the social, cultural, and political history of Mexican Americans, African Americans, and Native Americans. Ethnic studies programs such as these are predicated on the educational theory that a better understanding of cultural identity strengthens self-identity, which in itself promotes learning, educational achievement, and personal success (Samaniego & Gonzales, 1999).

The ethnic studies program is not only based on sound pedagogical methodology, but the United Nations recognizes the right of minority children to study their own culture as a basic human right. Thus, six human rights specialists from the United Nations condemned House Bill 2281 on May 13, 2010, for violating the human rights of language minorities. In Arizona, civil rights advocates and Tucson Unified School District teachers, represented by Attorney Richard Martínez, filed a complaint against Tom Horne and members of the Arizona State Board of Education (*Acosta v. Horne*, October, 2010). John Huppenthal, Horne's successor, declared in 2011 that high schools that continued to offer courses in Mexican American Studies were in violation of House Bill 2281 (Hing, 2011). Although the auditors chosen by Huppenthal found that the program did not violate the specifications of the law, in January, 2011, administrative law Judge Lewis Kowal declared Tucson Unified School District to be in violation of H.B. 2281 (Lara, 2012). He further declared that its Mexican American Studies program must be eliminated or the District would face a 10% monthly budget reduction penalty. The District voted to eliminate the program (Huicochea, 2012).

In an interesting end to a long federal desegregation lawsuit in February 2013, Judge David Bury of the U.S. District Court in Tucson ordered Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) to provide culturally and linguistically relevant courses relating to the history of Mexican American and African American students in order to achieve racial balance (Huicochea, 2013). The TUSD school board voted 3 to 2 to lift its objection to these courses and cited four reasons for their reinstatement:

- 1) Students need to feel like they are reflected in the curriculum;
- 2) Many teachers have spoken out about the importance of incorporating Mexican American Studies in the curriculum of the Tucson, Arizona schools.
- 3) The incorporation of such a curriculum has worked to instill pride in students' Latino heritage, says Lorenzo Lopez, a teacher in the district. He himself felt that he first wanted to become a teacher because he took a Chicano/a literature course in college and finally felt that he saw himself reflected in the curriculum.
- 4) Unfortunately, many students who do not see themselves reflected in curricula become disinterested and disengaged, making college seem like a waste of time. If

these courses can be introduced at a younger age, retention in school will be much easier. In fact, the Mexican American Studies curriculum was a huge success when it was still in schools — it graduated 100 percent of students from high school and 82 percent went on to college (Lauren, 2013).

TUSD will offer the courses in three high minority high schools and identifies these new classes as ‘culturally relevant’ courses required by the Unitary Status Plan mandated by federal court order. The classes will be held for one year and the district will evaluate the courses and determine refinements and expansion (Huicochea, 2013). This is an example of the value of the federal government in ruling fairly in civil rights matters of race, language, gender, and ethnicity.

4. How have these policies affected the educational achievement of Latino students in Arizona?

Latino children— the fastest growing school-age population in Arizona— were the primary target of both Proposition 203 and H.B. 2281. As Lawton (2007) points out, “Proposition 203 was the first of a series of legal changes aimed directly or symbolically at the flow of Spanish-speaking immigrants into Arizona” (p. 6). Considering the prominent role of Latinos in Arizona history and the fact that bilingual education was pivotal for this group’s equal opportunity for education, it is clear that Proposition 203 targeted populations that the social majority feared as politically formidable.

The passing of Proposition 203 in Arizona has had pernicious effects: depriving children of the opportunity to build on their native language skills to develop literacy in their native language and quickly transfer to their second language English, as they build their oracy. Moreover, children are now subjected to regulation of their native language and many school districts and schools have employed restrictive language policies. Therefore, the educational atmosphere for many Latino children is one of fear and repression, where children and their parents often feel unwelcome, and little to no effort

is made to communicate with children and parents in a language they can understand. Moreover, bilingual education in Arizona has been demonized to the point where school districts are afraid to implement such programs.

The social and academic segregation of LEP children in Arizona was further exacerbated by the modification of the structured English immersion program into a four-hour daily block dedicated to English phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicon, and semantics, all of which are irrelevant to learning academic concepts and language (Gándara & Orfield, 2010). Therefore, it has been argued that Arizona violated the desegregation mandates of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) and failed to provide appropriate language instruction for LEP children mandated by the Supreme Court in *Lau v. Nichols* (1974).

Proposition 203 is a classic restrictive language policy, since it does not offer alternatives for LEP students. By prescribing one year of ESL classes, Proposition 203 forced LEP students to enroll in mainstream classes before they gained sufficient English proficiency to succeed academically. This policy ignored the clear empirical findings that children need five to seven years of bilingual instruction in order to acquire academic language proficiency in a second language (Collier, 1987, 1989, 1995). By eliminating parents' choice of bilingual education for their children— and segregating these children from their peers— Proposition 203 has obstructed LEP children's equal access to education.

Therefore, Proposition 203 has had harmful effects on Latino LEP children by not meeting their educational needs (Gándara & Orfield, 2010; Garcia, Öztürk, & Wood, 2009; Wright & Pu, 2005). As Combs, Evans, Fletcher, Parra, and Jiménez (2005) found: (1) teachers, administrators, and staff from 13 of the 18 schools in their study reported that children “cried or were traumatized by being instructed exclusively in a language they did not understand”; (2) children's self-esteem was damaged; and (3) their emotional and learning problems were exacerbated (pp. 710–712). Garcia et al. (2009) noted that in 2007 Latinos scored below the benchmark in critical reading, mathematics, and writing, and were underrepresented in higher education. For example, at Arizona State University, only 12.2 %

of Bachelor's degrees awarded in 2007 were earned by Hispanics (Garcia et al., 2009) in a state where they comprise up 24% of the population. Without postsecondary education, which has become the basic requirement for most jobs, Arizona Latinos were highly likely to experience economic deprivation and continued underrepresentation in the political process.

Because Proposition 203's stated goal differed greatly from its actual oppressive goal, this educational legislation is emblematic of a covert language policy. Rather than bettering educational opportunities for language minority children, Proposition 203's English-only instruction has disabled their academic success and future potential. Considering the lifelong, and generational, devastating effects of English-only instruction on LEP students, Proposition 203 has done much to silence the increasing political presence and weaken the economic and social stability of Latino and Native American communities, impeding their acculturation into the majority society. By excluding Latinos and other LEP persons from "symbolic and material markets" and denying them access to the resources of the social majority, including full participation in education and subsequently in employment and political life, Proposition 203 reinforced their poverty through "*capability deprivation*" (Mohanty, 2009, p. 102). Significantly, the social majority does not perceive these socioeconomic, cultural, and personal deprivations as outcomes of language discrimination but as inherent characteristics of these language groups that cause their economic failure and poverty. This language attitude fails to acknowledge that these inabilities and disadvantages are not inherent— but socially constructed. Moreover, similar to Proposition 227, it has been argued that Proposition 203 violates Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution's Fourteenth Amendment because it discriminates on the basis of national origin by restricting access to education on the basis of language— an element central to the identity of many Latinos (Johnson & Martínez, 2000).

Crafters of Proposition 203 utilized various means to ensure that the "intended" goal of Proposition 203 was implemented. By identifying heritage languages of LEP children as a problem in contrast to the benefits of English instruction, Proposition 203 exploited the ideology of English as the only means to the successful assimilation of language

minorities to U.S. mainstream society. After passing Proposition 203, the Arizona Department of Education developed a new English-only curriculum which emphasized rigid English-only instruction, forbidding use of the native languages in the classroom, creating more barriers to their education. Because LEP children were separated from their English-speaking peers, segregation increased in Arizona schools. Moreover, Proposition 203 disallowed educational testing in the native language of LEP students that had been permitted by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). After the passage of Proposition 203, student progress was measured by two standardized tests: the Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) and the Stanford Achievement Test (Stanford 9), while the use of *Apr enda 2* (the Spanish version of the Stanford 9 designed for Spanish-speaking LEP children) was prohibited in Arizona.

Implementation of Proposition 203 (2000) was assured through a set of strategic tactics: **(a)** requiring teachers and administrators to adhere to the policy or be removed for five years; **(b)** permitting any “parent or legal guardian of any Arizona school child... to sue for enforcement of the provision of this statute” (Proposition 203 A.R.5. §15-75); and **(c)** utilizing various propaganda campaigns to shape the pro-English-only attitude among members of local communities, including the broadcast of the few Latino and “immigrant” supporters to create the illusion that Proposition 203 was not anti-immigrant, anti-bilingual, or anti-Latino. An important element of the propaganda was to diminish bilingual education, as well as bilingual teachers and respected researchers by calling them “loonies, kooks, nutcases, laughingstocks, and cultists” and accusing them of damaging or victimizing LEP children with bilingual teaching (Wright, 2005, p. 673; see also Lawton, 2008; Yamagami & Tollefson, 2010).

For educators, the consequences of violating Proposition 203 were immense. Schools, school districts, and their administrators and teachers were denied the opportunity to challenge Proposition 203, a language policy that they knew would have damaging effects on the educational outcome of LEP children and their communities. Once the English-only instructional curriculum and rules were established, as well as the criterion set for permitting students to enroll in

bilingual education, any violation of these policies resulted in the reduction of much-needed state funding and “eventual state takeover or privatization of the school,” or even job loss for nonconforming teachers and administrators (Wright & Pu, 2005).

Finally, by reinforcing the marginalization of ethnic groups, privileged members of the social majority maintained their status quo. For instance, those in the social majority secured control over Arizona’s politics, retained their political and economic prestige, and continued benefiting from their social position, including the ability to educate their children in well-funded private schools. The passage of a harsh immigration law (S.B. 1070, 2010) in Arizona “testified to the relative lack of political power of Arizona Latinos, and to the hardened views toward illegal immigration among Republican politicians both here and nationally” (Archibold, 2010, n.p.).

5. How do these policies conflict with the “best practice” that NCTE and CCCC have advocated?

Obviously, Proposition 203 effectively banning bilingual education for LEP students, S.B. 1070, permitting state police authorities to racially profile Latinos and inquire as to their immigration status; and H.B. 2281 effectively banning ethnic studies programs because they promote ethnic chauvinism, violates NCTE and CCCC tenets of best teaching practice and professionally and universally accepted theory and teaching practice. These legislative initiatives violate basic human rights, as well as the equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitution and the Supreme Court holding *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) clearly stating that lack of linguistic access to education is a flagrant violation of civil rights. These aggressive and plainly hostile legislative actions violate the spirit and the four corners of NCTE and CCCC’s long commitment to expanding the American canon to be more inclusive and including in a non-tokenistic way the work of racial and linguistic minority authors and permitting students true access to education by providing a curriculum and materials that reflect their cultural and linguistic characteristics and experiences.

Searching for America's (Kelly, 1970) goal was that “the truth and reality of our nation’s history and literature be embodied in the texts and other teaching materials, and that includes the fact of the racial and ethnic diversity of its peoples” (p. 2). The Task Force focused particularly on the inclusion of literature pertaining to nonwhite minority groups, stating:

Of all the minority groups in the United States the non-white minorities (American Indians, blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, et al), more than any others, suffer crippling discrimination in jobs, housing, civil rights, and education.

The consequences of oppression make themselves most visible in major urban centers. But these consequences, if less overt, are just as real in rural America. By comparison, the amount and effects of racism and bias in English and Language Arts educational materials might seem insignificant. But they are not and cannot be ignored.

In the course of his education, a student acquires more than skills and knowledge. He also finds and continues to modify his image of himself, and he shapes his attitudes toward other persons, races, and cultures. To be sure, the school experience is not the sole force that shapes self-images and attitudes towards others. But in the measure that school does exert this influence, it is essential that the materials it provides fosters in the student not only a self-image deeply rooted in a sense of personal dignity but also the development of attitudes grounded in respect for and understanding of the diversity of American society.

The accomplishment of these ends is a responsibility and obligation of those involved in English and Language Arts programs. Therefore continuing action to accomplish them is the obligation and responsibility of teachers, curriculum planners, textbook selection committees, local and state education authorities, designers of learning systems, and publishers (Kelly, 1970, p. 3).

The above preamble to the specific deficiencies to be avoided in college anthologies to assure inclusivity of non-white minorities and K-12 criteria for anthologies and texts is thoughtful and theoretically progressive. The recognition of the Task Force members of the vital nature of self-image to academic growth of students is commendable and demonstrates knowledge of the psychological foundations of good pedagogy. Studying the history, contributions, philosophy, literature, and creative art forms of a particular ethnic group for a member of that group is salutary. This is particularly vital. There is no doubt that ethnic studies would be a natural progression of the ideas presented. In fact, ethnic studies was born out of the recognition that the histories, accomplishments, philosophy, literature, and other creative work of members of ethnic and racial groups was an academically definable body of knowledge comprising a disciplinary area and could constitute an undergraduate major, a master's degree, or doctoral studies. Whereas there are universal themes, genres, archetypes, elements of literary study in all literature, a body of literature pertaining to a particular group is worthy of study.

Given those universally accepted assumptions, the state of Arizona's stance on ethnic studies is absurd and plainly founded on irrational biases and negative intentions. Tucson Unified School District is the second largest school district in Arizona and is well known for numerous firsts, including award-winning bilingual education programs, notable disagreements with the State Department of Education in terms of the implementation of Proposition 203 in 2000, when it valiantly sought to continue its ability to provide quality access to education to its limited and non-English speaking children by continuing its bilingual education program. Moreover, after the passage of Proposition 203, the Arizona Department of Education withstood well founded criticism and decided that it needed a target to remove the heat. Perhaps TUSD's exemplary ethnic studies program has had tremendous media attention because of its overwhelmingly positive student outcomes. In the alternative, the entire battle over ethnic studies may have been staged to gain political favor and campaign finance assistance of a certain group of voters in the state to meet the political ambitions of Tom Horne, former superintendent, who was elected Attorney General of the state of Arizona coincidentally in 2010, when both S.B. 1070 and H.B. 2281 were passed.

Proposition 203, S.B. 1070, and H.B. 2281 infringe on person's right to equal opportunity to education and employment. Fairness and equal treatment under the law are the quintessential principles upon which the United States of America was founded and that distinguish it as a beacon of democracy in the world. Striving to achieve these ideals is a moral imperative, grounded in the construct of social justice and in the U.S. Constitution. Social justice recognizes the dignity of every human being and each person's inalienable right to an equal opportunity to meaningfully participate in all aspects of society in the pursuit of a high quality of life. The goal of social justice is to ensure that all persons have a voice in the decisions that directly impact their welfare and that of their children. An inclusive concept, social justice applies to all persons, regardless of their social or economic standing, race, national origin, or their ability to speak English. The fair application of the principles of social justice in the U.S. demands that justice be ensured for historically marginalized populations, such as language minorities who are limited- and non-English-speaking (LEP) and whose access to equal opportunity has been traditionally denied on the basis of language. In all arenas of public life, LEP individuals continue to be treated differently or excluded by virtue of their inability to speak English at a certain level of proficiency.

A commitment to social justice embraces the belief that the government has the responsibility to enact strong and coherent public policies that ensure equality of opportunity and fair treatment under the law for all of its citizens. Although the U.S. has always been a culturally and linguistically diverse society, English-only policies have dominated the language of public life, impacting how business is conducted, how the government interacts with its people, how education is provided, how the political process operates, and how justice is served. The monolingual English perspective in the U.S. is so ingrained in public thought that discriminatory policies become norms, such as permitting the exclusion of sound educational approaches to serve the needs of children who are monolingual speakers of another language, or banning ethnic studies courses in public education because of an irrational conclusion that a course that teaches students about themselves is injurious to the wellbeing of the state. These ethnocentric policies have failed to support the goals of social justice, and instead have erected a barrier between LEP populations and key cultural institutions, thereby perpetuating a

cycle of educational, economic, and social inequality. Effectively, these policies have determined who is included or excluded from the benefits and protections afforded to all residents of the U.S.

At my retirement party after 43 years of service and induction in the University of Arizona Women's Plaza of Honor on January 25, 2013, I was honored by the comments made by many former students, but particularly by Mary Carmen Cruz, MA and Richard Martinez, JD, who commented on the power and promise of ethnic studies and ethnic literature to the enterprise of education for racial and ethnic minority groups. Both of these highly successful people were in my early Freshman English classes in the mid 1970's at the University of Arizona, in which I had sought permission and been granted the opportunity to veer from the sanctioned curriculum and use Chicano literature as the stimulus for discussion, analysis, and writing in the course. This became my laboratory, where I could experiment with the variables of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and film to present topics and materials of interest to an entire class of Chicano students and gauge the usefulness of the material to the goal of learning to write and writing to learn. Here were students who were loath to write a "composition," but bursting to expound on a variety of topics and critical inquiries suggested by the literature and historical exploration of Chicanos in the U.S. Here was a student that had failed Freshman composition excelling at writing that required contemplation, careful analysis, problem solving, and critical thinking and complex evaluation. Later, both students took the first Chicano literature course offered in the English Department of the University of Arizona from me. Mary Carmen Cruz, TUSD teacher mentor and longstanding NCTE and CCCC leader, thanked me for inspiring her and opening the doors for her in her graduate work, professional life, and in NCTE and CCCC. I was touched by her comments crediting me as her mentor and the principal reason for her success in her lifetime of working with students and teachers—thanking me for making the University of Arizona accessible to countless students who felt excluded from the University. Richard Martinez, J.D. has had an illustrious career in the law and is best known for his speaking and writing prowess in a profession of verbal athletes. Richard served as the legal representative for two teachers who brought suit against the State of Arizona regarding the ethnic studies program at TUSD. He reminded everyone gathered at the

Women's Plaza of Honor that day of the absurdity of banning the study of Chicano literature and other ethnic literature works that had inspired him and many other undergraduates at the University of Arizona to continue in higher education. He recounted his early experiences with the University, relating that my introduction to Chicano literature gave them the motivation, self-confidence, and sense of belonging that had been heretofore missing at the University of Arizona for him. He expressed his profound sadness that the opportunity he was given and that students at TUSD had been given by the ethnic studies program would no longer be available, lest they inspire treason and the overthrow of the government, as stated by H.B. 2281. He reiterated that HB 2281 was an absurd piece of legislation based on personal bias and unbridled hostility had taken away the joy of discovery and true engagement in education that he and his classmates had when they found themselves and their realities in the pages of *Bless me, Ultima* (Anaya, 1972), for example. Richard remarked that in the dialogue of the characters, in the events of the plot, in the unanswered questions, they found their lives and their histories, their concerns, and their secret thoughts.

The work of the students Medina presents and analyzes in his research article is an expression of resistance, of non-acceptance of an irrational world, and shows the spirit of a subordinated people who will persist and in the end show their strength, resolve, integrity, pride, and dignity – trumping the colonial narrative in the end.

Roseann Dueñas Gonzalez, Ph.D. is the first Mexican American woman to earn full professor status at the University of Arizona where she taught for 41 years. Retired in 2013, she is now Professor Emeritus of English and Director Emeritus of the National Center for Interpretation: Testing, Research and Policy and the Agnese Haury Institute for Interpretation, both of which she founded and directed from 1983 to 2012. Professor Gonzalez also founded and directed the academic tutorial program—the Writing Skills Improvement Program—whose primary mission it was to assist underrepresented students and students receiving financial aid as well as other students to meet their academic potentials, persist, excel, and graduate from the University of Arizona. This critical program enabled thousands of

underrepresented students at University of Arizona to graduate and to go on to graduate and professional schools by using a methodology that assisted students to build writing fluency and effectiveness, by capitalizing on the use of their cultural life experiences and engaging students in ethnic literature. A linguist specializing in English as a second language and sociolinguistics, particularly language policy, Dr. Gonzalez has served as an expert witness in numerous civil and criminal cases involving language discrimination and language access, working with the Department of Justice, the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission, the Legal Aid Society Employment Law Center, the Southern Poverty Law Center, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), the Mexican Capital Legal Assistance Program, the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund (PRLDEF), the Justice Project, public defender offices, private attorneys, and legal aid societies. In 1999, the National Council of Teachers of English awarded her the NCTE Distinguished Service Award for her leadership and service—the only Latino/a to hold this honor. Fundamentals of Court Interpretation: Theory, Policy, and Practice (1991, 2012) is considered the seminal work in language access in the courts, and her NCTE publications Language Ideologies: Critical Perspectives on the English only movement, Volume 1 (2000) and Volume 2 (2001) have contributed greatly to the field of language policy.

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