**BUT IT’S A DRY HATE: ILLEGAL-AMERICANS, OTHER-AMERICANS,**

**AND THE CITIZENSHIP REGIME**

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**INTRODUCTION**

***But it’s a Dry Heat***

The State of Arizona is known for its arid, scorching, and often unforgiving climate. Detractors remind themselves and visitors that “it’s a dry heat.” In the contemporary political realm, Arizona is also known for its contentious, intense, and often intolerant politics—most notably Senate Bill 1070 (SB 1070) and House Bill 2281 (HB 2281). Signed on April 23, 2010, SB 1070 was the country’s broadest and strictest anti-illegal immigration law. Challenged in the courts, SB 1070’s only remaining provision requires that immigration status be checked during law enforcement stops (Arizona 2010a). HB 2281, signed the following month on May 11, effectively banned Ethnic Studies curricula in Arizona public schools and specifically banned the Mexican-American Studies curriculum within the Tucson Unified School District (Arizona 2010b). Both bills had their share of vehement support and passionate criticism. Critics pointed to many purposeful details of anti-Mexican and anti-Mexican-American discourse surrounding the implementation of the bills; citing the language, the history, and the actions of the bills’ sponsors as vindictive, ruthless, and hostile. Collectively, the bills sustain a hateful political climate for many of the state’s citizens. But it’s a dry hate.

Given the political climate of Arizona, how should we talk about race and racism and their intersections with other oppressions? What are the ways Ethnic Studies contributes to the growing scholarship challenging the complexities of citizenship and its oppressions in the Arizona borderlands and beyond? The answer to these questions is borderlands pedagogy. To borrow from Gloria Anzaldúa (1987), the borderlands are an experience, at once attached and detached from place, always grounded in body. The borderlands are not only observed, they are lived. In the classroom, the borderlands frame the stories we tell, the concepts we draw upon, the ways we frame the world, and the general pedagogical experiences we offer students. Inherent in the questions are a number of assumptions. Most important of these assumptions is that citizenship is *not* a neutral concept. We often overlook the ways in which citizenship is constructed and more importantly we often overlook *who* gets to construct citizenship. Linking power to citizenship, we see that identity formations—including race, class, and gender—all factor into the conception of citizenship, particularly in terms of who is granted full citizenship rights and who is not. Borderlands pedagogy, then, develops upon the many educational foundations that assist in challenging and consequently providing systemic change to traditional notions of citizenship by reconciling borderlands studies, citizenship studies, and Ethnic Studies.

My educational background is Political Science, where I studied citizenship in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, but I teach Ethnic Studies. The Ethnic Studies Program at Northern Arizona University was a bit removed from the political debates in Phoenix and in Tucson. We are also a bit off the radar because our program offers only a minor and a graduate certificate—our courses help fulfill Liberal Studies and cultural diversity requirements. However, this is not the only reason why students take our classes. Our classes also fulfill the intangible and unmet needs of the many students who are drawn to Ethnic Studies. And while I do not believe that the state’s universities will have any of their Ethnic Studies or Ethnic Studies related departments or programs banned, I do fear the hostile environment created by official and legalized state discourse. Ethnic Studies is still under attack, and the watchful eye of state officials continues to be on higher education. On March 28, 2012, Arizona Superintendent of Schools John Huppenthal said in an interview with Fox News Latino, “I think that’s where this toxic thing starts from, the universities.” Huppenthal continued, “To me, the pervasive problem was the lack of balance going on in these classes” (Fox News Latino 2012). Whose balance, I ask? Asked another way, whose citizenship? Superintendent Huppenthal’s comments perpetuate the project of defining the citizenship regime against those who would challenge it, and consequently promote the whitewashing of education as a method for protecting structural and institutional oppression, continuing new culture wars against “illegal” and “other” Americans in Arizona.

The impact of SB 1070 and HB 2281 across the state is widespread, but the focus here is on citizenship, and particularly on educational citizenship. Ethnic Studies becomes a citizenship through education; but education, in this case, goes much beyond the four walls of a classroom to include the relationships between teachers, students, families, and communities. In other words, the purpose of this chapter is not to provide a detailed discussion of the bills and their provisions, but instead to examine how the bills affect students and teachers as citizens. Informed by Ethnic Studies, borderlands studies, and citizenship studies, I identify legal, institutional, and discursive realities of the citizenship regime in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, which promote anti-immigrant sentiment and the whitewashing of education, perpetuating new culture wars. More specifically, I describe how SB 1070 and HB 2281 are defined, constructed, and regulated through these realities. To do this, I have divided this chapter into four sections. First, I expand upon citizenship studies to indentify the concept of “borderdom” as an emancipatory project that challenges the citizenship regime. Second, I discuss and examine how borderlands pedagogy can be structured in theory and in practice. Next, through the lens of SB 1070 and HB 2281, I devote special attention to the United States citizenship regime and its role in rewriting membership rules through immigration enforcement and especially through the banning of Ethnic Studies, which itself reinforces the border. Finally, in my conclusion, I offer a brief account of how Ethnic Studies is about lived experiences, and how these experiences are detrimental to the citizenship regime; and this is a good thing.

**CITIZENSHIP, NATIONALITY, AND RESIDENCY**

***The Citizenship Regime***

The terms nationality, residency, and rights are linked to our contemporary knowledge of citizenship, and this knowledge is typically made visible through the regulation of borders by states (see M. Anderson 1996). The regulation of borders is also made visible through bills like SB 1070 and HB 2281. The bills reinforce the citizenship regime through anti-immigrant, anti-Mexican, and anti-Mexican-American sentiment, which produces a persuasive logic rooted in “others” as not belonging to the nation-state (see, for example, Huntington 2004). Without regard for historical migration patterns or for changing definitions of citizenship, supporters of SB 1070 and HB 2281 are fixated on the nation-state as the only means for citizenship. The issue, however, is the conflict between state-building and nation-building. Benedict Anderson’s (1983) characterization of the nation as an “imagined community” is useful in this discussion of belonging to a nation-state. Anderson writes that a nation “is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (1983, 6). Subsequently, a nation is formed of shared identity and culture, and not formed through a consciousness of “self” and “other.” In short, the nation exists in and through public discourses such as language, symbols, and history (see also Poole 1999, 12-13). The power of citizenship, however, is that political communities have defined themselves and “others” according to their boundaries; meaning that “imagined” distinctions between people are rooted in an arrangement of “imagined” claims to borders.

Today, most scholars consider citizenship to be about membership, belonging, rights, and obligations (see Heater 1999). The scholars agree that citizenship can be seen as, and has shown to be, both flexible and subject to change. However, it is also important to note that citizenship is “made real” because of social, political, and economic conflict created by the particular citizenship rules of nation-states. In this sense, border people are not only challenging and crossing borders, but are also creating new borders (see, for example, Meeks 2007). Thus, the dynamic processes of citizenship take place within a context that is shaped by citizenship rules, creating a citizenist perspective and hierarchy. “Citizenism,” Anita Tijerina Revilla writes, occurs when anti-immigrant “state- and federally sanctioned classification results in a system of unearned advantages for citizens and unwarranted discrimination of noncitizens, such as the denial of basic human rights” (Tijerina Revilla 2011, 7-8, n2). To describe and explain how challenges to traditional notions of citizenship materialize in and around the bridges, checkpoints, rivers, fences, *and* asymmetry that mark the frontiers where the United States and Mexico meet, the state’s derived ability, or the citizenship regime, which creates and control citizens must be conceptualized.

According to Jane Jenson and Martin Papillon (2000), “A citizenship regime can be defined as the institutional arrangements, rules, and understandings that guide and shape concurrent policy decisions and expenditures of states, problem definitions by states and citizens, and claims making by citizens” (246). Citizenship regimes thus generally have four dimensions: 1) they establish the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion of a political community; 2) set the political rules of the game for a polity and define state institutions, political participation, and claims making; 3) contribute to the definition of nation in the sense that formal, cultural, and historical positions define the political community; and 4) establish and legitimize the geographical borders of the political community as nation (Jenson and Papillon 2000, 246). For these reasons, the citizenship regime is an institution deeply entrenched with the nation-state and, as such, many assume citizenship as the primary political identity within political boundaries (see Sassen 2003).

While the citizenship regime, as a concept, system, and discourse goes back to the ancient world, it has re-emerged in the United States and particularly in Arizona with divisive debates concerning its meanings and its legacy. In traditional terms, the citizenship regime is built generally upon conceptual legal definitions of who is to be included in or excluded from a specific political community. Traditional citizenship is at the heart of the citizenship regime—legal citizenship. Conversely, I propose an alternative citizenship of belonging as one with a sense of community, openness, sentiment, and inclusion. The assumption is that border people challenge *and* create borders *because* of the breadth and depth of the citizenship regime.

***“Borderdom”: Alternative Citizenship***

The term *border* generally refers to the line that surrounds a particular area, as in an edge or margin, or the line that separates two or more distinct regions, as in a boundary or frontier. Complicating matters is the term *borderland*. Scholars often define borderlands as outlying or transitional regions of a border; illustrating how vague and indefiniteborder-zones can be (see, for example, Anzaldúa 1987). In these two cases, a border is a line and a borderland is a zone. The suffix *-dom* refers to a realm of jurisdiction, as in a king*dom*, but can also refer to a state of being, as in free*dom*. My notion of “borderdom” is conceptualized as both the realm of jurisdiction at or near a border(land) *and* as the condition of being bordered. “Borderdom,” however, cannot be so easily characterized. The difficulty with defining the term is due to the contradictions, tensions, and conflicts that happen at border(land)s.

According to Oscar J. Martinez, “International borders are likely to be the scene of conflict due to such basic factors as vague territorial limits, unclear title to natural resources, ethnic rivalries, and restrictions on the movement of goods and people across the political line” (1996, xiii; see also, Appadurai 1996, 37; Gutiérrez 1999, 491-492; Newman 2000, 18). The U.S.-Mexico borderlands are the site of a continual and seemingly escalating conflict. Unlike previous border struggles, today’s conflict is not focused on a fixed territorial place, but on an ambiguous political space of “personal identities, movements of persons, and cultural and political hegemony of peoples” (Kearny 1998, 124). Both SB 1070 and HB 2281 embody a battle of the nation versus the state and of ethnic identities versus citizenship rules of inclusion/exclusion.

Indeed, the relationship between borderlands and ethnic identities is an embattled one. For example, traditional conceptions of the nation-state emphasize territorial boundaries, but as ethnic classifications show, people are not always bound to one territory. This is not a new notion. Territorial boundaries have never fully conformed to the movement of people (Newman 2000, 21-22). Borders may no longer confine citizens. Instead, alternative citizenship forms may be emerging *because of* borderlands. As such, traditional citizenship stands in the way of a fully open and democratic society because it is arbitrarily given to those with power; while people of color, the poor, and women remain as non-citizens, second-class citizens, or both. As such, my concept “borderdom” contributes to rethinking what it means to belong. Indeed, there is something significant about what it means to politically, culturally, and socially belong—to live within a “borderdom,” and for most people belonging is articulated through the complexities of everyday experience.

I am not alone in suspecting that citizenship may no longer be contained by citizenship regimes. Many theorists do refer to alternative citizenships (see for example, Rosaldo 1985, 1989, 2003; Gutiérrez 1995, 1999; Flores and Benmayor 1997; Glenn 2002; Meeks 2007; Benton-Cohen 2009). Also, drawing upon Saskia Sassen’s (2003) analysis of micro-transformations in the institution of citizenship it is possible to argue that while citizenship remains embedded within a citizenship regime, citizenship practices can be ‘done’ by citizens, 2nd-class citizens, and non-citizens (e.g. migrants). Sassen suggests that there are citizenship identities that are not confined to the state, meaning that citizenship can be local, translocal, and supranational (2003, 21). These possibilities are especially important. If citizenship regimes cannot confine citizens or citizenship practices, then careful consideration of citizenship and of citizenship practices at the U.S.-Mexico borderlands against SB 1070 and HB 2281 can shed important light on the political identities of border people, while at the same time systematically examining those practices and identities to determine if a “borderdom” is continuously (re)created (see also Gutiérrez 1999).

Intergovernmental institutions, transnational social movements, international migrations, and ethnic identities have helped create citizenships that cross boundaries. These spaces serve to broaden the definition of citizenship by including non-state and trans-state actions, like cross-border community activism against SB 1070 and HB 2281, as legitimate expressions of citizenship. Despite the rules and assumptions that surround the legality and processes of citizenship, people practice citizenship even while they are not granted full citizenship rights because citizenship is and has been a fluid and changeable concept. Here is where educational citizenship becomes crucial for students and teachers. Henry Giroux writes:

Education as a moral and political practice always presupposes a preparation for particular forms of social life, a particular vision of community, and a particular version of the future. Americans must address the problems of public schooling in the realms of values and politics, while holding firm the possibilities of public education in strengthening the practice of active citizenship. (2003, 123)

Challenging SB 1070 and HB 2281 is, indeed, an act of citizenship. As students and teachers, we are called to be active citizens.

**BORDER(LANDS) PEDAGOGY**

***Pedagogy “for”* *the Oppressed***

Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) is a foundational text of critical pedagogy, which was instrumental in confronting and in many cases fundamentally transforming traditional educational citizenship. The work was especially important for poor or working-class ethnic minority students who had been negatively affected by citizenship practices. This is not to forget that these citizenship practices also negatively impact female, queer, disabled, and many other “oppressed” students. Following Freire, Giroux argues that pedagogy is a discourse encompassing human dignity, liberty, and social justice; and as Giroux has noted, pedagogy should engage in social criticism, especially in contrast to grave threats faced by schools, by critical cultural spaces, and by the state of democracy itself (Giroux 1992, 4). Furthermore, he suggests that border pedagogy offers a perspective to “understanding of how the relationship between power and knowledge works as both the practice of representation and the representation of practice to secure particular forms of authority” (1992, 29). Giroux continues, “border pedagogy must take up the dual task of not only creating new objects of knowledge but also addressing how inequalities, power, and human suffering are rooted in basic institutional structures” (1992, 29). As such, he contends that educators should prepare students as citizens, not separate the abstract rights that come from a crude historical and cultural narrative from everyday experiences (1992, 134).

Building upon border pedagogy, and moving toward borderlands pedagogy, I find good reason to assume the possibility of alternative citizenships through education. Arizona offers an intriguing case-study of the possibility, in that it is a state that consistently experiments on denying citizenship and citizenship rights to its very citizens. I also build upon border pedagogy, quite frankly, because it both acknowledges and challenges the discourses of power that control and contain “imagined communities” and the citizens they require. Because formal citizenship is marked by legal and societal contexts, the ambiguities and power dynamics the citizenship regime poses to those who are non-citizens—exemplified by SB 1070—and to those who are considered second-class citizens—exemplified by HB 2281—create the discursive realities of the citizenship regime. In short, official citizenship policies have defined, constructed, and regulated (im)migrants and people of color thus creating a complex classification of illegal-Americans (migrants) and other-Americans (Mexican-Americans).  Where control and containment is imperfect, borderlands people find spaces and ways to challenge citizenship, to claim the borderlands as their home, and to thereby create an alternative citizenship.

Borderlands pedagogy, as an emancipatory, critical, and culturally relevant pedagogy, thus becomes a space for teaching and learning that lends itself to the conscious decolonization of academia, and consequently the decolonization of citizenship. The critique is of the assumption that citizenship begins and ends solely with official institutions—the same institutions that create and maintain the definition(s) of citizenship—the citizenship regime.  With the large concentrations of migrant, ethnic, and other “minority” populations, the nation-state’s hold on citizenship through its official institutions and its territorial boundaries, should be continuously challenged—creating a space for alternative citizenship. “Borderdom” provides spaces to examine the formation and maintenance of culturally responsive pedagogies, and confronts the new culture wars in Ethnic Studies. As bell hooks (1994) suggests, traditional curriculum privileges the very students who belong to the core culture (white, male, heterosexual, etc.). Thus, a curriculum that emphasizes societal norms grants the core culture “authority” in the classroom (*and beyond*), while alienating students whose histories are skimmed over or even excluded (See hooks 1994).

Borderlands pedagogy, engages the intersections of race, class, gender, and sexualities to culture, power, and knowledge. Borderlands pedagogy also builds upon critical, cultural, and feminist theories that help us see that the borderlands and citizenship are part of particular discourses, seeking to expand the exclusiveness and rigidity of citizenship. (see, for example, Shklar 1995; Glenn 2002). Recognizing the importance of discourse to power, borderlands pedagogy offers a critique of the citizenship regime as a restrictive discourse of belonging, supposes a relationshipbetween state power and the citizenship regime, and conceptualizes the citizenship practices that confront, challenge, and consequently change the citizenship regime (see also Rosaldo 1985, 1989, 2003; Flores and Benmayor 1997). Citizenship regimes make borders, but people’s negotiations with borders are a confrontation of citizenship regimes by which border people can understand, challenge, redefine, or even overcome them (see also, Anzaldúa 1987; Rosaldo 1989; Sassen 2003). In other words, “borderdom” is founded upon the claims made against traditional notions of citizenship, which has subordinated and oppressed people because of their race, class, gender, and other differences. “Borderdom” involves respect, well-being, dignity, empowerment, and democracy. Furthermore, “borderdom” is not detached, touristic, or voyeuristic, but is instead a lived experience; one that allows us to confront, challenge, and change the very structure of knowledge and power.

**IMMIGRATION AND BORDERLANDS PEDAGOGY**

***The Creation of the Illegal–American***

Richard Sigurdson suggests that cross-border migration impacts Western ideas and practices of citizenship (2000, 141). Thus, to deal with immigration, nation-states have developed the following five broad strategies: rejection or expulsion, restrictions to citizenship (guest-worker programs), assimilation, integration, and cultural pluralism (Sigurdson 2000, 142). For instance, the more narrow and xenophobic view of immigration control holds that citizens have the right to bar immigrants, because once they are allowed in, they must be granted full citizenship (see Waltzer 1981). Another view espouses that as states have the right to bar immigrants, there are basic moral obligations to migrants by both the host and sending countries (see Chaney 1981). Finally, the more cosmopolitan view suggests that states should not try to exclude immigrants, particularly if immigrants are seeking escape from poverty or suffering from persecution (see Lichtenberg 1981). Malcolm Anderson argues, “Beliefs, prejudices, contingencies and calculations of interest determine the way in which governments use frontier controls” (1996, 129). To include or exclude migrants, thus, raises important theoretical issues about the relationship of individuals to the citizenship regime.

Inclusion, broadly defined as citizenship, is a necessity for the state to preserve its identity and culture. Exclusion, on the other hand, is generally regarded as a very important function of borders (Anderson 1996, 127-129). Here, it seems that Arizona’s focus is on borders and accordingly on exclusion. Indeed, SB 1070 was part of a larger process in the United States, that perceived increases in refugee and migration flows—leading concentrated efforts to close the border, control or halt immigration, and tighten security measures. Consequently, a backlash against immigrants from Mexico and other parts of Latin America persists in Arizona. The nightmare image that drives popular American imagination is that of unruly, diseased, and criminal Mexican aliens illegally coming into the country to take American jobs and to take advantage of benefits that should go to deserving Americans.

Offering a Mexican view of migration to the United States, former Foreign Minister of Mexico, Jorge Castañeda writes:

In this long historical process lies the reason why Mexicans in general see migration in a different light from Americans, even well-meaning ones, when the latter underline the imperative need for everybody “to play by the rules.” What are the rules? Mexicans ask. Americans answer: the law, and everyone must respect it, and consequently wait patiently in line at the U.S. Embassy on Paseo de la Reforma in Mexico City, or at the nine general consulates or thirteen consular agencies in Mexico, to obtain a visa of one type or another. Except the laws have changed countless times, and moreover, the “rules” have always been different for the “laws.” So which is it? Today’s law or yesterday’s rules? (Castañeda 2007, 37-38)

To be sure, Castañeda also writes that “most undocumented Mexicans in the United States . . . have no documents” (2007, 144). However, the demand for cheap labor and cheap goods in the United States reinforces the immigration-labor cycle. Millions of Mexican migrants are said to be living on the U.S. side of the border. Immigration has also grown to include a multitude of *new* Mexican immigrants from central and southern Mexico—most of predominately indigenous descent. Because of immigration laws in the United States, most Mexican immigrants endure great dangers to physically cross the border. As the U.S. border continues to become more secure, Mexican migration flows persist; and the actual barriers that separate the two countries remain only a hindrance for most migrants (see, for example, Newman 2000).

The issue with SB 1070 is twofold. First, the bill fails to take into account the long history of immigration. Second, it fails to adequately address the racism and discrimination directed at immigrants and at their “mother countries” (see, also, Garcia 1997, 200). Furthermore, I agree with Arturo J. Aldama’s suggestion that the word “immigrant” is problematic in understanding Mexican people. He asks, “What is the status for Mexicans who lived in Mexican territories before they were annexed by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848?” (Aldama 2002, 26). The primary concern associated with SB 1070 is the implicit assumption that Mexican migrants pose a cultural *and* racialized threat to the United States. It is suggested that immigrants refuse to conform to the so-called American culture (read White Anglo Saxon Protestant culture), and continue to stubbornly cling to their “backward” traditions. In addition, there is a presumption that immigrants are seeking to undermine American values and American freedoms (see Garcia 1997, 210). Finally, the discourse of illegality against Mexican migrants frames an unnecessary criminalization of citizens who are neither criminal nor “illegal.”

***A Borderlands Critique of SB 1070***

What I roughly identify as critical or cultural studies (e.g. feminist studies and critical race studies) have been at the forefront of uncovering the hidden meanings of citizenship (see, for example, Young 1990; Flores and Benmayor 1997). At the center of their arguments is exposing “the reality of the citizen often conceived as ‘male-white-able-bodied’, and to take action to enable minority groups to participate in social, political, and civic life, defining and claiming their rights to become equal, active citizens” (Jones and Gaventa 2002, 15-16). Through a borderlands pedagogy, I take from the critical/cultural perspective that citizenship is both complex and repeatedly contested. In addition, with the growth of such activities as migration, citizenship has become even more complicated. According to Derek Heater, there is a growing awareness by both scholars and citizens that traditional citizenship is a hollow and meaningless scheme (1999, 3). This is primarily because the relationship between citizens and governments suffers from a crisis of legitimacy, as exemplified by SB 1070.

As Michael Kearney suggests, U.S. immigration policies are not directed at stopping immigration, but instead are focused on regulating the flow of immigration. The problem is that while migrant labor is desired, migrants are not (Kearney 1998, 124-125). In a Foucaultian fashion, Kearney also suggests that the activities of the Border Patrol are not intended to prevent illegal immigration into the United States, but are part of a larger system that disciplines workers to work hard and accept low wages (1998, 128). In short, immigration policies not only strive to reject particular cultures but they also seek to exploit them. The constant threat of deportation can keep undocumented workers unorganized, undemanding, and obedient. Furthermore, SB 1070 sought not only to control migrants, but also to control any folks who were, as one of its provisions stated, “reasonably suspicious.” Accordingly, an analysis of how SB 1070 was contrived in Arizona exemplifies how universalistic approaches to such concepts as sovereignty and citizenship control human experiences and structure everyday life in much of the world. It is through unclear legal pretexts that Arizona “controls” its border and its citizens. Today, as always, the borderlands can best be understood as the zone where the United States experiments with the lives of its citizens (see Masco 1999).

Borderlands pedagogy reminds us that Mexicans and Mexican-Americans are both among the earliest settlers and newest arrivals to the United States. Some are indigenous; some are descendants of people who had settled in what is now the U.S. Southwest and have dwelled in the borderlands for more than 400 years; others have lived in the United States for several generations; and many have entered the United States in recent years. Most Mexican-Americans continue to live in the U.S. Southwest and in distinctly Mexican-American neighborhoods, or *barrios*. More importantly, however, borderlands pedagogy reminds us that educational discrimination and social isolation have negatively accentuated differences. For example, family income and educational attainment remain much lower than the national average for Mexican-Americans (see Anderson 2003). Arguably, culture (as opposed solely to skin color) sets Mexican-Americans apart from other Americans. However, since they *are* American they are also set apart from Mexicans. More notably on the U.S. side of the border, the social construction of the “illegal alien” has stigmatized Mexican-Americans, despite the fact that the great majority of them are legal residents.

**CHICANA/O CULTURAL IDENTITIES AND BORDERLANDS PEDAGOGY**

***Citizenship as “Borderdom”***

Since this is a study of citizenship, it is based on the notion that borders exist, that they matter, that they have real functions in various areas of society, and that they exert an important influence on those dwelling in the borderlands. At issue in this section is not how Americans view Mexicans and Mexican-Americans, but how belonging to the borderlands becomes associated with being “the Other.” This is a central concern, given that many Chicanas/os can both belong to the borderlands and can be “other” to either side of the border—not considered fully Mexican or American. A hybrid or mesitiza/o culture has materialized, only to be shunned by hegemonic centers. Lawrence A. Herzog contends that the importance of culture is magnified in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands. And on the U.S.-Mexico border, Chicanas/os can claim two nation-states. More importantly, Chicanas/os can create unique spatial formations that have evolved under the different cultural codes and conditions of the United States (Herzog 1990, 7).

An examination of Chicanas/os and of HB 2281 is a “point of entry” for a deeper discussion of “borderdom.” I am not saying, however, that being Chicana/o is *the* “borderdom” that I have discussed. Instead, I set out to map a conceptual and theoretical space in which we as students and teachers can engage in new conversations around borderlands and Chicana/o identities. Herein lies the issue with HB 2281. Borderlands pedagogy becomes a dialogue about the system to change the status and statistics of Chicanas/os for the better. Implicit in the political overtones of Chicana/o Studies is the idea that the U.S.-Mexico borderlands are contested territory. Many Chicana/o scholars view the borderlands as a site of political and cultural conflict—a contested terrain shaped by changing individual and collective definitions of belonging and not belonging to the borderlands (see, for example, Vigil 1998).

A primary concern for many Chicana/o scholars is the belief that the creation of the 1848 border, with the signing of the *Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo*, split them and created a second-class citizenship of hyphenated Americans. Mexican-Americans, thus, are embodiments of a complex fate shared by those born “other-American”—hybrids always living in the hyphen. Ultimately, Chicana/o Studies is political. Indeed, there will always be a variety of definitions for the term Chicana/o. The scholarly world, at large, has come to view the term Chicana/o as a political term. As a distinctive ‘identity,’ Chicana/o identity takes shape within the confines of the citizenship regime. In short, HB 2281 and the banning of Mexican-American Studies in Arizona only made Chicanas/os more visible. The ban has fuelled widespread consciousness-raising with regard to the identity of Mexican-Americans and especially of Chicana/o youth. Another way to consider “borderdom,” is to look to Chicana/o Studies, which identifies numerous possibilities. Chicano/a Studies has a long and wide-ranging history, however, it can be noted for its insistence on both cultural and political empowerment; and this empowerment is just the wedge issue for Arizona politicians.

***The Creation of the Other–American***

The U.S.-Mexico borderlands, as Arturo J. Aldama and Naomi H. Quiñonez write, “is a site that is lived and expressed by those who reside in the physical/discursive margins generated by the edge of two nation states” (2002, 1). They argue that for more than 500 years, the Americas have attempted to deal with colonial and neo-colonial subjugation, and for more than 150 years, Chicanas/os have dealt with a continued subjugation. What Chicana/o Studies faces, in less than 50 years of existence is the undoing of more than 500 years of a colonized pedagogy. The Chicana/o experience stems from the dynamics of colonization. Because manipulation and destruction of oppressed peoples are inherent to colonialism, Franz Fanon argues that the process of decolonization involves the creation of a national consciousness (1979, 210). The U.S.-Mexico borderlands are illustrative of Chicanas/os’ complex relationship to traditional forms of citizenship. Chicanas/os thus become essential to the discussion of the possibilities of “borderdom,” primarily because Chicanas/os dwell within a vague and indefinite borderlands.

As James Diego Vigil writes, “few . . . attempt to grapple with and unravel the complex strands of Chicanos, as the ‘in-between’ people, who straddle both nations with a thin borderline separating the two” (1998, 2). What is equally important to note here, as C. Alejandra Elenes calls to mind, the problem with mainstream discourses is not that they fail to take into account differences of race, class, gender, and sexuality, but that they fail to adequately theorize and even fail to acknowledge such categories as “white,” “male,” “heterosexual,” and “middle class,” and their interconnectedness (2002, 254). In a similar vein, Norma Alarcón et al. write, “the nation-state sharpens the defining lines of citizenship for women, racialized ethnicities, and sexualities in the construction of a socially stratified society” (1999, 1; see also Irigaray 1985, 171). In other words, citizenship vis-à-vis the nation-state is both the denial and consolidation of sexual, gendered, *and* racial differences.

Following this argument Sarah Ramirez maintains that what we see in Chicana/o nation-building is a shared cultural indigenous heritage, a common language—a mixture of Spanish and English with some use of the various indigenous languages of Mexico, a deep connection to the land, and a political, social, and historical displacement (2002, 224). The Chicana/o homeland, *Aztlán*, becomes a unifying concept and base for Chicana/o presence in the United States. Ramirez suggests that saying the word “*Aztlán*” also becomes a basis of commitment toward acknowledging and claiming indigenous concepts as part of the Chicana/o reality (2002, 224-225). However, the point that Ramirez makes is that this “imagined” Chicano nation “served to subjugate, define, and control Chicanas, revealing a contradiction between ideology and praxis” (2002, 225). While nation-imagining implies homogeny, many have been uncritical of the official discourses of a solely Chicano nationalist movement—many except for Chicana feminists. The term “Chicana feminist perspective,” writes Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano “implies certain similarities with and differences from either an exclusively ‘feminist’ or ‘Chicano’ perspective” (2007, 364). Perspectives on Chicana thought are numerous, and are more so, necessary.

Indeed, a Chicana feminist critique is a useful starting point for rethinking citizenship, borderlands and Ethnic Studies away from the binary opposition between “us” and “them,” to questions of difference, power, and knowledge (Aldama and Quiñonez 2002; see also, Moraga and Anzaldúa 1981; Anzaldúa 1987; Alarcón 1997; Trujillo 1998). In my classroom, starting with the Chicana feminist critique in my “Introduction to Chicana/o Studies” courses is as purposeful as it is useful. My very own introduction to Chicana/o Studies was through the lens of Chicana feminism and not through the oft-taught starting point of Chicano nationalism. In the process of challenging existing paradigms, Chicana feminists introduce new political identities—borderlands identities—that emerged to challenge both the racism of Anglo American feminism and the sexism of ethnic nationalist movements. Much like a borderlands pedagogy, a borderlands identity is used to challenge and even to defy the ways the citizenship regime confines and separates human communities.

Chicana/o Studies, then, offer cultural productions that create a discursive space through a borderlands pedagogy to articulate various forms of resistance to physical barriers, including educational barriers such as HB 2281. As Aldama and Quiñonez point out, Chicana/o Studies is “a resistance to the multiplicity of oppression across race, class, gender, and sexuality” (2002, 3). Aldama continues, “Chicana/o border studies, devoted to understanding the complex dialectics of racialized, subaltern, feminist, and diasporic identities and the aesthetic politics of hybrid mestiza/o cultural production, is at the vanguard of historical, anthropological, literary, cultural, artistic, and theoretical inquiry” (2002, 11). As such, critical Chicana/o borderlands studies is part of the attempt to understand Chicana/o identity as one that is synonymous with a borderlands identity. This does not necessarily mean that a Chicana/o needs to physically live on the border or that a border person is a Chicana/o. Borderlands identity also means living in the symbolic borders that differentiate between such identities as ethnicity, class, and sexuality. Subsequently, the social, cultural, and political expression of citizenship rests with the ability to redefine and re-imagine borderlands discourse.

***Chicana/o Borderlands Pedagogy***

It is widely accepted that Chicana/o Studies, as a formalized academic field of study, came into being as a direct result of the Chicano Movement of the 1960s and 1970s (see Avila 2001). The birth of Ethnic Studies was also connected to third world anti-imperialist struggles, seeking to de-center a Eurocentric/American mythos curriculum. It is also important to note that Chicana/o history and political/cultural movements certainly predates this time. Since the making of the current border, when Mexico and the United States signed The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgoand later The Mesilla Treaty (the Gadsden Purchase), the borderlands have been an important area for Mexican-Americans. By the start of the Chicano Movement (the Mexican-American Civil Rights Movement) in the mid-1960s, the borderlands and border crossings became important areas of analysis within Chicana/o Studies. Chicana/o Studies have been key in the emphasis of “borders” as an important academic consideration. More than just focusing on the U.S.-Mexico border, as is commonly perceived, Chicana/o Studies have exposed the importance (and non-importance) of borders, physical, cultural, geographical, social, and so on, in *our* lives. Chicana/o identity, therefore, has come to occupy the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, although Chicanas/os are not always confined by the territorial borderlands.

Still, Chicana/o educators use as their primary icon the border. For these scholars, the border has great symbolic currency. The border—represented by the fence and the river—become cultural metaphors for Chicanas/os. Most scholarship of the border examines the metaphoric possibilities of the border as a barrier and as a permeable connection between Mexico and the United States (Fox 1999, 46-49). Indeed, Chicana/o Studies, more than any other discipline, have placed considerable attention on the concept of borders; and Chicanas/os claim the border person as their own. Also, as Carlos G. Vélez-Ibáñez writes, “the border is among the most important ideas in our lives simply because our identities are so tied to this creation” (1996, 265-266). Also, as Americo Paredes reminds us, “life along the border was not always a matter of conflicting cultures; there was often cooperation of a sort, between peoples of both cultures, since life had to be lived as an everyday affair” (Paredes 1978, 72). Nonetheless, life in the United States for masses of Mexican and Mexican-Americans has been anything but easy, yet Chicanismo becomes a way to embrace rather than to reject identities.

HB 2281 has failed to look at the larger contribution of Chicanas/os and other Latinas/os for that matter in Arizona; and as Stanley R. Ross explains, “as a larger and more diverse group, a group unique for its cultural mixing, or *mestizaje*” (1978, 2). Ultimately, Chicana/o identity is about “the political.” This political identity is not easily identifiable—it is not visible like skin, wardrobe, or dialect, especially in the borderlands. James Diego Vigil writes, “To understand the Chicano people is to understand their history. It is to recognize that Chicanos have been shaped by a series of ‘social systems’” (1980, 221). More importantly, Chicanas/os are also shaping these social systems. What HB 2281 seeks to do is to strip Chicanas/os of their history and therefore strip them of understanding their rights as citizens. Furthermore, HB 2281 seeks to strip Chicanas/os of their cultural identities. Cultural identity is so important to the struggle for economic, social, political, and ideological change, and many Chicanas/os and “others” are no longer accepting treatment as second-class citizens. Thus, Chicano/as have the ability to confront, challenge, and cross borders, and lead this new era of cultural awareness toward a new era of citizenship (see also, Vigil 1980, 187-213).

***The Continuing Story of the Search for Educational Citizenship***

HB 2281 has forged an unnecessary phenomenon in race and ethnic relations in the borderlands. Negative racial/ethnic representations of Mexican-Americans in the United States stretch back before the U.S.-Mexico War. Mexicans have long been seen as a mongrel race in contrast to their northern neighbors, not only in skin color but also in morality. After the war, Mexicans living in the United States became Mexican-Americans, inheritors of a Mexican cultural identity but members of a stratified U.S. society (see Pettit 1980, 12). Thus, citizenship is a racialized concept; and as such, HB 2281 is a racialized discourse advanced by continued antagonism against “others” in the state of Arizona. Whereas, SB 1070 further criminalized undocumented migrants, HB 2281 criminalized actual citizens. For example, as Carl Gutierrez-Jones writes, “The process by which Chicanos have become institutionally and popularly associated with criminality has had a long and complex history that is intimately related to their very construction as a social group in the United States” (1995, 1). Indeed, HB 2281 maintains the criminalization of Chicanas/os. Worse so, HB 2281 denies all Arizonans the extensive understanding of the United States that the bill’s supports say they revere.

As C. Alejandra Elenes (2003) argues, education in the United States seeks the assimilation of ethnic subpopulations into the core culture to embrace a national mythos of equality, democracy, and freedom as both factual and attainable. The issue is that these same ethnic subpopulations are themselves suggested to be culturally deficient. Against the cultural deficiency model, Ethnic Studies and particularly Chicana/o Studies Programs emerged from the civil rights movement which helped to end school segregation and to implement bilingual and multicultural education. Still Ethnic Studies and Chicana/o Studies moved beyond education reform to curricular transformations, that connected Chicana/o youth to their history, their culture, and to their communities; but not without their own issues of nationalism over subjugated identities such as feminism. Chicana/o Studies was and in many cases still is male, hetero-normative, and working class. The question is how to confront and challenge traditional pedagogies while remaining committed to inclusivity and to the diversity of internalized oppressions. As such, an Ethnic Studies curriculum must always create new forms of agency rather than adding Chicanas/os to already existing pedagogies for the sake of inclusion (see, Elenes 2003, 192-194).

**CONCLUSION**

***Ethnic Studies as Border Crossing***

Folks are uncomfortable discussing difference; not only in Ethnic Studies or Women’s Studies courses, but in all classrooms. When discussions of race, gender, or even class break out, there is a tendency to disregard, cut short, or even defend the non-existence of racism, sexism, and so on—essentially protecting supremacy and oppression. This is even done along progressive lines, whereby any meaningful discourse surrounding racism is replaced with multiculturalism. New borders are created. Many of our women, queer, and racial/ethnic minority students are left meander around the actual and very real issues that affect their everyday lives, leaving the majority of students who come from the core culture able to justify a false reality that we live in a post-racial, post-feminist, or post-homophobic world.

The dilemma of borderlands pedagogy is great—to discuss the relevant issues, identities, and ideas that resonate within the excluded (non-citizens) while continuing to ensure that these fluid identities do not themselves become totalizing projects of modernity. We need to embrace ambiguity, and to embrace the political mess that is education. Yes, the classroom is a political space. It always has been. However, when we are to hold Christopher Columbus in high acclaim, while simultaneously ignoring genocide, our classrooms have created a politics of disregard toward difference. In the classroom we affirm or deny political hierarchies (see, McKenna 2003). Education is political, but the politics of banning Ethnic Studies programs should not be involved. What happened in the Tucson Unified School District was to develop a curriculum to address low test scores and high dropout and push-out rates of Mexican Americans. The Mexican American Studies program did just this. HB 2281, however, was instrumental in reversing the successful trends, all in the name of whitewashing education.

In Arizona, Ethnic Studies finds itself at a crucial crossroad. Although we have made some strides, many struggles remain. At issue, is that Mexican and Mexican-American identities in the United States are also constructed and developed through various discourses, and these constructions are informed and driven by anti-immigrant and racist sentiments. And while SB 1070 created heightened awareness of immigration, being undocumented is arguably not a significant issue in Arizona because discriminatory conditions continue to exist despite legal status. Such is the case of HB 2281, which itself contradicts classic principles of U.S. democratic theory of full incorporation into U.S. society, requiring that all discriminatory barriers be eliminated. When applying these principles to the struggle for Mexican-American equality under the law, it is clear that Mexican-Americans have not been granted “full” citizenship in the United States (see Valencia, et al. 2004, 15-16). The relationship between Mexican-Americans and citizenship thus raises important questions with regard to notions of knowledge, justice, and power.

***The Margins are Important***

How is “borderdom” different from traditional forms of citizenship? This question is especially important given that—as I have already suggested—Chicana/o border identities can be both a hybrid of two or more state identities and a rejection of state identities. To understand “borderdom,” it is important to understand experiences as negotiations with borders. While barriers are a strong feature of most border peoples’ experiences, negotiations with borders position border people to cross borders. Yet, these border crossers are marginalized. They are already people are living in the margins. Yet, the margins, as I often remind my classes, are most important part of reading and understanding texts. When we read—theory, poetry, our fellow student’s narratives—the margins are where we make our notations, where we ask our questions, where we write our comments. Pay attention to the margins. Our deepest understandings come from the margins. We hold on to the margins in Ethnic Studies. Ethnic Studies, thus, becomes social justice for the marginalized through education; but education, in this case, goes much beyond the four walls of a classroom to include the relationships between teachers, students, families, and communities. Ethnic Studies, thus, is an act of love. Ethnic Studies is an act of humanity. Ethnic Studies soothes our fears, and it realizes our dreams. Ethnic Studies both challenges and expands our boundaries. Ethnic Studies is exactly what is needed to confront, to challenge, and to stop the hate.

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