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Moira Monica Meijaard April 10, 2020

Disrupting *Las Fronteras*: A Reading of Gloria Anzaldúa as a Cross-Cultural Killjoy Feminist

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Abstract

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By Moira Monica Meijaard

In the 1980s, Gloria Anzaldúa addressed historically ignored intersections between gender, race, sexuality, nationality, and culture through *This Bridge Called My Back* and *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. Drawing upon her own experiences of living in Texas, at the Borderland between Mexico and the United States, Anzaldúa constructed an intersectional feminist rhetoric that aimed to envelop the diverse experiences and opinions of other women living at this crossing of cultures. Just over 50 years later, Anzaldúa's strategies of intermingling Spanglish, inductive reasoning, and deductive reasoning are still maverick within the realm of feminist rhetoric. This thesis argues that reading Anzaldúa through the two unlikely paired lenses of Sara Ahmed's killjoy feminism and logical argument structures of classical rhetoric can help us take a fresh approach to Anzaldúa's controversially utopian "bridging" rhetoric. This unique approach illuminates the ways through which bridging, Borderlands, and *mestiza* rhetoric may serve as pragmatic tools that adapt to multiple audiences, languages, and spaces. This adaptive rhetoric made a critical impact in Anzaldúa's time and is useful even today as we examine feminist rhetorical situations from within the academia, in politics, and beyond.

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This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my grandmother, Dulce Mercadé – who pushed me to be a strong woman, get an education, and never let a man walk over me. *Aunque me dijiste que en boca cerrada no entran moscas… jamás pudiera quedarme callada. Te quiero, y te echo de menos más de lo que puedas imaginar.*

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INTRODUCTION

El patriarcado es un juez que nos juzga por nacer,

y nuestro castigo es la violencia que no ves.

Es femicidio. Impunidad para mi asesino.

Es la desaparición. Es la violación.

Y la culpa no era mía, ni dónde estaba ni cómo vestía.

El violador eras tú.

Son los pacos, los jueces, el Estado, el Presidente.

El Estado opresor es un macho violador.

El violador eras tú.

Duerme tranquila, niña inocente, sin preocuparte del bandolero,

que por tu sueño dulce y sonriente vela tu amante carabinero.

El violador eres tú. ("La letra de 'El violador eres tú'")

"The rapist is you," sings the chorus of the feminist battle hymn heard around the world. Beginning with a performance by Las Tesis on November 25, 2019 in Chile, the song has been translated into languages around the world to protest governments' inactivity regarding violence against women (Hinsliff). More than singing the lyrics, the protesters often wear black blindfolds and attach choreography to the performance. The dance steps depict the uncomfortable, degrading positions women have been forced into, including squatting to reflect how police conduct "body cavity searches, often while stripped naked" (Hinsliff). Visually stunning, even the performers have emotional reactions to the protest as they remember the violence they have personally experienced (Hinsliff). Las Tesis translates to "The Theses," which reflects the academic interests of the group. Their "interest in feminist theory" and desire for further activism on the widespread femicide that plagues Latin America and, frankly, the rest of the world reflects how feminist movements have barely moved past the United States' borders (Hinsliff). Thus, Las

Tesis took it upon themselves to create an anthem for women worldwide. Over 2,000 women performed in front of Mexico City's Zocalo (i.e. main square), and thousands more have protested in Colombia, France, Spain, the United Kingdom, and Australia (McGowan; Pierson). This is the kind of reach a global women's movement needs, and its success is grounded in the techniques used.

Though the effectiveness of the protest is based on its lyrics in conjunction with its performance, the translation of the lyrics into multiple languages reveals their importance in the movement. The chorus, "The rapist is you," allows for women to point out their oppressors in a supported group, rather than doing it alone and potentially being ignored. The numbers of women who gather to say these lyrics also interrupt existing routines. They willfully disrupt the "happiness" of the spaces they are in by drawing attention to the unhappiness of those who inhabit the spaces. They create a new space, one which demands that the ignorant begin to listen. But beyond that, the song offers a critique of the systemic issues that have resulted in a need for the performance. As described by Gaby Hinsliff, "[t]he song's message is that rape doesn't happen in a political vacuum; that it is welded to patriarchal power structures as a means of keeping women down." In other words, the song addresses more than just the chief complaint of femicide; it illuminates the underlying patriarchal structures and values that normalize female subservience and oppression. Las Tesis' technique of what feminist theorist Sara Ahmed would call a killjoy interruption, a term that generally describes the verbal disruption of a norm to acknowledge its oppressive nature, paired with a deconstruction of the roots of femicide is reminiscent of another Latinx feminist powerhouse: Gloria Anzaldúa.

Gloria Anzaldúa: An Introduction to Revolutionary Disruption

Gloria Evangelina Anzaldúa was a Chicana, lesbian, female writer and academic whose work revolutionized Intersectional Feminist Rhetoric and the fields connected to it. Like Las Tesis, she wrote extensively on the inequality and femicide faced by women within Latin America, the United States, and the Borderlands that exist between them. In the late 1970s and through the 1980s, Anzaldúa unapologetically published her experiences in painful detail, spearheading the willful disruption of a society that had neglected and perpetuated its mistreatment of women. Beyond putting brutal personal accounts at the forefront of her writing, Anzaldúa paired her multilingualism with deductive and inductive reasoning to expose the roots of how and why violence and oppression are normalized. Thus, Anzaldúa's killjoy feminism pushed readers to see the kinds of trauma that women are enduring while showing the illegitimate foundations of inequality in language that a larger audience would understand.

Literature Review

The following paper is grounded in research that spans the Americas and three languages. To examine the killjoy feminist, a recent figure developed by Sara Ahmed, I review two works where Ahmed introduces and extrapolates on uses and functions of the killjoy: "Feminist Killjoys (and Other Willful Subjects)" (2010) and *Living a Feminist Life* (2017). To address the research that has been done on Anzaldúa beyond the Western lens, I survey works including "Toward a Mestiza Rhetoric: Gloria Anzaldúa on Composition and Postcoloniality" (1998) by Andrea A. Lunsford, *Mestiza Rhetorics: An Anthology of Mexicana Activism in the Spanish-Language Press, 1887-1922* (2019) by Jessica Enoch and Cristina D. Ramírez, and "Transculturation and the Colonial Difference" (2002) by Walter D. Mignolo and Freya Schiwy. To analyze previous research on Anzaldúa's rhetorical strategies, particularly those that employ traditional appeals and multilingualism, I study *The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from*

Classical Times to the Present (2001) by Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg, *Feminist Rhetorical Theories* by Karen A. Foss, Sonja K. Foss, and Cindy L. Griffin, and "Conocimiento as a Path to Ethos: Gloria Anzaldúa's Networked Rhetoric" (2016) by Kendall Leon and Stacey Pigg.

Anzaldúa as a Killjoy Feminist

Anzaldúa's interruption of the norms within social and rhetorical contexts parallel Sara Ahmed's words in "Feminist Killjoys (and Other Willful Subjects)" (2010). In the article, Ahmed embraces the stereotype of the problem-raising, happiness-disrupting, norm-interrupting feminist. She uses "happiness" to describe a state of comfortable conformity with the status quo, while highlighting that there are people who are unhappy in this space. People who are treated as "other" for any number of reasons including but not limited to their gender, race, and sexual orientation are expected to remain silent and allow others to have their happiness. This silence raises a need for activism, which does not always receive positive reactions. As Ahmed extrapolates, "[i]n speaking up or speaking out, you upset the situation. That you have described what was said by another as a problem means you have created a problem. You are the problem you create" (Ahmed). Ahmed's feminist killjoy offers the ability to celebrate those who speak out and acknowledge the unhappiness that exists. In order to propel change, there must be awareness that something needs to be changed. Building on this idea, Ahmed points out that "[w]illfulness could be rethought as a style of politics: *a refusal to look away from what has already been looked over*" (Ahmed). Ahmed expands on the killjoy within political and social situations in her recent book.

Titled *Living a Feminist Life* (2017), Ahmed's book describes the recurring alienating experiences that make a feminist. She indicates the unhappiness that exists within situations we have accepted as normal such as professional meetings or dinner tables and highlights the marginalized identities who are expected to deal with or embrace it. In response, Ahmed presents the killjoy feminist who interrupts the conversation. Ahmed names Anzaldúa as a killjoy and emphasizes the fearlessness of her intermingling of English and Spanish, noting that "To speak your own language is to become disobedient. Her tongue persists with a willful disobedience, refusing to be straightened out. Feminism: a history of willful tongues" (191). Furthermore, though Ahmed does not directly name Anzaldúa's works as killjoy manifestos, her definition of the manifesto notes that: "we bring into our statements of intent or purpose the experience of what we come up against" (255). The entirety of Anzaldúa's work is dedicated to raising awareness to the issues that plague generations of women, unapologetically addressing virtually every problematic facet of a patriarchal society.

Beyond the Western Tradition, South of the Border

In "Toward a Mestiza Rhetoric: Gloria Anzaldúa on Composition and Postcoloniality" (1998), Andrea A. Lunsford prefaces an interview with Anzaldúa with some insights to the success of Anzaldúa's literary activism. She posits that Anzaldúa's work is a "triumph over the 'tradition of silence,'" thereby highlighting Anzaldúa's willfulness to raise awareness about her experiences and the social inequities they exhibit (2). In addition, Anzaldúa goes about this in a way that allows her to "imagine, enact, and inhabit spaces that go beyond dichotomies of all kinds" (2). In other words, Anzaldúa transcends seemingly predetermined, unbridgeable groups to create new spaces that permit seemingly impossible, open conversation. Anzaldúa explains this transcendence herself when she states that "what I'm trying to present to you is […] another

way of composing, another rhetoric; but it is only partly new" (13). As a result, she innovates techniques that are "cast in the Western tradition, because that's all [she] was immersed in" but have elements that transform the tradition (13). Anzaldúa's approach to activism is reminiscent of those typical in Latin America, which embrace a hybridity of techniques.

In *Mestiza Rhetorics: An Anthology of Mexicana Activism in the Spanish-Language Press, 1887-1922* (2019), Jessica Enoch and Cristina D. Ramírez explore the complexities of Mexicana activism and rhetoric through identifying select successful rhetors. They examine the delicate relationship between English and Spanish, the decisions authors must make regarding which language to use, and the controversies that surround Spanglish and translations. In addition, they distinguish Mexican history from United States' history. Particularly, they highlight questions about citizenship with the creation of the Mexico-United States border and explain gender inequalities embedded in policy and social norms. Between language, citizenship, and gender disparities, Enoch and Ramírez raise questions of identity and bring forth Mexicana authors who have dealt with these questions. Scholars like Anzaldúa, Paula Moya, and Damián Baca offer a new understanding of the concept of "*mestiza.*" Originally a derogatory term to describe the children of indigenous women who had been subjugated and/or raped by Spanish conquistadores, the term *mestiza* has been embraced as "a way to name the mixed identity of the Mexican people" (2). Furthermore, "*mestiza* rhetorics have been defined as those that create an alternative and gendered rhetorical space for rhetors to explore their hybrid lived experiences" (3). This hybridity takes multiple forms, whether it relates to multilingualism or Anzaldúa's own proposed hybrid framework: the Borderlands.

In "Transculturation and the Colonial Difference" (2003), Walter D. Mignolo and Freya Schiwy address Anzaldúa's framework of the Borderlands as a way to approach translation,

transculturation, and communication among difficult relations. Particularly, they identify historical interactions between indigenous populations and guerillas, describing "the emergence of a border-space that rearticulates from a subaltern position" (15). Regarding Anzaldúa's formation of the Borderland, Mignolo and Schiwy emphasize that "[s]he does not discard any of the 'identifications' that are only partially available to her, but uses them with and against each other to construct a concept of identity" (15). Thus, Anzaldúa's framework of the Borderlands and, in turn, identity formation within the Borderlands has become useful worldwide when considering political and social interactions. Regarding Anzaldúa's feminism, Mignolo and Schiwy note that "[f]eminist rewriting is crucial to this translation, but its knowledge is not rooted in Western discourse alone" (15). Thus, they raise a need for intersection. Anzaldúa's intersection anticipates the modern feminist killjoy and pairs it with her use of multilingualism (non-Western) and inductive and deductive reasoning (Western). This pairing creates a hybridity that stems from Anzaldúa's multicultural perspective.

The New Mestiza and The Borderland: Finding a New Ethos

In the new edition of *The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the Present* (2001), Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg highlight how Anzaldúa intermingles "not only her experiences as a woman, lesbian, and Chicana, but also her varied linguistic resources" (1201). Indeed, Anzaldúa was one of the first authors to use Spanish and English interchangeably within the context of academic and public writing, setting herself apart within Feminist Rhetoric and Rhetoric as a whole – as indicated by her being named for these strategies in *The Rhetorical Tradition*. In addition to writing in multiple languages, Anzaldúa has addressed explicitly her use of Spanglish and the criticism she has received for it. Her multilingualism "even when writing for primarily English-speaking audiences" reflects Anzaldúa's purposeful breaking of the status

quo (1201). She thus interrupts the ways in which writing has been approached for centuries, paralleling the characteristics of Ahmed's future killjoy feminist. Moreover, her coupling of multilingualism with other rhetorical techniques including inductive and deductive reasoning provide a multi-layer strategy for feminist argumentation.

Feminist Rhetorical Theories (1999) outlines the development of Feminist Rhetoric as the path towards "a more comprehensive understanding of rhetoric" (7). Within that scope, Karen A. Foss, Sonja K. Foss, and Cindy L. Griffin describe diverse approaches that historically shaped and continue to mold Feminist Rhetoric. They then highlight Anzaldúa for her use of *mestiza* and Borderlands – two intertwined, multicultural frameworks for Rhetoric. Foss et al. describe the "*mestiza* consciousness," a way to move towards a future that involves "the breaking down of paradigms" and "the straddling of two or more cultures" (110). This straddling of cultures is embodied by the Borderlands, which itself serves as a space for considering various, overlapping, and intermingling cultures. Foss et al. list feminism as a culture that exists within the Borderlands, emphasizing that it "exhibits a diversity and plurality that provide us with possibilities for paradigm-changing visions" (112). The *mestiza* and Borderlands provide a mindset and an environment, respectively, to consider broader change. Notably, Foss et al. showcases Anzaldúa's transformation of ethos and her "need to construct several layers […] – some authentic, some accommodating, and some that contain a new sense of agency" (122-123). Thus, Anzaldúa's transformations open up the possibility for a rhetorical strategy that inverts other traditional strategies.

For example, Anzaldúa's inversion of ethos is recognized in "Conocimiento as a Path to Ethos: Gloria Anzaldúa's Networked Rhetoric" (2016), as Kendall Leon and Stacey Pigg examine the boundaries to women's ethos and strategies to overcome them. Specifically, they

examine the framework of conocimiento as a way to simultaneously rethink ethos and transform it, extrapolating on the steps Anzaldúa presents towards conocimiento in her own writing. Conocimiento is a Spanish term which translates to "knowledge." However, its connotation implies more than just what is learned inside a classroom; it refers to knowledge of the world around us (i.e. street smarts). Thus, conocimiento is meant to be a holistic approach that ultimately contributes to a "unique form of authority" (264). Moreover, it pushes the reader to consider their definition and perception of "authority." As Leon and Pigg note, Anzaldúa's work "is an invitation to a process of becoming that is not only about developing as an individual rhetor, but also about interconnecting, grounding, and collectively transforming" (275). This transformation is tied together throughout the article with the statement "now let us shift" (275). Indeed, Anzaldúa's transformations push for considerations of shifting traditional techniques in addition to shifting languages (e.g. English to Spanish).

Anzaldúa is a killjoy feminist through the interruption her work intentionally caused, the awareness her distressing experiences raised, and the "trouble-making" personality she proudly embraced. Though Ahmed's killjoy is useful for analyzing and enacting feminist activism, her framework does not delve into the ways in which these interruptions can or should be verbalized to maximize their effectiveness, specifically within the realm of adapting rhetoric to diverse cultures and nationalities. Speaking up and speaking out is vital to social movement, but the content of what is spoken and the progression of the movement thereafter is equally important. The expanded killjoy that results from integrating Anzaldúa's techniues reflects the Latin American hybridity described by Lunsford, Enoch and Ramírez, and Mignolo and Sciwy. As Anzaldúa states in "La Prieta," "[t]he mixture of bloods an affinities […] has forced me to achieve a kind of equilibrium. Both cultures deny me a place in their universe. Between them

and among others, I build my own universe" (232). The Borderland is the hybrid space where Anzaldúa builds this universe, and the *mestiza* consciousness embodies the hybridity of existing and thinking between cultures. Thus, Anzaldúa's interruptions originate from a place of multiple cultural perspectives, resulting in a need for multiple techniques to build bridges in understanding. Through this integration of multiple perspectives, Anzaldúa enables us to expand our notion of the killjoy to further intersections and cultural considerations, advancing feminist rhetoric from that hybrid space.

Anzaldúa's hybrid killjoy feminist involves disruptive statements using logical arguments and multilingualism. Anzaldúa's transformation of traditional appeals, namely ethos, has been studied by multiple scholars including Foss et al. and Leon and Pigg. However, attention to logos, which has been historically perceived as the most valuable appeal, is lacking. In contrast, Anzaldúa's use of Spanglish is discussed frequently. But, authors have not yet examined Anzaldúa's use of Spanglish paired with logical reasoning as part of a killjoy framework that adapts to different audiences. Unlike Ahmed, whose audience is primarily feminist scholars who already agree with many, if not most, of her feminist ideals, Anzaldúa's audience is broader and includes Latin Americans and North Americans of varying ideologies. As showcased by the concept of the Borderlands, Anzaldúa aims to bridge cultures and create a new space. As a result, the rhetorical techniques employed in expressing opinions matter because some of the contexts which call for a killjoy are delicate: family dinners or other gatherings. The goal is to raise awareness, persuade and build a bridge.

Road Map

This paper will examine how we can use Anzaldúa's techniques to expand killjoy feminism in a way that simultaneously bridges gaps in culture and understanding and breaks down the current sexist, oppressive structures that exist. The primary texts used for analysis are *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, the essay "La Prieta" in *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, and the essay "Speaking In Tongues: A Letter to 3rd World Women Writers." Within the body of the thesis, the first chapter examines how Anzaldúa disrupts the norms of Western literature through Spanglish, specifically perceived modes of valid communication and perceived forms of ethos. The second chapter then analyzes Anzaldúa's killjoy moments and their arrangement within the premises of her inductive arguments, contributing to her transformation of logical arguments. The third chapter studies how Anzaldúa shows the ways in which generally accepted arguments for sexist norms are unsound, thereby inverting deductive arguments to support feminist goals. Ultimately, this thesis aims to expand Ahmed's killjoy to include elements of Anzaldúa's rhetoric. This expansion offers pragmatic ways to adapt to wider cultural intersections that include nationality, enabling a larger audience to witness the norms that must be changed in persuasive language they understand, effectively raising awareness and pushing for activism.

CHAPTER 1:

Anzaldúa's Spanglish Killjoy: Uniting and Alienating

"Around this table, the family gathers, having polite conversations, where only certain things can be brought up. Someone says something you consider problematic. You are becoming tense; it is becoming tense. […] You respond, carefully, perhaps. You say why you think what they have said is problematic. You might be speaking quietly, but you are beginning to feel 'wound up,' […] In speaking up or speaking out, you upset the situation. That you have described what was said by another as a problem means you have created a problem. You become the problem you create." (Ahmed "Feminist Killjoys")

As the title of Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* suggests, bilingualism takes on an important role in her writing, one that is simultaneously alienating and unifying. While the message of the title is not particularly difficult to decipher, it may make non-Spanish speakers uncomfortable. *La frontera* translates directly as "The Border," and *mestiza*, a term initially defined in the introduction of this thesis as representative of mixed identities in Mexico, is both an English and Spanish word (though admittedly lesser known in English). But, to the monolingual English eye, the translations are not obvious. And while non-native English readers may be accustomed to looking up translations of foreign words, native English readers have not needed to develop this habit. They have the privilege of speaking the lingua franca into which everything is translated. Within the scope of multilingualism, the killjoy thus manifests itself in the disruptive use of Spanish words and phrases, as Anzaldúa puts her monolingual English readers into the position of anyone who does not speak English fluently. Though Anglophones will understand the core messages of Anzaldúa's text, the use of bilingualism delivers a lesson: a snippet of what it is like to have to exist in a world that does not speak one's first language or readily offer translations. But alongside this lesson is a broader benefit: multiple languages mean a larger population can read and decipher the text – though admittedly one can argue that the bilingual reader is best equipped to understand the work. As a result, both English

and Spanish speakers can read Anzaldúa and understand, broadening Anzaldúa's audience without needing a different version of the text.

While Anzaldúa's admittedly colloquial style increases the accessibility of the ideas she raises, her method pushes against – even disrupts – the norms of the literary canon in multiple ways. The most obvious way is her use of Spanish, especially since she publishes in the United States where trade and scholarly books are written almost exclusively in English. The less obvious way to the monolingual English eye is Anzaldúa's use of Spanglish, which itself has caused significant controversy since it became a common method of communication for bilingual speakers. Spanglish refers to the intermingling of English and Spanish, though whether it is a mode of speaking, a dialect, or a language is still constantly debated. While acknowledging that a consensus has not been reached, this chapter will refer to Spanglish as a language because that is how Anzaldúa refers to it in her works (*Borderlands/La Frontera* 81). Anzaldúa was one of the first authors to use bilingualism intentionally as kind of disruption in her rhetorical activism. Beyond disrupting the norms of which languages are typically used and which ones are considered appropriate for publication, Anzaldúa uses her multilingualism to tell the stories that have been deemed unspeakable and that cannot be told in only one language.

For Ahmed, a person becomes a killjoy upon speaking up and disrupting the "happiness" of those seated at the table who embrace existing cultural norms. But, regardless of whether Anzaldúa speaks, she already disturbs the spaces in which she exists because of her intersectional identity. Anzaldúa describes this existence in *Borderlands/La Frontera* as "[b]eing different, being other and therefore lesser, therefore sub-human, in-human, non-human" (40). If simply voicing something about being "other" is disruptive, then someone who would be viewed as "other" deliberately existing in a space would also be disruptive. As a result, given Anzaldúa's

position, she is a disruption for simply existing in these spaces. But beyond that, she steps back and uses her particular existence to bring people together (as with bilingualism and Spanglish). This anticipates the killjoy and even expands its potential because it disrupts the very binary by means of which culture is built. Anzaldúa thereby offers a new way for us to recognize killjoy feminism in the context of intersectional, *mestiza* feminism – answering part of the question of what a killjoy would look like in the Borderlands.

If the purpose of the Borderlands is to serve as the bridge in consciousnesses, Anzaldúa's use of Spanglish as it relates to Ahmed's notion of the killjoy feminist also brings into question how these intersections play a role in her ethos. As cited in the previous paragraph, Anzaldúa describes how others perceive her as "being different" and therefore "lesser," which would typically result in immediate dismissal by most audiences. But in "Conocimiento as a Path to Ethos: Gloria Anzaldúa's Networked Rhetoric," Kendall Leon and Stacey Pigg describe how Anzaldúa's straddling of cultures embodies a "unique form of authority" (264). Indeed, while Anzaldúa's identities isolate her from having authority in "normal" contexts, her unique ability to communicate across cultural and linguistic boundaries through Spanglish builds a new kind of ethos and opens up new possibilities for communication. By building her own space where she and other authors with similar backgrounds can serve as the authorities, Anzaldúa transforms ethos as an intersectional feminist author.

This chapter builds on Leon and Pigg's notion of Anzaldúa's unique authority by demonstrating how through using Ahmed's killjoy as a lens, we can examine Spanglish as a way to address female experiences of subjugation and disempowerment that are unfortunately common across United States and Latinx cultures. Through common language and experiences, Anzaldúa unites women across the borders and empowers them to speak out themselves while

both raising awareness of gender inequality to the general population and alienating certain members. The first section of this chapter provides a brief overview of Spanglish and the debates that surround it. The second section of this chapter examines how Spanglish enables Anzaldúa to bring women together across borders. This bridging across borders can then be tied to Ahmed's goals of unifying women of different races and sexualities to expand the killjoy into women of diverse cultures and nationalities. The third section of this chapter examines how Anzaldúa's rhetoric is an attempt to pull up a chair at the head of the dinner table and educate a broader audience. The painful experiences described serve to raise awareness of experiences that women across the Americas endure, while Spanglish ensures that these stories are told in languages the readers must at least partly understand.

Anzaldúa's Language: English, Spanish, Spanglish

Prior to analyzing Anzaldúa's use of Spanglish within the killjoy framework as she develops it, this section will briefly examine the scholarship on Spanglish and attempt to summarize a complex controversy about language use. This debate includes a range of voices and positions. Playing a central role in these debates are the Royal Spanish Academy (RAE), the institution traditionally charged with defending the integrity of the Spanish language against perceived threats, and a plethora of scholars who have challenged the RAE's statements and actions "correcting" Spanglish and shaming its existence. The North American branch of the RAE, the North American Academy of the Spanish Language (ANLE), has perpetuated the RAE's defensive and exclusionary mission, thus failing to represent the realities of speakers within the region. Part of the defense of "pure" Spanish has revolved around the fact that English is perceived as a language that is "invading" Spanish; this issue will be addressed in what follows. Finally, this section will also briefly review a related debate around *mestizaje*, which

involves a melding of cultures and which may include Spanglish as a meeting of Spanish and English.

Spanglish developed naturally as a way for bilingual speakers of English and Spanish to communicate in the Americas (at the border between Mexico and the United States and in urban areas with large concentrations of Spanish speakers like New York City and Miami); however, the backlash that its widening use has provoked brings into question what elements of language people value: its development or its conservation. Ana Celia Zentella, a prominent scholar of bilingualism and Spanglish, offers a partial response to this duality in her article "'Limpia, fija y da esplendor': Challenging the Symbolic Violence of the Royal Spanish Academy." Zentella explains that the first definition of Spanglish appeared in the *Diccionario de la lengua Española* (DLE) in 2014 and sparked criticism due to what was perceived as a discriminatory presentation of Spanglish speakers as uneducated speakers of incorrect Spanish (32). Some linguistic scholars have vehemently disputed the notion that official institutions such as the DLE and the RAE have displayed uninhibited prejudice. However, the ANLE has responded by consistently blaming a lack of education among lower-class speakers of Spanglish (Zentella 32). The ungrounded generalization of Spanish speakers in the Americas as lacking education and status is unsurprising considering the origin story of the Americas.

Beginning in 1492, colonialism created a hierarchical structure that put Spain at the top and anyone who was not from the Iberian peninsula at significantly lower levels. Hence the privilege of *peninsulares* – that is, those who originated from the Iberian peninsula – is ingrained in Spanish American culture. The idea of the Americas creating their own variations of Spanish pushes against the power of monolingualism and the linguistic hegemony Spain aims to keep – as represented by the existence of the ANLE. The research in support of Spanglish as a natural

development exposes the pushback against Spanglish as discriminatory. Linguists have found that many Spanglish speakers are fluent speakers of both English and Spanish, indicating that Spanglish is a way of manifesting bilingual speakers' dual identity (Zentella 33). Linguistically, Spanglish is a natural development, but the RAE's denial reflects a determination to avoid change, reminiscent of colonial tensions between Spain and the Americas.

Colonial history also plays a role in the interpretation of Spanglish as the influence of an overpowering English over the Spanish language. In the context of the United States' historical involvement in Latin America, linguistic shifts raise valid critiques regarding the effects of neocolonial power dynamics. The emergence of Spanglish may be seen as evidence of the encroachment of a new imperial power. For example, Zentella mentions a Yale professor who describes how "'the language of Cervantes'" is being "'[invaded by] English'" (36). Referring to Spanish as "the language of Cervantes" alludes to the predominantly male, Spanish canon and raises concerns related to the patriarchal values embedded in both the perception and construction of the Spanish language. The Spanish that Latin Americans – excluding Brazilians for the purpose of this analysis – speak originates from a tragic past involving the forced conversion, re-education and even murder of the indigenous population. The English that is increasingly spoken in Latin American emerges from globalization, which has resulted in industries exploiting workers in many countries. Spanish and English are both languages of the colonizers, so arguably, Spanglish emerges as the language of the colonized who have created their own voice.

The new voice – Spanglish – is tied to a greater identity that embodies a meeting of multiple cultures: *mestizaje*. If *mestizo* narrowly means a mix of indigenous and European, Anzaldúa's writings not only explicitly embrace the identity of *mestiza*, but provide a fluid space

– the Borderlands – where the development of this identity and its interactions with others may be put into practice. As described by Rafael Pérez-Torres in *Mestizaje: Critical Uses of Race in Chicano Culture*, “the mestiza body moves through and becomes the borderlands as a site in transition: between Spanish-speaking and English-speaking, between the Third World and the First” (22-23). Thus, the *mestiza* and the Borderlands become interchangeable regarding their shared goal: a bridge between cultures as a method towards equality. To be sure, opinion is split as to whether Anzaldúa’s notion of bridging is overly ambitious or utopian: “either she is championed […] for her vision of oppositional consciousness, articulated from a site of specificity, locality, and resistance, or she is criticized for her overly utopian […] blending and bridging of borders” (Pérez-Torres 25-26). The abstract qualities of a *mestiza* consciousness and the Borderlands raise questions regarding its applicability in everyday life. Therefore, detailed strategies that Anzaldúa employs in killjoy moments make these concepts more viable for use in activist contexts. For example, Spanglish is both related to the concepts of *mestiza* and the Borderlands and serves as a physical technique to be used in activism.

Spanglish as the Method for Unifying Women’s Experiences

Anzaldúa breaks the silence on unspeakable female experiences to raise awareness and encourage others to do the same, using Spanglish to unite women across borders and show that non-normative modes of expression are valid. Beyond uniting women through shared languages and experiences, Anzaldúa’s Spanglish puts her in conversation with scholars like Zentella, who argues that Spanglish is integral to bilingual identities (33). It is also integral to the experiences Anzaldúa elects to share, in which she details how she was raised to be a “good woman” behind closed doors. What makes a “good woman” will be deconstructed in subsequent chapters, but it is generally grounded in norms that convenience men. This creates a gap between the women

who want to perpetuate the standard of the “good woman” (typically mothers) and those who wish to diverge from it (typically daughters). So, the re-education of rebellious, “problematic” women (as Ahmed calls them) takes place in the home, where an association with safety meets an association with oppression.

The scenes of familial re-education that Anzaldúa describes in painful detail reflect the consequences of pushing against the norms depicted by Ahmed in the epigraph of this chapter. Ahmed indicates that at the dinner table, “only certain things can be brought up.” If the limitation on what can be raised in conversation is disrupted, then the disruptor is deemed a “problem” – a problem that must be fixed. In *Living a Feminist Life*, Ahmed describes how “becoming good is about not being contrary; it means straightening one’s wayward ways, no longer opposing one’s own will to the will of others” (69). It then becomes the household that “[straightens]” out the “problems” so that troublemaker is suitable to go out in public. This “straightening” that happens in the household also manifests itself in the languages that bilingual children are allowed to speak inside versus outside the house. Pérez-Torres describes the “necessity for a ‘public’ voice that must be articulated in English and the possibility for a ‘private’ family voice that could be spoken in Spanish, but only behind closed doors and beyond public social spaces” (17-18). Thus, beyond revealing shared experiences, Anzaldúa presents the tensions that result from identities being pulled in opposite directions, both linguistically and socially.

Veering away from the established standards guarantees sharp criticisms that imply that a woman is making trouble. Across Anzaldúa’s works, she describes the various ways in which she has been treated as a troublemaker and the ways in which her mother attempted to discipline her and convince her to change. In Ahmed’s depiction of the dinner table at the beginning of this chapter, the mother is silent in the presence of the father, but Anzaldúa’s stories reveal what

happens behind closed doors. Particularly, in *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, Anzaldúa's article "La Prieta" details how her mother disciplined her by instilling guilt in her for being different and taught her the disappointment with which she would be met if she continued being different:

> "'Machona – india ladina' (masculine – wild Indian), she would call me because I did not act like a nice little Chicanita is supposed to act: later, in the same breath she would praise and blame me, often for the same thing – being a tomboy and wearing boots, being unafraid of snakes or knives, showing my contempt for women's roles, leaving home to go to college, not settling down and getting married, being a politica, siding with the Farmworkers." (223)

Anzaldúa describes how her mother would "praise and blame" her "in the same breath." This reflects a potential conflict within her mother between what her culture has deemed correct versus what would allow her daughter to be her authentic self. Anzaldúa's mother seems to recognize the oppressive nature of attempting to force someone to change who they are, but proceeds anyways. Indeed, the traits Anzaldúa describes would be admirable in a different, more independent context: being fearless, getting an education, and empathizing with others. However, because this is not her role to fulfill, she is shamed for it. By drawing attention to these roles, Anzaldúa points out that the trouble she made may not have been relevant to what was "right," but rather what is wrong with gender roles and double standards.

In reporting her mother's speech, Anzaldúa uses Spanglish to emphasize the double standards that were imposed upon her and highlight their problematic nature as a motivation for change. Though she rarely offers translations for Spanish terms, she does so in this passage. Most of the passage is in English, which may signal a primary audience of Anglophones and/or reveal the contrasting richness of Spanish words "*Machona – india ladina*" is a phrase with strong negative connotations, as the term "*machona*" is derived from "*macho*." "*Macho*"

embodies the characteristics that are desirable in a man, and the suffix -ona is used to intensify these characteristics. According to Jessica Enoch and Cristina D. Ramírez, "nineteenth-century Mexican gendered ideology was marked by […] *machismo* (extreme male dominance) and *hembrismo* (extreme female submission)" (18). The term "*machismo*" has become associated with Latin American gender roles themselves, so, for a female to be referred to as "*machona*" would be an insult. However, *hembrismo* was characterized by the "embrace [of] 'submission' and 'self-denial'" and a "'disinterest in the world of politics'" (Enoch and Ramírez 18). *Hembrismo* promotes the erasure of female agency and opinion, raising questions about whether "ideal" female characteristics are inherently good or simply convenient for those in power.

The "insults" that follow Anzaldúa's mother's criticism of Anzaldúa's *machismo* thereby indicate a delineation between desirable characteristics in a woman and the characteristics of a strong individual, irrespective of gender. "*India ladina*" reflects the racist undertones that plague many Latin American cultures, marked by hierarchies based on race. The final Spanish word, "*politica*" simultaneously showcases the double standards within the culture and serves as a call to action. "*Politico*" is the term for a male politician in Spanish, and technically, the term for a female politician in Spanish is "*politica*." However, "*politica*" holds a negative connotation while "politico" does not, demonstrating how males can own the role of politician and have a political opinion. Anzaldúa is praised by Lunsford for breaking the tradition of silence, which speaks to Anzaldúa's purposeful disruption of *hembrismo* (2). Particularly as a lesbian woman, Anzaldúa's ownership of both being a woman and being capable of taking on "*macho*" characteristics like activism highlight how she does not need a man to complete her – she is strong as an individual.

Anzaldúa exposes continual attempts by her culture to teach women that they are lesser than men when she introduces common oppressive phrases that exist in both Spanish and English. In *Borderlands/La Frontera*, she notes, "'[y]ou're nothing but a woman' means you are defective. Its opposite is to be *un macho*" (Anzaldúa 105). As previously discussed, *un macho* is synonymous with "a man" while also suggesting the characteristics that make a "good man." This commonly used Spanish term is put into conversation with the commonly used English phrase "[y]ou're nothing but a woman," showcasing the level of sexism that exists across borders. This aids in unifying women as they witness the global implications of gender inequality. The contrast between the two phrases exhibits the ways gender norms are perpetuated across cultures. In Spanish, to be called *un macho* guilts a woman for having *macho* characteristics and pushes her to adjust her behavior away from *machismo*. In English, to be referred to as "nothing but a woman" indicates that to be a woman is to be even less than human. By exhibiting the differences in sexism, Anzaldúa reveals the different but shared experience of being a woman to unite them from across borders and languages.

Anzaldúa's use of Spanish and English to expose the unfair treatment and expectations of women expands the range of the killjoy to include women who do not speak English. While Ahmed addresses intersections of race, ethnicity, and sexuality, she does not address the factor of nationality and the cultural components that accompany differences in nationality, including language. Furthermore, she empowers women in general to re-claim the attempts to re-educate them, taking their rightful place at the dinner table. Beyond empowering other women to speak up, Anzaldúa's intersectional approach addresses a need for a bridge between feminists in the United States and those in Latin America. This bridge opens a space for the creation of a new identity: killjoy feminists who embrace a *mestiza* consciousness, which expands Ahmed's

intersectionality to move beyond race and ethnicity into identities like nationality and familial background. The embrace of a *mestiza* consciousness is especially important for women across borders who have had a history of tension. In *Mestiza Rhetorics*, Enoch and Ramírez acknowledge the negative assessments that Anglo feminists have made regarding "the Mexican woman;" for example, Carleton Beals has described her as "'[priding] herself on her submissiveness and subjection,'" and Ruth Allen links "Mexican women's submissiveness to an apathy for the emerging feminist movement" (18). These assessments need countering, particularly because women across cultures face oppressive experiences that are simultaneously similar and varied. While Enoch and Ramírez raise awareness about the significance of Mexican feminists, Anzaldúa takes this identification of significance one step further. Not only does she integrate these cultures to embrace a plurality of feminisms across borders, but she promotes an overall raising awareness of women's experiences across cultures.

Spanglish as the Alienating Bridge

Spanglish serves as a means to unite and empower women from both sides of the border, but Anzaldúa's audience expands beyond women and includes people of all genders who should be aware of gender disparities. In order for a bridge to be built, an audience needs to be aware that there is a gap in the first place, hence Anzaldúa's use of the killjoy to raise awareness across a larger population using Spanglish. The goal of the killjoy is to interrupt situations that cause unhappiness for themselves and/or others in order to raise awareness within the larger group that the norm is problematic. While Spanglish is inherently disruptive to the norms of the literary canon and the ways Anglophones are used to reading texts, people who speak English, Spanish, or Spanglish can understand her messages (albeit with varying levels of difficulty). Anzaldúa uses Spanglish to expand her audience and bluntly put forth her experiences in language many

people can understand, unapologetic about the level of trauma they exhibit or the disturbance they cause. Through this unapologetic disturbance, Anzaldúa embodies Ahmed's killjoy, who is identified as a problem for acknowledging a greater problem. Forthcoming chapters will analyze Anzaldúa's techniques for bridging ideological differences, but the following analysis highlights how Spanglish serves to both unite her audience through shared language and alienate members of that audience through the expression of certain opinions and experiences.

In the epigraph of this chapter, Ahmed described how by speaking up, killjoys become the "problem [they] create." This is reminiscent of how Latin American Spanglish speakers are considered problematic because of their use of a language that has developed naturally. Anzaldúa's bilingual use of Spanglish thus complicates Ahmed's killjoy. A bilingual person is a killjoy by virtue of being bilingual, as their language disrupts the norms of monolingual speech. Whether because someone does not speak their language or deems it inferior, bilinguals interrupt the happiness of the spaces in which they express themselves. Anzaldúa's use of Spanglish thereby insists that there is a fine line between Spanglish used as a mode to unite people who speak different languages and as a way to alienate them. The alienation derives from either those who do not understand every word that is spoken or those who deem what is said unworthy of being listened to because it is an "inferior" mode of communication. Anzaldúa navigates this fine line and persists, using Spanglish (already a controversial form of communication) to raise awareness of the problematic issues inherent in gender inequality.

In the essay, "*Movimientos de rebeldía y las culturas que traicionan*" from *Borderlands/La Frontera*, Anzaldúa addresses her audience from both sides of the border, raising awareness for the ways in which both the United States and Latin America mistreat women:

> "Though I'll defend my race and culture when they are attacked by non-*mexicanos*, *conozco el malestar de mi cultura*. I abhor some of my culture's ways, how it cripples its women, *como burras*, our strengths used against us, lowly *burras* bearing humility with dignity." (43)

Anzaldúa begins by expressing the pride she has in her culture and warning that non-*mexicanos* should not make judgements, particularly because the issues she raises are present in both Mexican and United States' cultures. Thus, she alienates non-Mexicans, directly pushing against the colonialist tendencies for "developed" nations like the United States to judge "developing" countries like Mexico. The phrase "*conozco el malestar de mi cultura*" translates as "I know the unhappiness/discontent of my culture." The term unhappiness can be directly tied to the killjoy, reflecting Anzaldúa's critique of her own culture. Anzaldúa proceeds to describe the problematic gender disparities of Mexican culture predominantly in English, using a mocking tone to make clear that women across the continent must "[bear] humility with dignity." The few Spanish words used reflect a common derogatory term for women. "*Burra*" translates to both donkey and "stupid woman." The repetition of the word highlights how often it is used within Mexican culture and emphasizes how dehumanizing it is to be consistently called such a term. Anzaldúa shows her audience how across American cultures, there are shared gender issues that are being denied in similar ways. This puts her audience on equal footing, preparing the ground for other techniques to be instilled for building bridges.

While the previous quote puts her cross-cultural audience on equal footing, Anzaldúa's striking descriptions in Spanglish of her experiences attempt to inform her readers of the undeserved experiences women are put through:

> "Through our mothers, the culture gave us mixed messages. *No voy a dejar que ningun pelado desgraciado maltrate a mis hijos*. And in the next breath it would say, *La mujer tiene que hacer lo que diga el hombre*." (*Borderlands/La Frontera* 40)

The term "mixed messages" indicates to monolingual English speakers that the two Spanish phrases that follow contrast each other. "*No voy a dejar que ningun pelado desgraciado maltrate a mis hijos*" translates roughly as "I won't let anyone mistreat my children." This first statement reflects a universal sentiment that mothers wish to protect their children. However, the second Spanish phrase, "*La mujer tiene que hacer lo que diga el hombre,*" translates as "the woman needs to do what the man tells her." When taking into consideration domestic abuse, rape, and assault, these two attitudes come into conflict. Though monolingual English speakers will understand that mixed messages are being given, Spanish speakers will witness the contradiction firsthand. Admittedly, monolingual English speakers will not experience the full impact of the message loaded with emotional terms including "*pelado desgraciado*" which can be used to describe a man. While Anzaldúa's tactic can unify people who speak different languages, limitations in understanding may result.

Anzaldúa's use of Spanglish enables her to pull up a chair to Ahmed's dinner table, whether those seated are Anglophone family members or Hispanophone family members. This linguistic diversification of the killjoy represents a new bilingual way of recognizing killjoy feminism in the context of *mestiza* feminism, and in turn, recognizing what the killjoy looks like in Anzaldúa's borderlands – where the *mestiza* consciousness manifests. Anzaldúa begins this expansion by using Spanglish as a unifying mode of communication, although the combination admittedly may still alienate certain readers. Through this communication, the killjoy can be expanded to be intersectional in regards to nationality and culture, bringing together women across borders with shared experiences and makes the issues clear to men. However, while the use of multiple languages may make the issues clear with men, that does not mean that the information will be well received – enter Ahmed's killjoy who highlights that the disruption is

intended to create discomfort rather than bridges in understanding. The following chapters of this thesis will expand Ahmed's killjoy through a reading of Anzaldúa that allows for a bridging cultural understandings, but that is not the stated goal of Anzaldúa's use of Spanglish.

Spanglish embodies the beginning of the melding of revolutionary techniques in an effort to build a killjoy that is effective within the scope of both raising awareness and persuading. But whether Anzaldúa's identity is inherently a barrier to messages being received seriously has been a well-studied concern. Through her writing, Anzaldúa transforms the way we look at and think about persuasion. As scholars like Karen A. Foss, Sonja K. Foss, and Cindy L. Griffin as well as Kendall Leon and Stacey Pigg have noted, Anzaldúa transforms ethos as an intersectional feminist author. Her notion of the Borderlands is one method for doing this; it serves the marginalized as it opens conversation on the norms that dominant paradigms aim to control. But, Borderlands may not appeal to the general population – particularly those who benefit from the perpetuation of cultural norms. A similar concern may be raised for the *mestiza* consciousness, which unites women but may not do the same for men. Another method for Anzaldúa's transformation of ethos which I have discussed in this chapter is her use of Spanglish as an alienating and unifying form of persuasion. This leaves us to consider whether these languages may also form a new kind of ethos. I will argue in the following chapters that Anzaldúa further disrupts the standard of persuasion through the compilation of her framework which involves killjoy narratives in Spanglish that are supported logically by inductive and deductive reasoning.

CHAPTER 2:

Anzaldúan Inductive Reasoning: Distorted Norms Pivot Towards Change

"*The family gathers around the table; these are supposed to be happy occasions. How hard we work to keep the occasion happy, to keep the surface of the table polished so that it can reflect back a good image of the family. So much you are not supposed to say, to do, to be, in order to preserve that image. If you say, or do, or be anything that does not reflect the image of the happy family back to itself, the world becomes distorted. You become the cause of a distortion. You are the distortion you cause.*" (Ahmed "Feminist Killjoys")

As we have seen in Chapter 1, Anzaldúa's use of Spanglish transforms her ethos and unites a larger audience with modes of communication that transcend two languages, making the content of what she communicates even more important. Through Spanglish, Anzaldúa takes her place at multiple tables with no intention of remaining quiet, but she selects her words methodically. As Ahmed warns in the passage above, the killjoy distorts the world through criticism and as a result becomes viewed as a "distortion." Anzaldúa responds to this challenge not only through her use of Spanglish – already a perceived "distortion" of the languages it combines – but also by expanding Ahmed's killjoy framework. This expansion involves a shift from Ahmed's series of disruptive statements to Anzaldúa's own series of logically organized statements that target the cores of feminist issues. She uses logical reasoning, including inductive and deductive, to engage in the discussion of controversial topics with readers who have a wide range of opinions. This chapter will focus on Anzaldúa's use of inductive reasoning, specifically how Anzaldúa uses the cumulative nature of premises within the inductive framework to build her feminist arguments. Her premises thereby reveal the distorted gender disparities that are reflected within cultural norms.

I argue that Anzaldúa employs a hybrid strategy that combines killjoy goals with the structures of inductive reasoning. The inductive structure involves a series of specific premises that work together as evidence towards the truth of the broader conclusion (Bradford). To be

sure, Ahmed might push back against Anzaldúa's arguably accommodating techniques, which involve reasoning that has indeed previously been used by men to oppress women. In *Living a Feminist Life*, Ahmed describes the danger of accommodation: "to become accommodating, we take up less space. The more accommodating we are the less space we have to take up. Gender: a loop, tightening" (Ahmed 25). Gender is indeed a tightening loop. But, Anzaldúa's accommodation neither results in her taking up less space or more space. It allows her to move within a space and manipulate the limits of the space to ultimately change the space. Anzaldúa's methods of accommodation serve to both argue in language that her readers will understand and reason in ways that her opposition has previously affirmed. In other words, Anzaldúa uses techniques that she knows have been deployed effectively for certain arguments, and then transforms them to serve her own purposes.

Anzaldúa acknowledges her thought process in selecting techniques that build bridges in her book *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. Specifically, in "*La conciencia de la mestiza/*Towards a New Consciousness" she indicates that "[b]ecause the counterstance stems from a problem with authority […] it's a step towards liberation from cultural domination. But it's not a way of life" (100). Anzaldúa identifies a duality in the counterstance: the empowerment it may offer and the reality of constantly fighting against the authority. Anzaldúa's address of the counterstance as "not a way of life" acknowledges that we cannot live in constant argument or by excluding others from conversations because they oppose us. Between family dinners, workplaces, and general public areas, this is virtually impossible. So, while the counterstance openly states its discomfort with the situation and as a result declares independence, maintaining this independence is not always realistic because sometimes the audience contains people the counterstance would rather not push away. Direct parallels may be drawn between the

counterstance and Ahmed's killjoy, as the very scene in the epigraph depicts someone who "[says], or [does]" something that pushes against the norms of the table and is deemed a "distortion" as a result. While Anzaldúa pushes against norms, she highlights an attempt to educate and build a bridge, explaining that:

> "At some point, on our way to a new consciousness, we will have to leave the opposite bank, the split between the two moral combatants somehow healed so that we are on both shores at once and, at once, see through serpent and eagle eyes." (*Borderlands/La Frontera* 100)

Anzaldúa puts forth the image of "[having] to leave the opposite bank," denoting a crossing that must be done to reach an understanding – a bridge that must be built. The serpent and the eagle reflect two sides of a hierarchy. The eagle is able to look down upon other animals while the serpent may only look upwards. These positions reflect a directionality these animals are used to facing and an arrangement that influences the perceptions they have on the world, which are important elements of the rhetorical situation that Ahmed raises and will be further discussed later in the chapter. To be "serpentile" holds a deeply negative connotation while having "eagle eyes" denote keenness. Therefore, "[seeing] through serpent and eagle eyes" reflect a meeting between two opposite entities that are perceived very differently. Seeing through serpent and eagle eyes means forming arguments that at once interrupt the norm to raise awareness and speak to multiple perspectives on the topic. Although one side may be completely wrong – for example, someone arguing against gender equality – using the opposition's beliefs and manipulating their strategies may be the key to changing their minds.

Anzaldúa's approach as an activist of building bridges has been and continues to be critiqued for its idealism, but there are scholars who do believe there are bridges to be built. In *Feminist Rhetorical Theories*, Karen A. Foss, Sonja K. Foss, and Cindy L. Griffin suggest that

"[m]ost definitions of feminism are ones that we believe many individuals would support if they understood feminism apart from its stereotypically negative associations" (2). In this way, they call for an approach to feminism that would allow for Anzaldúa's notion of seeing through both serpent and eagle eyes. In this context, it could be argued that Anzaldúa's use of inductive reasoning alongside blunt killjoy statements reflects a kind of practicality or pragmatism that is both disruptive and generous. In the first section of this chapter I will analyze how Anzaldúa tactfully approaches the table using inductive reasoning to persuade her audience of her argument. Through her use of inductive reasoning, she expands killjoy intervention to both raise awareness and attempt to build bridges in understanding. In the second section I address Anzaldúa's use of inductive reasoning in integrating a linguistic argument regarding the masculine ending *-os* to show how Anzaldúa joins a greater debate about the inherently oppressive nature of language structure.

What Makes a Good Woman Also Makes a Double Standard

When Anzaldúa interrupts the dinner table to which she has brought her readers, she is fully aware that speaking inherently disturbs the norms of the table. Thus, the message she verbalizes must be strategic – representing a series of statements her audience believes to be true but grouping them so as to anticipate the direction of the problem. Anzaldúa does not begin by telling her readers what they already know. She begins disruptively, getting the attention of those seated at the table by making a few remarks that are alarming to them. Then, when they are listening uncomfortably, she moves into an inductive argument that reflects the audience's beliefs back to them. This strategy embodies Ahmed's description of managing power: "power works as a mode of directionality, a way of orientating bodies in particular ways, so they are facing a certain way, heading toward a future that is given a face" (Ahmed *Living a Feminist Life*

43). Anzaldúa uses the audience's beliefs as this mode of directionality, manipulating the ways in which the audience already faces to point them in a different direction. The inductive argument serves as the perfect vessel for this use of directionality, as it involves multiple premises pointing towards a conclusion. In the end, Anzaldúa pivots the inductive argument to show how when the audience's beliefs are put together, they reveal a larger systemic issue.

Anzaldúa exemplifies this strategy in in *Borderlands/La Frontera* in her essay "*Movimientos de rebeldía y las culturas que traicionan,*" as she pairs Ahmed's directionality with commonly held beliefs within an inductive argument to enact a killjoy pivot. The chapter name translates as "movements of rebellion and the cultures that betray," which suggests the aforementioned strategy: if placed into a specific order, the culture will betray itself, thereby aiding rebellious movements. In other words, the name suggests an argument about arrangement in the power of persuasion, which parallels Ahmed's mode of directionality. The specific order in this case arises from inductive reasoning. The title – albeit in Spanish – alludes to Western rhetorical approaches, furthering the bilingual and multicultural component of Anzaldúa's argumentation. She explains:

> "The culture expects women to show greater acceptance of and commitment to the value system than men. The culture and the Church insist that women are subservient to males. If a woman rebels she is a *mujer mala*. If a woman doesn't renounce herself in favor of the male, she is selfish. If a woman remains a *virgen* until she marries, she is a good woman." (*Borderlands/La Frontera* 39)

Anzaldúa begins the quote by indicating one cultural norm that contributes to the larger issue of gender inequality and that we have seen in Ahmed's description of the dinner table: "If you say, or do, or be anything that does not reflect the image of the happy family back to itself, the world becomes distorted" ("Feminist Killjoys"). By addressing the disparity in expectations for women and men, Anzaldúa distorts the world in which the "happy family" lives. The role female

subservience plays in Mexican culture has previously been mentioned in Chapter 1, through Jessica Enoch and Cristina D. Ramírez's discussion in *Mestiza Rhetorics: An Anthology of Mexicana Activism in the Spanish-Language Press*. They argue that "nineteenth-century Mexican gendered ideology was marked by two pervasive concepts, *machismo* (extreme male dominance) and *hembrismo* (extreme female submission)" (Enoch and Ramírez 18). As someone who was raised in the Borderlands between Mexico and the United States, Anzaldúa expands the reach of this expectation as one that manifests in Mexican cultures on both sides of the border.

The inductive structure of the rest of the quote from Anzaldúa then shows that it is not the killjoy who distorts reality, as those seated at Ahmed's table would believe, but that culture is already a distortion through the normalization of double standards. Anzaldúa states that "if a woman rebels she is a *mujer mala.*" The term "*mujer mala*" translates as "bad woman." Anzaldúa's use of Spanish denotes the frequency with which the term is used, reflecting extensive judgements being passed on women. This begins the building of a double standard: obedience is considered a valuable trait in women, while men are stereotyped as strong and assertive (Enoch and Ramírez 18). Anzaldúa then indicates that a woman "is selfish" if she "doesn't renounce herself in favor of the male." In other words, to be a good woman, she must give up her personal agency to do as the man wishes. The statement also reveals the consequences society puts into place for women who are disobedient. While until this point, the premises in Anzaldúa's argument have focused on behaviors condemned by a woman's community, the argument then pivots towards behaviors condemned by many religious organizations.

In reference to behaviors condemned by the church, Anzaldúa refers to premarital sex, a topic which she discusses extensively through both inductive and deductive arguments. In this

particular inductive argument that continues from the premises named in the prior paragraph, Anzaldúa posits that a woman is "good" if she "remains a *virgen* until she marries." The Spanish word "*virgen*" refers to the Virgin Mary, a person people often emulate, especially within Latin American cultures. The Virgin Mary plays such an iconic role in Latin cultures that the counterpart to *machismo* is sometimes called *marianismo* rather than *hembrismo*. As the authors of "Machismo, Marianismo, and Negative Cognitive-Emotional Factors" explain, "*marianismo* is rooted in Christian values brought to Latin America during colonization, which defined women as nurturing figures and spiritual pillars of the family" (Nuñez et al.). A gender role instilled through colonialism and perpetuated through the church, *marianismo* became "a construction of the expected female gender roles based on the Virgin Mary" (Nuñez et al.). The Virgin Mary is an exceptional figure in the Bible, so the expectation that all women are expected to be like her is unreasonable – particularly because men are not expected to act like Jesus or any other male biblical figure. Specifically in the context of sex, women are expected to ignore their own natural desires for the sake of being perceived as pure by their husband, while men are actively supported in promiscuous endeavors.

Taken together, the premises of Anzaldúa's inductive argument are constructed to show that in order to be considered "good," women cannot rebel, have agency, or have premarital sex, all of which are positive characteristics in men. As Enoch and Ramírez allude to when they discuss *machismo*, the delineation of good traits and bad traits by gender raises questions of what makes traits good or bad. If what makes an action good or bad is the gender of the person who does it, then a trait cannot be inherently good or bad. And if a trait cannot be inherently good or bad, then how can the gender of the person committing the act have such a large influence on its morality? Anzaldúa thereby exposes the double standards that exist. However, she does this

through a gradation of societal norms. The gradation manifests in a layering of problematic societal norms that lead up to explicit indications of oppressive norms. This arrangement of premises and the problems they identify therefore double as killjoy moments that when put together, show the unreasonable limits for women that men do not have to consider when making decisions.

***Nosotros*: Women Inherently Tied to the Man**

Anzaldúa demonstrates the limits placed on women extend beyond cultural norms and are embedded in our language. She does this by first demonstrating and then critiquing the ways in which words have been formulated to inherently discriminate against women. As she does in her critique of cultural norms, she defies the image of the killjoy acting as the distortion at the dinner table by showing how words are distortions of people's identities. Ahmed also goes beyond exposing dinner table norms and alludes to complex, unseen issues that are literally written into our cultures: "[killjoys] come up against what others do not see; and (this is even harder) you come up against what others are often invested in not seeing" (Ahmed *Living a Feminist Life* 138). While words have definitions, the meanings of their roots and the rationale behind their composition are often unspoken. Nevertheless, they are reflective of attitudes and potential prejudices against the entities being named – this is especially true when examining the language surrounding gender.

Anzaldúa's critique of language focuses on Spanish, which uses a male-prioritized gender binary, though her strategy involving inductive reasoning can expand beyond Spanish. Spanish is a gendered language, which allows for gender inequality to reveal itself within the very structure of the language. Some of the most obvious inequalities involve the fact that objects and pronouns

are split into the gender binary of male or female, rather than reflecting a spectrum. Moreover, the default gender placed on groups is male unless the group is entirely made up of females or female-pronoun-assigned objects. Anzaldúa describes this phenomenon in "*Movimientos de rebeldía y las culturas que traicionan*," arguing that certain pronouns have become inherently oppressive: "Chicanas use *nosotros* whether we're male or female. We are robbed of our female being by the masculine plural. Language is a male discourse" (76). In Spanish, the third person plural form of "we" is split into *nosotras* if the "we" is composed of a group of exclusively women and *nosotros* if the "we" is composed of a group of exclusively men. In a group of mixed genders, the "we" is also *nosotros*, reflecting a default to male gendering that erases the presence of women in that group. However, Anzaldúa does not simply identify these inequities in the Spanish language; she compiles these inequities into a structured argument.

Anzaldúa exposes the discriminatory nature of Spanish grammar through her use of inductive reasoning. By indicating that "Chicanas use *nosotros*" regardless of their gender, Anzaldúa notes the erasure of women from the grammatical structure in a way that is simultaneously inoffensive and indisputable. This sentiment is also explicitly stated in a more direct, charged manner when she describes that women are "robbed of [their] female being by the masculine plural." The term "robbed" indicates a lack of consent or input on women's behalf to have these rules exist, indirectly addressing the lack of consideration the RAE has for women. This culminates in her conclusion that "language is a male discourse." Thus, Anzaldúa uncovers the biases that exist within language itself and brings them to the surface, raising awareness through inductive arguments structured to use beliefs held by those at the table as a basis for pivoting towards the feminist message.

Ahmed echoes the work Anzaldúa does in uncovering the biases that exist within language construction when she describes the origins of the word "woman." In *Living a Feminist Life*, she indicates that "*woman* is derived from a compound of *wif* (wife) and *man* (human being); woman as wife-man also suggesting woman as female servant" (Ahmed 224). The inclusion of "man" in "woman" secures within language that the female cannot exist without the male – female being another word which finds the womanly part being added on to the "male" root. So, no matter how many strides are made towards gender equality, the language we use to identify ourselves inherently denotes the female as inferior. Moreover, the root "*wif*" reveals how certain gender roles are inextricably tied to our language, paralleling how being a wife and monthly figure are still roles girls are raised to believe they must eventually take on. As Ahmed discusses further, "[t]he history of woman is impossible too disentangle from the history of wife: the female human not only as in relation to man but as for man" (*Living a Feminist Life* 224). Ahmed thereby raises the seemingly inextricable associations between woman and wife, and in turn, between woman and servitude, showcasing how in English there are linguistic constructions that – as Anzaldúa indicates in Spanish – oppress women and may contribute to continual gender inequality.

By breaking down Spanish words to demonstrate their inherent biases, Anzaldúa joins killjoy linguists and authors who are pushing against the inherent gender hierarchization within language. For example, Ana Celia Zentella, demonstrates the RAE's unwillingness to shift towards "greater linguistic equality" by using the example of their insistence on the "masculine ending -*os* for all groups—even if only one male is in the group" (25-26). Even more concerning, she indicates that the RAE "views the alternative repetition of both male and female plurals as 'artificial and unnecessary'" (Zentella 25-26). Although one would not expect progressive views

from the RAE, as they are the organization that continues to exert colonial power through its attempts to control the Spanish language used in Latin America, this highlights the issues that remain within language. As previously discussed in Chapter 1, the RAE has been repeatedly criticized for discrimination, and Zentella highlights its linguistic discrimination in relation to Spanglish and sexism rooted in word construction. Zentella's criticism of "-*os*" also puts her into conversation with Ahmed, who indicates that a hierarchy is constructed by having the word *man* be able to stand alone, but a *wif* unable to exist without the *man* to signify a person. The inability of a woman to exist alone in the construction of words and grammatical rules reveals an assumed dependency. This assumed dependency speaks to the greater issue of the formation of a hierarchy that perpetuates patriarchal attitudes through more than just physical treatments of women. Anzaldúa thus connects the linguistic elements of oppression with the ideological elements through the inductive structure.

Anzaldúa disrupts the conversation by raising awareness through inductive arguments that progressively use her audience's biases and beliefs against them, which is useful in an expansion of Ahmed's killjoy framework that adapts to audience. Anzaldúa transforms inductive arguments from serving male-centered logic, to involve premises that embody feminist narratives and culminate in feminist conclusions. Her use of inductive reasoning serves to tackle two kinds of issues: those regarding the formation of language itself, and those relating to the ways in which we define certain terminology. She reveals the problems with the definition of a "good woman" and highlights the limiting factors women must endure that men do not, exposing the men to the feeling of increasing tension and control that women must endure on a regular basis. She also delves into the complexities of language formation and how it reflects historical biases that we should be aiming to shift away from.

Ahmed's killjoy sits at the table to call out inequality, but Anzaldúa's killjoy sits at the table to state the reasons why inequitable norms should change. This shift in the arrangement of argument focuses on the logics that people have been taught since primary school. Inductive reasoning thus draws upon the directionality that exists in people's current positions and uses these lines of reasoning that they are accustomed to facilitate the transmission of feminist messages. Notably, though inductive reasoning allows for the integration of experiential-based elements into logics, it does not directly attack the logic behind norms. To break down the logic behind oppressive perceptions, Anzaldúa employs deductive reasoning rather than inductive reasoning as its structure enables for a different set of rhetorical abilities.

CHAPTER 3

Anzaldúan Deductive Arguments: Building New Truths

"One way of telling my feminist story would be to begin with a table. Around the table, a family gathers. Always we are seated in the same place: my father one end, myself the other, my two sisters to one side, my mother to the other. Always we are seated this way, as if we are trying to secure more than our place. A childhood memory, yes. But it is also memory of an everyday experience in that quite literal sense of an experience that happened every day. An intense everyday: my father asking questions, my sisters and me answering them, my mother mostly silent." (Ahmed "Feminist Killjoys")

While Gloria Anzaldúa does not offer a description of her family's dinner table, her attitude towards her family reflects how her prioritization of audience differs from Sara Ahmed's priorities at the dinner table. In the interview "Coming into Play," Anzaldúa describes how her family "doesn't want [her] to go and speak anywhere near them," and how "difficult" that has been (Reuman 30). She prioritizes giving her opinion, but she wants to maintain relationships and, to an extent, promote understanding. This desire manifests itself in her emphasis on "bridging." In contrast, Ahmed highlights a need for disruption without factoring in the audience. In the family dinner scene, she depicts how they are seated with "[her] father one end, [herself] the other" – two people head-to-head. This arrangement is said to represent that they "are trying to secure more than [their] place." But, Anzaldúa's priority is not to secure her place, it is to voice her opinion in a way to which those seated at the table will be receptive: through a transformed logic, specifically deductive reasoning.

To understand the ways in which Anzaldúa acts within deductive reasoning, we need to understand basic deductive structures. In his article "Deductive Argument Forms," Mark Afino notes that deductive arguments "affirm the truth of some conclusion with absolute certainty" (Alfino). This supposed guarantee of truth reflects why deductive arguments are valuable in argumentation and persuasion. However, successful deductive arguments (referred to as "sound" within classical rhetoric) must follow two parameters to have solid conclusions: "the premises

have to be true" and "the *logical form* of the premises has to have a property called '*validity*'" (Alfino). This chapter analyzes a logical form that has three components: a general major premise, a particular minor premise, and a conclusion that indicates the minor premise stems from the major premise. This chapter will refer to these conclusions as "universal truths" due to their presumed certainty in classical rhetoric and logic. The structure of deductive reasoning serves as a tool for building convincing arguments; however, deductive arguments have garnered significant backlash in feminist rhetoric due to their use in discrimination against women.

To extrapolate on the aforementioned backlash, this paragraph will serve as a brief history of associations between deductive reasoning and sexism. *The Rhetorical Tradition* depicts how logical appeals are, especially in Classical Rhetoric, held in high esteem while "[e]motional appeals are something of an embarrassment in the classical system" (Bizzell and Herzberg 5). Not only does the comparison of appeals ignore the situation or context (i.e. what rhetoric refers to as *Kairos*), it neglects the complexity of each individual appeal. To aggravate the issues with ranking appeals, Plato induces the genesis of gender disparities within language when he defines different parts of the human body in Book X of *The Republic*. He identifies a manly part that is rational, and a woman's part that is emotional (Plato). Gendering appeals not only perpetuates their questionable ranking, but it attempts to speak to the validity of the rhetors based on their perceived gender. Unsurprisingly, the conclusions related to cultural norms drawn from deductive reasoning thereafter were based on limited, sexist perspectives. These limited perspectives raise questions regarding the validity of these deductive arguments and their resulting conclusions, particularly when these conclusions are supposedly "universal."

Anzaldúa's use of deductive structures simultaneously allows for us to expand the killjoy and push for a reconsideration of how we view male-dominated rhetorical techniques. Anzaldúa

admits that while her argumentation methods are rooted in traditional, classical techniques like deductive reasoning, her multicultural perspective and intersectional identity inform how she modifies them (Lunsford 13). The first and second chapter of this thesis have focused on expansions of Ahmed's killjoy, but this chapter highlights the tensions between Anzaldúa and Ahmed's argumentation that delineate different killjoys. Both this chapter and the second use the traditional appeal of *logos*, but Anzaldúa's use of deductive arguments does not necessarily involve explicit killjoy moments in its premises. Many oppressive norms are grounded in beliefs that have been embedded in American cultures for centuries. Anzaldúa uses the very logic that supports these outdated norms to deconstruct them. In doing so she re-appropriates the structure of deductive argument. Deductive arguments' structure of putting together a major premise and a minor premise to guarantee a conclusion is not inherently oppressive. It is the discriminatory content that has been typically placed into the positions of these premises that is oppressive. By acknowledging the nuance between structure and content, Anzaldúa shows how deductive reasoning can be used in a killjoy framework and strengthen it.

Anzaldúa complicates deductive reasoning by disrupting the traditional ways in which persuasion has been approached and pushes back against Ahmed's aversion to male-dominated techniques like deductive reasoning to show that they can be used in killjoy narratives. In *Living a Feminist Life*, Ahmed points out that "[f]eminist philosophers have taught us for over a century how man becomes universal; women particular" (216). When she refers to the "universal," she refers to the conclusions of deductive arguments. When she refers to the "particular," she refers to the minor premise of deductive arguments. Indeed, deductive arguments have historically been male-dominated and for that reason, feminist scholars like Ahmed have avoided them as part of feminist frameworks. Specifically, in *Living a Feminist Life,* Ahmed does not use deductive

arguments. This technique can be tied to her citation method in which she does not cite white men, a willful disruption of current authoritative structures. However, there are benefits to using male-dominated strategies, as exemplified by Anzaldúa.

The complexities of persuasion in feminism go beyond Anzaldúa's effort, and many scholars have directly or indirectly engaged in the discussion of repurposing traditional appeals in modern feminism. Anzaldúa echoes Michael A. Gilbert, as he highlights a multifaceted approach to argumentation that involves logic alongside other appeals. This emphasis on logic as part of a larger framework also puts Anzaldúa in conversation with Phyllis Rooney, who indicates that logic does not apply in moral situations, while Anzaldúa exemplifies how logic is necessary to combat unfair moral judgements bestowed on women by the patriarchy. Octavio Paz also responds to these moral judgements as he analyzes the verb *chingar* as an example of sexism embedded in both language and culture. In these conversations, a need for deductive structures within feminism emerges as it may be most effective at deconstructing the unsound arguments used to oppress women in the first place.

This chapter will examine how Anzaldúa transforms limited patriarchal deductive arguments into inclusive feminist deductive arguments by expanding their premises and pivoting who they can serve. The first section of this chapter will examine how Anzaldúa disrupts the concept of a universal truth, making room for more inclusive truths. These universalizing truths embody the integration of multiple voices into the premises of deductive arguments, reminiscent of Ahmed's pulling up a chair at the head of the family table to engage in the conversation and give her opinion. The second section of this chapter will show how Anzaldúa expands current universal truths into universalizing truths in order to shift perceptions about taboos and societal norms. In this way, Anzaldúa not only disrupts the table dominated by male rhetorics – like

Ahmed's that is guided by her father's questions, but the table set by Chicanx culture. Anzaldúa takes her seat at the table armed with techniques that simultaneously willfully resist the norms imposed on a Chicanx daughter and attempt to build bridges of understanding using logic. Anzaldúa thus transforms deductive arguments, using them to disrupt current culture and build a collaborative space for constructing new culture that embodies an expanded killjoy who may speak to more than Ahmed's primarily feminist audience.

Limited Universal Truths

Anzaldúa's deconstruction of universal truths speaks to Ahmed's description of the seating at the family dinner table. Ahmed's observation, "Always we are seated this way," denotes both a lack of movement from position and an expectation of settling into this limited order. In a similar manner, universal truths ignore the multiplicity of perspectives that may shape what we perceive as true. Anzaldúa disrupts this concept by exposing its convenience, highlighting it as a tactic for limiting what societies may perceive as what is right or wrong with social norms. Those who control societal norms can build social codes and moralities that seem arbitrary in the larger picture. But, because these social codes and moralities are based on the desires of a select few, they are not arbitrary – they reflect what would benefit the inventors. Beyond strategically selecting what is right and wrong, establishing a supposedly universal truth eliminates any opposition's arguments. This elimination also manifests in a fear of being unseated that Ahmed depicts in another description of the table: "when you are unseated, you can even get in the way of those who are seated, those who want more than anything to keep their seats" ("Feminist Killjoys"). If an audience "wants more than anything" to remain at the table, they may be hesitant to support opinions that have resulted in an "unseating" and fearful that a shared opinion with the "unseated" will result in their "unseating." The hesitation and fear that

Ahmed identifies present challenges for Anzaldúa's "bridging" as a willingness to listen does not equate to a willingness to act or show support. Anzaldúa takes a seat at the table in a way that acknowledges this fear, using deductive reasoning that deconstructs culture and then proceeds to reveal that this very reasoning has been centered around a limited perspective that benefits men.

We see a powerful example of Anzaldúa's deconstruction of culture through deductive reasoning in *Borderlands/La Frontera*. In the chapter, "*Movimientos de rebeldía y las culturas que traicionan*," Anzaldúa critiques culture in a way that does not immediately come across as a critique:

> "Culture forms our beliefs. We perceive the version of reality that it communicates. Dominant paradigms, predefined concepts that exist as unquestionable, unchallengeable, are transmitted to us through the culture. Culture is made by those in power – men." (38)

As I will show in what follows, Anzaldúa accomplishes the killjoy goal of raising awareness while pushing against Ahmed's emphasis on the individual in order to take into consideration the hesitancy that others seated at the table may have. The quote above involves the layering of three deductive arguments that not only bring universal truths to light but, more importantly, to showcase their illegitimacy and inflexibility. The first deductive argument will expose men as the creators of culture, thereby raising questions regarding the logics of universal truths, how Anzaldúa expands the functions deductive arguments have previously served in feminist arguments, and how deductive arguments may be useful within a killjoy framework. Anzaldúa's second deductive argument, which stems from the conclusion of the first, shows how our beliefs are shaped by male motivation and desire. This draws upon the disruptive nature of the killjoy while still attempting to build the kinds of bridges Anzaldúa aspires to. Subsequently, Anzaldúa argues in favor of multiple truths shaped by multiple realities, pushing against the inflexibility of

culture. Thus, Anzaldúa resists Ahmed's avoidance of traditional appeals by using deductive reasoning to expose the limitations of universal truths, break them down, and open previously accepted universal truths to include a multiplicity of truths.

Anzaldúa's use of linear reasoning alongside narrative allows for us to expand the killjoy approach, and furthermore expands the perceived limits on the issues deductive arguments may be used to support. Particularly, Phyllis Rooney, in her article "Feminism and Argumentation: A Response to Govier," states that "[l]inear reasoning may be quite appropriate in deductive reasoning contexts, while narrative expansion is often very appropriate in eliciting and then reasoning about the relational complexities of moral situations" (2). Through delineating where certain argumentative methods may be applicable, Rooney suggests a binary between what issues linear reasoning versus narrative expansion may serve. This binary stems partially from the misuse of linear reasoning as a "masculine [mode]" which limited who could determine what was morally right (Rooney 2). By using deductive reasoning for moral arguments that empower women rather than oppress them, Anzaldúa inverts its purpose and expands its usage. Moreover, her use of deductive reasoning in her narration of personal stories attempts to undo Rooney's binary and push for a compilation of techniques for effective argumentation.

Anzaldúa uses the deductive structure as a frame for compiling multiple techniques, including Spanglish and narrative in order to be overall more persuasive. This approach is highlighted by scholars like Michael A. Gilbert, who denotes the importance of pairing logic with other appeals in order to be able to argue and build bridges more effectively. In contrast to Rooney, Gilbert does not assign types of issues to forms of argument. Instead, he discusses the importance of using diverse techniques to make a persuasive argument. Gilbert marks a distinction between convincing and persuading, indicating that "[p]ersuasion, on the other hand,

appeals to emotion, self-interest, and the body. Being persuaded as opposed to convinced is to have changed one's mind by dint of lesser, fallacious or rationally inappropriate means" (Gilbert 1). Gilbert's observation that persuasion involves emotional appeals speaks to Ahmed's emotion-fueled killjoy approach. However, they diverge in that Gilbert highlights appealing emotionally to the audience, while Ahmed does not need to because her goals involve bringing women together, not building bridges among a broader audience. While Anzaldúa, Ahmed, and Gilbert highlight the importance of storytelling in persuasion, recognizing the ways that narratives interrupt spaces and awareness, Gilbert and Anzaldúa are focused on how these narratives may be written to persuade.

To invert deductive reasoning, Anzaldúa uses elements of universal truths regarding cultural norms to show how these truths are inherently limiting. Seemingly anticipating Ahmed's notion of people who fear being "unseated" from the table, Anzaldúa begins her deductive arguments with premises that do not explicitly judge the patriarchal system, but implicitly raise the potential problems with current cultural construction:

> Major Premise: Culture is made by those in power
> Minor Premise: Men are in power
> Conclusion: Men create culture

Through this deductive argument, Anzaldúa indicates how men have made and continue to form culture through positions of power. People in power have the ability to influence and to some extent control others, so the major premise can be generally agreed upon. In the context of the United States, the minor premise can be supported through statistical data: 90% of lawmakers in the United States ("Time to Change Congress?") and 96% of CEOs in the Fortune 500 are male (Zarya). As a result, most people with greatest influences in government and business are men.

Though deductive reasoning guarantees the validity of the conclusion, the visible power structures in US society support it as well. Politicians create the laws which citizens – of all genders – must follow. Business leaders oversee the goods and services available to consumers and many of the jobs that are available. They control where people spend most hours of their week, their incomes and where they spend it. Through deductive reasoning, Anzaldúa lays out how men are in control of culture, inverting the historical use of deductive as defending men and oppressing women. Anzaldúa simultaneously prepares a foundation for pushing against universal truths and begins to allude to the kind of killjoy feminist arguments that can be made using deductive reasoning.

Anzaldúa's shift from subtle to direct criticism of cultural formations embodies the intertextualities between Anzaldúa's killjoy and Ahmed's killjoy. In *Living a Feminist Life*, Ahmed describes how "[t]o build feminist dwellings, we need to dismantle what has already been assembled" (2). This concept of dismantling is reminiscent of Anzaldúa as she deconstructs universal truths through deductive reasoning. However, when Ahmed notes that "we need to ask what it is we are against, what it is we are form knowing full well that this *we* is not a foundation but what we are working toward," she refers to a different "we" than Anzaldúa (*Living a Feminist Life* 2). Ahmed's "we" refers to an audience of feminist women whom she inspires to speak up at the table and express the unhappiness they feel in "normal" spaces. "Normal" spaces are headed by men, and she has accepted that there may be audiences who do not hear her; therefore Ahmed's killjoy prioritizes female expression over general audience reception. Meanwhile, Anzaldúa prioritizes female expression but manifests this priority differently as she uses male-dominated rhetorics like deductive reasoning to ease her general audience into feminist arguments. She believes that despite the historic lack of listening, specific techniques

may change a general audience's reaction. In this way, she balances universal truths and accusations within her larger argument for the sake of persuasion.

Anzaldúa's persuasive balance dismantles the concept of universal truths by presenting who creates these truths and revealing the limited perspectives they bring to their argument. This pivot from universal truths to limited perspectives speaks to Ahmed's table scene that served as the epigraph for the previous chapter on inductive reasoning: "[y]ou say why you think what they have said is problematic." The "problematic" element Anzaldúa addresses is the intentionality behind the unquestionability of cultural norms. If a culture accepts that one group is the dominant one, then it ensures power and opportunity for that group for generations to come. The persistent subjugation of other groups stops when the system is interrupted, and the existing structure is called into question:

> Major Premise: Culture forms our beliefs
> Minor Premise: Men create culture
> Conclusion: Men form our beliefs

The major premise is a universal truth; beliefs are indeed shaped by the communities in which people are raised and/or live. Anzaldúa thus disrupts the "happiness" that is the acceptance of beliefs being formed by culture by directly discussing the roles that dominant power structures play in belief formation. Although he minor premise may raise objections, it is a conclusion drawn from deductive reasoning – a "universal" truth. Anzaldúa exposes the root of the patriarchy, defined as "control by men of a disproportionately large share of power" ("patriarchy"). This simultaneously raises questions about who should have the power to determine cultural norms and what is the validity of existing norms if they are/have been decided by a select few. A society cannot represent the interests of its people if half of its citizens have

not been involved in its culture's creation. If all citizens were involved in the creation of culture, Anzaldúa argues that there would be a multiplicity of truths, and more fluid social norms as a result.

With the disruption of the concept of a universal truth, Anzaldúa pushes the reader towards the concept of multiple truths based on diverse perspectives – an inherently controversial move for a woman. In the passage quoted earlier, she uses the terms "version of reality" and "dominant paradigms," which imply that other versions of reality and other paradigms exist (Anzaldúa *Borderlands/La Frontera* 38). When Anzaldúa defines dominant paradigms, the parallel word structure in "unquestionable" and "unchangeable" highlights the authoritative nature of culture and its impenetrability. The implications of the "impenetrability" of culture are significant, especially when related to the gendering of the Spanish language and how gender inequality and violence has become embedded within language. This phrasing is especially important in highlighting the barriers women face in questioning and changing culture, particularly in Chicanx and Mexican culture.

Anzaldúa's reference to penetration alludes to the Spanish word "*chingar*," which has become emblematic of gender-based violence in Mexico. Mexican writer Octavio Paz, in his canonical and much-contested essay, "The Sons of La Malinche" (included in *The Labyrinth of Solitude*), writes about the extensive interpretations and implications of *chingar*. This verb has many definitions but notably "denotes violence, an emergence from oneself to penetrate another by force. It also means to injure, to lacerate, to violate – bodies, souls, objects – and to destroy" (Paz 21). As a Chicana woman who studied in Texas, Anzaldúa would have certainly been familiar with Paz's work and with the debates around gendered violence which Paz characterizes as part of the Mexican psyche. By alluding to the tensions between impenetrability and

penetration in describing an "unquestionable, unchallengeable, [transmission]" of culture, Anzaldúa speaks to the experiences Paz describes in his works. Paz further explains this extension of culture as a reflection of male dominance: "[t]he person who suffers [*la chingada*] is passive, inert and open, in contrast to the active, aggressive and closed person who inflicts it" (21). The penetrated (i.e. women) are acted upon, passive in every process, so they cannot ask questions or cause change. But by raising the concept of alternative versions of reality, Anzaldúa creates a version of reality where women need not experience the violence that Paz testifies to and is perpetuated through language.

By raising the concept of multiple realities, Anzaldúa addresses the problems of an unmalleable culture intentionally structured to oppress a specific population. Ahmed also invokes a stagnant culture when she described the dinner table: "[a]lways we are seated this way, as if we are trying to secure more than our place" ("Feminist Killjoys"). In this scene, Ahmed suggests that the physical, unmoving, seating arrangement speaks to a larger issue of "[securing] more than [their] place" ("Feminist Killjoys"). The refusal to shift reflects a refusal to give up power, whether those seated at the table are at the head or sitting on the sides. A fear of being unseated in any capacity limits the possibility for changes in culture. In this context, Anzaldúa's approach of using universal truths to move towards inclusive truths invests in a balance between Ahmed's killjoy and Gilbert's persuasion.

This balance manifests in Anzaldúa's final deductive argument at the end of quote I have been discussing, as it opens the possibility of moving from universal truths towards an acknowledgement of multiple realities that produce multiple truths:

Major Premise: We perceive the version of reality that [culture] communicates

> Minor Premise: Dominant paradigms […] are transmitted to us through the culture
>
> Conclusion: Our reality is constructed by dominant paradigms

By concluding that our reality is constructed by dominant paradigms, Anzaldúa astutely notes that there are a multiplicity of realities that could be possible if the dominant, authoritative paradigms were deconstructed. In other words, non-dominant paradigms can offer alternative viewpoints to what cultural norms, perhaps more equitable ones, could look like. For example, Paz's notion of the word "*chingar*" is representative of a dominant paradigm of gendered sexual violence: "[t]he verb is masculine, active, cruel: it stings, wounds, gashes, stains" (21). Anzaldúa does not directly refer to the word "*chingar*," but she does refer to the larger issue of how women are "robbed of [their] female being by the masculine plural" (*Borderlands/La Frontera* 76); this formulation conjures up Paz's cultural legacy while suggesting an alternative viewpoint. Multiple realities would also open linguistic possibilities for a more gender-inclusive Spanish beyond the norms defined by the RAE, which assume a masculine plural and which I discussed in previous chapters. The assertion of multiple realities results in a more inclusive version of reality, which pushes against the concept that there are singular "universal" truths. While Ahmed's killjoy does not identify deductive reasoning as valuable for feminist purposes, this may deserve reconsideration when evaluating their usefulness in a feminist context.

New Truths Move Towards New Norms

Anzaldúa deconstructs the concept of a universal truth and introduces the idea of a multiplicity of truths, allowing for the re-evaluation of social norms and the reasoning behind them. In this manner, she inverts deductive reasoning and integrates feminist perspectives into the deductive structure. As a result, Anzaldúa diverges from Ahmed's opposition to using male-dominated techniques, and instead, repurposes them, providing killjoy feminism the opportunity

to raise a diversity of truths. In *Living a Feminist Life*, Ahmed "[adopts] a strict citation policy: [she does] not cite any white men" (15). Citation is a practice of authority, so Ahmed uses a specific method that addresses the cultural privilege of whiteness and maleness. In contrast, Anzaldúa does not remove the men from the practice of authority that is deductive reasoning. Instead, she integrates male-dominated techniques and transforms them for feminist purposes – offering a mode for us to expand the killjoy. One element of this transformation involves using validation processes inherent to deductive reasoning: false premises render arguments unsound and unsound arguments do not hold. Regarding gender norms, Anzaldúa addresses the generalizations that have been made about women and the unsound roots of their rationale. Ultimately, Anzaldúa's transformation of deductive reasoning encourages the questioning of existing cultural taboos, opening up a discussion about how to eliminate oppressive, unreasonable norms.

Anzaldúa breaks down the rationale behind the taboo against menstruation in the in the subsection of her essay "*Movimientos de rebeldía y las culturas que traicionan*" titled "Cultural Tyranny" to showcase how oppressive norms are based on universal truths that inaccurately represent women. Anzaldúa exposes the ways in which men "secure [their] place" at Ahmed's dinner table by putting forth a dysmorphic view of women's bodies to make themselves the perceived "natural" and women "unnatural." This dysmorphia manifests itself in various facets of Chicanx and Mexican culture; as Anzaldúa indicates, "[t]he male-dominated Aztec-Mexica culture drove the powerful female deities underground by giving them monstrous attributes and by substituting male deities in their place" (*Borderlands/La Frontera* 49). By explaining how the patriarchy eliminated powerful women from their belief system, she highlights how men attempted to eliminate powerful women from the culture as a whole. Anzaldúa parallels

Ahmed's killjoy by not only examining the complicated perception of women as weak and dangerous, and doing so through describing the often-avoided elements of the female experience. Certain cultural norms reflect a superficial view of females and their bodies, including the oversexualization of breasts and butts, the criticism of intelligent and powerful women, and the taboo of menstruation. Having established that our beliefs are formed by a gender-specific faction of the population, Anzaldúa names various expectations and taboos that surround women and deconstructs them to reveal their groundlessness.

The title of the subsection analyzed below, "Cultural Tyranny," speaks to how culture is controlled by a non-representative limited few and the problems that arise from this disproportionate power. Anzaldúa offers a new perspective to counter limited perceptions, specifically in the realm of menstruation:

> "Humans fear the supernatural, both the undivine (the animal impulses such as sexuality, the unconscious, the unknown, the alien) and the divine (the superhuman, the god in us). Culture and religion seek to protect us from these two forces. The female, by virtue of creating entities of flesh and blood in her stomach (she bleeds every month but does not die), by virtue of being in tune with nature's cycles, is feared. Because, according to Christianity and most other major religions, woman is carnal, animal, and closer to the undivine, she must be protected. Protected from herself." (*Borderlands/La Frontera* 39)

Anzaldúa breaks down how seemingly contradictory perceptions coexist within the same lines of reasoning and mocks their outdatedness. By invoking science as part of her rationale, Anzaldúa uses logic that supports that the basis of taboos against menstruation are absurd. The first deductive argument contained in the above passage exposes culture and religion as entities which have used the inaccurate idea of women as supernatural to fuel oppressive norms. Then, the second deductive argument addresses why societies illegitimately view women as needing

protection. Ultimately, Anzaldúa identifies the unsoundness of these bases for female oppression and brings into question taboos and certain cultural norms.

Anzaldúa unabashedly talks about the taboos that stem from historical discomfort with certain topics, particularly those that involve women's bodies. This causes the reader to feel uncomfortable and, perhaps, go on to question why they feel that way. Anzaldúa's explanation in this subsection is embedded with a history of misunderstandings of women's bodies. She includes seemingly "supernatural" descriptions of how the female "[creates] entities of flesh and blood in her stomach […] bleeds every month but does not die." These descriptions depict pregnancy and menstruation, respectively. However, the taboos against menstruation and various elements of pregnancy reflect a continual discomfort with these processes that resists scientific explanations. The presentation of female natural biological processes as unnatural permits a continuation of historical power structures and attitudes towards women that are grounded in inaccuracies:

> Major Premise: Culture and religion seek to protect us from danger
> Minor Premise: The supernatural is dangerous
> Conclusion: Culture and religion serve to protect us from the supernatural

"[C]reating entities of flesh and blood in her stomach" and "[bleeding] every month but [not dying]" provide striking examples for the ways in which women are supernatural despite logical scientific explanations. If women's biological processes are proven to be natural, which is a form of logic, the argument that women need to be treated differently because they are supernatural is unsound. But, due to the fact the argument existed for centuries and was convenient, the "supernatural" became embedded in societies' attitudes towards women. This resulted in the oppression that manifests itself in the taboos we allow to guide our daily interactions. As she

structures her argument, Anzaldúa highlights this unsound reasoning and pushes the reader to reconsider their attitudes towards these cultural norms. By integrating the scientific facts that menstruation and pregnancy are normal phenomena, Anzaldúa shows how a shift in cultural norms would allow for greater gender equality. However, the fact that science – predominantly male-led – is unable to dispel supernatural perceptions may indicate a deeper issue that Anzaldúa cannot resolve: an "othering" that need not be grounded in truth to be believed.

While Ahmed does not directly address the tensions between the scientific and supernatural within perpetuating gender inequities, she speaks to the notion of walls and how they artificially limit actions in social circles. Whether they are physically there, figuratively there, or both, the concept of walls is useful in analyzing the obstacle of unquestioned "othering" Anzaldúa attempts to overcome. In *Living a Feminist Life*, Ahmed describes how "[i]f walls are how some bodies are stopped, walls are what you do not encounter when you are not stopped" (148). The walls Ahmed describes are selective, acting as filters. Similarly, the characteristic "supernatural" is used to divide people. Ahmed argues that being a woman inevitably results in the confrontation of a wall, and that the way to push against the wall is by speaking up, indicating that the wall is there, and creating a new space where others who have faced the same wall may exist. Anzaldúa knows that she may be unable to move the wall, but she also attempts to build a door to the other side, thereby shifting the wall in a different way.

Anzaldúa's multi-angular approach, which has been deemed utopian by other scholars, is inspired by her personal philosophy, *nepantlta*. In *Feminist Rhetorical Theories*, Karen A. Foss, Sonja K. Foss, and Cindy L. Griffin explain that n*epantla* is an Aztec word "that means 'torn between ways,'" reminiscent of the Borderlands (105). Anzaldúa cannot speak up as Ahmed does because in the 1980s her identities result in multiple different walls being put up. As a

result, she creates her own space – the Borderlands – where those who experience *nepantla* can form and voice perceptions. The authors of *Feminist Rhetorical Theories* describe *nepantla* as "[involving] learning how to access different kinds of knowledge alongside or behind consensual reality […] and to create new meanings or realities as well" (Foss et al. 109). Anzaldúa is aware of the possibility that it may be impossible to open a door or build a bridge. But, she pushes the boundaries regardless. As a result, she serves as a maverick in attempting argumentation that even Ahmed avoids. Though there is a chance her audience may not listen, she uses these strategies and transforms them because they may eventually yield a bridge – vital to eliminating the placement of walls in the future.

In the case of the aforementioned passage on menstruation as a supernatural phenomenon, Anzaldúa identifies that the walls were created through deductive reasoning and thus attempts to open a door and tear them down using the same strategy. Anzaldúa tears down the walls, pushing for a rethinking of perceptions and treatment of women, and the rationales behind them. Particularly, she exposes the implicit biases that may be rooted in previous beliefs that women were unnatural/supernatural. Hence, Anzaldúa questions of the persistence of the stereotype of women needing protection (i.e. husbands) and staying at home to maintain households:

> Major Premise: Culture and religion seek to protect us from the supernatural
>
> Minor Premise: Woman is carnal, animal, and closer to the undivine (i.e. supernatural)
>
> Conclusion: Women must be protected, protected from herself

The fundamental unsoundness of the argument resides in the premise that women are perceived as needing protection for faulty reasons, thereby introducing a need to pivot perceptions. Anzaldúa exposes the convenience of this argument: if women need protection, the only people

who can serve as protectors are men. This builds dependency and facilitates the ability for manipulation of power. Indeed, while men are viewed as protectors, they are also often perpetrators of violence. Anzaldúa depicts this problematic duality as she describes her own sexual assault in "La Prieta": "our bodies [rolled] on the ground in an embrace so intimate we could have been mistaken for lovers" (226). Thus, the concept that women need protectors provides a curtain behind which to hide rape, physical, and emotional abuse. Anzaldúa raises the curtain and demonstrates the illegitimacy of this concept, showing that women can and should be treated as independent; this is a shift from the limited universal truths provided by traditional deductive arguments into a multiplicity of truths.

Through pushing for a shift in perceived truth by showing that these norms are harmfully instilled and perpetuated in young women, Anzaldúa expands Ahmed's killjoy by using the moment to not only disrupt both male-driven and colonialist cultures that further submissive norms. Anzaldúa presents powerful, personal testimony to the ways in which norms problematically limit women's behaviors. In "La Prieta," included in Anzaldúa's anthology T*his Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, she explains how upon entering puberty at a young age, her mother wrapped her developing breasts and pinned a rag onto her underwear: a "dark secret between [them], her punishment for having fucked before the wedding ceremony, my punishment for being born" (Anzaldúa 221). The scene reflects how her mother internalized the view of menstruation as unnatural to the extent that she wishes to hide Anzaldúa's development and blames her own "sins" for its early occurrence. The "dark secret" is reminiscent of the "supernatural" which is invoked in Anzaldúa's earlier quote regarding menstruation. From *Borderlands/La Frontera*. While Anzaldúa's earlier quote reveals the roots of certain taboos, this quote shows the consequences.

Moreover, Anzaldúa disrupts the status quo by bringing attention to the shaming that the patriarchy wields, operating through her mother's actions. Even though mother and daughter share a position as women under the patriarchy, the mother takes on the patriarchal position behind closed doors and shames the daughter for seemingly no benefit of her own. Her motivation lies in the colonialist norms involving submission and an avoidance of delineation from the norm that plague Latinx cultures. The notion in many cultures, particularly Latinx and Chicanx cultures that families should never air their dirty laundry parallels Ahmed's indication that to be different is to be a problem. By breaking the tradition of silence imposed by the internalization of a colonialist patriarchy, Anzaldúa's killjoy moment inspires discomfort in more ways than one. On one level, she exposes the ways in which her family has delineated from the norm, namely through Anzaldúa's conception through premarital sex. For this, Anzaldúa has faced significant backlash from her family. As previously noted in her interview with Reuman, they "[don't] want [her] to go and speak anywhere near them" (30). But, Anzaldúa pushes forth with her disruption regardless, as it raises the question of why a family would so ardently avoid the identification of a flaw in them – to avoid the risk of punishment for being incongruent with societal expectations.

Anzaldúa's presentation of her mother's reaction to her early development may reveal the imperfections within her family, but beyond that, it showcases more broadly the imperfections of a society that shames women for premarital sex. Beyond breaking cultural norms, Anzaldúa causes discomfort by exposing the punishment of a child for something they did not do that is intended to perpetuate gender norms. Early development delineates Anzaldúa's development as different[1] and is perceived as unnatural. Anzaldúa's mother believes her daughter's "unnatural"

development to be the result of her own "mistake" and resulting pregnancy, which raises the problematic nature of the stigma against premarital sex:

> Major Premise: Premarital sex will be punished by God
>
> Minor Premise: Anzaldúa's mother had premarital sex
>
> Conclusion: Anzaldúa's mother was punished – through Anzaldúa's birth and early puberty

The taboo of premarital sex is reflected in the expletive "fucking," which adds a strong, negative connotation to the act of having sex. Beyond the negative connotation, Anzaldúa's use of what is traditionally considered the male prerogative to use the expletive disrupts the gendering of language in a similar fashion as her use of Spanglish. With her use of the expletive, she takes ownership of the power associated with it to assert her point that this taboo originates from a belief in punishment for the act. But pregnancy is not a guaranteed outcome of premarital sex, especially with access to birth control. If pregnancy is not guaranteed, then it is possible that premarital sex is not an offense that God punishes. Hence, the major premise of the argument for chastity collapses. The continual perpetuation of this theory reveals itself to be a scare tactic used to convince women to remain chaste. Mothers' use of this argument serves as a normalized guilt integral to how girls are raised to be "good women." Anzaldúa draws attention in this way to a norm that is problematic in multifaceted ways and pushes the reader to consider how change is necessary.

Anzaldúa's use of the deductive structure marks a distinct difference between her killjoy and Ahmed's killjoy. Beyond reflecting their different audiences, it speaks to Anzaldúa's maverick framework of persuasion. While much of feminist theory, including Ahmed's killjoy, attempts to disengage from male-dominated techniques, Anzaldúa transforms deductive reasoning for feminist purposes through deconstructing the logic of universal truths: both

showing their problematic foundations and proving them limited by integrating multiple perspectives. This integration builds a collaborative space for discussing norms in which discriminatory taboos can be identified as needing change – a willful, killjoy shift that redefines cultural norms by building new truths. This chapter began with Ahmed describing the "intense everyday" of the family dinner table. Indeed, *Borderlanda/La Frontera* almost exclusively describes intense everydays as a woman living between cultures whose commonality is female subjugation. While she disrupts the status quo, Anzaldúa's use of deductive reasoning showcases her willingness to take the risk of manipulating the language of an oppressor who refuses to acknowledge her in an effort to be heard. Criticized as utopian, Anzaldúa's framework is pragmatic, attempting techniques that both break the everyday of the dinner table and even the everyday of some feminist theorists.

CONCLUSION

> "I *lack imagination* you say
> No. I lack language.
> The language to clarify
> my resistance to the literate." (Anzaldúa "Speaking in Tongues" 184)

In all of her writing and across a long career, Anzaldúa highlights the difficulty of activism when those in power offer countless rhetorical dismissals to (and of) those who lack power – particularly women. Women's opinions are discounted due to biological conditions such as premenstrual syndrome (PMS), psychological conditions such as being overly emotional, and epistemological conditions such as a supposed lack of knowledge. Meanwhile, men are barely questioned when they have affairs, act impulsively, and are given jobs for which they have little to no experience. The standards for believing and valuing what a man says are significantly lower than those for a woman, a phenomenon that traces its history to Ancient Greece and Plato's notion that men are inherently more "logical" than women (*The Republic*). Thousands of years later, feminist rhetoric is still attempting to bring equality to the deep-rooted issues of gender.

As we see in the quote that serves as epigraph to this conclusion, Anzaldúa acknowledges that women lack the language that will ensure they are heard by every audience, and the efforts to find such a language span all of her literary works. This thesis has focused on *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, the essay "La Prieta" in *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, and the essay "Speaking In Tongues: A Letter to 3rd World Women Writers." This thesis examines these works and puts them in conversation with feminist scholars like Sara Ahmed, specifically her book *Living a Feminist Life* and the essay "Feminist Killjoys

(and Other Willful Subjects).” Through this imagined conversation, this thesis has explored the language Anzaldúa creates for activism in an effort to broaden the scope of feminist techniques, particularly Ahmed’s killjoy, while building bridges in understanding with a larger audience. Anzaldúa offers a feminist revision of inductive and deductive reasoning and Spanglish to broaden the audience of feminist arguments and serve bridge-bridging, persuasive purposes. These revisions then function to further expand Ahmed’s killjoy feminism into one that may be adaptable to audiences of diverse cultures and backgrounds.

> “I experienced the success adapting killjoy feminism while at my first CCCCs conference. Because it was my first time presenting research, my father decided to join me on the trip. He was paying for a flight and hotel room, so I quickly realized I could not have him spend all that money and time just to watch me tell him the ways in which men are bad. So, I adjusted my rhetoric. I highlighted the logic of feminism and used mutually intelligible terminology. At the end of the day, he turned to me and said I was right about the issues I was arguing. That was a victory.” (Meijaard “Disrupting *Las Fronteras*”)

The experiences I have had within my own family related to adapting rhetoric have transformed the conversations at my own dinner table, resulting in the decision to take on this project and bookmark the conversation I imagine between Anzaldúa and Ahmed across chapters with epigraphs of Ahmed’s dinner table from her essay “Feminist Killjoys (and Other Willful Subjects).” The essay as a whole serves to introduce the feminist killjoy who raise awareness of the unhappiness women and other marginalized groups experience regularly in situations that perpetuate oppressive norms. In the essay, Ahmed provides specific situations that may cause unhappiness and warrant a killjoy moment to indicate these emotions and problems. This thesis has centered around the passage at the dinner table where Ahmed describes the norms of the table, particularly where people sit, who may speak, and when. She indicates the ways in which that situation revolves around her father, who directs the conversation and how her mother remains silent. She describes her frustrations and the tensions that build inside her, which

ultimately result in her speaking up to "disrupt" the norms. She then describes the negative reactions of those at the table, which provides a challenge for Anzaldúa: how to disrupt norms without being completely ignored or shut down by the audience.

Though Anzaldúa does not explicitly describe her own family's dinner table in the writings I explore in this thesis, the sentiments they manifest – a frustration with the norms, the silence, and the antagonism against disruption – make Ahmed's table an excellent lens through which to examine Anzaldúa. More specifically, the ways in which Ahmed handles the conversation at the table in order to disrupt it both parallels and comes into conflict with Anzaldúa's efforts to raise awareness and build bridges with those seated at her own table. Ahmed names her technique of willful disruption "killjoy feminism," a term that owns – even embraces and celebrates – the adjective "killjoy" that is often negatively bestowed upon women by men. By embracing the "killjoy," Ahmed reflects on the power to disrupt emotional appeals and flip criticisms of women being overly emotional and transforming them into a useful lens. In this thesis, I have argued that in her writing, Anzaldúa acts as a killjoy and that her rhetorical techniques can be used to expand Ahmed's killjoy framework to do the cross-cultural activist work Anzaldúa aims to accomplish.

This expansion of the killjoy revolves around a tension between a push for gender equality and an opposing push against that equality. Though much research exists regarding why many cultures seem hesitant to embrace feminism, the authors of *Feminist Rhetorical Theories*, Karen A. Foss, Sonja K. Foss, and Cindy L. Griffin identify one point that Anzaldúa attempts to address: "[m]ost definitions of feminism are ones that we believe many individuals would support if they understood feminism apart from its stereotypically negative associations" (Foss et al. 2). Anzaldúa's efforts to increase awareness and understanding of issues related to gender

disparity respond to this misunderstanding. Anzaldúa maximizes the reach of her writing through her use of multilingualism – specifically Spanglish. She then uses this reach to make killjoy statements organized such that they reflect a gradation in the social pressures that women experience, transforming inductive reasoning into a mode of uniting women. Finally, because Anzaldúa aims to build bridges among as large an audience as possible, she then inverts deductive reasoning so that those who will not immediately understand the issues related to gender disparities may come to see the logic behind a need for equality.

One of the primary methods that Anzaldúa uses to raise awareness to a wide audience is her use of Spanglish within literature. Spanglish is often relegated to colloquial, spoken language, so Anzaldúa's use of Spanglish as part of her literary language disrupts hierarchies of language within the academy. Moreover, the use of multilingualism to identify specific words and phrases puts Anzaldúa in conversation with Ahmed, as her technique of bluntly speaking up often involves monolingual identifications of certain words. Though Anzaldúa's use of Spanglish may limit who can easily understand her text, her integration of English and Spanish enable her to communicate with speakers of both languages. With her use of Spanglish, she disrupts multiple tables across North American and Latin American cultures by addressing gender inequality across borders and borderlands. Anzaldúa's ability to speak both languages thus builds a communicative ethos she would not have if she wrote exclusively in a single language. Because she bridges cultures, she gives herself a space to speak rather than having to demand for one by the dominant culture in each language. Anzaldúa details her intentionality with creating this space in "La Prieta" when she describes *El Mundo Zurdo:*

> "The mixture of bloods and affinities, rather than confusing or unbalancing me, has forced me to achieve a kind of equilibrium. Both cultures deny me a place in

> *their* universe. Between them and among others, I build my own universe. *El Mundo Zurdo*." (232)

Using the power to communicate with people across borders, Anzaldúa strategizes her killjoy moments within the premises of inductive arguments, as I explore in Chapter 2. Killjoy moments serve as premises of inductive arguments in a way that allows for a gradation in the issues she presents. This gradation manifests in a layering of killjoy moments that lead up to explicit indications of oppressive norms. Through this layering, Anzaldúa builds a sense that the premises themselves are closing in on the reader rather than providing a foundation for logical argument. This sense of constriction is felt by women when their behavior in public or private is limited by what society and their families deem appropriate. Bridging Chapters 1 and 2, we witness Anzaldúa's integration of Spanglish into her inductive reasoning as a way to broaden the scope of who may have these rhetorical experiences. But, killjoy moments that describe experiences do not attack the underlying logic behind oppression. Chapter 3 thus depicts how Anzaldúa sees the need for logic within building bridges in understanding, particularly with a broader audience that prioritizes logic over emotion (Bizzell and Herzberg 5). Anzaldúa thereby pivots from Ahmed's killjoy and integrates deductive reasoning within her killjoy framework, inverting the historical use of deductive arguments, and uses this inversion to expose male-dominated, colonialist logics on which current norms are based.

This thesis has examined how Anzaldúa attacks every possible pillar upon which the patriarchy stands in order to raise awareness and convince her audience that change is necessary – a posture which is potentially utopian but nonetheless killjoy and maverick in nature. Anzaldúa's multi-faceted approach to feminist rhetoric has previously raised discussion, as Foss, Foss, and Griffin indicate: "like all cultures that exist in the Borderlands, feminism exhibits a diversity and a plurality that provide it with possibilities for paradigm-changing visions"

(*Feminist Rhetorical Theories* 111). While feminism does exhibit "diversity" and "plurality," it is Anzaldúa's approach that involves the Borderlands that evokes these "paradigm-changing visions." But, Aznaldua's approach expands beyond the Borderlands, which Foss, Foss, and Griffin also acknowledge in defining the *mestiza* consciousness:

> "As a result, the *mestiza* consciousness can serve as a model or prototype because the future depends on the breaking down of paradigms, it depends on the straddling of two or more cultures." (Foss et al. 109-110)

Anzaldúa's killjoy feminism can be related to her *mestiza* consciousness, as both highlight an integration of cultures and techniques to build an effective framework for communication and activism. This integration also serves to be inherently disruptive through combining elements which would otherwise never interact. As noted in the quote above, "the future depends on the breaking down of paradigms." However, Anzaldúa's work reveals that this breaking down of paradigms does not exclusively mean the breaking down of male-dominated paradigms. Anzaldúa disrupts the norms of killjoy feminism to integrate logics found in both Ahmed's killjoy and in traditional rhetoric to straddle both rhetorical "cultures." By straddling these cultures, she breaks down the paradigms of each one in an effort to build towards a *mestiza* future, where rhetoric is not limited by gender, where regardless of gender, people can use logic and emotion to express themselves.

> "Yes, in a few years or centuries
> *la Raza* will rise up, tongue intact
> carrying the best of all the cultures." (Anzaldúa *Borderlands/La Frontera* 225)

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