



Writing as the Brushstrokes of Transformation: Lessons from Gloria Anzaldúa's When I Write I Hover

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Abstract: This conceptual piece draws upon the insights presented in Gloria Anzaldúa's work, *When I Write I Hover*, to transform writing as a form of art. In *When I Write I Hover*, Anzaldúa describes writing as a creative process that examines the intricate relationship between writing, transformation, and creativity. Anzaldúa alludes to how these elements are interconnected within the processes of knowledge acquisition and creation. Through this lens, I explore how Anzaldúa's work has influenced my understanding of writing as a creative and transformative act. This presentation aims to analyze Anzaldúa's insights on how writing informed my creativity, identity transformation, and introspection as I navigated my own Hispanic Serving Institution as a student through a richer appreciation of writing as a form of artistic expression.

Keywords: Anzaldúa, Identity, Writing, Latinx, Transformation

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FERNANDEZ: WRITING AS THE BRUSHSTROKES OF TRANSFORMATION

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Gloria Anzaldúa, in her essay "When I Write, I Hover," featured in *The Gloria Anzaldúa Reader*, describes writing as more than a mode of communication; it is a transformative act that allows individuals to explore, negotiate, and reinvent identity, knowledge, and creativity. For Anzaldúa, writing serves as a bridge between the self and the world, connecting personal history with new understandings. In my own experience, writing has become a space for negotiation and scaffolding, a way to make sense of my identity and how it shapes my educational experiences and evolving perspectives.

Anzaldúa's insights shaped how I view writing as a deeply creative and reflective practice. For me, writing is not merely an academic task; it is an act of self-exploration and reimagining, a way of locating myself within shifting cultural and institutional landscapes. Through Anzaldúa's lens, I understand writing as both artistic and transformative, a space where change is not only imagined but enacted.

In this process, writing allows me to deconstruct my sense of self and my educational journey, revealing how I have navigated cultural, physical, and emotional tensions that have shaped who I am. It has taught me to adapt, resist, and reconcile conflicting expectations, each moment of struggle deepening my awareness of identity and purpose as both learner and educator. Drawing on Anzaldúa's work, I approach this paper as a kind of canvas where identity, reflection, and transformation converge.

Grounded in this personal exploration, the paper begins with an introspective analysis of my transformative educational journey and then examines writing as both a creative and pedagogical tool through Anzaldúa's metaphor of the classroom as a writing borderland. It concludes with a reflection on the broader implications of writing as a practice of transformation.

My Story: Writing as Transformation in My Educational Journey

Before I start sharing my personal journey, I want to acknowledge the significant influence that being part of an HSI (Hispanic-Serving Institution) has had on my experience as a college student. This environment shaped the way I perceived and navigated my growth, challenges, and transitions throughout my academic journey, much like how Anzaldúa's perspectives and frameworks influenced my understanding of my own development.

The HSI I attended had a high Hispanic population. According to the university's statistics, 61% of its students are Hispanic, 15% of its students are White Non-Hispanic, 13% of its students are Black, 4% of its students are Asian or Pacific Islander, and 7% of its students are other minority groups (reference blinded for anonymity, n.d.). It is important to note that this HSI does not use the term "Latin American" within its data. Instead, they use "Hispanic" and "White Non-Hispanic." This form of distinction does not consider other Latin Americans who do not identify as Hispanic; students from countries such as Brazil, Guyana, and Suriname, among other Latin American nations, may face challenges in self-identification at the focal HSI. Nonetheless, the faculty population was predominantly White, comprising approximately 41% of the university's faculty in 2021, which contributed to cultural friction. The cultural friction would surface during class sessions or presentations, where I often felt pressure to adjust my tone or suppress the warmth and directness typical in my Latin American interactions. I worried that my enthusiasm or expressiveness might be read as unprofessional, so I rehearsed restraint, measuring each word, each gesture. Over time, that self-monitoring became exhausting, and

FERNANDEZ: WRITING AS THE BRUSHSTROKES OF TRANSFORMATION

writing emerged as the one place where I could reclaim my full, unfiltered self. Ultimately, this experience highlights the need for greater diversity and cultural understanding within the community.

As mentioned, I had issues with feeling represented within the faculty community, which often left me feeling isolated and uncertain about my place in academia. This lack of representation created a sense of invisibility, making it difficult to express myself or feel fully understood. However, when I turned to writing, especially free-writing or journaling during moments of self-doubt, I found a space where I could explore my thoughts without judgment. Writing became a healing practice, a way to reclaim my voice and assert my presence. Hovering over the blank page and watching my words take shape made me feel grounded, validated, and more connected to others who might share similar experiences. It was through writing that I began to feel seen, even when my surroundings suggested otherwise.

As a Latin American student in an HSI, I wanted to better understand the complexity and layered realities that shape these institutions. Yet, as I turned to the research, I found that many studies were limited by inconsistent and problematic terminology when addressing Latin American and Hispanic populations. For example, the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan fact think tank, described “Hispanic” and “Latino” as pan-ethnic terms meant to describe the population of people of that ethnic background living in the United States (Gonzalez-Barrera, 2015). In practice, the U.S. Census Bureau most often used the term “Hispanic,” while Pew Research Center used the terms “Hispanic” and “Latino” interchangeably when describing this population (Guzman, 2001). Similarly, *Excelencia in Education* (2020) uses the term “Latino” or “Latin American” interchangeably when discussing research conducted in HSIs. Switching between the terms reduces the validity of research conducted on this group. It condenses a notably diverse group of individuals into a homogenized entity. Homogenizing this group of students dismisses the differences in background, language, and more.

The homogenization of the Hispanic community highlights the way academic discourse tends to oversimplify individual identities by reducing their complexity into neat, digestible categories. It also reflects the personal experience of feeling similarly constrained within institutional spaces, where the multifaceted nature of one's identity is often flattened or diminished to fit certain expectations or stereotypes. This parallel emphasizes the tension between the richness of personal identity and the tendency of institutional or academic frameworks to streamline or categorize that complexity between languages, between identities, and between histories erased and stories reclaimed. Therefore, writing becomes a space where I resist that flattening. It allows me to pause, to float above the imposed terms, and insist on complexity. In the act of hovering, I reassert my presence, one that can't be neatly categorized or erased.

Lastly, considering the substantial population of Latin American individuals within Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), it is imperative to also reflect upon the effects of racial phenotypes on this demographic. Within the United States, Latin Americans display a wide range of racial phenotypes, complicating the Black/White Portrait of America (Frank et al., 2010). Due to historical racial mixing, Latin Americans exhibit a broad range of physical characteristics, including a wide range of skin color and phenotype variations, making it difficult for the government to categorize Latin Americans by race (Lopez, 2008). Yet, the social stratification of society continues to maintain a color gradient with European descendants at the top of the hierarchy and non-Whites at the bottom, giving an advantage to Latin Americans who are light-skinned and

FERNANDEZ: WRITING AS THE BRUSHSTROKES OF TRANSFORMATION

benefit from White privilege to varying degrees (Chavez-Dueñas et al., 2014). These racial dynamics are not new; they reflect colonial legacies that still linger in educational institutions today. Therefore, when I write, I elevate myself above the rigid systems designed to categorize, label, and confine me. My writing serves as a defiant act against these attempts to fix or define my identity, emphasizing my refusal to be confined within any predetermined boundaries.

Ultimately, HSIs have been instrumental in enabling Hispanic students to access higher education, serving as vital gateways that promote diversity and inclusion within academic communities. However, despite their important role, HSIs encounter significant challenges, particularly concerning inadequate funding that hampers their capacity to expand resources and support services. Additionally, there are ongoing debates about their effectiveness in fully achieving their core mission of increasing college enrollment and success among Hispanic students. These issues highlight the need for sustained investment and strategic improvements to ensure that HSIs can fulfill their intended purpose more effectively. It allows us to recognize the necessary changes and issues that need to be addressed within HSIs, particularly the need to resist homogenizing Latin American students and instead acknowledge the racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity within these institutions. Yet, behind the acronyms and enrollment statistics are students like me—negotiating multiple worlds, often without a roadmap.

This context also prefaces the site of my own personal transformation: an HSI where I began to understand myself more deeply, not just academically but culturally, emotionally, and politically. While HSIs may center Latin American enrollment demographically, they are still embedded in the broader structures of whiteness that define higher education. I had to learn to navigate these dominant white institutional cultures while simultaneously reconciling aspects of my own identity, mestiza, daughter of immigrants, first-generation scholar, with the expectations of academia. I often found myself code-switching, adjusting my language and behavior depending on the context, unsure of when or how to show up as my whole self. I would code-switch as I communicated and attempted to make connections with classmates and faculty. I softened my accent and avoided certain idioms from home, worried they might mark me as “less professional.” Yet in doing so, I began to feel detached from the warmth and authenticity of my cultural voice. This tension, between visibility and erasure, between compliance and authenticity, was ever-present, and it deeply informed my sense of self.

In this in-between space, I began to write. And when I write, I hover. I exist neither fully inside nor entirely outside the institution, but rather in a borderland space where reflection, resistance, and reimagining become possible. Writing became a form of survival and self-making. It allowed me to process the dissonance I felt between institutional expectations and my lived experiences. It gave shape to emotions I didn’t always have language for. Through writing, I reclaimed stories that academia had no room for. The page became a sanctuary, one where I could piece together fragmented parts of myself and construct a mestiza consciousness that refused to be boxed in by static definitions.

Hovering, in this sense, is not a sign of indecision or weakness; it is a powerful act of dwelling in ambiguity. Inspired by Gloria Anzaldúa’s concept of the Borderlands, I came to see this liminality as fertile ground for transformation. Like Anzaldúa, I, too, write to make sense of the contradictions, to carve a space for voices like mine, and to leave a discernible mark on the world. The process of hovering through writing helped me shift from merely surviving in the institution to actively shaping how I belong within it. It became both a personal and political act, a way of imagining new possibilities not just for myself, but for others who, like me, exist between categories, between languages, between worlds.

FERNANDEZ: WRITING AS THE BRUSHSTROKES OF TRANSFORMATION

An HSI and My Story of Becoming

Throughout my time at the HSI, I often encountered institutional structures that emphasized standardized metrics for writing and learning. While these frameworks are intended to provide consistency and measurable outcomes, they can inadvertently stifle creativity and individuality, forcing students into rigid molds that do not reflect their unique voices or experiences (Haladyna et al., 1998). However, I found inspiration in the work of Gloria Anzaldúa (2012), whose insightful approach to writing encourages a more expansive view of this act. Anzaldúa's (2015) perspective advocates reimagining writing as a powerful form of resistance, one that acknowledges and honors the complexities of diverse identities and experiences. This understanding empowered me to question the status quo and seek new pathways in my own writing journey.

As I navigated the intricacies of higher education, Anzaldúa's framework served as a guiding light, instilling in me a renewed sense of agency and purpose. It allowed me to embrace my identity fully and to express my thoughts and experiences authentically. By challenging traditional norms of writing, I discovered the power of my voice and the importance of fostering an inclusive environment where everyone's narrative can flourish. I was able to recognize the multiple facets of my own identity, understanding not only each aspect individually but also appreciating how they intersect and influence one another. This acknowledgment of intersectionality has deepened my self-awareness and highlighted the complexity of who I am.

Ultimately, my academic journey transformed my perspective on myself and my education, enabling me to see it not just as a process of acquiring knowledge but as an opportunity for personal and communal growth. It allowed me to turn inward while still engaging outwardly with my educational environment. Writing thus became not only a way to process my experience as a student but also a mode of resistance against the erasure of complexity. When describing her writing proclivities, Anzaldúa (2015) shared, "It is a ritual, a habit, a propensity bred in my bones" (p. 238). Anzaldúa described writing as a deeply ingrained and instinctual behavior, emphasizing that it is so fundamental to her identity that it feels almost innate, like an inherited trait or something embedded in her very nature. For me, writing became a ritual through which I crafted my sense of self. It became a process of revealing and sharing my truth with myself and the world. Developing this habit has placed me in a constant state of *nepantla*, a liminal space of transition, where I can access my own *mestiza* consciousness and embrace my evolving self, continually becoming who I am meant to be. I entered *nepantla* the moment when I wrote from the threshold, caught between tongues, between ways of knowing, between belonging and distance. Writing was the passage through that space, the bridge that carried me from silence to articulation, from fragmentation to *mestiza* consciousness.

In recognizing writing as a blend of creativity and education, I came to appreciate the significance of hovering in uncertainty, the nuance of ambiguity, and the power of pauses. These moments, a delicate dance between thoughts not yet fully formed, were not mere detours on the path of expression; they were integral facets of the journey itself. Each pause and moment of hesitation marked points of potential transformation, where ideas could shift and evolve. It was within these spaces, rich with possibility, that I discovered the profound depth of my own voice and the intricate layers of meaning waiting to emerge.

Anzaldúa's framework allowed me to reclaim the act of writing from the sterile confines often imposed by conventional academic production. It led me to ponder: What if writing transcended the mere presentation of arguments and instead became a vital act of breathing?

FERNANDEZ: WRITING AS THE BRUSHSTROKES OF TRANSFORMATION

What if the page transformed into a living archive, rich with the complexities of pain, joy, and inherited legacies? By intertwining narrative with theoretical insights and weaving memory into analytical discourse, I crafted a hybrid form of expression that authentically reflected my multifaceted identity.

This approach to writing, one that consciously embraces the margins, evolved into more than just a method of scholarship; it became a profoundly personal ritual. It offered me a space for reflection and self-affirmation, reinforcing my sense of belonging in an academic realm that often overlooks my experiences and perspective. Through this process, I not only carved out a unique voice for myself but also challenged the traditional boundaries of scholarly communication, inviting a deeper understanding of the intersections between identity, culture, and knowledge. As Anzaldúa (2015) expressed, “I write because I want to leave a discernible mark on the world” (p. 238). Her words embody a powerful assertion of presence, an insistence on being seen, heard, and remembered. In her work, writing becomes an act of survival, resistance, and legacy. Similarly, as I navigated my educational journey within a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), I began to understand the transformative power of writing in my own life. It was through writing that I began to articulate my lived experiences as a *mestiza*, to process the tensions and negotiations of identity, and to find meaning in the borderlands I inhabited socially, culturally, and academically.

Writing offered me more than just a platform for academic engagement; it became a form of healing and empowerment. It allowed me to challenge dominant narratives, question systems of exclusion, and imagine more inclusive educational spaces. In giving shape to my voice, writing became a means of visibility not only for myself, but for those whose stories and identities are too often erased or homogenized. Like Anzaldúa, I came to see writing as a political and pedagogical act, one that leaves a mark not just on the page, but on the world around us.

The Role of Writing in Identity Formation

Anzaldúa used writing as a medium of self-exploration and identity construction, highlighting her innovative textual forms that reflect her introspective journey towards identity formation, emphasizing her self-perception and literary voice. Anzaldúa (2015) expressed her intentions clearly, stating,

I write to record what others erase when I speak, to rewrite the narratives that have been distorted about me and about you. Writing allows me to delve deeper into my own identity and forge a stronger connection with you. Through this process, I aim to uncover the layers of who I am, preserve my essence, construct my identity, and ultimately attain self-autonomy. (p. 238)

Her approach to writing mirrors her personal journey through the complexities of borderlands. Anzaldúa (2012) argued that borderlands are not merely physical spaces but are dynamic realms where individuals navigate the intricate landscape of multiple identities. In her view, borderlands serve as fertile ground for resistance, creativity, and transformation. She shared, “When I write I escape my condition, but the writing always takes me back to confront my condition because to write is to live in made up worlds” (p. 238). When Anzaldúa wrote, she expressed finding an escape from the constraints of her reality, a refuge where her imagination can roam freely. Yet, paradoxically, the act of writing ultimately brought her face-to-face with her own condition. Each story she crafted, each character she breathed life into, is a journey into intricately designed worlds that exist solely in my mind. These worlds, while offering solace and

FERNANDEZ: WRITING AS THE BRUSHSTROKES OF TRANSFORMATION

distraction, also serve as a mirror, reflecting the complexities and challenges she navigates in her own life. Through her narratives, she not only created alternate realities but also confronted the very essence of her existence, forcing her to grapple with the truths she often wished to avoid. Writing becomes a dual experience: a temporary reprieve and a profound confrontation with the self.

Writing becomes a dual experience, a reprieve and a profound confrontation with the self. It becomes a transitional space, a liminal, messy, and contradiction-filled area. As Anzaldúa (2012) describes, those who inhabit the Borderlands must navigate overlapping identities and shifting cultural expectations. Similarly, when we write, we traverse uncertain terrain, negotiating inner voices, past experiences, and imagined futures. Writing, then, mirrors the experience of being in the Borderlands. It demands constant translation, self-interrogation, and the reconciliation of opposing forces. Each sentence becomes a step deeper into this in-between space, where clarity and confusion coexist, and where transformation begins.

Anzaldúa presented the idea of the in-between space called *nepantla*. It was first introduced within *The Borderlands / La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (2012) and further explored within *Light in the Dark/Luz en lo Oscuro* (2015). *Nepantla* is a Nahuatl term that describes a state of being "in-between" or "in the middle" of two or more worlds, cultures, or identities. Anzaldúa used the concept of *nepantla* to describe the experiences of Chicana women who navigate multiple and intersecting social, cultural, and political boundaries in their daily lives (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2015).

For the purpose of this paper, the term “*nepantla*” has intentionally not been italicized, despite being in a different language, to challenge the hierarchies of language. Italicizing languages other than English can perpetuate the notion of English superiority. By refraining from italicizing words based on their language, I aimed to maintain equality and respect for all languages used. I also reflected on Anzaldúa’s (2015) intentional use of *nepantla* without italics or capitalization as she has done in *Light in the Dark/ Luz en lo Oscuro: Rewriting Identity, Spirituality, Reality*.

Nepantla allowed individuals to create an identity that is not fixed or static. It has developed from the complex intersectionality of race, gender, sexuality, class, and culture to develop a sense of belonging (Anzaldúa, 2012). Anzaldúa argued that, in *nepantla*, individuals undergo the anguish of changing their perspectives and crossing a series of junctures and thresholds, some leading to a different way of relating to people and surroundings and others to the creation of a new world (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2012). Individuals experienced clashes in realities, and authority figures of the various groups demanded contradictory commitments. Individuals were caught in vortexes, each with different, often contradictory forms of cognition, perspectives, worldviews, and belief systems, all occupying the transitional *nepantla* space (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2015).

In the context of writing, the concept of *nepantla* refers to a transitional space or threshold where identities are actively formed, reshaped, and negotiated. It embodies the dynamic process through which individuals or groups navigate between different cultural, social, or personal identities, allowing for growth, reflection, and transformation. Writing allows the opportunity to get to know oneself, but also to embrace the new and the ambiguity. Guided by Anzaldúa’s understanding of writing as a site of transformation and identity, this paper will further examine how writing functions as both a creative expression and a pedagogical instrument.

FERNANDEZ: WRITING AS THE BRUSHSTROKES OF TRANSFORMATION

Anzaldúa's Lessons: The Classroom as a Writing Borderland

Writing, as Anzaldúa (2015) illustrates in *When I Write I Hover*, is not merely a technical or academic exercise; it is a deeply creative, spiritual, and educational act. It is a process of becoming. For Anzaldúa, writing dissolves boundaries between knowledge and feeling, logic and intuition, the academic and the personal. It is through this border-crossing that writing becomes a vital site for both creativity and transformation.

Viewing writing through Anzaldúa's lens, I began to understand it not simply to fulfill academic expectations, but as a form of artistic expression. It became a sacred space for meaning making. Writing became a way to explore and survive the contradictions of my lived experience, a place where bilingualism, mestiza consciousness, and cultural complexity could not only coexist but flourish. In this way, writing became more than survival; it became self-definition, resistance, and creation. From this perspective, writing becomes a crucial tool for creativity and transformation. Ultimately, through this layered, often uncomfortable writing process, I came to understand myself and my place within educational spaces not as fixed or singular, but as always evolving motion. I will explore my writing process in greater depth later in the paper. In this way, Anzaldúa reframed writing as an act of critical pedagogy where writing teaches us how to live, feel, and imagine otherwise.

Gloria Anzaldúa's (2012) concept of the "Borderlands" can ultimately serve as a powerful metaphor for understanding the classroom as a space where multiple identities, languages, and cultural perspectives converge and sometimes conflict. In this liminal space, writing becomes more than an academic exercise; it becomes an act of navigating, negotiating, and sometimes resisting dominant discourses. Thus, the classroom becomes a living manifestation of the borderlands, a place where students and educators alike dwell in the in-between, confronting contradictions and cultivating mestiza consciousness through shared acts of writing and dialogue.

Pedagogies of the In-Between: The Classroom as a Site of Mestiza Consciousness

In most higher education classrooms, writing functions as a central mechanism through which learning is evaluated, knowledge is legitimized, and academic competence is measured. These classrooms often emphasize standardized expectations for writing, including linear structure, formal academic language, and adherence to disciplinary conventions. As a result, writing is frequently framed as a technical skill or final product rather than as a recursive, reflective process of meaning-making. Students are typically expected to produce structured essays and research-based analyses that demonstrate mastery of content, often leaving little room for personal voice, uncertainty, or alternative ways of knowing. Such approaches can unintentionally reinforce fixed notions of identity, voice, and knowledge by privileging hegemonic academic forms. In contrast, a borderlands-informed pedagogy reframes writing as a site of transformation, contradiction, and becoming. Rather than conforming to dominant epistemologies, students are invited to sit with ambiguity, tension, and multiplicity, concepts central to Anzaldúa's mestiza consciousness framework. Understanding the college classroom as a borderland allows writing to become a space where these tensions are not erased but actively explored.

As mentioned, the classroom itself can be understood as a borderland where cultural hybridity and mestiza consciousness (Anzaldúa, 2012) flourish through writing. Mestiza

FERNANDEZ: WRITING AS THE BRUSHSTROKES OF TRANSFORMATION

consciousness, which Anzaldúa (2012) defined as a state of self-awareness experienced by a Mestiza woman as she navigates two distinct borders, which may be cultural, metaphorical, and/or social in nature. Similarly, in *The Borderlands / La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, Anzaldúa (2012) explored the intersectionality of being a woman by introducing the concept of Mestiza consciousness. Mestiza consciousness is that state of self-awareness when a Mestiza woman is found navigating two different cultural borders. Anzaldúa (2012) explained that having Mestiza consciousness is not a coming together or balance of contradictory identities but the creation of an additional third element that is greater than the sum of its severed parts, such that “the new Mestiza copes by developing a tolerance for contradictions, a tolerance for ambiguity ... she learns to juggle cultures” (p. 101). Mestiza consciousness is a new, third identity. In other words, intersectionality is two or more of your socially constructed identities, and Mestiza consciousness is none of your previously held identities (Hernandez, 2020).

Building on this understanding, writing can be visualized, not as an academic task, but as a mode of resistance and self-making. In a classroom cultivated by the borderlands, students are not expected to leave part of themselves at the door; rather they are invited to write from their full selves linguistically, culturally, and emotionally. As Anzaldúa (2012) observes, “wild tongues cannot be tamed.” In the realm of writing, these unrestrained expressions such as Spanglish, code-switching, emotion, and intuition, serve as crucial tools for meaning making rather than indications of linguistic deficiency.

The classroom, in this context, transforms into a dynamic space of *nepantla*, a liminal state of in-betweenness that not only fosters diverse perspectives but also challenges traditional binaries. It becomes an environment where students can explore their identities, grapple with transitional experiences, and engage in dialogue that acknowledges the complexities of their existence. This recognition of *nepantla* creates a rich tapestry of learning, where cultural intersections and varied narratives are celebrated, encouraging a deeper understanding of self and community in an ever-evolving educational landscape.

Writing in this context is a border-crossing act; students navigate between languages, cultures, and epistemologies. It becomes a tool to resist assimilation into monolithic academic standards and to assert complex, hybrid identities. As Anzaldúa (2015) writes, “When I write, I hover above myself and sometimes zoom in and out,” capturing the fluidity and multiplicity inherent in writing as identity formation.

By recognizing the classroom as a writing borderland, educators acknowledge writing as a transformative practice that fosters self-exploration and cultural negotiation, helping students not only succeed academically but also develop a richer, more complex sense of self within educational spaces.

Conclusion

This paper, drawing on Gloria Anzaldúa’s (2015) profound insights in *When I Write, I Hover*, explored writing as a dynamic and transformative act, one deeply tied to identity formation, creativity, and educational growth. It provided the opportunity to view writing as not simply a tool for academic output, but a vibrant process of negotiation and self-discovery that allows individuals to inhabit and bridge multiple cultural, linguistic, and personal borderlands.

Building on Anzaldúa’s view of writing as a deeply creative and spiritual act, it becomes clear that a classroom environment rooted in this philosophy can transcend traditional notions of conformity and uniformity. Instead, it transforms into a sanctuary that honors complexity and multiplicity, allowing for a rich tapestry of perspectives and experiences. Embracing this

FERNANDEZ: WRITING AS THE BRUSHSTROKES OF TRANSFORMATION

understanding invites educators and students alike to approach writing as a sacred practice, one that serves as a catalyst for personal and collective transformation. In such a space, diverse voices and identities are not merely represented but are actively reimagined and empowered, fostering an inclusive atmosphere where authentic self-expression flourishes and new possibilities for understanding and connection emerge.

In reflecting on my personal educational journey within an HSI, I see writing as much more than just a skill; it is a vital lifeline that acts as a powerful tool for fostering resilience, facilitating cultural negotiation, and establishing a sense of belonging. Through the artistic and intellectual process of writing, I, along with many others, can navigate complex social dynamics, express our multifaceted identities, and assert our presence both within academic spaces and in the broader societal context. Writing becomes a means of resistance, self-discovery, and connection, enabling us to claim and celebrate our diverse backgrounds and experiences. Ultimately, embracing writing as a borderland opens pathways for personal and collective growth, inviting us all to hover between worlds and find meaning in the in-between.

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FERNANDEZ: WRITING AS THE BRUSHSTROKES OF TRANSFORMATION

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