

# Zines in Third Space

Radical Cooperation  
and Borderlands Rhetoric

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For my father, who did not finish high school but had a self-proclaimed PhD in life, and who inspired my respect and admiration for public intellectuals. In recognition of his love for life and language, which was evidenced most poignantly at the end of his life through his Lake Obregon epistolaries.

For my mother, whose steady—slow and steady—ways have fortified me and have ultimately given me grit.

For my daughters, mis tesoros, Sophia and Aida, whose joyful and playful wisdom made the journey always sweeter and lighter, and whose wholehearted trust in me along the way helped me to learn to trust myself.

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For Jamie, whose deep respect for the value of the everyday stories of our lives inspires me, whose quirk and curiosity delights me, who is so very sweet to open my eyes to each morning, and whose kindness cultivates a home space that I always want to come home to.

## The Role of Imagination in Challenging Everyday Dominations

### Articulation at Work in Producing Antiracist and Egalitarian Social Agendas

In her preface to *This Bridge We Call Home: Radical Visions for Transformation*, Gloria Anzaldúa asserts that imagination “has the capacity to extend us beyond the confines of our skin, situation, and condition” (5). Chandra Mohanty, too, addresses the power and potential of imagination, suggesting that the idea of an imagined community is important because it can move individuals to “political coalitions woven together by the threads of opposition to forms of domination” (47). I draw on these and other theorists’ work (and in the following chapters focus more on the role of the decolonial imaginary) to explore the pursuit and formation of coalitions and the circulation of new perspectives and new knowledges in zines as third-space sites. I propose that coalitions are born of articulations, which may be considered expressive and connective practices. Zines can be highly imaginative and connective. As a result of this nexus of imagination, connection, and politics, zines are an excellent site for studying a certain kind of rhetoric, what I call borderlands rhetorics, that belongs to third space. Third-space sites as I am proposing them throughout this work, are spaces in which the politics of articulation are necessarily at play. The politics of articulation are expressed in zines in which zinesters first imagine and then work to build coalitions across contexts and in pursuit of social transformation that is predicated

on a radical democracies. By radical democracies I mean a participatory and emancipatory politics reflected in conscious coalitions.<sup>1</sup> There is much to be learned about coalitional practices, especially in their potential to propose new knowledges that serve a social justice agenda. Throughout this chapter, I explore rhetorical operations as important parts of articulation theory and practice.

Antiracist and of-color zinesters often write of the everyday as a racialized and racist context that holds coalitional potential. Many of these zinesters identify boundaries of difference across which coalitions can be imagined and consciously pursued. Importantly, the zines I focus on do not work to conflate difference or pursue homogenized heterogeneity but instead demonstrate how differences can stay intact in coalitional contexts. One strategy identified in the of-color zines and antiracist white zines I examined is a resistance to color-blindness and the color-blind racism that it insidiously reproduces.<sup>2</sup> Importantly, zines often reveal an informed understanding of the challenges of intersectional work, especially as they work to apply it through the practices of articulation across local and global contexts to better understand historic and ongoing experiences of exclusions and oppressions.<sup>3</sup> In *I Dreamed I Was Assertive*, Celia Perez reflects on everyday contexts and how saturated they are in racism. She notes that in her “whole secondary ed program there were only two black students and one Latina (me)” (issue 2 n.p.). She discusses the public school where she teaches and the many ways dominance and color-blind racism are reproduced in the teachers’ lounge, the classrooms, and the curriculum. Zinesters engage an understanding that spaces and the social interactions that constitute them, and are constituted by them, are imbued with racial meanings and racialized inclusions and exclusions, at once symbolic, historic, and material.<sup>4</sup>

In its caption, “always and never the same,” the cover of *Rubyfruit Manifesto #2* calls readers to consider the mis/treatment of people as mass productions of sameness while also calling readers to a sense of the unpredictable by implying that people are always in the process of becoming and in that process should be understood as never simply the same (see Figure 2.1). In this example from *Rubyfruit Manifesto #2*, the zinester uses a raw cut-and-paste visual to highlight the stark and inhumane reality of Nike factory workers in Vietnam not earning a living wage (see Figure 2.2). In asking readers to simply “think about it,” the zinester is assuming that the issue of a living wage is obvious and that any thoughtful person would grasp the magnitude of injustice in confronting how a transnational conglomerate such as Nike can get away with such gross and mass exploitation. Though the cut-and-paste style is informal with a sense of impromptu, especially in its visual assemblages, this zinester also includes a relatively more formal



Figure 2.1. “she is always and never the same”—from *Rubyfruit Manifesto #2*, edited by Tyrell Haber Korn.

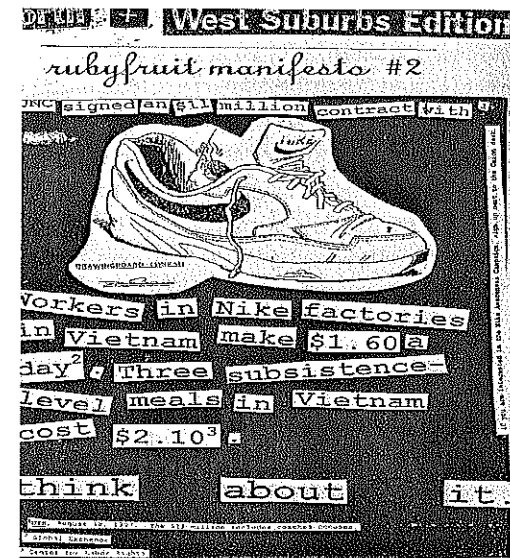


Figure 2.2. “think about it”—from *Rubyfruit Manifesto #2*, edited by Tyrell Haber Korn.

citation of the statistics that reflect the income disparities that sustain opulence and abject poverty. This citational reference invites readers to further investigate for themselves this issue in which they, as consumers, are implicated. The visual and the discursive come together to address the greed of consumer culture, support a sense of urgency around the need to act as critically informed consumers, and to call for activism against unjust labor practices. A sense of local and global responsibility, connectivity, and transnational awareness is conveyed throughout this zine, especially in its appeals to new and informed practices across shared affinities.

Blanca of *Esperanza*, December 2002, Issue #2, demonstrates a relatively formal, academically informed understanding of intersectionality that is then followed with specific examples of lived practices related to this understanding in pursuit of an egalitarian social agenda. This zine articulates, and is focused on, motherhood and community activism. Blanca proposes a "womanifesto" written "in order to encourage and support the blossoming of female friendship and community" (6). Such an expression reveals the value of relationships and relational understanding that is often expressed in zines. Before delineating her understanding of overlapping systems of oppression, she first addresses the relationship between commodification, corporatization, and the body and how such a relationship serves powerful interests and harms women in the everyday. She proceeds through a critically engaged act of disarticulation that acknowledges intersecting, if also fluid, systems and practices of oppression. Specifically, she states that she will "[r]efuse to engage in self-loathing that corporations profit from and perpetuate. Understand that 'all forms of subordination are interlocking and mutually reinforcing' by using Mari Matsuda's 'other question' technique: 'when I see something racist, I ask, 'Where is the patriarchy in this?' When I see something that looks sexist, I ask, 'Where is the heterosexism in this?' When I see something homophobic, I ask, 'Where are the class interests in this?'" (6). In this passage, this zinester offers a guide for readers to disarticulate interlocking structures of oppression and rearticulate social structures and (discursive) practices in pursuit of social justice.<sup>5</sup>

As a demonstration of the coalitional consciousness that informs the production of *Esperanza*, Blanca writes that "any trades I get that are racist, sexist, homophobic or otherwise offensive get recycled in the city dumpster" (inside cover). This editrix promises to send nothing but evil thoughts in return for receiving such zines. Like many zinesters she calls for other tradeworthy zines to engage in a kind of community dialogue to share knowledge and promote connection among young mothers in particular. Trading such zines is a mechanism of community education and community building.

In *Bamboo Girl*, Issue 6, Sabrina Margarita Sandata notes that she is working to build community by hooking up or articulating the east and west coasts, but she goes on to note that "if there's anyone else out there who lives in the boonies and in between, and needs fellow strong Asians to speak with, definitely send in your shit (see below). We need all of you guys! And when I say Asians, I mean the whole shebang! Yellow, brown, Near/Far/North/East/South/West/everywhere Asians, Oceanic, Micronesia, Hawaiian, us mutts in between the lines (or should I say, cultures?), and everyone else I forgot to mention but am not leaving out purposely" (82–83).

Sandata writes of being inspired to pursue a pan-Asian coalition and in one entry titled "Calling All Asian Brothers and Sisters!" she clearly reveals the coalitional consciousness that informs this zine's production. She notes that her call to organize is inspired by the history of organizing in the black community. The act of calling on nondominant histories and of identifying problems and possible solutions from within nondominant community contexts is related to decolonizing methodologies that prioritize such practices. Such practices are important to the politics of articulation that inform of-color coalitions struggling against related, if distinct and multiple, oppressions. The understood responsibility to know and value one's history as well as those of Others is engaged as a commitment reiterated across a number of feminist of-color zines, including *Slander*, *HOW TO STAGE A COUP*, *Evolution of a Race Riot*, and *Borderlands: Tales from Disputed Territories between Races and Cultures*.<sup>6</sup>

*Evolution of a Race Riot* is a zine compiled by Mimi Nguyen and contains writings that address classism, hetero/sexism, racism, and color-blind racism primarily in punk culture. Ultimately, Nguyen identifies punk as both racist and hetero/sexist, and her writings turn toward conscious coalitions of post-punk feminists and queers-of-color. She, and other zinesters, question how punk as a space that was supposed to challenge authority and promote antiauthoritarian, antiestablishment, and antinationalist values could reproduce race, gender, and sex hierarchies as well as participate in exclusions based on race, gender, and sexuality. Nguyen has written for a number of zines, and consistently practices a politics of articulation to build coalition for progressive social change across local and transnational contexts. She considers feminist and queer of-color zines and their compiled bibliographies a networking tool that can inform a politics of transformation for equity and justice.

In another of her zines, titled *Slander*, Nguyen chronicles her relationship to the punk scene in the United States. Articulating an anticorporate activism to feminist and queer politics, she writes of her lived experiences with a collectively run record store and her collaborations for the Epicenter Women's Outreach Coalition (EWOK) for punk rock feminist

purposes. She notes that in the punk rock scene “there were the white boys and their displays, pumping righteous vegan fists in the air.” Such protests fall short of the change-oriented practices Nguyen is herself involved in and promotes in her writings. Throughout her writings, she advocates for a coalitional approach to local ills, writing about such places and practices as the “Mad Housers,” and teaching about the concept of essential shelter as an alternative to the inhumane ways homeless people are treated in the United States. She writes of being increasingly less involved in the punk scene and notes that she continues to have “one foot planted firmly in still-hostile territory [of punk] but” that she is “far better armed, & less believing. Much less. Much, much, *much* less” (n.p.).

Nguyen shares her own experience of everyday racism and articulates it to the complex politics of tourism and the pursuit of empire. An issue that she explores in some depth is that of tourism and travel. Specifically, she explores how tourism as an industry is related to empire and empire building. In one entry she reflects on the language of the frontier as non-innocent, evoking shades of both economic and territorial expansion and empire. She speaks of tourism as implicated in the politics of global capitalism and as a representation of “colonial nostalgia, a space of money, memory and amnesia. Imperialism has ways of resurfacing” (n.p.). Her writings often investigate social change movements for the ways in which they conflate or elide difference and/or get commodified. Throughout, Nguyen critically investigates such social movements and progressive practices for ways in which they might consciously, or not, reproduce injustices, oppressions, and historical omissions particularly through dominant narratives and national scripts across local and national boundaries. She uses the space of the zines to enact critical reflections on movements identified as liberatory while also effecting a kind of grassroots community education and community literacy. Her zines then practice the politics of articulation, thereby connecting not only communities but also issues to promote a critically informed antiracist, antiglobalization, transnationally aware agenda. Nguyen’s work engages in a critique of neoliberalism. It expresses both a transnational and local perspective by actively articulating the local to the global and by asking probing questions about the relationships between race, class, gender, sexuality, citizenship, and nation.

In one entry regarding a review Mimi found of her zine, the self-identified white reviewer states that she “can’t relate” and feels bad about that fact. Mimi considers writing to her to tell her that

maybe the point wasn’t for her to relate, but to challenge herself to think more broadly, critically. Or maybe suggest that [she] didn’t want her to relate, because she is not like her, and that

very real issues of race, class, and nation affect our sociality, even in a supposedly “neutral” space like art, or punk, and that we need to be aware of these things and take them seriously.

Nguyen concludes this entry with, “Then I realized that I’d already written all these things in the zine she reviewed” (n.p.). Her conclusion expresses what many of-color zinesters, particularly in the U.S. punk scene, comment on: how tired they are of making efforts to teach and explain and interrupt everyday racism. Such experiences are often the motivation for the coalitions they are proposing in these zines.

Nguyen’s *Race Riot 2* is deeply theoretical while also being accessible, as revealed by its authors’ commitments to valuing lived material truths, engaging in everyday race talk, confronting everyday racism, and revisioning everyday and other occluded histories.<sup>7</sup> There is also an engagement with whiteness that highlights and critiques the ways in which whiteness can (but should not) reinsert itself as central in coalitional work. Importantly, there is an understanding of the need to pursue coalitions that are primarily identified as “of color” while understanding that antiracist whites can be part of such coalitions. This understanding reflects a lived experience of the ways in which social movements have served dominant interests and reinscribed social subordinations. This zine identified the need to address racism in many of the ways we might experience it. One entry in this zine begins with an acknowledgment of the difficulty of remaining in the punk scene when, all too often, one can count the of-color participants. It discusses the shortcomings of the U.S. punk movement particularly for women of color. This zinester also considers the experience of overt and/or color-blind racism, sexism, and heterosexism in the punk scene.

In this issue there is a long and related rant that addresses the racism and heterosexism in the punk scene. This zinester states that it is “disgraceful that a person in this scene would stigmatize those who identify themselves as a riot grrrl, a feminist, a queer or just a person who demands to be treated with a little respect” (49). She concludes by asking, “Why aren’t these critics as opinionated about racist or meat-head bullies at shows? Think about it!” (49). “Think about it” appears throughout a number of zines as a call to become informed and active against social injustices.<sup>8</sup>

*HOW TO STAGE A COUP*, a zine by Helen Luu in Scarborough, Ontario, offers yet another example of conscious awareness regarding intersecting systems and practices of exclusion and oppression (see Figure 2.3). This zine offers in-depth investigations into subcultural contexts that reproduce rather than interrupt dominant social orderings. In “Unpunking,” Luu, like Nguyen, identifies and questions the lack of diversity in punk

contexts. This inquiry informs most of the submissions in this zine. Luu discusses the punk-identified Antiracist Action group of “white punks trying to combat racism” (n.p.). She begins her critique of the group by articulating its androcentrism with its ethnocentrism, or what she calls its “whitecentric” profile (n.p.). She notes that the ARA works to confront blatant racism but ignores the quotidian experiences and expressions of it, a matter of-color zines take up. Her critique is based on the ignored relationship between structures and institutionalized racist practices, and the people who interact, perpetuate, and populate these structures and institutions. Luu’s analysis highlights the problem of perpetuating a myth of racism as only structural and therefore not also relational and everyday. The problem with a strictly institutional definition of racism, for Luu, is that it does not hold individuals responsible for participating in institutions and institutional practices of racism. Luu concludes that such an understanding of racism does not encourage or even allow for necessary self-reflection at the local/individual level. While questioning why more people/punks of color are not active in the ARA, Luu also critiques the action sometimes undertaken by whites on behalf of people of color, noting that it feels “extremely paternal. As in, the poor and helpless people of color needing the brave and mighty whites to come rescue us” (n.p.). In keeping with the value that many feminist of-color zinesters promote in working from within, she notes that people of color welcome “allies and supporters fighting with us but we need to be the one taking the front lines. This, by the way, is for all oppressed groups—women, those who are queer, disabled, poor, the list goes on” (n.p.). This quote demonstrates a lived consciousness about both racism and (white) privilege as well as their connections to queer politics. As another demonstration of the conversations that are ongoing across academic and nonacademic contexts, this zine applies critical theoretical discourses on whiteness, power, privilege, and the production of norms to lived experience.

Throughout *HOW TO STAGE A COUP*, Luu expresses a coalitional subjectivity. She self-identifies as a ‘third world’ woman (n.p.). Investigating the homogeneity of punk culture in the context of her status as a working-class immigrant, she makes connections between the relatively local and oppressive practices she has identified within her own subcultures and those more global and oppressive practices in society at large. She sees the local in the global and the global in the local. Such a vision demonstrates an interconnected understanding of systems of oppression as experienced within regimes of race, nation, sexuality, and gender, which is key to the strategies of resistance in this zine.

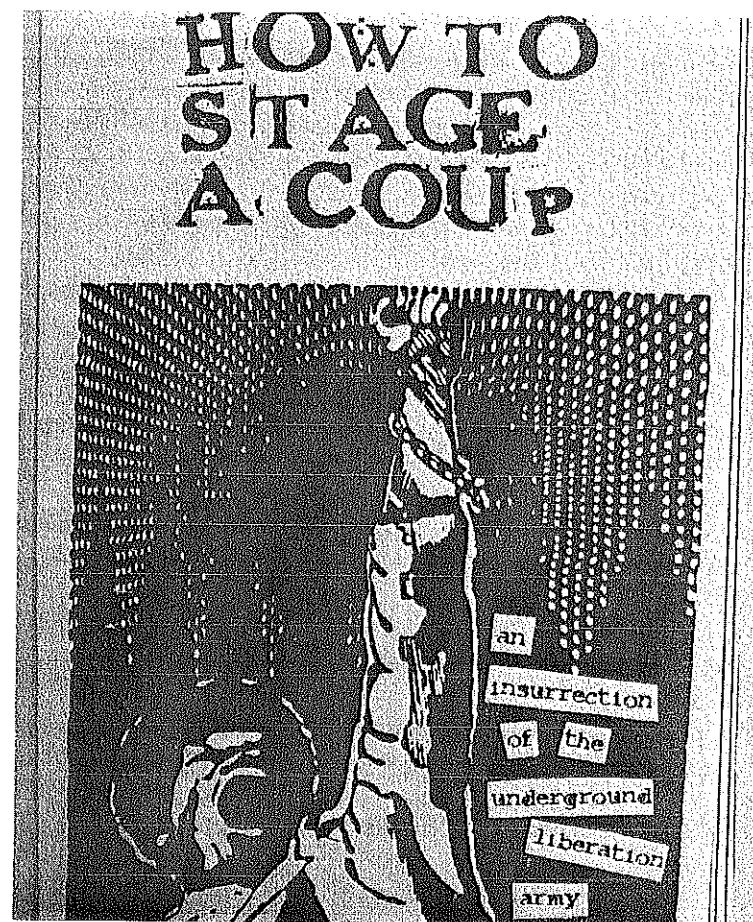


Figure 2.3. Cover of *HOW TO STAGE A COUP: an insurrection of the underground liberation army*, from *HOW TO STAGE A COUP*, edited by Helen Luu.

Specifically, Luu reflects on the related experiences of hetero/sexism and racism and efforts to express them that are met with disbelief.<sup>9</sup> Luu concludes that the disbelief of acts of everyday sexism and racism is perpetuated through the myth that civil rights are everywhere established and equitably in place. She states:

You know, it’s like when privileged white middle/upper class, able-bodied/able-minded men whine about measures like affirmative action and employment equity being “reverse

discrimination.” As if reverse discrimination can even exist in a context where certain groups hold power and privilege over others (not to mention the disturbing fact that the word “reverse” implies that discrimination is abnormal when it happens to people who hold power and privilege in society, and is only normal and acceptable when it happens to the Other. (n.p.)

By arguing against the very notion of reverse discrimination, Luu offers a structural understanding of the impossibilities of effective material reversals in entrenched hierarchies. Luu also offers a materialist critique to articulate and include class and ability in her discussion of power. She notes that discrimination is perpetuated and enforced by a particular configuration of power relations. Questioning the impossibility of reverse discrimination is a self-authorized act based both on lived experience and on an ability to articulate her own understanding and experience to other contexts. The politics of articulation are thus functioning in expressions of coalitional consciousness and coalitional subjectivity as alliance-building tactics and strategies.

Lynn Hou, a contributor to *HOW TO STAGE A COUP*, self-identifies as “queer, disabled, asian-american” (n.p.). She reflects on “a dynamic and complex dilemma in a subculture that supposedly accentuated this universal concept of all punks being oppressed the same. just like the real world frighteningly, punk was/still is this straight white boy hegemony” (n.p.). She concludes with a call for “people of color” to form collectivities in order to “see how we can make a difference in the punk scene, if not the world” (n.p.). Hou acknowledges that practices of subordination are often repeated in subcultural contexts. Naming these practices of division and subordination is a step toward interrupting them. Articulating the local and the global holds the potential to build a broad community base for purposes of supporting coalitional action across contexts.

In addition to advocating for the need and the right to know nondominant histories and heritages and acknowledging the racist implications in the inaccessibility of such histories, particularly in educational contexts, there is often a call in zines to educate about the rights of the exploited and those who are otherwise disenfranchised. In Issue 9 of *Bamboo Girl*, Sandata writes an entry titled “Know Your Rights as an Immigrant!” for un/documented people living and working in the United States (20).<sup>10</sup> This rant resulted from her lived experiences with the INS. The use of lived experience to inform coalitional action—in this case to circulate information about rights—is prevalent throughout the zines I considered.<sup>11</sup>

*Bamboo Girl* also demonstrates an understanding of the process and implications of racism and racialization in local contexts in issue 11, which focuses on women of color and mental health. It is meant to challenge the taboo and interrupt the silence regarding mental health in communities of color and working-class communities. In an entry titled “Herbal Allies for Crazy Girls” (Figure 2.4), Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha reclaims her right to share knowledge based on her own experiences: “I don’t got any fancy letters after my name. . . . I’m a girl who’s been crazy who has been studying herbs for about ten years now on my own” (37). This author’s understanding of medicinal herbs, based on her own experiences, legitimates and validates lived experience as valuable and informative. Piepzna-Samarasinha’s entry articulates lived experience with traditional practices and indigenous knowledges, especially as they address well-being and proliferate information, knowledge, and lived literacies that pertain to health and well-being in community contexts.

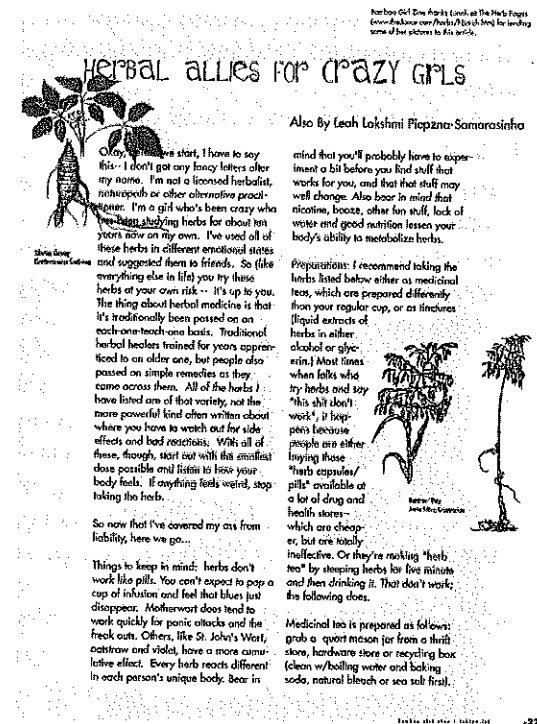


Figure 2.4. “HerBaL aLLies FOR crazy Grls”—from *Bamboo Girl* #11, edited by Sabrina Margarita Sandata.



Strategically, *Bamboo Girl* uses visual representations of each herb Piepzna-Samarasinha comments on to include both the common name as well as the botanical name. Such a strategy demonstrates deep knowledge about, and an informed approach to, the healing herbs being discussed. Tactically, however, Piepzna-Samarasinha quickly distances herself from the medical establishment by noting that she has no fancy title but relies instead on lived experience and on practiced and learned traditional knowledges. She notes that her qualifications include being “a girl who’s been crazy” and who has been “studying herbs for about ten years” on her own. Searching for and finding answers from within, *Bamboo Girl* demonstrates many such examples of resistance to exclusionary practices that rely solely or even primarily on expert and therefore authorized knowledge. Expert and authorized knowledges in this zine are understood as unaffordable and otherwise inaccessible. They are also understood as potentially pathologizing through the production of norms that would render a “crazy girl” an unauthorized and illegitimate source of knowledge. Legitimations and validations of lived knowledges are third-space strategies and tactics that also promote community and grassroots literacies. This zine works to consciously imagine and reconfigure community and community agendas that value accessibility to information and community education based on lived experiences.

Issue 11 of *Bamboo Girl*, which is identified as a post-9/11 zine, addresses the misrepresentations imposed through scapegoating and stereotyping (see Figure 2.5). The back cover of this zine focuses on a photograph taken of a sidewalk spray-painted with the words “Please Don’t Attack Other Americans.” The editrix of this zine, Sabrina Margarita Sandata, notes how 9/11 has led to dangerous expressions of patriotism that are feeding into a culture of fear and allowing for the profiling of brown people, referred to throughout this zine as “brothers and sisters.”<sup>12</sup> Sandata’s point of view is historically informed, race conscious, community-oriented, and coalitional. Moreover, “brown” in this zine is a named coalitional ambiguity that is deployed strategically to build community and forge coalition across borders of difference.<sup>13</sup> One entry reproduces a poster stating “Not In Our Name! Women of Color AGAINST WAR” (45) (see Figure 2.6). A caption encourages readers to hang the slogan “on your computer at work. Surely to impress the powers that be. Exercise your goddess right! Unless of course, it gets you fired” (45). Labor practices are called into question through a call to subvert, where possible, the capitalist imperative regarding work space as somehow not also the space of activism and resistance, particularly, in this instance, resistance against the post-9/11 fear-based discrimination is related to Islamophobia and the persecution of brown people.



Figure 2.5. “NO RACIST SCAPEGOATING”—from *Bamboo Girl* #11, edited by Sabrina Margarita Sandata, and Design Active Collective, illustrator.

[ All the something to hang your computer at work.  
Surely to impress the powers that be.  
Exercise your goddess right!  
Unless of course, it gets you fired. ]

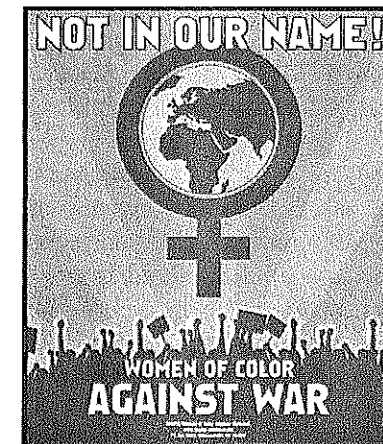


Figure 2.6. “NOT IN OUR NAME”—from *Bamboo Girl* #11, edited by Sabrina Margarita Sandata, and Favianna Rodriguez, illustrator.

Not all zinesters experience the same potential through “brown” as an expressed code for coalition; this discussion is also taken up in some academic spheres. As Jackie notes in her zine, *Memoirs of a Queer Hapa #2*, “the vision of a United States consisting of ‘shades of brown’ that we began with is not so much a vision of pluralism as it is a vision of homogeneity or sameness, or a ‘flattening’ of difference under a unified national identity. The vision offered to us by the example of the ‘queer hapa’ is a vision of difference without reductionism, and a belief in the possibility of creative identity construction rather than being forced—by a normalizing culture and national discourse—to adopt a prefabricated identity” (14). There is, of course, not always consensus in of-color zines about the rhetorics of self- and other-representation, but there is evidence of productive dialogues about distinctions and contestations. Third-space zinesters often explicitly note that the language they have access to is steeped in dominant ideology. These same zinesters state that they will continue to look for and propose more equitable discourses but that, in the meantime, they resist all that serves to silence and invisibilize them. As Jackie notes at the end of another issue of *Memoirs of a Queer Hapa*, “difference” is invoked to describe “everything that is not white and heterosexual” (n.p.). “The term is often used with good intentions, but is problematic in that the inscribed meaning reproduces the idea that everything that is not white and heterosexual is not normal. Although I did use the term, I put it in quotes to show that I was using it somewhat sarcastically” (23). She knows that to speak of “difference” is to reify normativity.<sup>14</sup> While she creatively and critically continues to develop a language that expresses difference outside of the normative/nonnormative dichotomy, she qualifies her language with quotations as a visual cue that she is calling such words as “difference” into question.

Though distinct in their discourses, both *Bamboo Girl* and *Memoirs of a Queer Hapa* address third-space activism in the everyday. Returning to *Bamboo Girl*, the call for agitation in mundane contexts is made with the understanding that one is differently constricted in different material contexts. This third-space understanding demonstrates the ways lived contradictions are understood and navigated in the everyday. In this zine, it is a given that some people will be able and willing to be visible and vocal regarding their political resistance while others will not. What is noteworthy is that the two identified populations are understood as able to form coalitions that will, at different times and in different ways, resist discriminatory practices. In much the same way that I am suggesting a spectrum of zines in terms of critical consciousness, it is worth noting that this example, too, demonstrates a kind of spectrum of third-space tactics

and strategies, from radical resistances and agitations at one end to the relatively more passive approaches at the other end.

Sandata's reflections on racist naming practices are another example of navigating lived contradictions. She reflects on her own reentry into school to study “Traditional Oriental Medicine,” noting that, for her, the term *Oriental* should be reserved for referencing a rug. Demonstrating a third-space understanding of the realities of living with contradictions, she states that she will wait to take on this issue of such racist naming practices after her studies are completed. Throughout each issue of *Bamboo Girl* are disarticulations and rearticulations that demonstrate a developed and deployed coalitional consciousness and commitment to community representation, education, and outreach—all elements of third-space and borderlands rhetorical practices.

In another instance of the politics of articulation and borderlands rhetorics as representing third-space understanding and coalitional consciousness, an interview titled “Samira (Un)Veiled” in *Bamboo Girl #11*, describes Samira Ali Gutoc as

a spirited Muslim-Filipina [and] law student at the Arellano University School of Law . . . A cultural hybrid, [who] openly discusses the intersections of her identity—on being born and raised Filipina in Saudi Arabia, getting in touch with Muslim identity and culture during the early part of her move to the Philippines, articulating Islam with feminism as well as the feminist implications of keeping her veil on—and relating these with her commitment as a journalist to take Muslim struggles, youth perspectives, cultural diversity and women's stories to the mainstream. She's both a fighter and a pop culture junkie. (Villacorta 47)

This passage offers a third-space representation and understanding of third-space lived experiences as produced and as productive. Through a borderlands rhetoric a young, Muslim Filipina activist is introduced through a representation not available in mainstream media. In offering a third-space representation of what it means to be both Muslim and Filipina, readers are confronted with a multiply positioned coalitional subject who, through this representation, is made understandable and knowable.<sup>15</sup> She becomes someone with whom to build coalitions across her own lived and embodied experiences, which are located beyond a strict binary to reveal third space through both/and consciousness and lived material realities. She refuses to

collapse or obscure any part of herself in order to fit a more tidy definition of self-identity.

A commonality in many of the zines I am considering is a clear understanding of the force and function of normative and normativizing discourses. Letters to the editor, responding to the multiplicity of issues raised in *Bamboo Girl #11*, are reproduced in the midsection of this zine. One letter writer acknowledges the “veil of invisibility” Filipina/os have lived under for far too long (79). The writer expresses a theoretical and quotidian understanding of racism based on lived experience. She demonstrates a multivoiced perspective and a kind of code switching as third-space practice that acts between dominant and nondominant discursive practices, expectations, and terrains. Such discursive practices are certainly related to code switching but can be messier and as much about words as they are about concepts. For example, the “Angst Column” is written with third-space consciousness (83). Titled “How Filipino/Pilipino Are You?” the essay begins with the question: “Who is anybody to tell you you’re not ‘enough’ of anything?” (83). This entry embodies a third-space conscious understanding of “authenticity,” “purity,” and “legitimacy” as subordinating and alienating myths. The author is aware that these myths need to be shattered by a conscious understanding of what it means to embody and live the messiness of multiplicity. Demonstrating an awareness of the ways borders can not only divide but inauthenticate subjects, the author asks what it means to be a *real* or *true* Filipino (my emphasis). She describes grappling with the taunts that she was not “Filipino enough,” “feminine enough,” “queer enough,” or even “dark enough” (83). Such personal reflections are a borderlands rhetorical expression of both the lived experience of both/and as well as its coalitional potential. The “table of contempts” of *Bamboo Girl #8*, is a playful discursive expression of the zinester’s dissatisfaction with the injustices in society and it lists articles, essays, and other contributions (3). Third space is revealed to be a shared space of understanding here, and as such, it is often a component in the politics of articulation.

In *Blowin’ Chunxx 5*, a Native American zine, an entry titled “Anarchy in Action” posits the importance of space in its relational and coalitional potential. This zine makes a spatialized appeal to coalition that is meant to redress historic displacement, cultural appropriation, and commodification. The zinester states that she is attempting a coalition through “a geographical reality, however, small or fragile, that does not exist on the map of mass consumption and malaise” (n.p.). This zinester goes on to say that 404 Willis (a not-for-profit gathering space) is a place where “we translate critique into action and explore prospects for real freedom through non-alienated daily

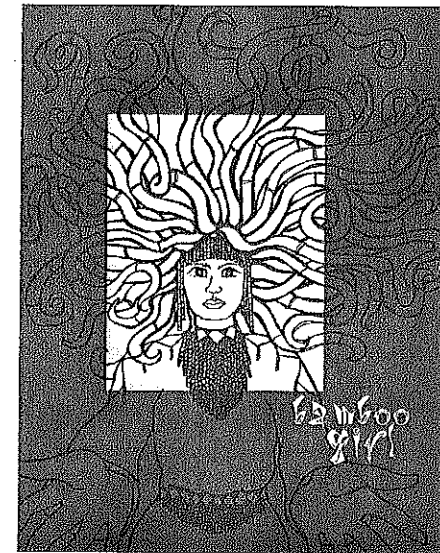


Figure 2.7. “Bamboo Girl”—from *Bamboo Girl #11*, edited by Sabrina Margarita Sandata.

interaction; a place where we go to live, if only for brief moments, as if the circle was *not* broken; a place where we can experience the fulfillment of mutual desire and imagine a life where our dreams are not colonized” (n.p.). In an example of the related practices of articulation this zinester explains that “[e]very Sunday 404 engages in direct response to the war on the poor . . . by distributing free coffee, clothes, and vegetarian food” (n.p.). There is a developed class-consciousness revealed through a call to move beyond the punk scene and anarchist community. There is also a call to conscious consumption regarding infamous punk rocker G. G. Allin, who, according to this zine, “thinks brutalizing women is cool” (n.p.). The entry continues, “We think he sucks. Boycott G. G. Allen” (n.p.). The calls to action in this zine reveal not only an informed, coalitional consciousness but a politics of articulation that brings together Native American youth, zinesters, post-punkers, feminists, anarchists, and activists against neoliberal dominations as well as against misogyny, racism, classism, homophobia, and xenophobia.

In *Bamboo Girl #1*, there is a two-page entry articulating racism, classism, and lesbian sexuality. It addresses the “Lesbian Avengers,” whose group split over issues some members had with experienced racism and feelings of being silenced and otherwise erased from group discussions,

decisions, and practices (23–24). These experiences, in turn, inform the practice and politics of disarticulation and coalition as articulated in the zine, eventually contributing to a consciousness of race, sexuality, and class that catalyzes the formation of a new and highly class-conscious coalition known as CITYAXE. According to literature of CITYAXE reproduced in this zine: “The lesbians of color and working class lesbians of CITYAXE are not presuming to speak for all lesbians of color, and all working class lesbians, but we do speak *as* lesbians of color, and working class lesbians, and we demand respect for our knowledge of our own racial, ethnic and class identities just as we do for our lesbian identities” (24). This newly formed coalition is dedicated to “instigating and organizing multicultural, multiracial activism by and for New York lesbians” (n.p.).

The entry by members of CITYAXE recognizes the difficulty inherent in coalitional practices and demonstrates the diverse intersections of third-space subjectivity, which reveal the importance of forging coalitions across borders of difference, including those of race, class, and sex. This zine manifests itself as a decolonized, third-space site reminiscent for me of Sandoval’s decolonized cyberspace “in which alternative realities provide individuals and communities increased and novel means of communication, creativity, productivity, mobility, and a different sense of ‘control’” (136). Insight into the challenges, including the failures, of activist groups attempting cohesion through intersectionality and diversity is instructive and hopeful. Letters and comments are posted throughout this zine in order to create and sustain dialogue. Third-space, borderlands rhetorics clearly work, in part, through repeated and politically charged calls for intersectional approaches to coalition. These calls are often founded on antinormative discourses and explicitly queered practice.

The fact that *HOW TO STAGE A COUP* issued a call for submissions to *Indian Attack*, a then newly forming zine that boasted a circulation of “1500,” exemplifies the cross-community dialogue and the coalitional practices of-color zines are engaged in (n.p.). The call suggests a commitment to building connections and even coalitions through the pursuit of questioning dominant historical record, new knowledges and the production of alternative histories. This zine includes a reprinted article by Mike Alexander titled “Redefining ‘Justice’—creating alternatives to the canadian ‘just us’ system” (n.p.). The rhetorical choice to deploy the concept of justice as “just us” demonstrates a strategic awareness of the criminalizing of certain communities as well as of the exclusionary and subjective historical practices and applications of justice in racialized societies. Such a rhetorical move opens a space for the contested histories and spatialized social practices

that Massey describes as stories-so-far; this space allows for contradictory histories to commingle, to circulate, and to be critically considered across contexts.

### Community Scribes: Lived and Relational Knowledges and Community Literacies

Community literacies<sup>16</sup> are born of lived experiences and are a valued part of cultural reconfigurations emerging in many zines.<sup>17</sup> Due to the valuing of lived experiences and the potential to generate and circulate not only new perspectives but also new knowledges, community literacies are implicated in the politics of articulation as practiced in third-space reconfigurations. These reformations are sites and discourses of third-space activist subjects whose experiences are understood to be valid and valuable in the production and consideration of knowledges.

Third-space zines reflect an (emergent) coalitional consciousness that informs, and is informed by, practices and performances of resistance to deficit-driven understandings of circulating literacies. It is made up of oppositional technologies and differential practices, relations, and understandings that allow for, and pursue, “the pleasure[s] of regeneration in . . . chiasmatic borderlands” (Haraway 1992 306). As countercultural, third-space sites, the zines I have studied offer fertile ground for exploration of the politics, practices, and transformative potentials of tactical groupings informed by a radical democratic politics and a community agenda of social justice.<sup>18</sup> Code b(l)ending, strategic coalitions, and resistance to identified mechanisms of social control emerge as tools and tactics of coalition and change. Coalitions emerge from the relational politics of identity in motion that are always implicated in the practices of articulation considered here.<sup>19</sup>

In *Memoirs of a Queer Hapa #2*, jackie invites readers to copy and distribute her zine freely: “Copy-Left! Reproduce and distribute freely!” (n.p.). Such an invitation holds the potential to promote grassroots literacies and community education, and also exemplifies how third-space lived practice can subvert normalized and dominant capitalist imperatives. Another example of a zine that deploys a coalitional consciousness toward the goal of building and educating community is *Housewife Turned Assassin!, Numero #1*, a zine reproduced in North Hollywood, California. It includes pages on “\*stuff 2 read\*” with a call to “put your mind 2 work. sit your ass & read a book” (n.p.). Another page in this zine is headed “Read and Think” and reproduces a page from “Marlene Fried & Loretta Ross’

pamphlet 'Reproductive freedom: our right to decide' (n.p.). This pamphlet begins with the fist of resistance in the center of the symbol for woman and says: "In whatever sphere of activism we choose—education, agitation, inspiration, legislation—whether we are building organizations or creating alternative structures and communities of resistance, we must trust in our ability to find answers from our own lives" (n.p.). By including this page the zine editor sends a message to readers that personal reflection is a valuable tool and necessary exercise in coming to coalitional consciousness and action. The message reveals how the valuing of one's story and its application to a broader context are activist and political acts with consequences for the greater community.

Narratives deployed in zines offer everyday voices and counter-stories from third spaces and third-space subjectivities that can be instructive about and disruptive to dominant discourses.<sup>20</sup> Voices becoming audible and spaces becoming visible are both part of a process that can aid in developing borderlands rhetorical tactics and strategies that describe and make meaning of individual and collective realities, especially those based on lived experiences.<sup>21</sup> As Lugones notes, a "crucial aspect of the streetwalker theorizing is to uncover, consider, learn, pass on knowledge of the multiple tools of tactical strategists in having deep spatio-temporal insight into the social" (225). More importantly, these insights from multiply-situated subjects can contribute to the refutation and revisioning of colonial histories that have obscured and silenced shared, and yet diverse, lived experiences and community knowledges. Narratives in zines provide insight into third-space practices, relationships, contested (material) histories, and discourses in their cultural contexts.

Naming practices and resignifications emerge as important to the reproduction of knowledges, the circulation of information, and the building of community. In *Pure Vamp*, Gretchen reflects on the name of her zine and her motivation for writing it. She, too, expresses a coalitional subjectivity stating that she wanted to "make it phor sistas, kinda nonboysnotantiboyz . . . I wanted it to relate to wimmin. I wanted it to represent what they think of us. Heartless, manipulating, deceiving. I wanted it to represent me. Vampires sucking the life outta u, kinda sounds like what we live thru everyday." She notes on this same page that "in an 11<sup>th</sup> grade classroom survey, when asked how Lady Macbeth is similar to a woman of the 90's majority of boys and one girl described her as being a heartless whore, manipulating, & deceiving." Gretchen's reflections on normativized representations of women in dominant contexts is one of resistance, resignification, and reclamation. She identifies the stereotypical depictions and misinterpretations of women within and beyond literary

contexts. She describes how it feels in the everyday to be associated with these depictions as a result of her gender and sexuality. Through a dissident performance she resignifies and subverts the notion of good girls or ladies as always and only virginal and passive. Borderlands rhetorics in zines such as this one function to identify, resist, and even disarticulate the social controls that are exerted through the production of norms and serve to subordinate, dominate, or otherwise exclude.

In *Alien*, [c r]apoll[a] #1, for example, the zine's creator, Witknee, explains why she chose the title of her zine, stating simply "i feel . . . very alienated." In a discursive and tactical move to interrupt and disarticulate the alienating components of the assembled mechanisms of power Witknee confronts, she notes:

to understand how ignorant and clueless my parents, i'll give you a small example: we were walking down the street and we walked past a homeless man and my dad turns to me and the step-monster saying they deserve to be homeless cos it's their fault they can't find a job and a place to stay. now it is quite ironic cos my dad was of the many people who support ronald mcgregan closing down all the mental institutions and leaving all the patients homeless. oh how i love america, and my dad too. (n.p.)

In this passage, Witknee describes the effects of the powerful norms that are produced through the articulated relationships between family, nation, patriarchy, government, mental institutions, and corporations. The sarcasm with which she ends this passage speaks to what she experiences as the absurd representation of America as a land of equal opportunity. It also demonstrates an understanding of the relationship, and relational practices, between nation and patriarchy. Her critique serves as a discursive interruption to the rhetoric of blame that is associated with those in poverty. Her reflections throughout this zine discursively disarticulate the connections that perpetuate systems, structures, and practices of entrenched and normalized inequality. What this passage reveals is that disarticulation is a process in which zines and zinesters engage in very savvy ways. Third-space consciousness informs this process that can begin to be identified in many zinesters' personal reflections as necessary to new articulations and proposed action.

*Alien*, no. 100, Witknee's second issue, includes "AN OPEN LETTER TO ALL MEN," in which she states that she is not "anti-man" but "pro-womyn" (n.p.). In this letter she succinctly details the ways patriarchal

practices pervade life. She discusses and deploys strategies of disarticulation through a critically engaged consciousness that moves her to question the taken-for-grantedness of patriarchy and androcentrism. She begins,

i live in ur world. i live in a society based on HE, HIS, MAN . . . i have always been taught to care what U think of ME (US); whether it by looks and/or actions. All of OUR magazines are centered around U—how U feel about our clothes, hair, weight, and even the way WE THINK. . . . i've been force fed UR HISTORY, UR philosophies, UR discoveries, and UR pleasures. UR WHITE MALE government controls OUR bodies, OUR choices, Our life. (n.p.)

In its questioning of dominance and the ill effects of a gendered, subordinating, and exclusionary history, this passage, too, reveals the process of disarticulation and its relationship to the development of a critical consciousness that is part of a pattern in many of the zines I studied. This process represents a vital component in practices of disarticulation. This questioning that resists normalized discourses, cultural practices, privilege, and entitlement is followed by a call to other zinesters to collaboratively uncover alternative representations of histories and knowledges. Resistance in zines comes into view through a politics of disarticulation and rearticulation that promotes and pursues a reimagined world based on a radical democratic politics and a community agenda of social justice. Zinesters sometimes begin the process of disarticulation through the investigation of their own privileges.

*fantastic fanzine: s is for sorry* is a zine out of Arlington, Virginia, written by erika. It begins with reflections about “systems of domination” and their implications for the local and the global (n.p.). erika identifies the politics of articulation as pursued through writing as a resistant and subversive act with community-building potential: “i feel like writing this stuff is something i can do that is really necessary if we want to bring all this ‘political shit’ together in a way that we can struggle for the end of domination on a global level but in our own lives too” (n.p.). She begins her reflections by commenting on Leonard Peltier, who was convicted for the murders of FBI agents due to his affiliation with and leadership of the American Indian Movement (AIM) and then continues with reflections on the implications and prevalence of (assumptions of) monogamy in heterosexual relationships. She follows these entries with reflections on a sex-positive approach and a redefined erotics that interrupt normative prescriptions for pleasure and any predetermined objects of desire. What appear to be at first glance random thoughts turn

out to be a savvy recognition of the ways norms and related dominant cultural practices are articulated to serve and reproduce what she identifies as a heteronormative social order that is exclusionary, divisive, and oppressive. She states for example that “lately i’ve been trying to weave things together and i use my own experiences to try and understand or actually explain things like colonization and CYCLES OF ABUSE. i know it’s not all the same but it’s all connected” (n.p.). Throughout her zine, erika identifies and disarticulates these disciplining cultural formations.<sup>22</sup> These zines together begin to constitute a spectrum that can broadly represent the principles and potentials of critical, third-space consciousness as intersectional and as necessarily informing coalitional work.

Throughout the zine, *HOW TO STAGE A COUP*, there is a generalized call to join a national “Refuse & Resist” action group (n.p.). The call is aimed at promoting a critical community literacy, and is made next to an insert from the group’s “Real World Dictionary.” This dictionary, itself promoting a kind of community literacy, defines “The War on Crime” by articulating it with a “New World Order” and “war on drugs” and offering alternative definitions for readers to consider, in their words:

1. A war on African-American and Latino communities and poor people in general (with a particular focus on criminalizing Black and Latino youth and scapegoating immigrants).
2. Deceptive phraseology used to promote the idea that problems in society are caused by “a lack of family values, mothers on welfare, day laborers on street corners, youth labeled gang members, and immigrants”; *blaming the victims of economic exploitation and racist oppression*, rather than Amerikkka’s white-supremacist, reactionary socioeconomic policies
3. Police-state measures designed to contain the fallout from continued exploitation and oppression of the people by the U.S. government *ex. a)* Clinton’s Crime Bill *b)* 3 strikes you’re out *c)* Boot camps for juvenile offenders *d)* 100,000 more cops *e)* Militarizing the border between the U.S. and Mexico *f)* 47 new death penalty crimes *g)* “Community-based” policing (police-based communities) *h)* “Constitutional” sweeps of public housing *i)* building new prisons *j)* Closed-circuit television/traffic signals. Don’t believe the hype! Join with Refuse & Resist and beat back this attack on the people. (n.p.)

The consistent use of the term “Amerikkka” is a form of code b(l)ending in that it deploys a discursive tactic recognized by many in marginalized

communities as a reminiscent of the fact that race continues to be an organizing principle in social hierarchies and power relations. In utilizing this nondominant code, this zine demonstrates a historic awareness and contextualization of the racism experienced in community contexts. This zine identifies other radical sites of resistance with which to build coalitions. It also exemplifies a Foucauldian understanding of the structures, systems, and apparatuses of social control. For example, on a page dedicated to ongoing struggles in East Timor, one zinester writes that the East Timorese “find small comfort in the pretense of U.N. support. (And why not? After all, it means a whole new market for their buddies in Big Business.)” (n.p.).

The border-crossing pursuits of new perspectives and new knowledges circulated to inform, educate, and call to action that I have outlined here are in keeping with Chris Atton’s proposal that alternative media (in this instance zines) have created new spaces for other voices that provide a focus for specific community interests as well as those that are contrary and subversive. My focus is on the participatory nature of these media and particularly how participation is imagined and reconfigured, as well as who is included and what is getting proposed, produced, addressed, and/or accomplished. Some zine articles exemplify multidimensional and creative borderlands rhetorics as rhetorics of resistance, coalition, community education, and activism. Others reflect critical borderlands rhetorics that propose new perspectives and speak the personal in order to enter into dialogue with a created (virtual) community, generate new knowledges, and pursue new articulations. Efforts at community education reveal the lived literacies I have identified and how they can be applied.

In *Queer Latinidad: Identity Practices, Discursive Spaces*, Juana María Rodríguez acknowledges the code switching that goes on in queered Latina spaces between quotidian language, or what she calls street vernacular, and political theoretical discourse. She invites us to “reimagine the practice of knowledge production” as it is undertaken in these contexts (3). Code switching blurs the boundaries between legitimate/illegitimate and proper/improper discourses that for many zinesters conjure third spaces both on the page and subsequently in the minds of readers. The reciprocal relationship that exists between borderlands rhetorics and third spaces as mutually constitutive can ultimately reveal a lived and valued community literacy that is characterized by remarkable practices and intricacies of code switching and creative code b(l)ending deployed by zinesters as community scribes to resist dominant power structures while also generating local and global discourses and knowledges as well as building community through affiliational practices.

### Code Switching and the Identification of One An-Other

So, if you really want to hurt me, talk badly about my language. . . . I am my language. Until I can take pride in my language, I cannot take pride in myself. . . . I will no longer be made to feel ashamed of existing. I will have my voice: Indian, Spanish, white. I will have my serpent’s tongue—my woman’s voice, my sexual voice, my poet’s voice. I will overcome the tradition of silence.

—Gloria Anzaldúa, “How to Tame a Wild Tongue,”  
*Borderlands/La Frontera* (81)

Code switching can be a change in language or in language in/formality within a given context. Code switching between English and Spanish is used in a zine titled *Calico*, #5 as a community-building and information-circulating tactic to call for volunteers to eliminate illiteracy. Issue 5 begins with “Listen Up! ¡Escuchan!” (9). In comic-like text bubbles affixed to a collage of 1950s-era black and white ad photos, a group of adult, white and seemingly middle-class men and women are made to ask and answer the question “How Does Illiteracy Affect Me?” (9). The responses to this question include statistics about the cost of illiteracy and its ill effects across a number of social locations and experiences, including poverty, crime, discrimination, interrupted productivity, and challenges to family and employment (see Figure 2.8).

This zine is deploying 1950s images that even today continue to circulate as the expression of modernity and progress as well as the representation of what it looks like and apparently means to be an American in order to disrupt the continued dominant assumptions of these representations. As J. Anthony Blair argues in “The Rhetoric of Visual Arguments,” in the same way that rhetorical arguments include enthymemes, so, too, do images as they also produce a kind of visual rhetorical argument, composed of missing parts or gaps, that call an audience to actively fill in those gaps. Blair’s visual enthymemes are rhetorical devices and strategies that are implicated in the disruptions of dominant social orderings that zines accomplish. By using visual representations of white middle-class men and women to question their own role in the presence and re-production of illiteracy and by identifying and articulating the multiple dimensions and related complexities of illiteracy as a community problem, the artificial divisions so often sustained in the name of (maintaining) a given social order are resisted. The action-oriented, coalition-building approach being performed here subverts these taken-for-granted and therefore normalized or naturalized divisions

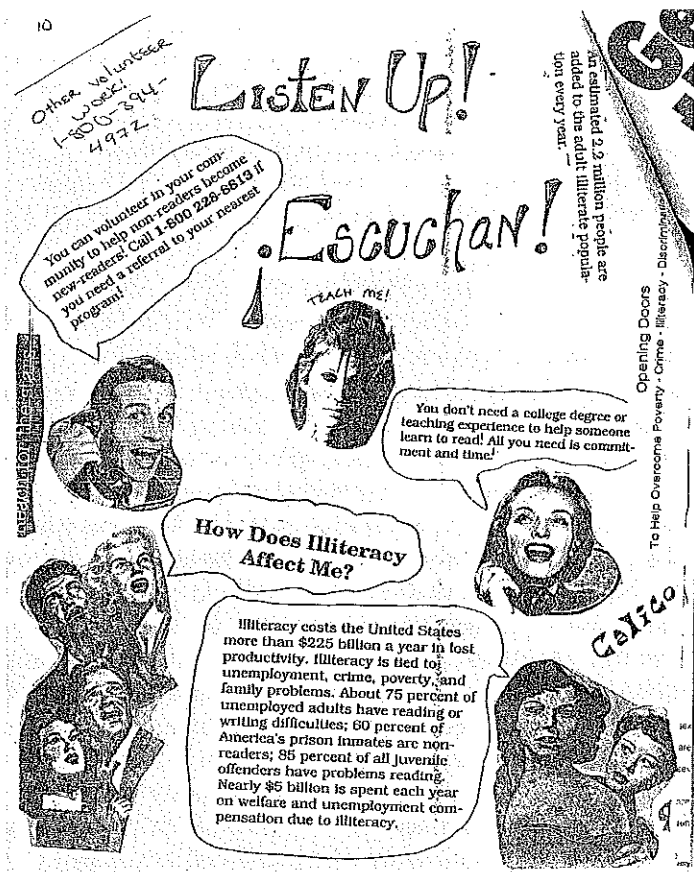


Figure 2.8. "Listen Up! ¡Escuchan!"—from *Calico*, #5

and potentially interrupts the ideology that illiteracy is a problem located solely on the individual; using the accessible aesthetics of zine culture, it presents illiteracy as a shared problem across lines of race, class, and gender that must be addressed through action on multiple political and cultural fronts.

Code switching as an act of solidarity, communication, and coalition is evident in a number of zines. It reveals an alternative, mixed discourse that can speak an ambiguity that resonates with third-space subjects. Third-space tactics and borderlands rhetorics are often comprised of code switching or bilingualism as a means of representing lived experiences and

thereby resisting the limits of dominant discourses. Code switching can be a change in language within a given context. Those who are able to follow and generate the same switched codes understand and are able to identify (with) one another. Code switching is identified in dominant contexts as illegitimate, impure, improper, and therefore invalid.<sup>23</sup> As a practice, code switching demonstrates a commitment to the value of lived experience and the validity and import of the (allegedly) impure in nondominant contexts.<sup>24</sup> The performed and discursive acts of resistance in the zine *¡Mamasita!*, *Issue One*, begin with an act of code switching as evident in both the zine's title and the grammatical markings that surround it: namely, the inverted exclamation point preceding the title is a visual cue that this zine emanates from and circulates within nondominant linguistic and cultural contexts because this exclamation point is regularly used in Spanish language texts but not in English language texts (see Figure 2.9).



Figure 2.9. "... YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO FIGHT ME FIRST"—from *¡Mamasita!*, *Issue One*, edited by Bianca Ortiz.



Third spaces are exposed and explored throughout this zine. Even the space between childhood and adulthood becomes a new space for questioning expertise and authority as potentially repressive. Issue 1 also questions the role of rules in artistic expression. To the zinesters at *¡Mamasita!*, rules express an authority that should be questioned as they limit and oppress imagination, expression, and (artistic) representation. In an unnumbered issue, one *¡Mamasita!* zinester questions the mainstream information that reproduces taken-for-granted assumptions in authorized spaces, such as dictionaries. She argues that normalized word pairings such as “big and stupid” and “skinny and pretty” are part of dichotomous discourse that reproduces hierarchy and inequity through (veiled) subordination (n.p.). This identification of discursive practices that sustain subordination and oppression is another borderlands rhetorical tactic that works as an implicit argument for third space produced by the subversion of false dichotomies. Throughout *¡Mamasita!* this strategy is used to reconsider dominant language practices as impositions of power that reproduce the status quo. In using this strategy of highlighting discursive practices that sustain false hierarchies and other third-space tactics, this zine begins to dismantle the imposed limitations to dichotomous and neatly oppositional and therefore subordinating dominant discourses.

*Bamboo Girl* also uses code switching and bilingualism as a coalitional strategy. In issue 8 it calls for an engaged activism with articulated Others. One entry is based on a political flyer that the author acquired at “the festival of resistance,” and it depicts a political slogan/logo naming the “coalición por los derechos humanos de los inmigrantes/coalition for human rights of immigrants” (55). Articles throughout this issue call for community action based on pursued coalitions and circulate information regarding community resources. Titles that reveal interventions into taken-for-granted assumptions, a commitment to grassroots literacies, and a call to coalitional action include “rally against street beat sweatshops,” “calling all asian brothers and sisters,” “working our world by painting it,” “Interview with Dr. Zieba Shorish-Shamley: Director of Women’s Alliance for Peace and Human Rights in Afghanistan (WAPHA),” (3) and “resource list for puerto rican political prisoners and prisoners of war” (26). Other titles that reflect this third space as both a location and as a practice are “the acculturation of Asiatic tattoos by non-asians” (18), “married & queer” (44), and “being ‘a person of color’ at rutgers freshman orientation” (75). *Bamboo Girl* reports on acts of injustice that identify shared oppressions and exclusions as experiences that can promote collective action. One such report is titled “southern justice prevails: black panther activist returned to solitary confinement” (27).

*Bamboo Girl #1* is written for “brown” women in pursuit of coalition across differences to challenge practices and notions of color-blindness and its ill effect of conflating difference with sameness.<sup>25</sup> Sandata begins her zine by using both English and Tagalog in her greeting. The borderlands rhetoric that follows defines her reasons for creating the zine, stating that she has “always been a little perturbed by the fact that nobody sees ethnic chics in the hardcore [punk] scene [but she knows] they exist, because [she’s] one of them. [She’s] a Filipina/Spanish/Irish mestiza of sorts [who has] always wanted to express [her] frustration toward racist assholes who think that the hardcore scene in the US belongs to the white middle-class boyz alone” (1). The goal is to break from the tyranny of the practices that zinesters have experienced as alienating over time. In the lives of many zinesters, these social networks even in subcultural contexts can be mechanisms of control and discipline that need to be subverted and reimagined.<sup>26</sup> Borderlands rhetorics resist and reveal the active obfuscation and exclusions Sandata discusses. This first issue of *Bamboo Girl* offers critical reflections on the lack of diversity and gender equity in punk and other subcultural contexts. Further evidence of a coalitional consciousness is revealed in an entry that chronicles the coalitional efforts of different community groups. The submissions throughout this zine exemplify the multidimensional and creative discursive approaches to resistance, coalition, community activism, and third-space representation.

In *i dreamed i was assertive #3* winter/spring 2000, Celia Perez begins with a bilingual introduction of her cover image of Frida Kahlo. She considers the different receptions/meanings Frida has on either side of the Mexico/U.S. border and concludes asking if people in the United States “know how much she disliked america?” In one entry, Celia questions why she feels that people don’t (want to) hear her. She describes having given her family a zine she wrote for them at Christmas in which she reflected on race, class, and family and her “feelings about living between worlds, as a first-generation American and as a quasi-middle class, college-educated person who spends most of her time among white people” (n.p.).<sup>27</sup> She later comments about having written about her feelings like an outsider among Latinos and whites and how those feelings seemingly offended her white father-in-law. Her writing leads her to reflect on the effects and experiences of color-blind racism. She notes the silencing effects she experienced in knowing that her father-in-law did not want her to write about being ill at ease particularly among whites:

I feel incredibly sad to be in this position. But at the same time  
I feel like, there you go, a prime example of what our society

is like. So many white “liberals” who turn away from reality, pretend things aren’t the way they are, because they don’t want to acknowledge their existence for fear of how these things will reflect on them. (n.p.)

She extends her concern with censorship from the realm of family to the public realm. She has a well-researched entry on housing zines at libraries and why she thinks housing them in public libraries is not often practiced. She draws on the works of Noam Chomsky, Chris Atton, and the Library Bill of Rights to argue for the need for non-mainstream perspectives and alternative literature to be collected and made available in our libraries. Noting that the aim of libraries is to “provide information, unbiased, democratically, free of charge, to all that enter its doors,” she argues that zines are in line with the very purpose of libraries. She also names the Civic Media Center’s Zine Library in Gainesville, Florida. Celia explicitly notes that the production of zines is not for “monetary gain” and therefore highlights the alternative consumption patterns and interests that are so often promoted in zines as they work to build coalitions that are not just about consumer culture and capitalist imperatives.

Several of Celia’s entries demonstrate an awareness of the articulated interests of nation, citizenship, and mainstream as well as popular media. After watching episodes of *Will & Grace* and *90210* about Latina maids marrying for their green cards, Celia decides to do some research. As yet another demonstration of the engagement in tactical and strategic maneuverings, her critical inquiries lead her to the *Yale Journal of Law and Feminism*, where she confirms her gut feeling about the instances and difficulties women have in obtaining green cards through “sham” marriages. She says immigration laws soothe a growing anti-immigrant sentiment, favor men, and hurt women, in particular, as women must remain married for two years before INS will accept the marriage as real. Her concern is for women who are made to endure subservience, violence, and vulnerability in order to become citizens. In those two years, Celia discovers, female immigrants are particularly vulnerable to abuse and threats (n.p.).<sup>28</sup>

Believing that women learn from women’s lives and valuing lived knowledges, the zinester who creates *Women’s Self Defense: Stories & Strategies of Survival* states these goals: to “give women more options to choose from when using self-defense by sharing a diverse range of strategies successfully used by women in real life situations . . . [and to] break the stigma around sexual harassment and assault so that we can talk about it, take action, and overcome it” (4). The significance of this zine is in its valuing of

women’s individual stories of sexual assault and harassment. As tactics of third space, the reproduction of these stories validates individual experiences and authorizes the telling of these experiences as informative. Moreover, it empowers women to discuss their survival skills and strategies, thereby validating lived experience as a valued way of knowing. It also recognizes the value of naming experiences and sharing stories of survival in the recovery and healing process for victims of sexual violence.

In *Gift Idea, 1 & ½*, seanna reflects on the potential for a more just world. One entry reveals her imagination at play as she wishes “they’d come out with a tang instant social consciousness juice powder that everyone could drink” (7). She acknowledges that social transformation takes time and coalitional effort. As an act of community education and an effort to promote community literacy, she includes a glossary at the end of her zine because “there just seems to be so much vocabulary that’s very important and last year i didn’t really have an idea of what these words mean! so it would be assy for me to just use them and not define them” (11). seanna has included her own neologisms as well as definitions for concepts such as “oppression, imperialism, colonialism, critique, dialogue, institution or ‘institutionalized,’ and privilege” (11).

Borderlands rhetorical practices subvert exclusionary practices and boundaries that keep information and knowledge inaccessible. Zines, as third-space sites, often question the authorized and expert, especially in terms of knowledge production.<sup>29</sup> This is a third-space and borderlands rhetorical practice. The zine *Gift Idea* works to consciously reimagine and reconfigure community and community agendas that value accessibility of information based primarily on lived experiences. Throughout, it focuses on community practices and agendas that are attentive to difference and that consciously resist the conflation of differences for political expediency.

Another zine titled *Heresies* demonstrates one end of the diverse spectrum of sophistication in terms of presentation and production. It is a more polished, self-described feminist publication that is funded, in part, by the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. Issue 20’s cover is a list of words that include examples of bilingual code switching. The words lead up to the title of the zine and appear to reveal the motivation for readers and writers of zines such as *Mamasita!* as well as “activists, organizers, progressives, heroines, visionaries, witnesses, pacifists, sisters, compañeras, agitators, radicals, leftwingers, dissidents, firebrands, revolutionaries, subversives, provocateurs, yellow-bellies, bleeding hearts, big mouths, bra burners, castrating bitches, commie sluts, pinko dykes” (*Heresies* cover). On the inside cover there is a space, “**Help!**” where

a call to feminists for help with production is made. The introductory comments on the inside cover define those who work on and for *Heresies* as women who

are aware that historically the connections between our lives, our arts, and our ideas have been suppressed. Once these connections can be clarified, they can function as a means to dissolve the alienation between artist and audience, and to understand the relationship between art and politics, work and workers. As a step toward the demystification of art, we reject the standard relationship of criticism to art within the present system which has often become the relationship of advertiser to product . . . we feel that in the process of this dialogue we can foster change in the meaning of art. (1)

This relatively well-funded zine and its introductory statement manifest the coalitional consciousness and practices of resistance that are being rehearsed, performed, and imagined in zines such as *Mamasita!* to inform the politics of articulation. *Heresies*, issue 20 includes contributors as well-known as Barbara Kingsolver and Ronnie Gilbert. It includes a questionnaire with responses from a wide range of feminist activists. Questions probe the process of self-identifying as an activist, the defining moments, motivations, and models for becoming an activist, the intersections of difference in activism for activist Others, and the contradictions inherent in activism. Offering insight from within, there is an understanding among many of the respondents that zinesters are considered everyday activists. Ronnie Gilbert concludes her questionnaire with reflections on the everyday activist:

I worry when "activists" are lionized that people will say, Oh, that is such an extraordinary person—look at all she does—she must be some kind of Superwoman. We all want models and examples to inspire us. But it seems to me that the single mother who campaigns for daycare is the activist, the woman who works for battered women, the ex-battered woman who turns her experience into a teaching project for school children, the precinct worker, leafletter, petition circulator, the person who supports with letters and money and/or her physical presence the fight for reproductive rights or divestment from South Africa, who opens her doors or her church's to Central American refugees, who takes whatever small but firm bites out of her small or large resources to end

religious, racial or political persecution ANYWHERE, and she who gives of some part of herself to prevent nuclear disaster—she is where the action is. (Volume 5, #4)

This description of the everyday activists demystifies and makes an activist identity accessible. Importantly, this profile not only emphasizes the everyday activist but the relational potential that resides in everyday coalitions.

Finally, and as a representation of the reality of the struggles for feminist activists, this issue includes a photograph of an anonymous man wearing a T-shirt that reads "NUKE THE BITCHES" at the Women's Peace Encampment. The idea that a man wearing this T-shirt would situate himself at the Women's Peace Encampment is representative of the lived threat of violent male domination. The photographic representation of this threat reveals its materiality and its prevalence in the world. These threats are manifested across a number of contexts in the everyday. Girls and women throughout these zines are actively and collectively resisting very real threats to their emotional, psychic, physical, and sexual well-beings. Such zines work to disarticulate identified modalities of control as well as to interrupt and reconfigure networks of power relationships. Within the subset of publications I have concentrated on in this chapter, zinesters' common goal—often stated explicitly—is to break from the tyranny of alienating practices and the power of normativizing discourses. The articulated formations explored in these zines are mechanisms of control and discipline. Zinesters often disarticulate these connections, rearticulating them in third-space coalitional or community contexts where, after critical engagement and reflection, they take on new meanings.

### Academic and Nonacademic Third-Space Sites of The Politics and Practices of Articulation

Zines materialize and reflect borderlands rhetorics through the languages of resistance, opposition, and, most importantly, coalition. They generate knowledge and provide alternative sources of information. They can be theoretically sophisticated, productive, and informed while also being accessible and thereby promoting community literacies. As demonstrated here, zinesters as third-space subjects are tactically and strategically practicing and performing third-space theory and also performing coalitional subjectivities, building community, and sharing knowledge across the seemingly impervious boundaries and borders of race, class, color, gender, sexuality, education,

and ability. Zinesters' resistance is routinely undertaken to reimagine and re-present new ways of relating with similarly interested people, distributing information, and generating knowledge. In creating spaces within which to produce and exchange these perspectives, a community of engaged participants from differing social locations and lived experiences come together to inform one another about different ways of being in solidarity around shared values and issues that are both local and global.

Zines gestate and circulate in myriad acts of resistance toward social transformation. The tactics of the very reproduction of zines are often illegitimate and unauthorized. Zines are often reproduced subversively, on company time and with company resources. Office copy machines are often the unauthorized tools of reproduction. These tactics of reproduction are not themselves transformational, but the potential for countercultural resistance and transformation can be found in the consciousness-raising, knowledge-generating, information-disseminating, and community-building action in zines. In constituting communities, zines are third-space sites for the production of knowledges and outlets for the dissemination of information. Zines are also spaces of reconfigured community. Zinesters, as third-space subjects, resist myriad mechanisms of social controls to imagine and to construct third-space alliances pursued in the name of antiracist and socially just agendas.

My purpose throughout this project has been to make visible the third-space sites and subjectivities of (discursive) resistance undertaken for the purpose of producing meaningful and relevant knowledges, practices, and relations that first imagine and then reconstruct, promote, and represent antiracist agendas and models of social justice and egalitarian social discourses. Social spaces are sites of identity construction and coalition that can highlight the ways that identities are based on "performances of social actors operating in and through these spaces" (Massey 43). I am arguing that the practices of articulation performed in zines are a community-building tool of meaning making that can inform coalitional work as it is undertaken to pursue a socially progressive agenda that, in turn, implicates egalitarian social relations, antiracist agendas, and social justice using spatialized terms; coalitional practices develop in the realm of third space as a consequence. Third space is identified from within academic and nonacademic contexts. This suggests to me that a dialogue can and should occur across such contexts to activate the potential of borderlands rhetorics to build relationships and understanding as well as to produce knowledges and new practices that have the potential to subvert norms and transcend exclusionary and dominating divisions.

In yet another spatialized reference, the artist of the cover for the zine, *Borderlands: It's a family affair #2*, uses two profiled faces to take up the borders of the left and right edges of the title page (front and back cover of the zine). The faces are looking directly at one another and between them are photographs of different people, including one couple that has been posed to appear heterosexual and therefore represent normative sexuality. The caption reads "TITLE: Hermanas ARTIST STATEMENT: In relation to the theme: FAMILY, This piece is about bonding not by blood but by experiences. I grew up mostly in white spaces on the west coast of the U.S. and because of this, the birth of my brownness came much later in my life. During the budding knowledge of my race identity, I had and have a beautiful friend and hermana to share it with. Gracias por todo Michelle. by Luisa" (back cover). There are myriad such references to space as an important component in the process of coming to understand oneself through one's lived history. This process is often contextualized in space that is understood as contested, racialized, and (in need of being) politicized.

Zines as third-space sites are sometimes explicitly addressed in spatial terms as a "home" of sorts. Specifically, in *Memoirs of a Queer Hapa*, jackie writes that zines "provide a place where subjugated knowledges and self-representations can be produced. It is possible that exclusion from both dominant and minority groups has led outsiders of varying backgrounds to construct a 'home' on the hotly contested middle ground of racial and sexual identities" (12). When I write of borderlands rhetorics and third-space contexts as spatialized, I am referring to this notion of creating space through an act of imagined, lived, and discursive transcendence of binaries, oppositional dualisms, and false dichotomies. The representations from this third space are accomplished through borderlands rhetorics that, themselves, are not only produced from but also productive of third space. Such an instantiation of the recursive relationship between third-space sites and subjectivities is what I am arguing for in this project. My understanding of these lived realities as spatialized experiences comes first from my own understanding of what it meant for me to grow up in a mixed-race home on the U.S./Mexico border. Not only can we read zines as third-space sites but we must also understand them as locations where zinesters' efforts at re-spatialization are an expressed opportunity for re-politicization often also expressed as a pursuit of social change and coalition that is contextualized by lived, material circumstances and experiences.<sup>30</sup>

The practice of articulation is the contingent, non-necessary connection among discourses, social forces, and social actants or groups. My understanding of articulation and articulatory practices is predicated on

the nonessential self as a multiply-situated subject informed by ambiguity and even contradiction. The discursive formations that are constitutive elements of these subject positions are reflected through the borderlands rhetorics that are relational rhetorics insofar as they reveal the potential for connectivity through a third-space consciousness. The connection between intersectionality and articulation is, itself, relational; that is to say, multiply-situated subjects are situated such that we are able to use our positionalities to theorize and to achieve the potential of what Mouffe refers to as the “multiplicity of relations of subordination” (535). However, the relational potential of these positionings are not ever guaranteed and are not permanent.

These notions of a relational elsewhere and of the newness it can imply are important in understanding the potential of coalitions under specific conditions. “Elsewhere,” for me, is related to third space or what Haraway sometimes also refers to as a “common place.” Third space is a common space that is about public culture, something that the rhetorical arts have long been attentive to. Haraway states that the common place or public culture has many houses with many inhabitants, suggesting that the potential points of articulation are many and unpredictable (297). The articulation of Haraway’s notion of situated knowledges to the understanding of coalition that zinesters demonstrate can inform a deeper understanding of the politics and practices of articulations assembled across different locations and relations. Ultimately, Haraway argues that we are all in liminal areas where new configurations and new kinds of action and responsibility are gestating in the world (314). While I do not agree that all material circumstances are lived or experienced as liminal, I am interested in borderlands spaces that are experienced as liminal and are consciously engaged to reveal new ways of understanding, being, relating, and acting in the world. As I see it, third space always emerges out of articulations to become the material context for yet more articulations.

Thinking in terms of praxis, articulation theory—when followed by articulation politics—can result in a gyre that serves to produce linkages that resist normalizing and hegemonic ideologies. Of course, key to all work in articulation theory and politics is the understanding that connections can be changed and reorganized—though this is not always a simple matter. Practices of disarticulation and rearticulation imply that work that can fail is never absolute, guaranteed, or permanent. This inevitability of connective vulnerability and even breakage is an integral component of articulation theory and practice.

Next, I briefly turn to examples of the politics of articulation at play in academic contexts. Here, I identify practices I’ve identified in zines that

include disarticulations and rearticulations undertaken first to interrupt taken-for-granted knowledge systems and (academic) connections and then forged to make new connections in order to perform and represent new imaginings and produce new knowledges.

The crossing of borders of differing knowledge systems represents manifest resistance to the academic apartheid that Chela Sandoval describes as reductive, divisive, and exclusionary (2000). These interdisciplinary academic border crossings reveal a practiced politics of dis- and re-articulation and offer a revitalized approach to the transformative potential of interdisciplinary academics and activism. These cross-disciplinary, third-space practices have the potential to generate new perspectives and new knowledges that are represented by borderlands rhetorics. As illustrated, for example, in the works of Susan Bordo, Yolanda Leyva, Emma Pérez, and Juana María Rodríguez, academic border crossings are generative acts of resistance to imposed disciplinary orderings that divide the scientific, social, sexual, historic, personal, and/or cultural. The works of these scholars can be considered third-space work rhetorically represented by bringing together two or more academic disciplines.<sup>31</sup> Several of the activist of-color zines that I studied had editors who went on to pursue activist work and engage in the politics of articulation from more formal, institutional locations. Zinesters, as has been noted, may be found in the academy and the public library system, where their community and coalitional work and perspectives strategically inform new ways of doing things in dominant contexts. Mimi Nguyen’s academic research, for example, demonstrates transdisciplinary interests as creative articulatory practices that bring together “transnational feminist cultural studies; science and technology studies; fashion, citizenship and transnationality; and Asian American, queer, and punk subcultures.”<sup>32</sup> Celia Perez, meanwhile, is a public librarian who continues to work to include paper zines in library collections and circulations because she believes that such periodicals represent alternatives that should be accessible to others looking to engage in new, critical, and creative community and academic practices as well as to document locally relevant practices.

Zines are examples of the politics of articulation at play, particularly as they reveal the potential for social transformation through disruptive discursive acts, dissident performances, and articulations that effect new social, cultural, political, economic, and sexual configurations. Importantly, zines reveal articulatory practices and potentials while also suggesting the potential for constant subversion of these practices. They provide us with a visualized manifestation of struggles against subordination. I agree with Stephen Duncombe who identifies in them “the seeds of a different possibility: a novel form of communication and creation that burst with

an angry idealism and a fierce devotion to democratic expression" (228). This democratic expression is connected to a politics of articulation as it reveals the potential to be disruptive and also coalitional, participatory, and inclusive. The practices of articulation revealed in this chapter provide evidence of coalitional consciousness in activist efforts at community building, knowledge generation, and information sharing. The examples in this chapter offer recipes for resistance to exclusionary, divisive, and subordinating practices and discourses. I highlight the ways in which the practices and politics of articulation serve to imagine and propose communities in order to resist myriad forms of oppression, to reeducate, inform, and re-present one another, and to practice a radical, countercultural, and coalitional democracies.

Resistance in zines comes into view through a politics of dis- and re-articulation. Disarticulations interrupt, even dismantle, the taken-for-grantedness of normativities as well as networks and relationships of control. As countercultural third-space sites, zines offer fertile ground for exploration of the transformative tactics and goals of reconfigured and reimagined coalitions. Practices and politics of articulation are reconfiguring third-space sites and (discursive) practices in pursuit of a transformative agenda.

Zines are third spaces of disarticulations and rearticulations, resistance, and antagonism. Borderlands rhetorics are deployed in these reconfigured collectivities to reimagine and re-present new and old knowledges that inform the coalitional politics of rereading, rewriting, and re-presenting in the everyday. The borderlands rhetorical practices and performances of zines demonstrate resistance to dominant mis/representations. They demonstrate not only new representational strategies but also new reading and interpretation strategies that have implications for the production of local, relevant knowledges and for literacy studies.

## Embodied Intersections

### Reconsidering Subject Formation beyond Binary Borders

We can only start from where we are—beings who have been created in a cruelly racist, capitalist, and male-dominated society that has shaped our bodies and our minds, our perceptions, our values and our emotions, our language and our systems of knowledge.

—Alison M. Jaggar, "Love and Knowledge"

In her influential essay "Love and Knowledge: Emotion in Feminist Epistemology," Alison Jaggar calls for the articulation of emotion to theorizing. She argues that emotion is an important part of the production of knowledge and is therefore implicated in all knowledge claims. Rather than deny or suppress emotion's role in the production of knowledge, she suggests emotion can be a tool of coalition and can therefore aid emancipatory practices. Similarly, in her chapter titled "Anguished Past, Troubled Present," Edén Torres argues that we, Chicanas, "must make good use of our pain, memory, and rage" in order for us not only to heal but to build lasting coalitions for social change (46). Zinesters are working to integrate emotion into their knowledge claims and practices in order to engage holistically and in coalition for social change. Embodied knowledges, embodied resistances, and representations of the body in third-space contexts reveal much about multiply-situated, relational, coalitional, and corporeal subjectivity.<sup>1</sup> In my efforts to identify practices, and explore the potentials of reweaving or rearticulating the mind-body dualism as a third-space tactic, I look to the role of emotions, specifically anger and also love, in articulatory