

**Anzaldúa, Gloria and Cherríe Moraga. *This Bridge Called My Back. Writings by Radical Women of Color.* Kitchen Table Press: 1981.**

“We were born into colored homes. We grew up with the inherent contradictions in the color spectrum right inside those homes: the lighter sister, the mixed-blood cousin, being the darkest one in the family. It doesn't make many years to realize the privileges, or lack thereof, attached to a particular shade of skin or texture of hair. It is this experience that moves light-skinned or “passable” Third World Women to put ourselves on the line for our darkest sisters. We are all family. From those families we were on the one hand encouraged to leave, to climb up White. And with the other hand, the reins were held tight on us, our parents understanding the danger that bordered our homes.

We learned to live with these contradictions. This is the root of our radicalism”. (5)

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**Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands/La Frontera. The New Mestiza.* Aunt Lute Books.**

“By creating a new mythos - that is, a change in the way we perceive reality, the way we see ourselves, and the ways we behave - la mestiza creates a new consciousness. The work of mestiza consciousness is to break down the subject/object duality that keeps her prisoner and to show in the flesh and through the images in her work how duality is transcended. The answer to the problem between the white race and the colored, between males and females, lies in healing the split that originates in the very foundation of our lives, our culture, our languages, our thoughts. A massive uprooting of dualistic thinking in the individual and collective consciousness is the beginning of a long struggle, but one that could, in our best hopes, bring us to the end of rape, of violence, of war.”

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**Lorde, Audre. "Scratching the Surface: Some Notes on Barriers to Woman and Loving." *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches.* Freedom, CA: Crossing Press, 1984. 45-52.**

Today the red-herring of lesbian-baiting is being used in the Black community to obscure the true face of racism/sexism. Black women sharing close ties with each other, politically or emotionally, are not the enemies of Black men. Too frequently, however, some Black men attempt to rule by fear those Black women who are more ally than enemy. These tactics are expressed as threats of emotional rejection: "Their poetry wasn't too bad but I couldn't take all those lezzies." The Black man saying this is code-warning every Black woman present interested in a relationship with a man--and most Black women are--that (1) if she wishes to have her work considered by him she must eschew any other allegiance except to him and

(2) any woman who wishes to retain his friendship and/or support had better not be "tainted" by woman-identified interests. . . .

All too often the message comes loud and clear to Black women from Black men: "I am the only prize worth having and there are not too many of me, and remember, I can always go elsewhere. So if you want me, you'd better stay in your place which is away from one another, or I will call you 'lesbian' and wipe you out." Black women are programmed to define ourselves within this male attention and to compete with each other for it rather than to recognize and move upon our common interests.

The tactic of encouraging horizontal hostility to becloud more pressing issues of oppression is by no means new, nor limited to relations between women. The same tactic is used to encourage separation between Black women and Black men. In discussions around the hiring and firing of Black faculty at universities, the charge is frequently heard that Black women are more easily hired than are Black men. For this reason, Black women's problems of promotion and tenure are not to be considered important since they are only "taking jobs away from Black men." Here again, energy is being wasted on fighting each other over the pitifully few crumbs allowed us rather than being used, in a joining of forces to fight for a more realistic ratio of Black faculty. The latter would be a vertical battle against racist policies of the academic structure itself, one which could result in real power and change. It is the structure at the top which desires changelessness and which profits from these apparently endless kitchen wars.

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### **On Women of Color**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=82v134mi4Iw>**