

Ectopic: Autohistoria-teoría

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I sleep across from a bookshelf of mothers. Keen mothers, queer mothers. Mothers eclipsed by infants, crafting presence in words. Mothers of an intimate genre, who lay bare the personal on pages that invite communion. Reading the mothers of autohistoria, I bear the waiting.

The lineage of self-theorizers is made of “teller[s], knower[s], and listener[s] simultaneously.”¹ “For years,” bell hooks reflects, “I was hesitant to share personal stories. I had been trained to believe that anyone who relied on a personal story as evidence upholding or affirming an idea could never really be a scholar.”² Personal story, autohistoria-teoría shows us, is knowledge. “Chicana feminist writers are equally observers/ethnographers/cartohistographers and witnesses to their own lives. Their personal testimonios break the barrier between subject of study and exposing their own lives to document their subjectivities.”³ The cycle of self-reflection, theorization, and re-building shapes the voices that brace my own story. Testimonio provides textual community, validates the pain often swallowed. Their words give me permission to hurt, and to show it.

I propose a methodology of tears. “I want to write of the pain I am feeling right now, of the lukewarm tears that will not stop coming into my eyes.”⁴ Her pain is not my pain; her loss and exhaustion are her own. But her suffering made textual crosses decades, contexts, and bodies,

and invites me too to weep and speak. There is comfort in externalizing pain: “You’ll see, ya verás, there’s solace in tears.”⁵ Not only solace; there’s knowledge in tears. “We are called to learn from our senses, from our feeling states, and find their ways of knowing. If we allow for the possibility of tears, then an insurrection of subjugated knowledge may occur.”⁶ What might happen if I let myself fully feel it?

Anzaldúa knows the wisdom of the body, the stakes of autohistoria: “(the body, too, is a form as well as a site of creativity). Through creative engagements, you embed your experiences in a larger frame of reference, connecting your personal struggles with those of other beings on the planet.”⁷ Collectives are possible through creativity, through the articulation of embodied experience. We do not write alone, but in collaboration with generations of voices and texts.⁸ Cristina Rivera Garza, through her concept of disappropriation, frames writing as an inherently communal endeavor. Through language, we collectively belong to one another.

When accounting for my positionality in relationship to my research, I acknowledge how much I cannot understand, how much I have not lived through. I step aside. This allows me, I realize, to keep my body at a distance, even as I write about physical acts of protest and connection. I’m careful to examine my potential complicity, but in decentering myself, I avoid exposure.

“Conversation is always about giving.”⁹ In my teaching, I practice a pedagogy of generosity. This means not asking students to take risks that I am not willing to take alongside them. “I could not be merely a spectator.”¹⁰ Conditioned to perform competence at all times, the sharing of self and struggle that creates more dynamic, honest learning spaces does not always come

naturally. I commit to vulnerability in the classroom because I can see how students soften, grow, and imagine new trajectories for themselves when they perceive me, too, as a human in a process of becoming. What would it look like to extend this same authenticity to the rest of my life? The mothers of autohistoria have shown us the way. In writing, as in teaching, the sharing of struggle offers an opening, a reshaping of academic space to reveal our overlapping wounds.

No one told me it would hurt so much. “Entering our wounds means vulnerability, but to stay in the wound as victim is to allow desconocimiento, a negative energy that is disempowering because it does not move towards transformation.”¹¹ Am I ready to unravel? “This reluctance is a reluctance to deal with myself, with my own experiences and the feelings buried in them, and the conclusions to be drawn from them.”¹² Touch the bruise. Dive into the *cenote*.

“I am trying to write about the impossible, the ordinary beginning of one life.”¹³ The routine miraculous, the out-of-reach everyday. My due date was November 7. I should be at home, delirious and learning. Learning how to keep a new human alive, how to coax nourishment out of my breasts, how to care for my changed body. I should be adapting to new rhythms. I should be falling in love with cowlicks and toes, fumbling over pump parts and swaddles. I should be learning about “the mundane world of sleepless nights, ear infections, and petty arguments...hallmarked by the ordinary...the indoor world of domestic bliss and blame.”¹⁴

I’ve longed for parenthood for years, and have often felt that yearning to be incompatible with my academic life. I know the costs. I’ve read about “the lost lifetime income a woman can expect by becoming a mother.”¹⁵ I know that despite improvements in family leave policies,

“scholarly life in the United States is still a deeply masculinist culture; there is a continued expectation that professors are not the primary caregivers to their children.”¹⁶ Knowing the facts has not diminished my desire.

I see the scholar-mothers scrambling, energies divided across perpetually incomplete tasks. “I can’t even get my teeth brushed some days...I no longer ever have any free hands.”¹⁷ “[S]he fears she is destined to be a mediocre scholar and a mediocre mother, never able to fully dedicate herself to either role.”¹⁸ I want that imbalance. I would give up a lifetime of prestige and quiet evenings. “Time with children runs through our fingers like water as we lift our hands.”¹⁹ I would give anything to have my tidy schedule upended.

With no men or desire for men in the picture, it was a medicalized project from the beginning. I became a medicalized project. It started with crinkling exam paper, with weighing my body, with bloodwork and bills, with the warped online dating of scrolling through sperm donors. It started years ago, when, in a new city and on a one-year postdoc, I decided to pursue solo parenthood. “[T]he muteness of the desire stood in inverse proportion to its size.”²⁰ I drove alone through six-lane traffic to consult with a reproductive endocrinologist. I worked for months through the clinic’s prerequisites, submitted to physical and psychological evaluations, read the books on parenting alone, drafted my will, attended solo-mom meetups with well-dressed older women and their jammy toddlers, picked up a crib free on craigslist.

When I visited my closest friend, she declined to look at my short list of donors. She confided, wincing, that she didn’t think I was ready. I’m grateful for her honesty. It was true: I could not

begin to afford childcare in DC. “You will need every resource.”²¹ I grieved, recognizing that I did not yet have the financial stability or support network that my child deserved. I packed up the crib. I carried it across the country when I got the tenure-track job. Four years later, my life is transformed. Did I wait too long?

I feel fragile, so invested in an uncertain outcome. “I am afraid to want this baby and be unable to have it.”²² My wanting runs deeper than my fear. Others write of losing themselves into early motherhood. “It is uncomfortably close to self-erasure.”²³ I’ve lost myself into the yearning, the preamble. The precarity of trying was always a gamble, but I thought it would work. I thought that the years that I spent waiting, shoring up favors and dollars, banking stability, would somehow grant me a simple conception.

Instead, Texas surprised me with partnership, with a treasured head of brown curls in my kitchen, stirring curry. Waves of oxytocin sweep through my chest, just thinking about her. She witnesses without fixing, holds my tears without flinching. “‘I’m going to do this,’ I told her. ‘Will you go there with me?’”²⁴ I found myself waiting not only on my stability, but also on her readiness. It was never her dream. She doesn’t understand my bodily need. And, as she’s said, she has love to give. She will go there with me.

Four months of failed IUIs, or intrauterine inseminations, carved my life into two-week intervals of hope and loss, into a pendulum of hormonal side-effects. Every cycle depleted me absolutely. I resorted to consulting an Etsy psychic. I ordered protective crystals. I lit *velas*. I prayed.

In February, my doctor called in the middle of a zoom meeting to let me know I was pregnant. I floated for two weeks with an ecstatic naivete I'll never know again. "I really had no idea what I was getting into."²⁵ I pre-paid for nine months of pre-natal yoga, unaware of how much of a statement of faith in my body I was making. I signed up for a tracking app, inadvertently also enrolling in months of targeted advertising. I ordered maternity leggings. I talked to the spark inside of me. Breathing deep, hands on my belly, I promised to keep them safe. "I worry over what I hold. I want perfection. Each day, I pray another perfect cell to form. A million of them."²⁶

My clinic's online message informing me that my hCG, or pregnancy hormone levels, had failed to double brought me to my knees. My screams of "No!" left the dogs cowering.

It was worse than I thought. A fertilized bundle of cells got it wrong, implanting in my fallopian tube and thus threatening my life. Brutal winds lifted the West Texas dirt, obliterating the sky as we blundered into the pharmacy. Grains in my eyes, blood pulsed in my ears.

After the methotrexate injections killed the fetal tissue, I had blood tests every other day, until I was clear of rupture. I startled a couple in the lab's waiting room when they lifted their newborn from her carrier. Her presence stopped my breath. I cried out involuntarily while invisibly bleeding through another pad. My veins eluded the needles: two, three, four stabs to get a sample. Now blood draws bring on panic attacks, take me back to those bereft days.

The heavy bleeding, followed by infection, doubled me over for weeks. My insides were altered, out of place. The word ectopic comes from modern Latin's ectopia, "a morbid displacement of parts," derived originally from Greek's ektopos, "away from a place, distant, foreign, strange." I've been tired and grieving, overly medicated and distant, foreign, and estranged from my body and community for a long time.

No one could see the fist clenching my abdomen. I told very few people, finding the act of divulging and the pressure to educate draining. I showered and dressed. I showed up to meetings. "I handle the outward motions of each day while pain fills me like a pus-pocket and every touch threatens to breach the taut membrane that keeps it from flowing through and poisoning my whole existence."²⁷ The pretending was exhausting.

"This, too, will pass."²⁸ If my pain fades, who will remember this life that wasn't? The loss, for me, was a death. I would never argue for a fetus' personhood rights. And, to me, the spark of cells was someone. Someone I will never serve pancakes to on a lazy Saturday or chase across a park. Someone who will never grow molars or throw a tantrum or laugh. Someone I will never hold. Someone whose startling individuality I will never know. Someone who never existed, who I loved. I lost not only their future, but also who I would have become, transformed by them.

We entered a new territory of treatments. I learned how to bruise. I continued to wait. Where is the lesson, in all this waiting? I learned the balance between ice and heat to ease intramuscular injections. I learned new terrains of fatigue. "It is a residual exhaustion, the culmination of a full year and half of endless work and worry."²⁹

“I don’t feel like being strong, but do I have a choice?...I want to write rage but all that comes is sadness. We have been sad long enough to make this earth either weep or grow fertile.”³⁰ Giving up on trying would be more devastating than continuing; both require a strength I don’t know that I have. “We are all stronger than we think we are when put to a task.”³¹

If I wanted it enough, I thought, I would control myself better. I believed I could discipline my body into conceiving. “Capitalism has prompted us to dream of an ideal individual who can be or is in control of everything.”³² I thought that I could fix the project of my body, that I could regulate (or spend) myself into a solution. I participated in a study on polycystic ovarian syndrome, adopting what my partner not so affectionately dubbed the cauliflower diet. The declining numbers on the scale woke up disordered adolescent habits, but instead of my desirability at stake, it was my maternity. I gave up caffeine and alcohol. When I failed to eliminate sugar, every bite meant surrendering my dream. Self-blame allowed an illusion of control. I attended webinars on the impacts of stress. I laid in bed worrying about the toxic effects of cortisol levels on conception. I started acupuncture. “I want to control the tale. I can’t—therein lies the conflict that drives this plot in the first place. I have to trust this body—a thing inherently bound to betray me, an unreliable conveyance.”³³ I bought a larger pill case to accommodate my weekly supplements. If any capsule could deliver, I would swallow it. I read research on paraben and phthalate exposure, anxious that every dab of lotion or plastic carry-out container would lead to a childless life.

Effort does not equal outcome. The mythology of meritocracy is hard to unlearn. I cannot earn my way into motherhood.

I filled a sharps container. I learned to surrender every imagined timeline. I gave up the calculus of nine-month chunks, no longer counting on fingers to envision how to fit teaching assignments into my child's arrival. When I was first pregnant, I plotted out the weekly development in my calendar. I went back and crossed out the milestones with a sharpie, nine months of black gaps that reminded me of the futility of planning.

I have new scars, still tender, from where they cut through my core to clear out scar tissue, polyps, a toxic interior. I had no intuition of the endometrial wreckage inside of me. "I feel my body a stranger."³⁴ My body is foreign, waist thickened from cycle after cycle of fertility drugs, jaw locked, back humped. And still, my body has shown up for me gloriously. My skin yielded to needle after needle. In a single month, my ovaries fattened twenty eggs. "I'm going to have an awards banquet for my body when all of this is over."³⁵ I'm grateful for all that my flesh has carried me through, and at the same time, I feel fractured. Over and over, my closest ally betrays me. "I propose that we learn to embrace our own fractures, shatterings, vulnerability."³⁶

Who embraces us as we fracture? In community, we hold each other. Feminist collectives are not theoretical. They are the embodied commitments of those invested in one another's survival and comfort. Audre Lorde recognizes the support that sustained her through cancer: "Perhaps I can say this all more simply; I say the love of women healed me."³⁷ In her fictional autobioethnography, Norma Cantú reveals a network that extends beyond the nuclear: "Tres

mujeres. Vecinas. Comadres. Three women. Neighbors... The three comadres sharing worries, joys... Sharing chismes, dreams, gossip, advising each other.”³⁸ The comadres’ expansive kinship shows us solidarity as lived intimacy, love as a continual practice of mutual caretaking: “The three look at the camera with laughing eyes, hair blowing in the wind, their solidarity palpable as their love for each other.”³⁹ Their community model of care contrasts with the loneliness of many contemporary family units, surviving in isolation with communities scattered across vast geographies. Who embraces me as I shatter?

In my research, I celebrate collaboration, embodiment, solidarity, and an anti-capitalist ethics. My articles identify pockets that fleetingly realize new visions of what community can look like. I see a gulf between my celebration of feminist collectives and my lived isolation. I do not know how to account for the discrepancy between my professed enthusiasm for these bold enactments of “other ways of being in the world” and my seclusion.⁴⁰ As much as I cheer for the ethics expressed in these feminist performances, I’m called to curl inwards, to clench and cry alone in my sheets.

I don’t know how to implement feminist commitments when it’s my own body at stake. What do these concepts mean outside the context of intellectualized, neatly orchestrated performances or the rushing energy of a march in the streets? I live in Texas. The lifesaving care I received is no longer guaranteed. The future of IVF is uncertain. I know where the battles are, but most days I’m too tired to fight.

In infertility, I have never felt more alone. When grief left me undone, I found no structures of solidarity to call upon. I know how common pregnancy loss is. I know the political stakes of the private, in a post Roe-v-Wade landscape. Yet, “it is very difficult sometimes to remember that I AM NOT ALONE.”⁴¹ Sexual assault, years ago, thrust me into a furious collective. I was living praxis, participating in guerilla artworks, public forums, and policy changes. Where previously I shouted, I now swallow.

What feels like an internal failure seems to demand private solutions. If I slog hard enough, it still feels, I could convince my body to cooperate. Hard work usually works. “The early programming to self-rely is accompanied by a conception of the body as a rational machine. Obligated to repress our own vulnerability, we become detached from our bodies, each other, and the world.”⁴² My insistence on my own competence has costs; it distances me from all understanding. I’ve lost so much connective tissue. My body is not a rational machine. I cannot bully it into creating a baby. Only in allowing the irrational animal of my body to break into others’ hands can I begin to heal. “[N]one of us can be in control. Because we only do exist being-with.”⁴³

I worked to unlearn individualism in favor of collective forms of wellbeing. And yet, in this struggle, stubborn self-reliance became the only strategy I could trust. My wife was out of town on a day when I needed estrogen and progesterone injections in my butt. I worried over a short list of neighbors who might be willing to stab my rear end with a two-inch needle, but I didn’t ask for help. Instead, I contorted myself, breathing the needles in on my own. When it’s my own body failing me, I don’t know what collaboration and solidarity look like. When I recognized

someone in the clinic waiting room, I didn't reach out. I prioritized privacy. I didn't take medical leave when I should have. Two days after surgery, dosed with opiates, I led my graduate seminar. Survival felt like showing up to teach my class.

I am grateful daily for my wife's steady presence, her touch, her nourishment. Our mutual gestures of bodily caretaking are constant: salmon burgers, shoulder rubs, thrifted cashmere. And she is not enough. This is and is not also happening to her. A wife is not a community. A partner is not a collective. Even as I long for a support network, I continue to harden inwards, to hoard my own hardship.

I've never felt more focused on money, fretting over the sperm and hormones that come free to so many. I'm spending my parents' retirement, lovingly offered, on transvaginal ultrasounds, on a chance. My financial fixation is a facet of this relentless individualism. I don't know what mutual care looks like in the absence of insurance coverage.

I don't know what relying on community looks like when academia keeps mine dispersed. There are companions in the pages I read, friends I can call. I don't reach out in the messy thick of it, when my words are choked. If anything, I report back after the fact, a rational re-telling. Long-distance and virtual connections can bolster. I found a world of "IVF warriors" on Instagram. I hold my breath and mourn alongside these strangers. And, I've experienced an immediacy of need that this scattered support cannot meet. As comforting as my maternal autohistoria shelf is, books don't walk the dog when I'm folded in pain. Stretching across states towards those who love me often feels like work.

I decide that no one wants to hear about my uterus, that this is all is too visceral to share. I worry that I am too much to bear. I demand self-composure in the telling of my rending. “But will I ever be strong enough again to open my mouth and not have a cry of raw pain leap out?”⁴⁴ I’m afraid to let you hear the raw cry.

This text is an invitation to cry together. “Vulnerability could become the capacity to accept a state of pain or insecurity, submitting or delivering the self to the feeling of coming undone.”⁴⁵ My pain is unpolished, liquid, crude. How many of you have been gutted in this way, have come undone through these same veins? “Would I be able to overcome my terror of falling apart if I allow myself to rely on others, on you?”⁴⁶

Whose comfort does my silence preserve? I want to announce how many pads I’ve soaked through, how many internal stitches are holding my core together, how many deaths have happened inside of me. I want to show you my bruises, my scars. After her mastectomy, Lorde’s clinic pressured her to wear a prosthesis to her appointments, to keep up morale in the office. They asked her to hide the external signs of her pain, so that others need not confront it. “Prosthesis,” she writes, “offers the empty comfort of ‘Nobody will know the difference.’ But it is that very difference which I wish to affirm, because I have lived it, and survived it, and wish to share that strength with other women.”⁴⁷

Self-reliance is a wound, a rejection of connection. It hides not only our weakness but is also a refusal to share our strength with others. “It could be possible to treat vulnerability as a healed

scar...The scar is nothing other than the atavistic command to become a self-reliant individual who can efficiently manage her own human capital by herself. And what makes that scar heal is not turning inward or isolating ourselves, but opening outward, reaching out to others.”⁴⁸ I can no longer manage by myself. “You’ve punctured my solitude...I feel I can give you everything without giving myself away.”⁴⁹ I’m opening outwards with red-rimmed eyes and inflamed scars.

For the mothers of autohistoria, I make an offering of my own undoing. They taught me the power in textual communion. “Telling stories is one of the ways that we can begin the process of building community.”⁵⁰ We are not alone. We are hungry to touch through the pain:

“vulnerability is an acknowledgement of the desire for intimacy.”⁵¹ Reaching outwards, we begin to heal inwards. Externalizing pain, in words or tears, is a “spiritual inquiry toward self-love and validation.”⁵² Autohistoria-teoría establishes knowledge through lived experience. More than that, it rejects shame and extends love, through the bonding of community across pages.

“Beneath your desire for knowledge writhes the hunger to understand and love yourself.”⁵³ The vulnerability of self-theorizing proposes a reframing of what words can do. Listen: “where the words of women are crying to be heard, we must each of us recognize our responsibility to seek those words out, to read them and share them and examine them in their pertinence to our lives...there are so many silences to be broken.”⁵⁴

I’m still childless, waiting for the next round of treatment, and finding it harder to hope. Every time I show up to an appointment, though, I embody optimism. “How on earth can I bring a child into the world, knowing that such sorrow lies ahead, that it is such a large part of what it means to be human?”⁵⁵ There’s an irrational hopefulness in trying, in believing this world worth living

in, in continuing to invest my whole self into this endeavor. IVF does not always produce a baby. It might not work. We might exhaust my body and bank account until eventually giving up. We have one embryo left.

I choose to believe that one day I will look back and reflect: “I had come to my motherhood along the long hard path.”⁵⁶ I will marvel: “His hands are like little stars.”⁵⁷ Someday, tears of relief will greet my ultrasound. I’ll see, within my own body, another’s “vertebrae, a sweet strand of pearls, and then the heart, beating as visibly as a pulsar.”⁵⁸ Thrumming from my future, I can hear the pattering of tiny footsteps rushing towards my bed. Someday, I believe, I’ll be able to say: “To that hole in my heart...thank you for staying.”⁵⁹

¹ Leslie C. Sotomayor II. *Teaching In/Between: Curating Educational Spaces with Autohistoria-Teoría and Conocimiento* (Wilmington: Vernon Press, 2022), 17.

² hooks, *Critical Thinking*, 49.

³ Aída Hurtado. *Intersectional Chicana Feminisms: Sitios y Lenguas* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2020), 86.

⁴ Audre Lorde. *The Cancer Journals* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute, 1980), 24.

⁵ Norma Cantú. *Canicula: Snapshots of a Girlhood en la Frontera* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 111.

⁶ bell hooks. *Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 83.

⁷ Gloria Anzaldúa. *Light in the Dark/ Luz en lo oscuro: Rewriting Identity, Spirituality, Reality*. Ed. AnaLouise Keating (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 119.

⁸ Cristina Rivera Garza, *The Restless Dead: Necrowriting and Disappropriation* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2020), 52.

⁹ hooks, *Critical Thinking*, 45.

¹⁰ Sotomayor, *Teaching In/Between*, 93.

¹¹ Sotomayor, *Teaching In/Between*, 33

¹² Lorde, *Cancer Journals*, 25.

¹³ Cherrie Moraga. *Waiting in the Wings: Portrait of a Queer Motherhood* (Ithaca: Firebrand Books, 1997), 117.

¹⁴ Moraga, *Waiting in the Wings*, 85.

¹⁵ Ann Crittenden. *The Price of Motherhood: Why the Most Important Job in the World is Still the Least Valued* (New York: Picador, 2001), xii.

¹⁶ Rachel Connelly and Kristen Ghodsee, *Professor Mommy: Finding Work-Family Balance in Academia* (Plymouth: Rowland and Littlefield Publishers, 2011), 5.

¹⁷ Anne Lamott. *Operating Instructions: A Journal of My Son's First Year* (New York: Anchor Books, 1993), 67.

¹⁸ Connelly and Ghodsee, *Professor Mommy*, 5-6.

¹⁹ Louise Erdrich. *The Blue Jay's Dance: A Memoir of Early Motherhood* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1996), 4.

²⁰ Maggie Nelson. *The Argonauts* (Minneapolis: Graywolf Press, 2015), 32.

²¹ Erdrich, *Blue Jay's Dance*, 15.

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- ²² Moraga, *Waiting in the Wings*, 27
- ²³ Erdrich, *Blue Jay's Dance*, 4.
- ²⁴ Moraga, *Waiting in the Wings*, 16.
- ²⁵ Lamott, *Operating Instructions*, 66.
- ²⁶ Erdrich, *Blue Jay's Dance*, 9.
- ²⁷ Lorde, *Cancer Journals*, 11.
- ²⁸ Moraga, *Waiting in the Wings*, 127.
- ²⁹ Moraga, *Waiting in the Wings*, 102.
- ³⁰ Lorde, *Cancer Journals*, 12-13.
- ³¹ Erdrich, *Blue Jay's Dance*, 35.
- ³² Irmgard Emmelhainz, *Toxic Loves, Impossible Futures: Feminist Living as Resistance* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2022), 71.
- ³³ Erdrich, *Blue Jay's Dance*, 43.
- ³⁴ Moraga, *Waiting in the Wings*, 26.
- ³⁵ Lamott, *Operating Instructions*, 59.
- ³⁶ Emmelhainz, *Toxic Loves*, 70.
- ³⁷ Lorde, *Cancer Journals*, 39.
- ³⁸ Cantú, *Canícula*, 35.
- ³⁹ Cantú, *Canícula*, 35.
- ⁴⁰ José Esteban Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia: the Then and There of Queer Futurity* (New York: New York University Press, 2009) 1.
- ⁴¹ Lorde, *Cancer Journals*, 61.
- ⁴² Emmelhainz, *Toxic Loves*, 69-70.
- ⁴³ Emmelhainz, *Toxic Loves*, 71.
- ⁴⁴ Lorde, *Cancer Journals*, 77.
- ⁴⁵ Emmelhainz, *Toxic Loves*, 71.
- ⁴⁶ Emmelhainz, *Toxic Loves*, 71.
- ⁴⁷ Lorde, *Cancer Journals*, 61.
- ⁴⁸ Emmelhainz, *Toxic Loves*, 71.
- ⁴⁹ Nelson, *Argonauts*, 5.
- ⁵⁰ hooks, *Critical Thinking*, 49.
- ⁵¹ Emmelhainz, *Toxic Loves*, 73.
- ⁵² Sotomayor, *Teaching In/Between*, 20.
- ⁵³ Anzaldúa, *Luz en lo oscuro*, 121.
- ⁵⁴ Lorde, *Cancer Journals*, 23
- ⁵⁵ Lamott, *Operating Instructions*, 11.
- ⁵⁶ Moraga, *Waiting in the Wings*, 17.
- ⁵⁷ Lamott, *Operating Instructions*, 74.
- ⁵⁸ Lamott, *Operating Instructions*, 6.
- ⁵⁹ Moraga, *Waiting in the Wings*, i.