

PROFILE OF RESISTANCE

GLORIA E. ANZALDUÁ

Writer, activist

*“A woman who writes has power,
and a woman with power is feared.”*

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Courtesy of esperanzacenter.org

Background Information

September 26, 1942 - May 15, 2004

Anzaldúa received her bachelor's degree in English, Art, and Secondary Education from the University of Texas-Pan American. She also received a graduate degree from the University of Texas at Austin in 1972 in English and Education.

Anzaldúa's Resistance

Anzaldúa was of Mexican descent. While she was growing up, she experienced a lot of discrimination because of her racial-ethnic background. She used writing to share her experiences with the world. While she was working on a graduate degree in English she taught a course at the University of Texas at Austin called “La Mujer Chicana” (The Chicana Woman). While teaching this course she realized there was not much literature on Chicana women (Chicana is a woman of Mexican descent). She decided to change that by creating powerful works of writing that brought to light the Chicana experience.

Her famous book, *Borderlands/ La Frontera*, illustrated the complexities within Chicano and Latino culture, lesbianism, and Chicanos in a white American society. It also highlighted the beauty of diverse cultures and journey of self-discovery.ⁱ In her writing, she used English and six different variations of Spanishⁱⁱ to portray the difficulties in learning a language and adapting to a new culture. Her goal was to create a multicultural inclusive feminist movement.ⁱⁱⁱ She also worked hard to bring to light the experiences of queer women of color.

Achievements

Anzaldúa won many awards, including the Lesbian Rights Award in 1991 and the American Studies Association Lifetime Achievement Award. She was named among the LGBT 31 History Icons in 2012.^{iv} Another one of her important works, *This Bridge Called My Back: Writing by Radical Women of Color*, won the Before Columbus Foundation American Book award in 1981. She ultimately became a powerful voice for the Chicana feminist movement.

