

When Sonja first told me ATHE would be here in Arizona, I felt my heart rise, then plummet, then rise again. Rising: My favorite people in the world, coming to be here with us, after so many years of political struggle! Plummeting: Oh, Lord, what they must think of us, given how all our dirty laundry has been hung on the clotheslines of media and social networks. Rising: I know we are more, much more than what you may have heard, and this is a chance to share some of that. You are here, and that's the important thing. You are the smartest, most creative people I know. We are so grateful you have joined the smart and creative people who live here to dream together these next few days. I know it perhaps wasn't the easiest choice for many of you to make, and I want to start by thanking you for making it. And I hope that when you leave us, your time here in this complicated place will enrich your work at home, in ways that only Arizona could have given you.

What does it mean for ATHE to dream together in this place, at this time? Here, in Scottsdale AZ, originally home to the Hohokam people, who lived here from more than 2000 years ago up until about 1450. It is likely that they traveled here to southern Arizona from what is now Mexico, and maintained ties to their original homeland. Many contemporary Pima, Tohon Chul and Tohono Oodam peoples, three of some twenty Arizona tribes, consider the Hohokam to be their ancestors. So when we hold an event in this space that was theirs, it's appropriate to acknowledge their contributions to our future. To give just one example: without their irrigation canals, which are the basis of the ones we still use, it is unlikely that Tempe or Phoenix or Scottsdale or Mesa would ever have been settled by anyone

else. And it is useful to recall that, when this land was first occupied, the notion of geopolitical borders as we understand them today simply did not exist. Thus, native communities to the south are divided by what to them is an artificial border; some are activist in denying its existence or calling for its transcendence; others defend it against crossers for a variety of reasons: some ecological, some territorial, some idiosyncratic. There is no unified indigenous front here, but there is, as Patricia Ybarra will point out, a chance to learn from perspectives that do not often get national media attention.

We also acknowledge the ongoing and deep ties to Mexico that this growing urban area continues to have. After the big land grab that resulted in this area becoming US Territory, about half of the residents of this area were Hispanic families. During the Mexican Revolution, they identified themselves as Latin or Spanish Americans to distinguish themselves from the new immigrants – because even though they had been here for generations, by now they faced significant discrimination from the Anglo settlers seeking their fortunes on Hohokam land.

And yet the Latino presence remains strong here: when in the second half of the last decade law after law after law was passed here restricting access to higher education, Latina/o youth – documented and undocumented alike -- were at the forefront of the public critique against it, putting their bodies on the line in street protests and theatre performances on the lawn of the capitol – in one case literally chaining themselves to the steps of that Capitol in support of the Dream Act. We have one such Dream activist with us today -- Dulce Juarez.

More recently, with the passage of HB 2281, we have been made newly aware of the importance of public schools in creating an “imagined community” of Americans. A hundred years ago, in Tempe, where I work, half of its young people could not attend public school with the other half. Today in Tucson, history seems to be repeating itself, as many young people are prohibited from learning their own history in their own public schools.

It will be four years ago next week that SB1070 went into effect, thrusting Arizona into a peculiar and particular kind of national – and international -- spotlight. I want to tell a personal story about that. Four years ago, in the week before SB1070 went into effect, I went home to visit my parents in Beaver, Pennsylvania. (For those who have never been to Beaver, think Mayberry RFD.) The very night I arrived there was a big rally in front of the Beaver County courthouse in support of Arizona governor Jan Brewer and SB 1070. About 250 people were there to sign an Arizona flag to send to Brewer. The speakers were two immigrants from Europe who "did it the right way" (which means that their European ancestors arrived before there even was immigration legislation) and one surprise speaker, who spoke during the audience participation time. Phyllis Trevino-Chambers, a third-generation Mexican American Beaver Countian, approached the podium wearing a sombrero and waving her passport. “This is my country, too,” she said. “I am an American citizen. Do I need to prove my citizenship when I come into Beaver?” She spoke about how the news about SB1070 was causing her kids to be taunted at school born here, but whose kids are already being

taunted at school about "going back to where they came from." They were already being racially profiled.

There are three things I want to point out about this, some obvious, some perhaps not so.

First: Arizona is everywhere. I assure you the very last thing I expected to find when I fled to Pennsylvania from the heat of Arizona and its even more heated debates was a pro-Jan Brewer rally. But I should have known better. I read Charles Bowden, a Tucson-based journalist whose love for this state is as constant and unforgiving as its landscape. And he is always saying that what happens here in Arizona will eventually happen where you live, it just happens here first. Here, he says, is where the abstractions are made flesh: Here is where the collision of human life with limited resources is being played out: Here we have to figure out how to conserve resources like water, and to harness other ones, like the sun. Here is where we have to figure out who gets to live together, and how. Here in many ways is the laboratory for the post-welfare state many other kinds of "American dreamers" seek. The results are sometimes elegant and beautiful, sometimes blunt and ugly. Sometimes we get it right, sometimes we get it wrong; and on one recent occasion, we got it right, but for the wrong reason (Patricia Ybarra will have more to say on that as well.) Arizona is not just here, it is where you are too, or soon will be. Please, keep us in mind.

Second: Theatre -- abstraction made flesh par excellence -- is everywhere as well. Those Beaver Countians in support of SB1070 didn't just sign a petition, they

signed the AZ flag. Phyllis Trevino-Chambers didn't just carry a sign or make a speech; she chose to wear a sombrero to make her point. We all know this and can embrace it in everything we do, in and outside of the classroom -- a point Patricia will also return to later.

Third: The man behind the rally is a guy named Jerry Fisher, who lives in the countryside outside of Beaver, which is also where my folks live, and they happen to know him. When he is not organizing anti-immigrant rallies, he is the man who plays Santa Claus in the local Parks-and-Rec Board Christmas festivities (my dad is one of those Board members). And once, at one of their Fall Festivals, he won a raffle for a U.S. Savings Bond -- which he immediately handed off to my young nephew Simon, who happened to be standing next to him. For me, Jerry Fisher is a lot like the Arizona I have come to love. A bundle of contradictions.

Phyllis Trevino-Chambers is also like the Arizona -- or perhaps I should say Arizonans -- I have come most to love: the thousands of people -- people of faith, of art, of activism, of just basic human decency -- who stand shoulder to shoulder with the undocumented and are not afraid to speak truth to power. Trevino-Chambers' family came to Beaver County in 1912, to work on the railroads. Coincidentally, that was the year Arizona became a state. Also coincidentally, that was the same year the national Progressive Party was formed. Perhaps not so coincidentally, Arizona has one of the most progressive state constitutions in the land, which is not a fact that even seems believable today. "At the turn of the century, Arizona's economy was deeply influenced by railroad and mining companies, and the workers in these

companies struggled to secure their rights. It was at the constitutional convention that organized labor brought ideas including an eight-hour workday, an elected state mine inspector, the prohibition of blacklists of labor leaders, and a ban on child labor – [all of which made it into the constitution](#), along with broad progressive ideas such as initiative, referendum, recall, and direct primaries.”

(<http://backslashscott.wordpress.com/2012/04/12/arizonas-progressive-constitution-100-years-ago/>)

This legacy is, in part, what keeps Arizona in the news. This is a place where your civics lessons really live. I grew up in the working class of western Pennsylvania, in the shadow of the steel mills. I went to grad school and taught in liberal cities of Seattle and Minneapolis. I have never before now, however, lived in a place where political participation all along the political spectrum is so robust. This can cut one way in one cycle, the other in the next, or be more like a constant movement of grindstone and grit – but there is always that productive friction that is at work polishing something new into being. There is very little here that is “tried and true,” and that is both our heartache and our hope. We let SB1070 happen. We also successfully mobilized to have Senator Russell Pearce, its local author, recalled from office.

I’m going to end with a quote from Charles Bowden, who says what I want to say about all of this better than I can, and I invite you to reflect on it as you spend time with us here:

“I love it here because the ground is dangerous and beautiful and smashes any human fantasies of ultimate control. I love it here because Mexico is near and the lies and fables of our nation’s fabled heartland cannot be sustained here as the largest folk movement in the history of our planet -- the flight of the Mexican poor north—streams across my ground. But mainly I love it here because I know I live in the future while people in other parts of the nation struggle to imagine the future.”

This panel was formed precisely to help us with us imagine the future of our field, read through the lens of Arizona’s multiple performative histories. We’ll start with

[note I had to summarize Raquel’s contribution as she couldn’t make it.]

Raquel Rubio, who has been one of the major thinkers and advisors behind immigration activism for decades here in Arizona. She is an activist-scholar whose work focuses on human rights and Chicano/o and indigenous perspectives in culture, land and gender issues in the southwest, and she is widely sought as a speaker and adviser on such issues. She is originally from Douglas, Arizona, a small town on the Arizona-Mexico border, and is based now in Tucson with her husband, Barclay Goldsmith who is the artistic director of Borderlands Theater, who is also on our panel. As a professor at the University of Arizona, she has developed important curricula on Mexican and Latin American history as well as Afro-American, Yaqui and Tohono O’odham histories. Over the years she has won numerous awards for teaching excellence. Traveling in circles of activism, scholarship, education, and theatre, Professor Rubio will orient us to the geopolitical landscape of Arizona, speaking to what is needed in our public consciousness to move forward as a scholarly/artistic/activist body, to better face long-term and pressing questions around land, migration and citizenship.

Barclay Goldsmith has, for 29 years, been the Artistic Director of Borderlands Theater of Tucson, from its days on the back of a truck to its current manifestation as a professional theatrical incubator for cross-border

dialogues. Today, Barclay will share with us how Borderlands has used theatre to respond to the issues above in an artistically and organizationally sustainable way. He will trace key moments in the company's history that speak particularly to the company's survival strategies in the face of continual crisis. Over nearly three decades of theatrical experience right on the border makes him an expert in theatre as a site of "refuge, resistance, and renewal."

Dulce Juarez, an ASU graduate in Human Communications and Higher Education, has spent her time since graduation making hidden stories visible--whether they are the immigrant narratives through her work with ACLU, or the less visible narrative of privilege that "documented" bodies move through higher education with. She will describe her work as an activist who uses theatre as a tool in working with undocumented people, and her work in more "traditional" scripted theater to highlight the spectrum from performance intervention to direct action, to scripted representation. Her work as a Dream Activist also helps put a face on the changing population of theater artists and activists in the making, which will be a theme we return to in our final speaker ---

Catherine Cole, a professor at the University of California/Berkeley, who has long been recognized for her work on the intersections between human rights and performance. In addition to her scholarly work, she is herself an artist, and, now, university administrator. In June 2013, Cole concluded her tenure as Head of Berkeley's Graduate Program in Performance Studies and assumed her new post as Department Chair. From these diverse experiences she will offer her perspectives on the institutional challenges we face in attracting and serving a new generation of artists and thinkers who bring unique backgrounds and experiences with them. She is also at work at a new book entitled, *Picturing the City of Intellect*.

Finally, our president-elect Patricia Ybarra, professor of theater and performance studies at Brown University will serve as our respondent today, helping to launch the conversation about how ATHE fits into the changing academic landscape the literal DREAM ACT, and all its metaphorical resonances, represents. We will BEGIN the conversation here, and continue it through other events scheduled over the next two days – particularly during our business meeting tomorrow.