

IV. The Textual Dilemma in Breaking the Silence

This is my first semester of law school teaching. I am one of four professors assigned to the Law Practice Clinic. We rotate presenting weekly lectures to the group of twenty students. I had suggested and volunteered for the presentation on race/ethnicity and gender. At the time, I had planned to talk about the N.M. Bar's Task Force Report on the Status of Women Attorneys¹⁶ and other demographic and anecdotal accounts about how women, Latinos, African Americans, Native Americans, the disabled and gays and lesbians are doing in the New Mexican legal community. By the date of the lecture, I was absorbed in the writing of this paper and knew that my presentation would, and should, be both autobiographical and conceptual (rather than the detached and empirically descriptive presentation I had originally conceived). I would make the argument that, through the use of the techniques of Critical Race Theory, Outsiders are engaged in fundamentally transforming the nature of legal discourse and analysis. I ~~found~~ two issues in preparing my lecture: how to organize the volume of material on Critical Race Theory while making it applicable to clinical practice, and, secondly, how to make my personal perspective an overt feature of the presentation.¹⁷

I prepared late into the night. Finally, I stood before the class and my three faculty colleagues. In the instant as I was preparing to speak, my internal dialogue was registering the following thoughts: Can I launch into this presentation describing