

childhood necessity. Disguising my private self was urgent because I did not share the ethnic, gender or class-based assumptions around which the public environment was organized. This feeling of masking the private me is one that has, if anything, intensified as I have continued my involvement with educational institutions, first as a student, later as a university administrator and now as a law professor.

The public face that I wear today helps me bridge the psychic distance between the girl that I was and the woman that I have become. The public face that I wear today also helps me bridge the distance between my life as wife and mother and my life as lawyer and professor. It helps me to bridge the distance between my brownness and society's whiteness, and it helps me to bridge the distance between my present social reality and some future pluralistic reality for which I struggle.

For me, the struggle entails remaining functional and sane in what can feel like a dysfunctional and insane environment. I believe my situation epitomizes that of many other women--and not only women of color--but all of us who are insisting that we be let in the door, not just the front door but into that room with the seat of power with the understanding that once we are inside, we will rearrange the furniture, remove interior walls, and generally move in as co-owners rather than the short-term tenants that some are hoping we are.

Much has recently been written about subtext.² Subtext includes body language, posture, gesture, eye contact, how a person