

What about the Mask: had I constructed it effectively? One's mask can be visible: trenzas, makeup and clothes. A mask can also depend on philosophical, ideological and psychological devises which incorporate more subtle reference points. The mask I constructed began with the visible but then drew on notions about regionalism, ethnicity, gender. And, feeding into my doubts, it also appealed to conventional and orthodox perceptions of academic merit and professional worth.

Selective use of masks can be an act of resistance when one speaks through the mask, indeed aided by the mask, of other realities, other perceptions, other possibilities. Taking an oppositional stance to subordination, describing the multiple effects of racism and sexism, struggling to find new "arenas for contestation"<sup>29</sup>, are all expressions of resistance and can help to reinforce the feeling of psychic and ideological intactness.

For years I have remembered Josephine Chavez in the haze of my dislocation and alienation from law school and from legal analysis. Looking back, opening my Criminal Law textbook to find *People v. Chavez*<sup>30</sup> on page one represents the serendipitous finding of my voice for one day. In explaining Josephine Chavez's reality, I asserted my own. Finding a voice on that one day may have sustained me all these years until I could regain, reclaim, and use my classroom voice, more consistently and assertively.

Thanks, Josephine. *Gracias, hermanita.*