A. Using one of the “Verbs for Making a Claim” in They Say, I Say, (argue, assert, believe, claim, emphasize, insist, observe, remind us, report, or suggest (39)), write a sentence or two summarizing Anzaldúa’s claims below. Use a different verb(s) for each summary.

Example: So, don’t give me your tenets and your laws. Don’t give me your lukewarm gods. What I want is an accounting with all three cultures—white, Mexican, Indian. I want the freedom to carve and chisel my own face, to staunch the bleeding with ashes, to fashion my own gods out of my entrails. And if going home is denied me then I will have to stand and claim my space, making a new culture—una cultura mestiza [a culture of mixed backgrounds, including mixture of races]—with my own lumber, my own bricks and mortar and my own feminist architecture. (6)

Anzaldúa asserts she will not accept laws from others but make her own. And she insists that her laws will form a new culture to match her own mixed background.

1. Culture forms our beliefs. We perceive the version of reality that it communicates. Dominant paradigms, predefined concepts that exist as unquestionable, unchallengeable, are transmitted to us through the culture. Culture is made by those in power—men. Males make the rules and laws; women transmit them. (2)

2. In my culture, selfishness is condemned, especially in women; humility and selflessness, the absence of selfishness, is considered a virtue. In the past, acting humble with members outside the family ensured that you would make no one envidioso (envious); therefore he or she would not use witchcraft against you. If you get above yourself, you’re an envidiosa [a jealous girl]. If you don’t behave like everyone else, la gente [people] will say that you think you’re better than others, que te crees grande [that you think you’re a big shot]. With ambition (condemned in the Mexican culture and valued in the Anglo) comes envy. Respeto [respect] carries with it a set of rules so that social categories and hierarchies will be kept in order: respect is reserved for la abuela, papó, el patrón, [the grandmother, father, the patron (head of the family)] those with power in the community. Women are at the bottom of the ladder one rung above the deviants. The Chicano, mexicano, and some Indian cultures have no tolerance for deviance. Deviance is whatever is condemned by the community. Most societies try to get rid of their deviants. Most cultures have burned and beaten their homosexuals and others who deviate from the sexual common. The queer are the mirror reflecting the heterosexual tribe’s fear: being different, being other, and therefore lesser, therefore sub-human, in-human, non-human. (3)

B. Practice the “quotation sandwich” technique introduced in chapter 3 of They Say, I Say by framing the following quotations between one of the Templates for Introducing Quotations (46) and one of the Templates for Explaining Quotations (47). Use different template “slices” for each quotation.

Templates for Introducing Quotations

- X states, “....”
- As the prominent (educator/writer/etc.) puts it, “....”
- According to X, “....”
- X him/herself writes, “....”
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- Writing in the essay “Y,” X complains that “....”
- In X’s view, “....”
- X agrees when s/he writes, “....”
- X complicates matters further when s/he writes, “....”

Templates for Explaining Quotations

- Basically, X is warning ....
- In other words, X believes ....
- X is corroborating the age-old adage that ....
- X’s point is that ....
- The essence of X’s argument is that ....

Example: “I abhor how my culture makes macho caricatures of its men” (6).

Anzaldúa states, “I abhor how my culture makes macho caricatures of its men” (6). Basically, Anzaldúa’s point is that her culture forces men into exaggerated roles of masculinity and she despises the pressure to conform to those roles as much as the pressure on women to conform to subservient ones that she discusses earlier.

1. “There is a rebel in me—the Shadow-Beast. It is a part of me that refuses to take orders from outside authorities” (2).

2. “Tribal rights over those of the individual insured the survival of the tribe and were necessary then, and, as in the case of all indigenous peoples in the world who are still fighting off intentional, premeditated murder (genocide), they are still necessary.” (3).

3. “For the lesbian of color, the ultimate rebellion she can make against her native culture is through her sexual behavior” (4).

C. Using one of They Say, I Say’s “Templates for Disagreeing, with Reasons” (60), “Templates for Agreeing” (62) (keeping in mind “[e]ven as you’re agreeing, it’s important to bring something new and fresh to the table, adding something that makes you a valuable participant in the conversation” (61)), or “Templates for Agreeing and Disagreeing Simultaneously” (65-66), frame your response to Anzaldúa’s statements below in a sentence or so. Feel free to add a sentence or two beyond the template to elaborate your position, as necessary. Use a different template for each quotation.

Templates for Disagreeing, with Reasons

- X is mistaken because s/he overlooks ....
- X’s claim that ... rests upon the questionable assumption that ....
- I disagree with X’s view that ... because, as recent research has shown, ....
- X contradicts him/herself (or can’t have it both ways). On the one hand, s/he argues .... On the other hand, s/he also says ....
- By focusing on ..., X overlooks the deeper problem of ....
Templates for Agreeing

- I agree that ... because my experience ... confirms it.
- X is surely right about ... because, as s/he may not be aware, recent studies have shown that ....
- X’s theory of ... is extremely useful because it sheds light on the difficult problem of ....
- Those unfamiliar with this school of thought may be interested to know that it basically boils down to ....
- I agree that ..., a point that needs emphasizing since so many people still believe ....
- If X is right that ..., as I think s/he is, then we need to reassess the popular assumption that ....

Templates for Agreeing and Disagreeing Simultaneously

- Although I agree with X up to a point, I cannot accept his/her overriding assumption that ....
- Although I disagree with much that X says, I fully endorse his/her final conclusion that ....
- Though I concede that ..., I still insist that ....
- X is right that ..., but s/he seems on more dubious ground when s/he claims that ....
- While X is probably wrong when s/he claims that ..., s/he is right that ....
- I’m of two minds about X’s claims that .... On the one hand, I agree that .... On the other hand, I’m not sure if ....
- My feelings on the issue are mixed. I do support X’s position that ..., but I find Y's argument about ... to be equally persuasive.

Example: “The ability to respond is what is meant by responsibility, yet our cultures take away our ability to act—shackle us in the name of protection” (5).

If Anzaldúa is right that our culture limits people’s actions in the name of protection, as I think she is, then we need to reassess the popular assumption that security is more important than freedom.

1. “The culture expects women to show greater acceptance of, and commitment to, the value system than men.” (2).

2. “Humans fear the supernatural, both the undivine (the animal impulses such as sexuality, the unconscious, the unknown, the alien) and the divine (the superhuman, the god in us). Culture and religion seek to protect us from these two forces” (2).

3. “Contrary to some psychiatric tenets, half and halves are not suffering from a confusion of sexual identity, or even from a confusion of gender. What we are suffering from is an absolute despot duality that says we are able to be only one or the other” (4).