**Cherrie Moraga**

“La Guera” *This Bridge Called My Back*

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| **Text** | **In My Own Words** |
| What I am saying is that the joys of looking like a white girl ain't so great since I realized I could be beaten on the street for being a dyke. If my sister's being beaten because she's Black, it's pretty much the same principle. We're both getting beaten any way you look at it.  |  |
| The connection is blatant; and in the case of my own family, the difference in the privileges attached to looking white instead of brown are merely a generation apart. In this country, lesbianism is a poverty - as is being brown, as is being a woman, as is being just plain poor. |  |
| The danger lies in ranking the oppressions. The danger lies in failing to acknowledge the specificity of the oppression. The danger lies in attempting to deal with oppression purely from a theoretical base.  |  |
| Without an emotional, heartfelt grappling with the source of our own oppression, without naming the enemy within ourselves and outside of us, no authentic, non-hierarchical connection among oppressed groups can take place.  |  |
| When the going gets rough, will we abandon our so-called **comrades** in a flurry of racist/heterosexist/what-have-you panic? To whose camp, then, should the lesbian of color retreat? Her very presence violates the ranking and **abstraction** of oppression.  |  |

**Important Vocabulary:**

**\*comrades**: fellow members of an organization/movement

**\*abstraction**: existing as an idea, but not physically

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| Do we merely live hand to mouth? Do we merely struggle with the "ism" that's sitting on top of our own heads? The answer is: yes, I think first we do; and we must do so thoroughly and deeply. |  |
| But to fail to move out from there will only isolate us in our own oppression - will only insulate, rather than **radicalize** us.  |  |

**Important Vocabulary:**

**\*radicalize**: move someone to try to create large social change

WHAT IS THE AUTHOR SAYING?

The **main idea** of this writing is…

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