SHATTERING THE SILENCES

Transcript

OPENING: Music

Narrator: FOR MOST OF THEIR HISTORY UNIVERSITIES IN THIS COUNTRY HAVE BEEN EXCLUSIVE PLACES. MANY WERE KEPT OUT.

BUT TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO MINORITY PROFESSORS BEGAN TO BREAK INTO THE IVORY TOWER. BRINGING A MISSION OF CHANGE.

OPENING UP INSTITUTIONS DOESN'T COME EASY. BECAUSE IT MEANS CHALLENGING TRADITION.

MINORITY SCHOLARS ARE CREATING AN EXPLOSION IN THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES. BY RAISING FRESH QUESTIONS THEY'RE BRINGING NEW LIFE AND KNOWLEDGE TO THE UNIVERSITY.

BY DEMANDING THAT UNHEARD VOICES BE HEARDTHEY ARE... SHATTERING THE SILENCES. (Title Graphic)

Music

Narrator: FOLLOWING WORLD WAR TWO THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT AND LEGISLATION PAVED THE WAY FOR MORE MINORITIES TO ENTER UNIVERSITIES. TODAY THE NUMBERS ARE STILL ALARMINGLY SMALL. ACROSS ALL DISCIPLINES NINETY PERCENT OF PROFESSORS ARE WHITE.

Student #1: All the professors that I've had have been predominantly white males and I'm only getting that perspective from them so I'd really appreciate a different perspective.

Student #2: I've had women professors and I've had Jewish professors, but in terms of African-American or Latino professors, I haven't had them.

Student #3: You just can't have a good faculty unless it's diverse.

Narrator: THESE SCHOLARS ARE PART OF A NEW WAVE THAT HAS ENTERED OUR UNIVERSITIES BRINGING NEW CONCERNS AND NEW IDEAS.

David Wilkins: (voice over) I'm a Lumbee Indian and I'm a human being and I'm inherently biased as are we all.

Narrator: NEW SCHOLARSHIP IS BY DEFINITION CHALLENGING AND MINORITY SCHOLARS ARE CONSTANTLY DRAWN INTO A DEBATE OVER WHO DEFINES TRUTH AND WHO DECIDES WHAT TO TEACH.

Robin Kelley: (Talking head) This is not the first time higher education has been challenged or overturned. I mean the idea of American literature period, whether it's white males like Mark Twain entering the canon. I mean that was a struggle.

Narrator: BECAUSE THEIR NUMBERS ARE SO SMALL MINORITY PROFESSORS ARE OFTEN ISOLATED AND OVERBURDENED.

Darlene Clark Hine: Most of my generation of Black women historians are unmarried, we'll never have children and we'll never have husbands.

Narrator: THE ADDED PRESSURES TO DEFEND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION SUCKS AWAY THEIR TIME WHILE THREATENING THE VERY POLICY THAT HELPED THEM MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Nell Painter: So I think it's the sense that really white people belong on top. and they shouldn't have to give up anything for anybody.

Alex Saragoza: We can't get away from an important issue. Why now? I mean we are nowhere near parity.

Narrator: YET IT IS THROUGH A DIVERSITY OF IDEAS THAT SCHOLARSHIP IS ADVANCED AND CHANGED. IT IS THIS EFFORT TO BRING FRESH WORLDS INTO THE UNIVERSITY THAT IS SO VITAL FOR A FUTURE THAT INCLUDES AND EMBRACES EVERYONE.

(Music ends)

Narrator: TEACHING IS OFTEN LIKE GOING ON STAGE. A GOOD TEACHER MUST GIVE A NEW PERFORMANCE D AILY . DAVID WILKINS, A LUMBEE INDIAN FROM NORTH CAROLINA, REMEMBERS HIS FIRST TEACHING ASSIGNMENT.

Wilkins: (voice over) I just felt petrified. I got through the lecture, but my voice quavered the entire hour and fifteen minutes. and I still get very nervous in front of classes, especially in the beginning of the year. My routine is I prefer to be isolated, alone during the last 30 minutes before class.

(Graphic: Tucson, Arizona)

(Talking head): I walk into a bathroom, the nearest bathroom, and hopefully there's nobody in there and I look in the mirror and I stare at myself and I try to get myself calmed and focused and remind myself that I have to be on. (In Classroom): and this is an issue that minority faculty get all the time and majority faculty rarely get and it's a question of....(he's writing "insider vs. outsider" on the board)

Narrator: WILKINS IS A PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA IN TUCSON.

Wilkins (in classroom) The insider vs. the outsider perspective, alright?. That is I as an American Indian teaching about American Indians, I'm giving you an inside perspective. Someone from the history department teaching a course on Indian history is giving you an outside perspective.

Clifford M. Lytle: He has a very delicate role to play; because unlike most political scientists who have one constituency. He has two constituencies. He's not only functioning as a political scientist. He's functioning as an expert in American Indian affairs as well. and sometimes these two disciplines are not harmonious.

Wilkins: (in classroom): There's some people who presume that just because I'm an Indian that I'm naturally more insightful on Indian issues.

(Talking head; photographs as a child): I didn't really have a consciousness of being a Lumbee. In fact for the first twelve/thirteen years I thought I was a Cherokee. I didn't know what a Lumbee was until my dad retired and we moved back home. and so that's when I began to understand that I was part of a larger group and the group was Lumbee.

(In classroom): Everything I view I view from Lumbee eyes. Because that's who I am. That's the essence of who I am...

Narrator: IN 1972 WILKINS LIFE WAS CHANGED BY VINE DELORIA'S LANDMARK BOOK, "CUSTER DIED FOR YOUR SINS."

Wilkins (on camera): Indians that read that book when it first came out felt good to be Indian. and Lumbees like many people that have been colonized don't always feel good about who they are...about the color of their skin. and Vine's book emphasized how strong we were, how beautiful we were, how powerful we were despite what we had faced as tribal societies. and so you walked around you began to see people holding out their chests a little bit more, and people began to wear some outward symbols of what it means to be Indian. So I got my first Indian choker. I got me a nice hat. Started learning how to do some bead work. and we said heh we're somebody. and we had something to say. This is our country for God's sake, you know.

(In classroom): You have the official version...alright?

Narrator: DAVID WILKINS' WORK CENTERS ON TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY AND WHY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN INCONSISTENT IN RECOGNIZING NATIVE AMERICANS'AUTHORITY TO GOVERN THEMSELVES.

Wilkins: You have to go into government documents and pull out the Congressional Record and Congressional hearings and read all that stuff.

Narrator: WILKINS BEGAN BY INDEPENDENTLY RESEARCHING TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY AND HISTORY AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES. TO HIS SURPRISE HE FELL IN LOVE WITH THE STACKS, THE BOOKS, THE RESEARCH.

Wilkins: (voice over, on camera): Once I got into those archives and all around all those dusty old documents I felt completely at ease and I said, This is what I want to do. and that's what Vine had kick-started when he wrote "Custer Died For Your Sins." We could no longer rely on anthropologists, we couldn't rely on historians, we couldn't rely on non- Indian lawyers to do our own research. We were responsible for it ourselves.

Music over still photos of ethnic studies protests.

(Alex Saragoza opens office door, closes it behind and walks down hall intercut w/ stock footage of student protests)

Saragoza: (voice over) I think the origin of ethnic studies on this campus, like other campuses was primarily based on political considerations; it had little to do with academics.

(SOT): chant: "Power to the People"

Narrator: IN 1969 STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT BERKELEY WENT OUT ON STRIKE -- NOT TO PROTEST THE VIETNAM WAR -- BUT TO DEMAND NEW COURSES. COURSES THAT WOULD EXAMINE THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF RACIAL AND ETHNIC MINORITIES. THE NEW CURRICULUM WOULD REQUIRE A NEW FACULTY -- STRIKING STUDENTS DEMANDED THE UNIVERSITY HIRE MORE MINORITY PROFESSORS.

(SOT): We're going to have a Third World College by the fall of 1969 by any means necessary.

Narrator: AT THAT TIME THERE WERE ONLY SIX BLACKS AND ONE MEXICAN AMERICAN AMONG A FACULTY OF SOME FOURTEEN HUNDRED PROFESSORS. OUT OF THIS CONFLICT CAME THE FIRST ETHNIC STUDIES DEPARTMENT IN THE COUNTRY. AND THE HIRING OF PROFESSORS LIKE ALEX SARAGOZA, A HISTORIAN WHO TEACHES CHICANO STUDIES AS WELL AS COMPARATIVE ETHNIC STUDIES.

(Graphic: Berkeley, California) Saragoza: (voice over) Because I am associated with Chicano Studies, where many people on this campus assume we do second rate scholarship and third rate research and that most of us are probably fourth rate teachers and so on. . .

(on camera): . . . It's a continuous process of proving myself, including to students.

(In classroom): So that people who live in Michoacan begin to see those kitchens in the United States, those people who go back to Mexico with those huge boxes filled with pampers.....

Narrator: THIS IS AN ETHNIC STUDIES COURSE ABOUT MIGRATION.

Saragoza (In Classroom): Why? Because it came from here.

Narrator: MOST DEPARTMENTS REMAIN OVER WHELMINGLY WHITE AT BERKELEY. MINORITY PROFESSORS TEND TO BE CLUSTERED IN ETHNIC STUDIES, WHICH INCLUDE CHICANO STUDIES, AFRICANAMERICAN, ASIAN AMERICAN AND AMERICAN INDIAN STUDIES. THAT PATTERN IS REPEATED AROUND THE COUNTRY.

Saragoza: (On camera): Most of us I suspect could have ended up -- and I certainly had job offers -- to end up in a regular history department but we felt we had a particular mission to play.

(In classroom): You're Mexican, you're Mexican you're Mexican...That's the way I grew up. I'm Mexican, yeh, that's it.

Saragoza (on camera): For someone like myself and I suspect this is true for most of my colleagues, are very concerned with the issue of democracy in part because we were part of that generation that really believed...that we were in fact the land of freedom, liberty, democracy and equality and when we realized that was not necessarily true, that there was a whole generation of us, I think, who made it our concern to try to even the plane as much as we could.

Narrator: SARAGOZA'S RESEARCH AND WRITING HAS ROAMED BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER. HE WRITES ABOUT MEXICAN POPULAR CULTURE AND ABOUT CHICANOS IN CALIFORNIA. NOT ALL OF HIS WORK IS AIMED AT AN ACADEMIC AUDIENCE. SOME OF HIS ARTICLES ARE FOR SCHOOL TEACHERS TO HELP THEM UNDERSTAND LATINO CHILDREN.

Saragoza: (In classroom): Singing/mocking "Que la quieres!" laughter

(Music over shots of the San Joaquin Valley)

Narrator: JUST AS SARAGOZA BRINGS HIS EXPERIENCE AS A MEXICAN AMERICAN INTO THE CLASSROOM HE PERIODICALLY TAKES HIS STUDENTS TO THE GRAPE FIELDS OF THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY WHERE HE WORKED WITH HIS FAMILY AS A CHILD.

Saragoza (walking in fields with student): There was a raid on the fields by the INS and they used to have these Cessna planes and they would fly over and I remember them saying, "Do not run; do not run" and most of us there were resident farmworkers and were citizens or were there legally and yet I remember everyone running like crazy.

(over shots of his old neighborhood and old photos): Now this place looks a lot like the house I was telling you about -- the house I grew up in -- my mother, father, brother and sister all slept there . . . that grey one, the cinder block one, that's the one my father built . . . And my grandfather moved in with us. He lived in the back house. (Music)

Gloria Cuadraz (voice over shot of her packing up her office): In my family if you worked in an air-conditioned place and you were not out in the fields and you were not out in the heat and doing manual labor . . . that was something to strive for. . . . (Family photos)

Narrator: GLORIA CUADRAZ GREW UP IN ANOTHER AGRICULTURAL AREA OF CALIFORNIA. HER FATHER HAD MIGRATED FROM MEXICO AND HER MOTHER WAS A NATIVE CALIFORNIAN.

Cuadraz: (voice over family photos): I was the sixth born. Seven girls, one brother. My father was a farm laborer in the Imperial Valley.

Narrator: IN CUADRAZ'S LARGE TRADITIONAL FAMILY SHE'S THE ONLY ONE TO LEAVE HOME TO GO TO COLLEGE. NOW SHE'S A JUNIOR PROFESSOR IN THE AMERICAN STUDIES DEPARTMENT AT ARIZONA STATE UNIVERS ITY IN PHOENIX WHERE SHE TEACHES SOCIOLOGY.

(Graphic: Phoenix, Arizona)

Narrator: (over office scene) BUT CUADRAZ ALMOST DIDN'T MAKE IT. WHEN SHE WAS IN GRADUATE SCHOOL AT BERKELEY SHE RAN INTO TROUBLE AND DROPPED OUT.

Cuadraz: (voice over and on camera): I did not feel like I belonged and I was struggling, I was struggling to connect and for someone like myself who has felt connected their entire life to be asked to survive in an environment where you do not feel that you belong, that you're part of that culture, it was too overbearing for me.

Narrator: CUADRAZ'S REACTION TO GRADUATE SCHOOL WAS NOT UNIQUE. FIRST GENERATION MINORITY STUDENTS CAN ALSO STUMBLE OVER FINANCIAL AND FAMILY PRESSURES. FOR LATINAS, THE ROAD FROM HOME IS ESPECIALLY LONG.

Cuadraz: I hadn't learned the ways how to be successful in this context and I hadn't learned how it works. The individualization of it was almost shocking to my system.

Narrator : (photos of graduation; w/ mom): BUT CUADRAZ WAS DETERMINED AND RETURNED TO BERKELEY TO GET HER PH.D. IN SOCIOLOGY.

Cuadraz (voice over and on camera): She once said to me that if she had known that when I went off to college that I would never come back, that she would never let me go. Because I was the only one that left. But -- at the same time -- when I filed my dissertation I called her from a phone booth and I said, Mom. I said, well, it's done. It's in. It's done. I'm finished. and she said, "I admire you. Gloria, I admire you." and it meant everything to me at that time. . . . (tears)

(Madera High School grounds) Saragoza: (voice over): Well this is Madera High.

Narrator: FOR ALEX SARAGOZA THE ROAD TO A PH.D. WAS ALSO AN OBSTACLE COURSE.

Saragoza: (talking with student): Well I remember my freshman counselor trying to put me into auto shop, wood shop and mechanical drawing and this sort of thing and I was terrible at those things and I finally convinced her to put me into college prep. And if it wasn't for that I'm not sure what would have happened. and that's the sad thing about this is that the success of children should not depend on luck.

Narrator: SO MANY OTHER MINORITY STUDENTS HAVE BEEN LESS LUCKY. LOW EXPECTATIONS BY TEACHERS OR COUNSELORS IS ALL TOO COMMON.

Saragoza: (in fields with student): Right in front of me the teacher said "Oh, you know, the Mexican kids, they don't do well. They don't make it."

Narrator: YEARS LATER, AT HARVARD, SARAGOZA MET UP "WITH THE SAME PREJUDICE.

Saragoza (on camera): and I remember a paper I did with two other students at Harvard and the instructor turning to the non-minority member of our trio and saying he really liked that part of the paper. And I

remember his name was Steven Rosenholtz. and Steven turned to the instructor and said, Well I didn't do that, Alex did that. The professor assumed the part that had been very well done had been done by Steven.

(In fields w/ student): What I remember about Harvard is that the most important asset that I had was these fields. Because these fields taught me how to work. (Music)

Narrator: SARAGOZA AND CUADRAZ BRING WISDOM FROM THEIR JOURNEYS TO THE IVORY TOWER. A KNOWLEDGE THAT CAN'T BE ACQUIRED ANY OTHER WAY.

Saragoza (in classroom): People in Mexico like in many other places feel that this is the only place to be, right, that this is the only place where you can live a good and abundant life, that this is the only place where your child can get a good education . . . see you next week . . . applause. (Parent approaches Saragoza): I'm a parent of Allana Guy who is here. I have to tell you that you are absolutely the most engrossing, captivating teacher I've ever experienced. It was fabulous.

Saragoza: Thank you very much.

Narrator: IN HIS SPEECHES AND ARTICLES SARAGOZA EMPHASIZES OUR CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS. WITHIN THE NEXT DECADE FIFTY PERCENT OF CALIFORNIA'S SCHOOL CHILDREN WILL BE LATINO.

Saragoza: (on camera): If you look at the curriculum, if you look at the reading assignments, if you look at the indexes of the books that are used on many parts of this campus, we might as well be in Sweden.

Narrator: HOWEVER, THE TEACHING OF ETHNIC STUDIES REMAINS CONTROVERSIAL. JOHN SEARLE, A PHILOSOPHY PROFESSOR AT BERKELEY:

John Searle (on camera): See I think that one of the chief aims of education is to tell individuals, Forget about the ethnicity and the social class and all that stuff you were born into. When you join the university we invite you into a membership of a universal human culture. Whereas what this representation culture tells you is you are essentially what people most hate in you. So if you've been discriminated against on grounds of your race you should define yourself in terms of your race. See, what I think we should tell people is, Forget about your race, it's largely irrelevant to your intellectual development.

Student (on camera in classroom): There is no room for compromise. The American Indians compromised to give the white man a meal for Thanksgiving. The American Indians compromised to be on the reservations and look where they are now. We have to start somewhere. and if we are here demanding more classes like these classes then that's what we need to do . . . we're stuck in this tiny-ass classroom. excuse me . . . tiny classroom because there are no classes and there's no way I can appreciate a white man, a black man, a Latino American if I don't know who I am. and this is where I'm getting it from. Asian-American studies, American ethnic studies.

Narrator: IN AN ASIAN-AMERICAN STUDIES CLASS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, STUDENTS REACT TO THE CRITICISM THAT ETHNIC STUDIES DIVIDES THE CAMPUS ALONG RACIAL AND ETHNIC LINES.

Student #2: We have a classroom which is not found anywhere else on campus here and you have a classroom full of people of color. We get to express our ideas and we don't have to worry about living up to some white aesthetic values. We actually get to challenge them and get to create our own.

Student #3: I mean I love this class.

Student #4: . Do you think it's been different for you being a European-American in a classroom full of Asian-American students? Do you think that's part of your learning experience?

Student #3: I think so, Yes, I do. I think that's valuable but at the same time I think it's valuable to get a lot of Caucasian students in the classroom.

Student #5: You realize that for a quarter of the people in this class your word doesn't mean jack because you're white. . . .

Student #3: Yeh...(laughter)

Student #2: Stop speaking for everyone!

Student #5: Then you stop!

Student #2: I don't know if you understand how much it hurts me to see you say those things.

Student #5:. Like what did I say.?

Student #2: Like what it is. . . .

Student #5: What exactly did I say that hurt you that way?

Student #2: A lot of time you're lacking. You're lacking on histories and perspectives of people of color. When you like, sometimes you speak of stereotypes, like the other day you talked about how all black people are muggers. and me being half black, being raised by a black family . . . .hey, that's pretty offensive because of some of the stereotypes you say.

Student #5: Whoa . . . you're telling me to get rid of my labels? You're telling me to get rid of my labeling system and you're telling me I'm Anglicized? See, I came into this class with the view that everybody's an individual and if everybody behaves as an individual and gets to know one another as individuals there's no need for ethnic studies except for appreciation. That's my standpoint so don't you call me a white-washed twinkie mother (bleep)! What have I ever done to you that makes . . .

Student #2 Because I sat in this class and had to listen to you say all black people were muggers. I sat there and had to listen to that crap!

Student #5: You want to know why?

Student #2: I don't care. I don't care whatever reason. I had to sit there and listen to that crap!

Student #5: Don't you remember the professor and I were having that conversation? You're saying that deep in my heart I think the white man's better than me.

Student #2: I think a lot of times what you say in class it comes out that way...

Student #5: Professor Wong. What do you think.?

(Shawn Wong enters scene): Hold it. I don't want to stop this conversation, but another group is coming into the classroom.

Student #5: Can we yell in the hallway?

Wong: You can yell outside, yell in the hallway, but probably a better more constructive way is to deal with it in class.

Student #5: Because I feel I've done him a wrong.

Student #2: You have.

Narrator: SHAWN WONG IS ONE OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS OF ASIAN-AMERICAN STUDIES.

Wong (over drag racing scene): You might say I've got the fastest cars in the English Department.

Narrator: HE'S A NOVELIST, CAR RACER . . . AND RECENTLY PROMOTED TO FULL PROFESSOR IN THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON.

Wong (reading from his novel) You know the sexiest thing about you Raymond? This was Aurora's trap. She told Raymond men were scum then pushed an idea towards him that he could not resist. She never asked questions that were soft and open ended like what are you thinking honey...

Narrator: SHAWN WONG DIRECTS THE CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON. AND JUST AS ITS RARE TO FIND A CHINESE-AMERICAN PROFESSOR OUTSIDE OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING DEPARTMENTS, WONG HAS WRITTEN AN UNUSUAL NOVEL ABOUT LOVERS TALKING . . . ASIAN-AMERICAN LOVERS.

Wong: (reading): Do you remember the first time we made love? On the phone. . . .

Wong (voice over): The stereotype of Asians in America is that we are exotic, mysterious and silent. and so for the first time in literature we have an Asian man talking to an Asian woman about their relationship. What a concept. (giggle.)

Wong: (voice over): If you look in the media, Asian men and Asian women don't talk about their relationships at all. Nor do we fall in love or have sex or have a normal relationship.

Wong (voice over book signing scene): "American Knees," by the way, comes from an expression I heard in growing up as a kid in the schoolyard. Kids would come up to me and say what are you Chinese, Japanese or Americanese.? . . . (.Priscilla) . . . I don't know exactly what that meant at the beginning, but I thought whatever it is I didn't like it.

Student: I did read "American Knees," actually, I didn't read the other two that were published, but I liked that you had one of the characters be biracial because that was something I could relate to. Another thing I'd like to point out is that the main characters don't only talk about sex, they actually have it.(laughter)..which is different.

Narrator: IN THIS ASIAN-AMERICAN STUDIES CLASS STUDENTS WRESTLE WITH THE ISSUES WONG'S NOVEL ADDRESSES. COMPLEX ISSUES OF IDENTITY AND PREJUDICE.

Student (continues): There seems to be a lot of argument about what it means to be Asian-American and I just wondered what your opinion of that was. What does it mean?

Wong (in classroom): Asian-American is obviously a political term. It was a term of self-determination that described not only your sense of self but a political sense of self too . . . as a person that belonged to a larger community. One that is defined by your experience in America..

Narrator: (over photo of him as student; photo at typewriter): THE TERM ASIAN-AMERICAN WAS BRAND-NEW BACK IN THE LATE 1960S WHEN WONG WAS THE ONLY ASIAN MALE AMONG A THOUSAND OR MORE ENGLISH LITERATURE MAJORS AT BERKELEY. HE WAS ALREADY WRITING FICTION AND DETERMINED TO FIND OTHER ASIAN-AMERICAN WRITERS.

Wong: (voice over scene at computer): I decided I would major in something called Asian American literature except there were no teachers, no assignments, no credits, no classes...I just had to know if there was a generation of writers before me, because I wanted to learn from them.

(In Classroom): What if there were no Asian-American studies classes?

Narrator: WONG STARTED OUT ON A JOURNEY THAT WOULD OPEN UP A NEW FIELD OF STUDY.THE FIRST CHALLENGE WAS TO FIND ASIAN-AMERICAN AUTHORS.

Wong (in classroom): I was the only Chinese-American writer I knew.

Narrator: HE DID THE LOGICAL THING; HE ASKED HIS ENGLISH PROFESSORS FOR HELP.

Wong (in classroom): So one of my professors thought, Well you know there are these Tang Dynasty poets that wrote in China in 5 million B.C. So I went to the library and I looked up the Tang Dynasty poets and I read their poetry. And they wrote about drinking wine and falling drunk into the river. And this was l969, I had already done all that already . . . (laughter)

Narrator: WONG AND AN ASPIRING WRITER FRIEND, FRANK CHIN, SEARCHED USED-BOOK STORES FOR ANYTHING THAT MIGHT SOUND ASIAN-AMERICAN.

Wong (in classroom): I found Fu Manchu books, I found Charlie Chan books, books called "Rickshaw Boy" . . . I have the largest collection of racist Asian books.

Narrator: ONE DAY THEY DISCOVERED SOMETHING DIFFERENT.

Wong (in classroom): We found a book called "Yokohama, California" by Toshio Mori.

Narrator: FINDING TOSHIO MORI'S COLLECTION OF STORIES WAS LIKE FINDING THE FIRST RELIC IN AN ARCHEOLOGICAL DIG, ONLY THE TOOL THEY USED NEXT WAS THE TELEPHONE.

Wong: (in classroom): So he gets out the Oakland-San Leandro phone book, flips through the pages. There's Toshio Mori's name in the phone book So he calls him up. Is this Toshio Mori . . . the writer? . . . pause . . . Yes . . . then Frank says we just read your book, we'd like to come over and interview you. We couldn't believe we'd be the only people to actually sit down and write fiction or poetry or whatever. There had to be an older generation out there and Toshio Mori was our first discovery in that older generation.

Narrator: WONG AND HIS LITERARY DETECTIVE TEAM RECOVERED, PUBLISHED AND CELEBRATED A SEMINAL GROUP OF ASIANAMERICAN AUTHORS WHO HAD LANGUISHED IN OBSCURITY.PEOPLE LIKE TOSHIO MORI, HISAYE YAMAMOTO, WAKAKO YAMAUCHI AND JOHN OKADA. WONG'S TEAM WAS ALSO WRITING AND PUBLISHING THEMSELVES.

Wong: (voice over): It was important to me to find Asian-American writers to see if they wrote about the same things that I was concerned about growing up in America . . . did they write about an Asian-American sensibility in their literature?

(In Classroom): This was our literary scholarship of the day. Find out where they live; Call them up on the phone go visit them.

Narrator: WONG'S PERSONAL SEARCH FOR ASIAN-AMERICAN WRITERS HAS INTRODUCED NEW VOICES AND NEW KNOWLEDGE INTO UNIVERSITY CLASSROOMS ACROSS THE COUNTRY. AT THE AGE OF TWENTY-TWO HE TAUGHT ONE OF THE FIRST COURSES IN ASIAN-AMERICAN STUDIES. IT'S THIS WORK BY MINORITY SCHOLARS THAT INVIGORATES THE IVORY TOWER.

Music over shots of students on various campuses.

Darlene Clark Hine: (voice over, on camera in car): If we want a new world I think we have to make new people; and I look upon students as new people in the making; and we have to teach them a new history.

Hine (voice over archival footage of Kent State campus violence): I was at Kent State. I was standing right there on that hill. I was a graduate student at Kent State when that happened. And I thought I needed to observe this because I thought, Well, you know, you're going to be a historian, you need to see things. You need to be a witness. And I never ever expected that the guardsmen would open fire and kill people. Kill people like me. (on camera): and I almost shut down emotionally, intellectually. It didn't make any sense. I went into exile into the library.

Narrator: FOR DARLENE CLARK HINE THE LIBRARY AT KENT STATE YIELDED A DISSERTATION ON AFRICAN-AMERICAN LEGAL HISTORY.

Student at convention: Hi, my name is Mathew Whittaker. I'm one of Dr. Wanda Hendricks's students at Arizona State. She told me if I came up here to make sure I got to meet you.

Narrator: TODAY, TWENTY YEARS LATER, SHE'S AT THE TOP OF HER PROFESSION;

Student (Mathew Whittaker): Actually, meeting you is one of the main reasons I came.

Hine: Is that right?

Whittaker: Yeh, I really admire your work.

Hine: Well, thank you.

Narrator: HERE AT THE CONVENTION OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN HISTORIANS SHE'S SOUGHT OUT BY A NEW GENERATION OF SCHOLARS. HINE IS PART OF THE FIRST GENERATION OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN SCHOLARS TO BREAK THROUGH TO A WORLD THAT IS STILL MOSTLY WHITE.

Hine: (embracing a group of professors): All my Kent State professors.

Narrator: IT IS THROUGH THIS WORLD THAT YOUNG AFRICAN-AMERICAN SCHOLARS MUST LEARN TO NAVIGATE, SEEK MENTORS, TO SEARCH FOR ALLIES.

Whittaker (approaching another professor, Nell Painter): I just wanted to tell you that I really enjoy your work and everything and I just wanted to meet you, let you know I appreciate it.

Narrator: HINE AND HER COLLEAGUES FIGHT TO INCLUDE AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY AS AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE AMERICAN PAST. BUT IN HISTORY AS IN OTHER DISCIPLINES, CHANGE DOESN'T COME EASILY.

Hine (voice over): It takes a long time for historians to embrace new interpretations of the past.

Professor: He did a lot of the presidents.

Whittaker: Hi. My name is Mathew Whittaker

Hine (on camera at convention): People who have invested their life work in creating or constructing a certain vision of American history are not just going to lie back and die and say, Okay you're right, you Young Turks, just take it and go with it. I was wrong.

Narrator: THE WAY IN WHICH HISTORIANS VIEW THE AMERICAN PAST IS SLOWLY BEING ALTERED; FOR HINE THE TRANSFORMATION BEGAN IN AUGUST 1980 WHEN SHE RECEIVED A PHONE CALL THAT WOULD CHANGE HER LIFE AND THE FIELD OF AMERICAN HISTORY FOREVER.

Hine (on camera with photos of Mrs. Herd): and she said, Well I'm Shirley Heard and I'm a teacher in the public school system in Indianapolis, Indiana. And I'm calling because I want you to write a history of black women in Indiana. So I said to her, Mrs. Heard, you cannot call up a historian and order a book the way you would drive up to a Wendy's and order a hamburger. We historians do not work like that. And Mrs. Herd was undaunted. I said, Mrs. Herd, I cannot write a history of black women in Indiana because I don't know anything about black women. and she said to me in that black woman's voice and I knew that she had her hand on her hip. and she said. Let me get this straight. I said yes. She said: You are a black woman, aren't you? I said yes. She said you are a historian, aren't you? I said yes. And she said, Now you mean to tell me that you can't put those two things together and write a history of black women in Indiana? and I was dumfounded, stupefied.

(v.o. over photographs; music) Because historians can write a history of anything of anyone but the key is the historian must decide that that thing, event or person or group is worthy of historical investigation, and apparently no one had ever thought black women in Indiana were worth studying. . . . And it was as if I had entered another universe. A universe that I had never known existed. . . . And that was the beginning of my commitment to telling the truth, to lifting the veil, to shattering the silence about black women in American history.

Narrator: BY LISTENING TO VOICES THAT HAD NOT BEEN HEARD HINE HELPED TO CREATE A FIELD THAT DID NOT EXIST FIFTEEN YEARS AGO -- AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN'S HISTORY.

Scene at convention: Woman: I just love the sassiness.

Hine: Black women with an attitude.

Narrator: SHE'S WRITTEN THREE BOOKS ON THE SUBJECT AND EDITED THE FIRST MAJO ENCYCLOPOEDIA ON BLACK WOMEN IN AMERICA.

Another woman professor at booth: I've used your materials. . . .

Narrator: HINE'S WORK IN MAKING AMERICAN HISTORY MORE INCLUSIVE IS ECHOED BY OTHER MINORITY SCHOLARS. FOR EXAMPLE, SHAWN WONG'S LITERARY MISSION SPILLED OVER INTO HISTORY AS WELL.

Librarian: About 450 cubic feet of records from INS

Narrator: HE HAS CONTINUALLY ENCOURAGED STUDENTS TO DO ORIGINAL RESEARCH ABOUT ASIAN-AMERICANS.

Student: Well it's a forged document.

Narrator: RECENTLY, WONG HELPED TO RESCUE THESE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT FILES. THEY DOCUMENT THE FIFTY-YEAR PERIOD WHEN CHINESE IMMIGRANTS WERE ROUTINELY DENIED CITIZENSHIP IN THE UNITED STATES.

Wong (voice over photos in record book): The pictures themselves tell an interesting story. We're so used to -- especially in history books -- not seeing individuals. We hear about laws and periods of history but we very rarely focus -- other than famous people --we rarely focus on the average immigrant. We can see what a great record this is and we can begin to put together our story of Chinese in America.

Hine: I think scholars of color have enriched just about every discipline because of the new questions they have asked and the new approaches they have undertaken.

Music and scenes of West Side of Chicago

Hine (in Classroom): Just off the top of your head. What are the dangerous populations in American right now?

Student: The unwed mothers living in inner cities living off the public dole are a dangerous group.

Hine: We're talking about perceptions, stereotypes...

Narrator: TODAY HINE IS THE JOHN HANNAH PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY. IN THE CLASSROOM SHE CHALLENGES HER STUDENTS TO USE THEIR OWN EXPERIENCES TO LOOK AT HISTORY IN NEW WAYS.

Hine (in classroom): Gangs, adolescents; young black males in hooded t-shirts and sweatshirts. . . .

Narrator: RECENTLY DR. HINE WENT TO THE WEST SIDE OF CHICAGO TO REVISIT HER OWN HISTORICAL ROOTS.

Hine (on camera on street): 2141 West Warren Boulevard. Here we had an extended family; it was more like a community, a family compound, a collective. We had all of these adults around us. Our mother and father, our aunts and uncles. The only one left is my uncle Tip . . . (greeting at door).

Narrator: FOR HINE GROWING UP IN THE 1960'S CHICAGO WAS A DIFFERENT PLACE...IT WAS A COMMUNITY OF NEIGHBORS . . . A COMMUNITY THAT CARED.

Hine (to Tip): You look a little like Uncle Remus . . . (laughter. driving): I remember walking down this street; this short street; the houses were so well kept and so beautiful. (Greeting Sunday-school teacher).

Narrator: THE METROPOLITAN BAPTIST CHURCH WAS A CORNERSTONE OF HINE'S COMMUNITY.

Hine: My Sunday school teacher! I have not been back in 30 years. Can you forgive me?

Narrator: BUT IN THE 1960'S HINE -- LIKE MANY OTHERS -- WAS TORN BETWEEN THE TRADITIONALISM OF THE PAST AND THE RADICALISM OF THE TIMES . . .

Hine: When I was searching for some way to make a contribution to the whole movement for social justice I came across the Black Panther Party's Ten Point Program. It was the fifth point that really struck me. The fifth point said we want a true education for our people. and I said. Wow! That's it!

(In classroom): At some fundamental level we have to discover what unites us as human beings and I hope that this is what history ultimately will teach.

Music and home movies of Robin Kelley as young boy.

Kelley (voice over): I grew up in a household where my mother encouraged me to do whatever I wanted to do. If you want to be a poet, an artist, a writer, she always encouraged me. My sister and I were first generation college graduates and that has a lot to do with my mother's upbringing. She said do what you want to do.
Narrator: ROBIN KELLY IS A RISING STAR IN AMERICAN HISTORY. AT THE AGE OF 34 HE HAS PUBLISHED THREE BOOKS OF GROUND-BREAKING SCHOLARSHIP.

(Preschool children dancing to music) Kelley: How you guys doing today?

Narrator: KELLY'S WORK RANGES FROM HIP-HOP CULTURE TO BLACK COMMUNISTS IN ALABAMA; FROM MALCOLM X TO SOCIALISM IN AFRICA.

Kelley: Does anyone know what a professor does?

Child #1: Sometimes they do magic tricks like magicians who are professors.

Child #2: They write books.

Kelley: I went to my daughter's school to share my work with these kids. and I thought it would be fun to let these kids know what I do for a living; (I teach history); and also convey a sense of what history is to young people.

Child #3: What happened a long time ago.

Kelley: (on camera): In high school I was a mediocre student, I used to hang out with my friends all the time; my car was more important than anything else; my hair was really important, but school was not.

(In preschool): This is a picture of me bald . . . (laughter).

(Voice over): I hadn't the slightest idea that professors actually wrote books, I thought they were extensions of high-school teachers.

(In preschool): Sometimes professors who are historians which is what I am, write books about history.

(Voice over): I wanted to write about strategies of resistance and strategies that can change America.

Narrator: IN THE UNIVERSITY, PUBLISHING A FIRST BOOK CAN MAKE OR BREAK A CAREER. FOR KELLY THE MENTORSHIP OF NELL PAINTER -- AN ESTABLISHED SCHOLAR -- WAS KEY.

Painter: Robin first came into my life in a dissertation about this thick.

Kelley: and I sent her this huge 690 page dissertation. It just came out the blue and she's a very busy person.

Painter: and I read the big thing and I made some suggestions.

Kelley: She took time to not only read it but to put multi-colored post-its on each page.

Painter: and I made some suggestions for publication as well.

Kelley: She's responsible for virtually every good thin that happened to me in the academy.

Painter: I am not responsible for all the good things in Robin Kelley's career. RK is wonderfully able and he's just a terrific historian. (Classroom): re really isolated.

Student: Some of the middleclass black leaders.

Narrator: KELLEY IS COMPLETING HIS SECOND YEAR AS THE YOUNGEST FULL PROFESOR AT NEW YORK UNIVERSITY.

Kelley (In classroom): It is truth though, the people who bought the "Negro World," who paid their dues. . . .

Narrator: HE IS ONE OF ONLY THREE AFRICAN AMERICANS IN A FIFTY-MEMBER HISTORY DEPARTMENT.

Kelley (voice over): I think you have to do what you want to do and do what is engaging to you. (on camera): Part of my interest in going into academia was reform. I've seen too many students in huge classes just going through the motions without any intellectual engagement at all.

(In classroom): What was the attraction to Garvey? It wasn't the genetic link that when you're on a dance floor suddenly your African instincts come out.

Student: ****** freedom for them.

Kelley (in classroom): Brilliant. You know what you did? You just answered the first question I asked.

Kelley (voice over): I like to think that my own work has kind of forced historians, irrespective of race, to sort of rethink our assumptions about politics, about resistance, whatever, I think that's one important reason for us being here as scholars.

Man at conference: and I wanted to ask if you draw some kind of distinction or connection...

Narrator: EVERY YEAR KELLY GIVES MORE THAN EIGHTY SPEECHES AROUND THE COUNTRY TO TAKE HIS WORK BEYOND THE CLASSROOM.

Kelley (at panel): My main mentor was social movement. I think if it wasn't for politics I wouldn't be a faculty member. I wouldn't be anything but working with my colleagues at McDonald's.

(voice over): It's hard to say no to events and projects with which I'm politically sympathetic. Part of it has to do with coming from a working class family, you know, in trying to bring in the voices of ordinary people and their struggles into the story.

(At another panel) and I also hope we might think about bringing back that old slogan: the abolition of every possibility of oppression and exploitation. Thank you . . . (applause)

Narrator: KELLY'S WORK HAS FOCUSED ON NEGLECTED POLITICAL MOVEMENTS IN HISTORY. HIS WORK OFTEN CHALLENGES THE ESTABLISHED SCHOLARSHIP IN THE FIELD. BUT IN THE WORLD OF THE UNIVERSITY IT IS OFTEN ESSENTIAL THAT CHALLENGING IDEAS NOT BE COUPLED WITH A CHALLENGING PERSONALITY.

Kelly (at lunch): I'm working harder now than ever in my life.

(voice over): A lot of colleagues -- white colleagues, they feel that I'm safe. I speak their language. Because of that level of comfort it leaves in me a certain sense of discomfort. A discomfort with myself for not being as threatening and challenging as I'd like to be. Because I really want to be more of a threat. I want people to be afraid of me. Oh yeah, that's Robin Kelley coming down the street. He's the one. He's the one that wrote that book. But they don't really have that attitude toward me.

Narrator: BECAUSE THERE ARE SO FEW YOUNG MINORITY PROFESSORS THE DEMANDS CAN BE OVERWHELMING. AT THE SAME TIME, EVEN THE MOST SUCCESSFUL ARE SOMETIMES HAUNTED BY SELF DOUBT.

Kelley (on camera): But that's part of the drive. Constantly trying to prove to my colleagues that I do deserve to be a full professor, that I do deserve whatever I've got. But the mere fact that I bring it up means I'm not really sure.

Music and shots of students

Darlene Clark Hine: There is a very real cultural war going on in this country right now and we're all part of it.

Narrator: NEW SCHOLARS BRING NEW IDEAS TO UNIVERSITIES. IDEAS THAT CAN CHALLENGE THE VERY FOUNDATIONS OF THE IVORY TOWER. TODAY THE BATTLE OVER WHAT STUDENTS WILL BE TAUGHT HAS ERUPTED INTO AN ACADEMIC WAR.

Robin Kelley: (on camera) The cultural wars started as a reaction to multiculturalism. Multiculturalism was an effort to revise the curriculum. To think about what makes up great literature . . . people would try to introduce other writers and other voices. To say that the creation of western culture or world culture includes Africans and Asians or Asian-Americans and Latinos.

John Searle (on camera): I think it's a good idea to include excellent works from any tradition if we're trying to give our students a sense of intellectual quality. By all means. Let's bring in works from other traditions. But the idea of teaching works just because they are representative, no. Then you've shifted the conception of education from the humanistic to the anthropological.

Kelley (on camera): This is not the first time higher education has been challenged or overturned, you know. The idea of American literature period, whether it's white males like Mark Twain -- entering the canon -- that was a power struggle.

Searle: I think the idea of opening up area studies is terrific. But you have to make it clear. These are area studies. They are not political causes to be advanced, nor are they a means of providing employment for people who would otherwise have difficulty getting academic employment.

Kelley: The point is, Who makes the determination as to what is great literature or great scholarship. America is becoming more of a non-white country. and the more it does the more intense these battles will be.

Hear chanting over shots of the Lower East side streets.

Miguel Algarin: Chanting . . . It's the chant. It's the Nuyorican Poets' Cafe chant. (More chanting) . . . Our first poet for the evening is . . .

(at microphone in cafe): My name is Miguel Algarin

Narrator: MIGUEL ALGARIN TEACHES IN TWO WORLDS -- HERE ON THE LOWER EAST SIDE OF NEW YORK CITY HE INSTRUCTS AND INSPIRES YOUNG WRITERS AT THE NUYORICAN POETS CAFE. AT RUTGERS UNIVERSITY HE IS A PROFESSOR IN THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT. BORN IN PUERTO RICO AND RAISED IN NEW YORK; ALGARIN BEGAN HIS COMMITMENT TO THESE TWO WORLDS OVER TWENTY YEARS AGO.

(on camera): I was living on 6th Street and friends were collecting around my house. It would be three or four o'clock in the morning and I would have an 8 o'clock class at Rutgers. So oftentimes I wouldn't even be going to bed. I would shower, get dressed, take a train and teach. I realized I had to get these people out of my living

room; I was truly physically and mentally exhausted. That's how this thing happened. I wanted to get myself some rest.

Narrator: IN 1974 ALGARIN FOUNDED THE NUYORICAN POETS CAFE. HE'S NURTURED A NEW GENERATION OF POETS AND HELPED TO CREATE AN EXPLOSION OF INTEREST IN THE SPOKEN AND WRITTEN WORD.

Young woman at microphone: Good evening everyone; welcome to the open slam at the Nuyorican Poets' Cafe.

Poet #1: Your children think everything is fine under the sun, so long as they have their 40 ounce of malt liquor and gold teeth in their gums . . .

Poet #2: Ranging with brilliance, forever lost.

Algarin (voice over): I think that what you're seeing is young people using language to express the stress of living on the tar and concrete of the cities.

Poet #3: I am the silencer on the gun that will eventually shoot you dead. I am the claw that will scratch you from existence. I am the emotion moving over you like pestilence. I am you. I am you. I am you. My name is loneliness . . . (applause and yelling) . . .

Narrator: ALGARIN'S MISSION WITH THE NUYORICAN POETS' CAFE IS TO BRING HIS WORK FROM THE UNIVERSITY TO THE COMMUNITY. HE REVERSES THE PROCESS BY BRINGING EXCITING NEW POETS TO HIS ETHNIC LITERATURE CLASS AT RUTGERS.

Graphic: New Brunswick, New Jersey

Algarin (in classroom): Carl Hancock Rux is the recipient of the 1994 Fresh poetry award...He was selected by the New York Times Magazine critics as one of the thirty artists under the age of thirty likely to influence culture over the next thirty years . . . so ladies and gentlemen I leave you with Carl Hancock Rux . . . (applause)

Rux (reciting): Dancing to your earth, to your wind, to your fire . . . hopping back to you . . . you and me twist a lime in a drop, a Corona and a dime in our pockets . . . suck them lips.

Algarin: By bringing in the live writer is a question of demonstrating that literature can lift off the page onto the body and be performed.

Rux: You was a red light district, borders of my mind . . . I was up, up, up . . .

Algarin (voice over): So that the idea of this course is to enliven literature.

Rux: Soon baby soon. You said soon baby soon. Now circa 1989. The only erection to enter your flesh was a syringe ejaculating AZT going all up up up in you . . . (applause)

Narrator: AFTER THE ETHNIC LITERATURE CLASS ALGARIN MOVES UPSTAIRS TO TEACH HIS SECOND CLASS OF THE DAY.

Algarin: Now is one of the great moments in literature.

Narrator: ONCE AGAIN HE INSPIRES HIS STUDENTS TO DISCOVER THE POWER OF THE WRITTEN WORD.

Student #1: Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears. I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him. The noble Brutus told you Caesar was ambitious . . .

Algarin (v.o): Slower.

Student #1: If it were so, it was a grievous fault.

Algarin (on camera): I tell them something very simple. Look at Shakespeare not as impenetrable but penetrable. Remember, a classic is a classic not because it's difficult but because it has been able to be read year after year after year. Therefore, it's a classic because it is transparent. It is clear.

Student #1: You, who you all know are honorable men.

Algarin: Okay. Stop. Take it from the beginning. Because, you know that was off. You know that was off.

(on camera): They have to hit an emotion. If they don't hit an emotion, I stop it and have it done again. The moment they hit an emotion, I don't have to philosophize about what Shakespeare meant. Because they hit the emotion and the emotion is the philosophy, is the understanding.

Student #2: If thou consider rightly in the matter, Caesar has done great wrong.

Student #3: Has he masters? I fear that a worse come in his place.

Student #4: Mark ye his words, he would not take the crown. Therefore it was a certain he was not ambitious.

Student #5: If it be though so . . .

Algarin (voice over): There's nothing in Shakespeare that is not translatable to human terms.

(on camera): Othello, which is our next Shakespeare production, who is Othello? Well he's O.J. Simpson. You know, I'm not making it up.

Student #6: Here comes his body. . . . borne by Mark Anthony, though he had no hand in his death, shall receive the benefit of his dying.

Algarin (in classroom): The moment that you decide to let him talk, you have given your enemy the weapon most useful in the world. The tongue. The capacity to sway the passions of men. (voice over): I came from a family where culture prevailed. My mother was a composer of music, torchy passionate songs about love. I would say, Mom, where does it come from? My folks gave me a love of culture; culture existed in my house.

Algarin: So that there is nothing surprising about Shakespeare being in my life; It would be surprising if he weren't. and he works for me and I work for him.

(In classroom): Oh yes, he wants to do Hamlet; she wants to do Hamlet. Can the two of you get in touch and split it?

(voice over): Both Shakespeare and, if I may use my name in the same sentence as old Willy, the great Bard. He wanted to have a place to tell the story of England . . . (on camera:): . . . so I wanted to have a place in which to tell the story of the Lower East Side.

Affirmative Action rally at UC Berkeley:

Speaker at podium: This is a national issue as well as a local issue . . .

Narrator: DESPITE THE SMALL NUMBERS OF MINORITY PROFESSORS, THERE IS AN EFFORT TO ROLL BACK AFFIRMATIVE ACTION.

Speaker: It is not a quota system

Narrator: THE DEBATE RAGES ON CAMPUSES ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

Speaker: Affirmative Action has been good for minorities and women . . .

Narrator: IT'S AN ISSUE THAT ROBIN KELLEY THINKS IS MISUNDERSTOOD.

Robin Kelley: . . . Affirmative action which is very short lived. And if you think about the history, It hasn't been around that long and it's about to be eliminated; it wasn't about promoting or providing opportunities to students who can't compete. On the contrary it's about policing institutions that would not allow students of color who can compete into those institutions.

Narrator: AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA THE REGENTS HAVE ALREADY RADICALLY ALTERED AFFIRMATIVE ACITON. ALEX SARAGOZA SEES THIS AS PART OF THE MASSIVE ASSAULT ON SOCIAL PROGRAMS THAT IS SWEEPING THE COUNTRY.

Alex Saragoza: We can't get away from an important issue and that is why now? We're having this struggle over issues of race and so on because of the times . . . (chiming of clock)

Narrator: WITHOUT AFFIRMATIVE ACTION THERE WILL BE FEWER MINORITY STUDENTS IN THE PIPELINE; CONSEQUENTLY FEWER MINORITY SCHOLARS IN THE FUTURE. SARAGOZA SEES THE DISMANTLING OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AS COMING TOO SOON.

Saragoza: I don't think it's a coincidence. I mean, we are nowhere near parity. I mean, if people would tell me that we are, in fact, at that point now where the University of California reflects its population in terms of numbers of graduate students, undergraduates, faculty and so on, then I'd be the first to say we don't need affirmative action.

Narrator: AT PRINCETON, NELL PAINTER HAS SEEN HOW THE PERCEPTION OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION CAN BE MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE REALITY.

Nell Painter: I remember being at a history meeting a couple of years ago and a couple of white men, graduate students, standing up saying they'd never get a job because there was a black woman and she'd get all the jobs or they'd get all the jobs. and I looked back at the figures and there are more white men getting Ph.D.'s every year than there are black women ever. So it's like there are all these black women out taking the jobs from them and the worst thing is that all those black women are unqualified and all those white men are qualified. So I think it's the sense that really white people belong on top and they shouldn't have to give up anything for anybody.

John Searle: What has evolved is very simple. If you're given a choice in faculty hiring between a superior white male let's say and a not so good minority, member of a targeted minority. you're supposed to choose the less qualified person. That I think is outrageous. There's a name for that. That's called discrimination. That's racial and sexual discrimination and that's what affirmative action has come to mean.

Narrator: FOR THOSE AT THE UNIVERSITY -- SO CLOSE TO THE DEBATE -- AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IS OFTEN SEEN THROUGH THE LENS OF THEIR OWN EXPERIENCE.

Gloria Cuadraz: I am a beneficiary of affirmative action programs. I believe in them. They do work. And I would say if I had to bet on it, we're not all that bad. We become good citizens. We pay taxes. We buy homes. Why

wouldn't they want to create more of us? That's the question I ask myself. The scholarships, the state aid that I've received I think has paid off. I give it back and then some.

(at night, giving tour of university): It was built in 1990

Narrator: IT IS SEVEN OCLOCK AND GLORIA CUADRAZ IS GUIDING A GROUP OF HISPANIC HIGHSCHOOL GIRLS AND THEIR MOTHERS AROUND CAMPUS. IT'S PART OF HER MISSION TO EXPAND THE PIPELINE OF MINORITY STUDENTS.

Cuadras (to girls): So you're all first generation, then, college students? (in library): Can you explain the facilities here? (voice over): I'm very concerned with the low number of students we have, for example, students of color at ASU West; and that's the case anywhere and that's what needs to change and that's why our presence is important, to the extent that we serve as role models.

(walking with two women): So I was your first Chicano professor?

Narrator: CUADRAZ ALSO PUTS IN EXTRA HOURS TO MENTOR MINORITY STUDENTS. ALICIA GARCIA AND BELINDA QUINTANA ARE GETTING HE LP FROM HER WITH THEIR APPLICATIONS TO GRADUATE SCHOOL

Alicia Garcia: Just by happenstance I found a notice on the bulletin board out by the parking lot and I went home, called the number and they said as a matter of fact we're looking for one more person to be mentored with a Doctor Gloria Cuadraz. And I said a female? A Chicana? Wonderful! Where do I sign?

Cuadraz: We spent the first meeting talking about the similarities between her background and mine. It's about humanizing the institution. and that's not something I think that's a cultivated value in the academy. and if there's a difference we make it's being able to make that connection with students.

(in Classroom): What I ended up with was a case study with Chicanos and Chicanas who had . . .

Narrator: THE NEAR MISS THAT CUADRAZ EXPERIENCED AT BERKELEY INFLUENCED HER RESEARCH AND WRITING. IN STUDYING THE RECORD OF MEXICAN AMERICANS AT GRADUATE SCHOOL SHE DISCOVERED THAT ALTHOUGH THEY COMPRISED MORE THAN TWENTY-FIVE PERCENT OF CALIFORNIA'S POPULATION, THEY WERE RECEIVING ONLY 1 PERCENT OF THE PH.D.'S.

(in classroom): One hundred and twenty were awarded to people of Mexican descent. (sigh) Now it's a little hard to believe because of the fury over the debate about how much progress has been made and how many jobs have been taken away.

Narrator: TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF MINORITY PH.D'.S CUADRAZ WORKS ALL STAGES OF THE PIPELINE. . .

Cuadraz (in meeting): How is it that you can have a pool of candidates. . .

Narrator: . . . FROM GETTING MORE MINORITY STUDENTS INTO THE UNIVERSITY, MENTORING THOSE THAT ARE THERE AND LOBBYING FOR MINORITY ADMINISTRATORS.

Cuadraz (in meeting): . . . nine Latinos in the pool and not have one surface?

Narrator: HAVING MINORITIES IN SENIOR POSITIONS CAN PROVIDE CRUCIAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS AND FACULTY.

Professor: We don't' have anybody at the level of chair, dean...

Narrator: CUADRAZ'S SPECIAL CONCERN IS THAT LATINAS ARE IN THE RUNNING.

Cuadraz: and they had left out the Latina again. (on camera) One of the difficulties here has been having minority candidates seriously considered for positions. And so part of the invisible work are the calls that you have to make. Getting on the phone and saying, Look I really would like you to take a look at this pool of candidates. (on telephone): This is my co-chair. (voice over): It's lobbying. It's political work. It's making the calls to make sure that certain things are represented. And that's where the invisibility comes in. Everyone serves on committees. Some more than others. Okay. But the Invisible work comes in when you take some of this work seriously. And you really want to see some things change and move. (on camera): Twelve o-clock class.

Narrator: THE LONG HOURS OF THIS INVISIBLE WORK COMBINED WITH THE VISIBLE WORK OF TEACHING EATS AWAY AT THE TIME CUADRAZ NEEDS FOR RESEARCH AND WRITING.

Cuadraz (voice over): . . . presentation from candidates for provost search and then at about 2 o'clock . . .

Narrator: IN THE WORLD OF PUBLISH OR PERISH IT'S HER WRITING THAT IS VALUED WHEN SHE COMES UP FOR TENURE OR PROMOTION.

Cuadraz: I have seen colleagues, Chicanas, Latinas, constantly working and so in demand by the needs of the institution that they are not able to submit their research in time to get tenure.

Narrator: ALL THE MENTORING, LOBBYING AND COMMITTEE WORK THAT FALLS ON THE SHOULDERS OF THE FEW MINORITY SCHOLARS CAN TRANSLATE INTO THE LOSS OF A PERSONAL LIFE. FOR WOMEN IT OFTEN MEANS A LIFE ALONE.

Cuadraz: (voice over): I found him in Colorado. But he doesn't know how to come or stay. (on camera with dog): I told her that we were waiting for his blanket. Because when I talked to her last week she said she was making baby blankets. And I said Mom, where's Tito's blanket.? He's a baby too?

Women w/ Cuadraz in kitchen: I want to share some of that food now. We're multicultural. (lots of laughter)

Cuadraz (voice over; on camera): My family of friends is as important to me as my family of origin. Because I'm the only one that left my hometown, I'm the only one that never got married, that never had children. And that's in a family of eight, seven girls, one boy. As traditional as you can get.

Celia Alvarez: How many times did my dad sit me down at Christmas to give me the rules to get a man.

Laura Rendon: What we have to do is construct a new family.

Narrator: CELIA ALVAREZ AND LAURA RENDON ARE COLLEAGUES AT ARIZONA STATE..

Rendon: and that's the kind of family for example that I find with you because if I go home to my real family in Laredo, I remember when I was there this Christmas and I took copies of my book, my first book that I'm very proud about and my dad took a look at it and said okay, Let's go eat. (laughter). And my mother said, Oh this is very nice but I can't read it, I don't know how to read English. I said I know, Mom. That's okay. I just wanted to bring it to you so you kind of know what I do.

Narrator: ISSUES OF FAMILY VS. SCHOLARSHIP CONFRONT ALL FACULTY, BUT MINORITY WOMEN ARE ESPECIALLY VULNERABLE.

Cuadraz (voice over): I have the tenure clock ticking the same time I have the biological clock ticking and I may be forced to choose and I think I know which one I'm going to choose. The tenure clock.

Darlene Clark Hine (on camera): My generation of black women academicians and women of color academicians is really a sacrificial generation. (voice over): You're isolated in terms of geography very often; most of the colleges and universities, especially the big ten colleges and universities are located in small white towns. (on camera): Most of my generation of black women historians are unmarried and the possibility of finding someone to share the life on a personal, intimate, sensual level is not there for them. And we'll never have children; and we'll never have husbands or significant others in that traditional, idealistic way. (with students in cafeteria): How has . . . how has having a baby affected your work?

Student: Well it's been harder than I thought, because I thought when I had the baby that she'd just lay there for the first six months and I'd get a lot of work done..(laughter) . . . You had kids, you could have told me this. (laughter).

Hine: So you become happy by working and being successful but the profession at some level can't provide it all so you need not only the sensual, but you need the spiritual. Blues, for example, I love blues, and I play blues a lot. I think blues is about the best thing black people ever created and blues has really sustained me so when I go home and put on Coco Taylor, Albert King, Bo Diddley. It's alright. It's alright.

Narrator: THE PROXIMITY OF RUTGERS UNIVERSITY TO INNER CITY NEW YORK HAS ENABLED MIGUEL ALGARIN TO AVOID THE ISOLATION THAT IS SO COMMON TO OTHER MINORITY PROFESSORS.

Miguel Algarin: (voice over): I'm not isolated. I live in my community. This is my place.-- Toma, Toma --I walk outside and I talk to the people.

(voice from street): Get outta here!

Algarin (on camera): What we do here continues into the academy. Art does not get removed. Art, great literature lives. It's not between covers. It lives. (voice over): The spark that keeps me going is that I enjoy the morning light coming up and that I can go to school and teach the children of the janitors, the judges, the lawyers and doctors of Jersey their culture and then come back and create mine.

Music and images of students

Cuadraz (voice over): I think if we're talking about an institution that's going to meet the needs of the 21st century we're talking about institutions that need to care more about the students.

Music: Graphic: Office Hours

SOT: We're not going to make it on this elevator

Robin Kelley (voice over): I get a lot of students coming through my office hours . . . ("What's Up?") A lot of African-American students, of course, who kind of identify with me as a role model. I get a lot of white students. For me, I think, part of it has to do with age. ("Who's next?"). These students sort of see me as a peer. (on camera): They show no deference. Not that I want them to but they don't really care. They're like, What's up, homey? ("Hey, What's up?") (voice over): and they feel very comfortable talking to me about the most personal things.

(SOT): I don't think this is for film.

(voice over): A professor might say to them oh you should talk to Professor Kelley. As if I am an expert on everything that has to do with black people period.

(SOT): Talk to Walter Johnson about that.

(voice over): What it means is that my office hours are often like a circus.

(SOT): Negroes with guns.

Student: This field has always interested me but I just don't know if I'm very good at it. It's really pulling some strings and its making me think about things in a different way than I ever have.

Kelley: Have you ever thought about academia, a university professor? That sort of thing?

Student: As becoming one?

Kelley: Yeah.

Student. No.

Kelley: Well, what do you think about that idea?

Student: I don't know. I never thought of myself as a teacher . . . a professor.

Kelley (voice over): A lot of students of color, African-American students, come to us for assistance. They can't imagine that intellectual work is something they can aspire to. The tragedy is there are so few. It increases the workload . . . the burden of being a black presence falls on a handful of people. At NYU just within the university alone I'm chairing the Latin-American Search Committee.

(SOT) I'm finally turning in this final search report. I worked on it all night last night. Good riddance to the Latin-American search committee. (voice over): I'm on the American Studies search committee. I'm on the graduate admissions and fellowship committee. I'm on the third-year review committee. I'm on the graduate exam committee. I'm on the minority recruitment and retention committee. Because that's what we're supposed to do. I have articles coming out in places like The Nation, the Village Voice, Against the Current. We speak. . . . (on camera): I also teach two courses a semester -- a graduate course and an undergraduate course. (voice over): and I take care of my five year old daughter. I have to get her to school. Get her breakfast and take her to have fun. That's part of my life.

(SOT): Okay, this is hot. . .

Kelley (voice over): I'm very fortunate to be married to the most wonderful patient person on earth.

(SOT): You know, school's almost out.

(voice over): Someone I've known for fifteen years.

(SOT): That means after April 26 I have no more trips.

(voice over): Given my pace, my schedule it makes the duties of running a household difficult.

Wife: You're always reaching towards finishing that last thing . . . project.

Kelley: That Maoism essay is done.

Wife: Life begins after the essay

Kelley: I don't have anything else on deadline.

Wife That makes you open for new ones.

Kelley: Especially lately there are a lot of tensions in our household.

(SOT): That leaves me open to take up a whole lot of the slack so you can have more time in your studio without stress.

Wife: That would be nice.

Kelley (on camera): It's very hard. It's hard to be a father and husband. It's hard to do that and survive in this world and to be effective and that's why to be able to expand the pool of faculty and to give many of us a break and share the workload would make it better for everybody.

Wife: Well I've had to learn to sleep with the light on.

Kelley: Yeah, my computer's in the bedroom. Though when I get up in the morning, I won't turn the light on. I'll just have the computer on. That's gonna change. Cause I can't live like this.

Wife: (Laughter) Oh, I've heard this before. I wouldn't care so much if he was doing all this stuff and he was happy. But increasingly he seems not happy.

Kelley (on phone): I guess…actually you gave me this advice about twenty times.

Nell Painter (laughing; on phone)

Kelley: At every stage. The days at Emory, the days at Michigan. I just want to hear you say it again. Because I need you to tell me to say no to these people.

Painter: You should just say no. The line is so clear: Oh Robin, you're the only one who can do this.

Narrator: A SELF-TAUGHT PIANIST, KELLY'S NEXT BOOK IS ON THE JAZZ MUSICIAN THELONIOUS MONK.

Kelley: Moving into this study of Monk is bringing a certain level of peace to my own life and work that's part of the goal. I decided to write this book sitting in a hospital in Ann Arbor, Michigan. When I got very sick, being very run down. Sitting in a hospital. 104 Fever. Convinced me that I need to change my life. I can't live like this. and I need to work on something that brings me peace. So if there's ever a project that's not for other people and that's for me it's this project.

Music, images of students:

Kelley (voice over): The work we do makes a difference in terms of the overall scholarship. We function in terms of making this place a more diverse -- a more interesting place -- I think it's very important to have us and have more of us.

David Wilkins (voice over): It's been my experience on occasion, not consistently across time, but on occasion, that I can't let down my guard. That I need to keep my door closed. It's just a sense that the work that I do . . . is not considered quite as valid as some of the research that some of my other colleagues do. I never felt completely welcomed by the department at any particularly point. In fact I've been there for five years now and I've only had dinner at two of the faculty's homes.

Narrator: ARIZONA HAS ONE OF THE LARGEST CONCENTRATIONS OF INDIANS IN THE COUNTRY. THIS HAS ENABLED MANY NATIVE AMERICANS TO HOLD ONTO THEIR TRADITIONAL CULTURES AND VALUES

Wilkins: We decided to homeschool our children because they're our children and we didn't want the state to raise our children.

Evelyn Wilkins: I homeschool because I want them to know first of all their language

Narrator: EVELYN WILKINS WAS RAISED IN A TRADITIONAL NAVAJO HOUSEHOLD ON A RESERVATION IN ARIZONA.

Evelyn Wilkins: There's what we call our own Wilkins philosophy. . . . a little bit of what my grandmother taught; a little bit of what my husband's family taught him.

David Wilkins: In tribal societies historically there was a natural understanding that older people, more mature people would be instructors and guides and assistants for the younger ones that are coming up. And Vine filled that role for me.

Narrator: AS A GRADUATE STUDENT WILKINS HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH VINE DELORIA -- WHOSE BOOK HAD BEEN SO IMPORTANT.

Wilkins: and neither one of us used the word mentor until it became a popular concept in the late nineteen eighties. It just evolved out of our friendship.

(on phone): Deloria: As you continue your academic career we're going to have to teach you to go to the library.

Wilkins (in classroom): The contrast is that with the outsiders there's the notion that somehow because they're on the outside looking in they're more objective.

Narrator: BY GIVING VOICE TO NEW IDEAS FILTERED THROUGH THEIR OWN CULTURES, SCHOLARS LIKE WILKINS ARE TRANSFORMING THE UNIVERSITY.

Student: At least you know my personal experience is that I've had the outsider view for so long that it's nice to see what Native Americans are thinking about or what the other perspective is.

Wilkins: ! I'm biased. I'm a Lumbee Indian and I'm a human being. and I'm inherently biased as are we all. But the point I try to raise to my students is that every professor and the very concept itself, professor, is based on the root word, profess. And to profess something is to expound one's views. And hopefully one's views are steeped in the literature, in the documents, in what we want to call the truth. And what I try to do is bring some balance. Because the system has not been balanced. It is still not balanced . . . And that's certainly what I'm about . . . is trying to educate the students about indigenous issues from an indigenous perspective but a perspective that is rooted in the actual data and not from simply my own opinion. But it's rooted in the laws, in the treaties and the documents themselves.

Narrator: TEACHING OUR SONS AND DAUGHTERS IS WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT. BUT WHO SHOULD TEACH AND WHAT WILL OUR STUDENTS LEARN? AS WE ZOOM INTO THE 21ST CENTURY OUR COUNTRY, OUR WORLD, IS QUICKLY CHANGING. WHO WILL BE THERE TO HELP STUDENTS SHAPE THEIR QUESTIONS AND EXPAND THEIR IMAGINATIONS? WHAT VOICES WILL BE HEARD?