

## Suzelle Guinart

### Haiku:

Equal rights for all  
Is a phrase that always falls  
Short of the real truth

### Spoken Word:

Growing up I did not have a choice  
I knew I had to go to school, if I wanted to have a voice  
A voice my parents were stripped of  
When they decided to leave their homeland in search of freedom  
To give their kids opportunities they couldn't even dream of

My parents, who left a communist regime  
Just so my brother and I could be *free*  
So we wouldn't have to watch our backs  
If with injustice we disagreed

You think I lack credibility  
Why? cause I'm not from the streets  
That doesn't *mean*, I don't know the definition of struggle  
Just cause im not from the streets  
Doesn't mean I don't know what its like to struggle, to make ends meet  
To have parents who work two jobs, just to put shoes on my feet  
Yet im not here to tell you how my life was or wasn't difficult, im here to express the importance of my mentality, and how it empowers me to achieve  
Cause I know my future destiny would be much brighter than my past reality

Grad school, a masters, a ph.d? nah that was not for me  
My road to success, would not be paved through academe  
I guess I thought that, because I was taught that, a girl like me wouldn't make it  
To get into to college, to have a career, I'd have to just smile and fake it  
Fake it til you make it,  
best advice I ever got, until I met that one teacher who instilled in me the attitude of....if you want it, take it.  
Theres no need to fake it, when you can and will make it  
You just take it, because it will never be given  
Yea you gotta work hard in order to be winnin  
But working hard is only the beginning.

So now I working towards that grad school, masters, ph.d  
Academe better make way for *me*  
And yes because I was told  
That I too can dream big, and go for the gold.  
Fake it til you make it?  
Yea fake it until I've reach that point that I'm no longer pretending to succeed, that I've created my name in academe, and I've got that p...h...d  
So I no longer have to dream, because my dream, has become my reality.

Whether its through my future counseling degree  
Or that women's studies Ph.D  
One day ill change the world  
Im talking social movements, human rights, equality for all  
Cause there's no dream too big, or effort to small

And yea I'm working towards that grad school, masters, Ph.D  
Academe better make way for me  
So I can one day i can make way for others  
I want to tell my future mentees, students, and peers  
We don't have to fake it to make it, If you want it, take it.

Suzelle Guinart

### **Educational Autobiography**

When thinking of one's history and identity, one should always start by analyzing ecology and factors such as family and culture, which shape the life-course of all individuals. Since birth, my parents always ingrained in me their culture, their values, and their expectations of me. Joyce West Stevens stated that, "unquestionably, the family is the primary unit for the socialization of children" (61). As Stevens pointed out, every aspect of our lives have been at least somewhat shaped by one's family unit. Cultural identity, self-identity, values, and goals, are inextricably linked, and make up who I am as an individual.

First, while growing up, children develop a sense of cultural identity, sometimes even before they develop a self-identity. As stated on Dr. Evan's site, there are many social, biological, and environmental factors that can affect the decisions individuals make and how they identify themselves (Evans, Cultural Identity Worksheet). My parents always instilled in me the notion of "class" most heavily. They explained to me that just because I was born into a certain economic class, did not mean I had to stay there. They strongly believed that educational achievement led to occupational attainment, which would result in full citizenship status. Even though other factors such as gender and affiliation later became important in my life as well, I

always kept the first one in mind, and I knew that if I would push myself, things would fall into place and I would be successful, thus defining me as a go getter.

Secondly, my parents also strongly instilled their life values in me. These values consisted of hard work, determination, and integrity. They felt that with these three things, the sky was the limit and I could obtain anything I wanted. Although I used to roll my eyes and get tired of hearing the same speeches, I now uphold the same values as them, at least as far as education is concerned. My parents always pushed me to study hard and to pursue a higher education. They believed education leveled the playing field, and once I obtained it, I would be able to get any job I wanted and continue to work hard. Little did they know that one day I would be sitting in a college level Political Science class, and learn that their same values, were once held by Horrace Mann, who stated that “Education is the great Equalizer” (Dr. Smith). As I’m now learning in my Politics of Education class, our educational system might be flawed, and many times hard work does not insure success, but I still believe in never giving up. Nonetheless, my parents informed me that my role in the family was to go to college and obtain what they couldn’t.

In addition, fulfilling this role was not as easy as it seems because one needs to find their individual identity, while trying to up hold the collective family identity. As Joyce West Steves points out on page 18 of her book, in order to belong to a family, children try to be similar to the members in it and uphold their ideals. However, in the search for self-identification, the child also longs to be unique and develop his or her own ideals. While I adopted my family’s values of hard work and good ethics, I couldn’t fulfill the role they set out for me one hundred percent. My parents wanted me to stay home and to get married, have children, and live a life similar to theirs. Unfortunately, I do not define myself the way they do and do not want the same things

they do, thus I have define my own path in life and assigned myself a new role and I am now ready to live my life and continue with my academic studies.

Moreover, when thinking of my future career and my professional development, I still have many unanswered questions. The biggest question I have yet to answer is “what exactly do I want to do?” This question does torment me a little since I am applying to a few graduate programs and I am still not sure what it is I truly want to do. I currently applied to the Counselor Education program here at UF, and received an interview. I will be hearing the results in about a week or two, in which I will have a big decision to make. On a different note, I also would want to take a year off and save some money, move to California, and get my master’s in Social Work. Either of these routes will allow me to continue in academe and will fulfill my biggest desire, to help others. I am still not sure where life will take me or what’s meant to be, but I do know that whatever I set my self to conquer, I will do great in.

In conclusion, everything relating to my values, personality, and the way I define myself, can be traced back to the way I was raised. However, my viewpoints do not always correlate with that of my parents, and this can be do to the different agents who played a role in my socialization. Stevens explains that a “current thought among social scientist is that the transmission and acquisition of societal values, norms, and expectations take place in multilevel contextual domains, such as peer groups, family, neighborhood, and social institutions.” Although, my opinions vary from parents’, perhaps because of the influence the other agents of socialization had in my life, they taught me how to be self-motivated, hard working, and persistent, which are values I still carry. Perhaps it was just because they taught me to be that way, or perhaps it was because they believed in me, so in turn, I believed in myself.

