

Bowling Green State University
ScholarWorks@BGSU

Ray Browne Conference on Cultural and Critical
Studies

2018: Borders and Borderlands

Apr 8th, 11:00 AM - 11:50 AM

Border Crossing: The Female Body as Liminal Space

Cristina R. Rivera

The Ohio State University, rivera.360@osu.edu

Nicole Pizarro

Ohio State University - Main Campus, pizarro.8@osu.edu

Danielle Alexis Orozco

Ohio State University - Main Campus, orozco.37@osu.edu

Jacinta Yanders

Ohio State University - Main Campus, yanders.1@osu.edu

Arielle Irizarry

Ohio State University - Main Campus, irizarry.43@osu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/rbc>

 Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#)

Rivera, Cristina R.; Pizarro, Nicole; Orozco, Danielle Alexis; Yanders, Jacinta; and Irizarry, Arielle, "Border Crossing: The Female Body as Liminal Space" (2018). *Ray Browne Conference on Cultural and Critical Studies*. 1.

<https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/rbc/2018conference/016/1>

This Event is brought to you for free and open access by the Conferences and Events at ScholarWorks@BGSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Ray Browne Conference on Cultural and Critical Studies by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@BGSU.

Border Crossing: The Female Body as Liminal Space
Panel Proposal

Panel Topic:

While at first borders may appear in place to separate and divide, a closer look at these imaginary lines suggest we should be interested in viewing how they are crossed. Border crossing in today's contemporary media, particularly television and popular media, appears to qualify liminal identity, linking otherness to crossing over abilities. When turning to the female body and the ways in which femininity succeeds and fails as border crosser, what emerges is a labelable configuration of the female body--the female body as the marginalized marked other figure. However, just as bordered themselves are manifested within the imagination, media denotes a space where the imagination and liminality join forces to break down these previous social constructions. For this panel, Jacinta Yanders looks at the CW remake of *Beauty and the Beast* and considers how contemporary casting practices, while gesturing toward inviting marginalized identities into previously foreclosed spaces, can operate simultaneous to narrative ambiguity, and thus, nullify the effectiveness of such casting. Next, Nicole Pizarro examines *La Borinqueña*--a Puerto Rican comic--and its depiction of how the feminized superhero body works to cross borders to bring hope to the diaspora. Arielle Irizarry will discuss how *A Tale for the Time Being* creates a physical manifestation of feminine border crossing through written word. And lastly, Danielle Orozco will conclude with a depiction of how Laura/ X-23 in the film *Logan* (2017) imagines liminality between childhood, Latinidad and mutation. Therefore, this panels works to expose ways in which media transcends borders through imagining the female body in new and remastered ways.

Panel Chair/Facilitator: Cristina R. Rivera. PhD Student. English Department.
The Ohio State University.

Email: rivera.360@osu.edu

Bio: Cristina Rivera is a current Ph. D. student at The Ohio State University in English. Her current research interest include Children's Literature, Animation, Popular Culture.

Cristina's previously publications include: "Branding 'Latinohood,' Juan Bobo, and the Commodification of Dora the Explorer" and a book review of Mark Heirmermann and Brittany Tullis's *Picturing Childhood: Youth in Transnational Comics*. She also presented on fairytales and their use of boogiemen tropes to scare children into "proper" behavior at the PAMLA conference in 2015. Cristina is also currently a LASER mentor and teaches rhetoric as a graduate teaching associate at OSU. She received her Master's degree in Children's Literature from San Diego State University.

Panelist 1: Nicole Pizarro. PhD student. English Department. The Ohio State University

Email: pizarro.8@osu.edu

Bio: Nicole Pizarro's scholarship focuses on the ways narrative is influenced by film adaptations as mediums of entertainment and cultural conversation. She received the Dean's Distinguished University Fellowship from 2015-2017. She was elected Vice-President of the Interdisciplinary Graduate Film Studies Group and serves as the Communications Officer of the English Graduate Organization. Currently, she is a graduate teaching associate teaching in the subjects of adaptation studies, popular culture and rhetoric. She is originally from Luquillo, Puerto Rico.

Paper title: "The Feminized Superhero Body as Border Crossing: *La Borinqueña*"

Abstract: During the 1950's, the largest migration of Puerto Rican citizens to the United States, specifically New York, took place. Shortly after that, issues of identity started taking place, with a language, cultural and geographical divide separating island-born Puerto Ricans from Puerto Ricans born in the United States and "Newyoricans". In his article "Nation, Migration, Identity: The Case of Puerto Ricans," Jorge Duany argues that even after taking part of transnational migrations, there is a resilience of the Puerto Rican identity which manifests itself in the growing split between political and cultural nationalism.

This paper will explore how Edgardo Miranda-Rodríguez's *La Borinqueña*'s superheroinc prodigal body works in dual ways as the culmination of the diaspora. The daughter of Puerto Rican migrants, Marisol Ríos de la Luz is the result of the diasporic American dream in two separate ways. Marisol is the fulfillment of the American Dream, of moving to the diaspora in search of a better life, of the brain drain, of those who defy the odds and prosper. *La Borinqueña*, on the other hand, is the consummation of the dream. She is the return migrant. The soul and spirit of island of Puerto Rico flows through Marisol's veins because of her upbringing away from the island. As a result, the island bestows powers upon her and Marisol/*La Borinqueña*'s position as the culmination of the power of the island allows her to save it.

Panelist 2: Danielle Alexis Orozco. PhD student. English Department. The Ohio State University.

Email: orozco.37@osu.edu

Bio: Her research interests include US Ethnic Studies and Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies. In 2015, she received the Dean's Graduate Enrichment Fellowship Award and during 2016-2017, she was a LASER fellowship student. Currently, she is a graduate teaching associate teaching in the subjects of rhetoric and pop culture. She has made contributions to *Studies in 20th & 21st Century Literature*, *Image [&] Narrative*, and *¿Qué Pasa? Ohio State*. She is originally from Los Angeles, California.

Paper Title: "Crossing Borders: Laura Kinney as Monstrous Niña in Marvel's *Logan*"

Abstract: Even though she enjoys coin-operated kiddie rides and futuristic mp3-players, Laura Kinney is tougher than she looks. She may be a young girl, but she can fight off military

operatives with the brute force of her knuckle claws, hyper speed, and acute agility. In this paper, I analyze the mutant Laura Kinney (aka X-23) and her most recent configuration in the Marvel blockbuster film, *Logan* (2017). Laura/X-23 has a double heritage: as a clone of the X-Men mutant Wolverine, she is destructive and violent—seemingly “monstrous” ; as a highly independent young girl of eleven, she is intensely powerful. That her transaction of identity takes place on the US/Mexico border is significant given the terrain’s violent history as it pertains to the exploitation of women and their bodies (i.e. maquiladora factories and the Juárez murders). Her birth in a Mexican research facility is also an allusion to transnational productions of labor as they exist along the border. Ultimately, her liminal position as a young Latina allows her to engage and negotiate the violence of the border in unique ways. Yet, as a bilingual Latina, she highlights the compulsive erasure of powerful Latina superheroes in mainstream media. By featuring a character like Laura/X-23 in *Logan*, Marvel creates a sense of inclusion for Latinas in pop culture as the film provides a complex representation of her race, gender, age, and nationality.

Panelist 3: Jacinta Yanders. PhD candidate. English Department. The Ohio State University

Email: yanders.1@osu.edu

Bio: Jacinta Yanders is a PhD candidate in the Department of English who primarily researches mediated representations as well as contemporary media trends. She is currently working on her dissertation, which examines the narrative impact and audience reception of television reimaginings in which a character's race, gender and/or sexuality is changed from the original text.

Paper Title: “Flipping Race to Save Face: Remaking *Beauty and the Beast* and Representational Ambiguity”

Abstract: When describing the then-new CW remake of *Beauty and the Beast*, cast member Brian White said, “It’s got every ethnicity. It starts with girl power. You’ve got Nina [Lisandrello] who’s a black female, you got Kristin Kreuk who’s an Asian female, they’re cops; they kick butt, they’re smart, and they have outside relationships.” Indeed, like many other remakes in recent years, the new BatB changed racial dynamics from what had existed in the previous series. Such changes are often broadly construed as progressive moves toward inclusion, providing opportunities for actors to “cross over.” However, upon examining the series, one can see tremendous uncertainty with respect to how to navigate the ethnic and racial identities of these actresses as well as the characters they portray. In this presentation, I analyze how the representational ambiguity with which the series constructed the characters not only fails to be productively inclusive but also how it contributes to the proliferation of problematic stereotypes of women of color due to a lack of cultural specificity.

Panelist 4: Arielle Irizarry. MA/PhD student. English Department. The Ohio State University.

Email: irizarry.43@osu.edu

Bio: Arielle is an MA/PhD student in the English department at The Ohio State University focusing on twentieth- and twenty-first-century U.S. ethnic literature. Arielle is specifically interested in African American, Latina/o and Asian American literatures.

Paper Title: “Embodying Border Violence in Ruth Ozeki’s *A Tale for the Time Being*”

Abstract: In Ruth Ozeki’s *A Tale for the Time Being*, women have unique relationships to borders. Through written explorations of the way ecological violence, acts of self harm, and spiritual journeys across time and space, the novel’s protagonists grapple with a fraught kinship. Moreover, these explorations also demonstrate the way that these women of Japanese descent, as occupiers of multiple identities and spaces, come to embody the border in ways that trouble white, male centric views of our contemporary borders.