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GIVING VOICE TO THE MULTIFARIOUS IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE: GENDER INEQUALITY AND U.S. IMMIGRANT MULTILINGUALISM IN NORTE BY EDMUNDO PAZ SOLDÁN AND ITS ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY VALERIE MILES

Résumé

Dans cet article, j'examine le roman polyphonique Norte (2011) écrit en espagnol par Edmundo Paz Soldán ainsi que la traduction anglaise de Valerie Miles afin de comprendre comment les écrivains démontrent et critiquent les questions sociales et politiques pertinentes aux États-Unis. Je me penche sur la façon dont les écrivains traitent les questions liées à la violence extrême et à l'inégalité des sexes alors qu'ils transmettent des réalités très variées chez les immigrants latino-américains aux États-Unis.

Mots clés : féminisme, traduction, immigration, violence, inégalité

Abstract

In this paper, I examine the polyphonic novel Norte (2011) written in Spanish by Edmundo Paz Soldán and the English translation by Valerie Miles in order to gain an understanding of the ways in which the writers demonstrate and critique social and political issues of relevance in the United States. I consider how the writers treat matters related to extreme violence and gender inequality while they convey realities of vastly different experiences of Latin American immigrants in the United States.

Key words: feminism, translation, immigration, violence, inequality

Introduction

Through a comparison of *Norte* (2011) by Edmundo Paz Soldán and the novel's English translation, written by Valerie Miles in collaboration with Paz Soldán, this analysis will consider the effects of the translation in relation to the characters' experiences with immigration to the Unites States (U.S.) as well as how women are represented in both novels. As a Bolivian American, Paz Soldán writes *Norte* by leveraging his own experiences and perspective. Paz Soldán presents generalizations about the traits and experiences of immigrants with a realist image of extreme violence. Furthermore, his representation of women demonstrates their marginal position in society as subordinate to men and as the victims of men's violence and objectification. By analyzing the texts through the lenses of feminist and translation theory, this paper strives to gain a greater understanding of strategies to represent gender inequality in relationships and violence against women.

At a time when international borders are of high relevance in politics and public health matters, *Norte* by Edmundo Paz

Soldán, a polyphonic novel, gives readers an inside look into the lives of various individuals who cross the Mexico–U.S. border both legally and illegally in different decades and how their distinct experiences impact their lives. The reader follows Jesús, a Mexican serial killer based on the real Railroad Killer Ángel Maturino Reséndiz, in his growing obsession with violence and larceny and his illegal lifestyle of crossing the border freely primarily by train in the 1980s and ’90s. Paz Soldán uses candid descriptions of this character’s twisted thoughts and actions, despite writing in third-person narrative. Paz Soldán and Miles both develop the character of Jesús in such an intimate and dynamic way that the reader may feel sympathy for a vicious serial killer. Martín’s story, starting in the ’30s, is based on the self-taught artist Martín Ramírez and begins with him working illegally on a train in the U.S. and then continues as he is institutionalized in a psychiatric hospital. He struggles to understand English and eventually chooses not to speak altogether. Michelle, the only female protagonist, is a talented writer and artist who drops out of college to pursue her passions outside of the confines of academia. She is the daughter of Bolivian immigrants in the U.S. Her life in the 2000s revolves around a tumultuous love affair with an Argentinian professor, Fabián. The final protagonist, Sergeant Fernandez, is introduced later in the novel. He investigates several of Jesús’s murders while dealing with his own biases toward the criminal, as he is also an immigrant from Mexico.

Valerie Miles first collaborated with Paz Soldán when he was writing the manuscript for *Norte* and then again when he approached her to ask that she translate the novel into English. While there are translations of his novel into various languages, the English version is particularly significant, as the subject matter directly relates to the U.S. In her “Translator’s Note,” Miles divulges information on her translation process and the challenges that she faced. While her personal insight sheds light on the translation, I examine the texts further to see how her decisions affect the story, the character development, and the reader’s experience in English. Furthermore, I examine her explicit statements in relation to the text and allow space for contradiction, since a writer’s own interpretation of her work is not finally authoritative.

Differences and similarities

Miles takes liberties in her translation to alter passages rather than translate directly

in order to produce a novel that can be read with ease and to create distinct character voices while also maintaining Paz Soldán's intentions for the characters. Miles and Paz Soldán, as explained in the "Translator's Note," discussed the ways in which the U.S. domesticates the diverse Spanish-speaking cultures under blanket terms and stereotypes. In order to rightly encapsulate the unique individuals and their experiences crossing the border, their voices had to show such uniqueness. Although she does not go into great detail on the specifics of how she achieves it, it is clear that each character has a unique voice portrayed through varied syntax, capitalization, spelling, interjections, and code-switching, even when the narration is not in the first person. Moreover, through close collaboration, Paz Soldán had a hand in the final product and took the opportunity to rework some points and the characters. That being said, there are notable differences and similarities alike that tell a story about the targeted reader cultures as well as the author and translator. Elianna Kan explains that the Latin etymology of the word *translate* "derives from trans ("across") and lātiō ("carrying"), which makes the translator a sort of linguistic smuggler, carrying gems from one language, one culture into another" (2015). This image resounds in reference to *Norte*, which focuses heavily on crossing borders and cultures. Miles carries the ideas across the divide between languages and cultures to a different readership that may not know Spanish or prefer reading literature in English.

Miles chooses to maintain the Spanish title, *Norte*, meaning "North," and adds a colon and "A Novel," likely to distinguish her version from the source text and make it clear that the novel is in English despite the Spanish title. In the "Translator's Note", she justifies her decision well and explains that, in the U.S., the idea of "North" may cause confusion and make people think of Canada (319). In fact, when Debbie tells Sergeant Fernandez that she is considering moving to Ontario, Canada, he responds: "Canada? Why so far away? That's North of North" (226). Furthermore, it evokes a well-known expression in Spanish: "perder el norte," which means "to lose one's way, to lose sight of a goal, to lose control, to lose the sense of where is up and where is down on a compass" (319). In many ways, the characters become disoriented in their immigration experiences and, through the disorientation, they change or find themselves in a new way. For instance, Michelle suddenly drops out of university to pursue her artistic talents in a less structured

manner and Martín first comes to the U.S. to earn money and ends up fearing his home country and what he left behind. With vastly different immigrant experiences all in a state of loss of their past selves, they can encounter themselves in a different way in new and strange surroundings.

I note that, in a few passages, Miles expands on some of the sentiments regarding immigration, which reflects the social and political situation in the U.S. at the time. In chapter 6 of part 3, an American news figure reports on the Mexican Railroad Killer with strong words regarding immigration. In the source text, Paz Soldán writes the section in English: "It's time to build a wall so they can't come here so easily" (168). Through translation, Miles amplifies the negative statement: "It's time we build a wall and keep them out!" (186). Miles's version echoes the politics in the U.S. at the time, with presidential campaigns ramping up and focusing on immigration issues and Mexico–U.S. relations.

Another example of Miles's expanding on an immigration-related statement is in chapter 2 of part 2, when Martín reflects on his experience leaving Mexico. He explains: "Dolía tanto, irse" [It hurts so much to leave] (74). Miles takes a creative turn and writes: "Leaving one's place on Earth is a cruel experience" (77). Adding "Earth" into this statement adds a new element of being an alien in a foreign place. Furthermore, instead of saying that it hurts to leave, she deepens that pain and says that it is *cruel*, implying that the pain is imposed upon him by another person or entity and not by himself. Her translation supplements the passage about his experience by showing the reader that Martín does not consider the U.S. as his home and that it feels foreign. It also shows that he feels that going there for economic reasons was not truly a choice—it was required of him and has been cruel to him.

While she alters some passages and translates in a way that inserts her authorial voice, she also balances it with Paz Soldán's voice and intentions, translating a large part of the novel closely and directly. For instance, she translates quite directly the passage about Michelle's pregnancy and abortion—on which I elaborate below. Despite the complicated task it must have been, the translated polyphonic text flows well as it switches between distinct voices and narration types.

Gender inequality – Representation of women

In this analysis, I consider how Paz Soldán and Miles represent women through the diverse perspectives and experiences of the protagonists, both male and female. I have noted that every male character, regardless of his mental state, has strong tendencies to objectify women in the novel and regard female physical attributes above intellectual and non-superficial characteristics. The prevalent objectification demonstrates a lack of female agency. I therefore posit that the representation of male perspectives regarding women in the novel highlights modern gender inequality in North American society, which positions women as inferior to men and as objects to be viewed and oversexualized. The novels navigate the tension between reproducing the male gaze and criticizing it by being aware of both the social reality and the reader's presumable response to the objectification being manifested in all the characters. While it is possible that the reproduction of the male perspective and the lack of female agency in the novels are inadvertent or inconsequential, and I cannot assume to know what the author and translator think, the predominance of these elements coupled with Miles's contribution as a modern woman led me to the conclusion that the novelist and translator are critiquing the position and treatment of women.

Women through the eyes of Jesús

Jesús's unhealthy and antifeminist perception of women is the most noticeable example of all the characters, since his chapters are riddled with aggressive thoughts and actions as a serial killer and rapist who primarily targets young women. Through the feminist theory lens, I first consider Jesús's actions and perception of women's value in order to recognize some of the distinct areas of gender inequality in society.

The detailed descriptions of Jesús's brutal attacks and sadistic desires are difficult to read and force the reader to recognize and contemplate the extreme violence. Paz Soldán intentionally dedicates a large part of the novel to violence, a fact that is corroborated in his interview with the *El País* newspaper: He explains that the protagonist, ironically named Jesús, incarnates a generalized American fear of immigrants being dangerous people who will sneak into your house and kill you. Paz Soldán chooses to initiate the novel with a graphic chapter, where the reader first gets a sense of the

depths to which Jesús's psychopathic traits and violence go. He writes with great detail and from Jesús's twisted perspective how he and a group of men brutally rape and murder a Mexican woman. From that first chapter, the reader also recognizes Jesús's incestual desires, as he closes his eyes and imagines the woman as his sister as they are assaulting her. This scene also sets the tone of the novel, that is, a tone of women being repeatedly marginalized, with their rights, bodies, and agency aggressively violated. It is also Jesús's first experience with murder and it sparks a thirst within him that he continually seeks to quench throughout the novel.

Jesús feels overwhelmed by his nagging thirst to kill in chapter 3 of part 4, so he stakes out a neighbourhood near the train tracks when he sees a Hispanic woman, Noemí, pull up in her car. Miles translates the scene as follows:

> She glanced over at him quickly but continued on her way inside as if in that split second she had gauged that his was an insignificant face, that saying anything to him was a waste of her time, that he was just another of her paisanos walking the streets in search of a job: carpenters, plumbers, construction workers, anything to earn a few bucks. Why didn't they all just go back to Mexico? (212).

Jesús's story is a third-person narrative, yet the author and translator capture his volatile and aggressive mental state in their writing, resulting in an effect similar to that of first-person narration. This passage reveals how—in terms of "ego psychology"—he projects his male inferiority complex onto this woman, believing she instantaneously judges him insignificant, and he subsequently assaults her, presumably to exert his power (Scarf 10). Paz Soldán also includes a common xenophobic statement about Latin American immigrants in the U.S., demanding they all go back to Mexico.

Jesús almost exclusively chooses young, female victims to sexually assault and murder, giving the reader an impression of women in the novel as inferior and powerless victims against a man. In his analysis of the novel, Olivier Mongin argues: "[Jesús] jouit de cette bande frontière qui le rend invisible et lui permet de retrouver sa sœur vivante dans chaque femme qu'il tue" [Jesús enjoys this boundary strip that makes him invisible and allows him to find his sister living in every woman he kills] (147). I do not endeavour to psychoanalyze the motives behind his hatred of women, but Mongin raises an interesting perspective about Jesús

targeting and hating women because of the frustration of not being able to have his sister in that way. He thinks: "*Las mujeres.* All just a bunch of bitches, like his sister. They'll see, he'll put them all in their place" (84). He explicitly shows the reader through his actions and thoughts that he hates all women and makes the connection frequently with his sister, for whom he has always had desires. However, when he sees that a woman is having car problems, he helps her and contemplates attacking her but ends up leaving her alone because she has eyes like his sister's (216–218). That scene is set up in such a way that the reader would expect him to assault her, as he has never resisted an opportunity to do so before, yet it ends with him leaving her safely. If he finds his sister in every woman he kills and that serves as part of his sadistic motivation, it begs the question of why he does not therefore kill this woman who bears resemblance to his sister.

In a similar vein, Jesús selects a young Hispanic woman like his sister as his target in the aforementioned scene. Jesús assesses and judges Noemí harshly in a sweeping generalization: "Fucking puerca. They were the nastiest, the bitches who changed their clothes style and accent, took on snotty airs, tried to hide their origins" (212). It is noticeable that he only criticizes Mexican women for their actions and says nothing about men. It could be a projection of his inferiority complex because he feels insecure that this woman seems to have successfully immigrated to the States and has the American dream that is out of his reach while he crosses the border illegally. However, he enjoys the power he feels in evading border security and even goes so far as to express disgust for the American lifestyle (86), so it stands to reason that this passage primarily exemplifies his targeted hatred of women.

Although he judges Noemí's actions and character and the reader gets a strong sense of hatred in his words, he then selects her as his victim because of her physical attributes. He switches immediately from disgust to desire for her body, which is described as follows: "She was wide-hipped, with fat legs and a plump ass. Meat everywhere, the way he liked his women" (212). According to Jonathan Culler, feminist theory looks at what difference it makes or should make if the reader of the text is a woman (63). If the reader of this description is a woman, she likely sees this as more than just a serial killer on the hunt; it is also a disempowerment of the female subject. Describing the woman as having "meat"

construes her as an animal or meal, as if he is the hunter and she is the prey.

Laura Mulvey coined the term *male gaze* in her essay entitled "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" and, while she applies the psychoanalytical term to films, I argue that it can be applied to literature as well and is evident in Paz Soldán's novel. Mulvey writes that, in "a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its phantasy on to the female figure" (62). In this particular chapter, Jesús embodies the *male gaze* of the reader. He is, in fact, "peeping through a back window" as he examines Noemí's body (212). Mulvey argues that the man "emerges as the representative of power in a further sense: as the bearer of the look of the spectator" (63). His power as the observer of an oversexualized person diminishes her power and portrays the idea that the woman is an object and not an agent.

Jesús's other attacks that are described in the novel continue in this way, with oversexualization and hatred toward women. In contrast, the male characters in the novel are either devoid of any physical description or are described with minimal detail. This disproportionate portrayal of people who identify as women versus men further tips the scale in favour of patriarchal dominance and the oversexualization of women.

Martín and Sergeant Fernandez

Jesús's actions and perspective of women could be explained by his psychotic mental state as a serial killer and rapist; however, when all the other male protagonists also openly and often objectify women, it cannot be inconsequential. The author and translator deliberately represent women in this way, allowing the reader to notice the lack of female agency and draw the link with modern gender inequality through the lenses of various individuals. Martín Ramírez is degrading in his thoughts of his wife, María Santa Ana, who resides in Mexico. Similarly, Sergeant Fernandez regards his companion only as a body to use and enjoy, and he does not respect her or her profession as an escort, even though he consistently uses her services.

While it is difficult to judge the veracity of Martín's stories because of his schizophrenia, he often objectifies the real or imaginary character of María Santa Ana. When Martín first describes his wife, he centres in on her appearance:

> How's he supposed to get over something like her? She was the center of everything. A hot number. Her ass drooped a little maybe, but no matter: her big titties made up for everything else. She had the kind of curves a man could hold on to. Others used to gawp at her. Most women get fat and ugly when they get old, and that's when you have to say oh, she's so nice, she's so good. But his María Santa Ana was both at the same time: a good-looker and a good woman (30).

He is evidently attached to this woman, yet the elements he cares about are physical—degrading and sexualized, too. María Santa Ana does not receive any distinguishing character or personality description beyond being a "good woman", and what being a good woman to him means is difficult to judge. It is worth nothing that Miles translates "superarla" [get over her] (Paz Soldán 34) to "get over something like her" (Miles 30). Her choice to write *something* instead of *someone* further emphasizes to readers Martín's perception of his wife as an object or possession rather than a human or an equal.

In general, Fernandez treats people with kindness and mercy, even going so far as to pity Hispanic criminals and let them off the hook. However, his relationship with Debbie, an escort upon whom he frequently calls, is not one of mutual respect. Debbie does not play a significant role in the larger story and serves as a companion and deepened storyline for Fernandez. After observing her naked body and thinking about how much it is aging, Fernandez thinks about how he "should go find himself a twenty-year-old whore instead" (183). He admits that he has a weakness for Debbie, and she stopped charging him for the sex, yet he still views her as a "whore", "puta" in Spanish, serving him only with her body regardless of any connection they may be developing. He demeans her choice of profession by calling her names, even if only in his thoughts. Miles writes: "what mattered was that as long as she was hooking, she would continue to be a whore to him" (184). He wants her to quit and only be there for him, but he never tells her that. Like Martín, he centres in on her body, placing all her value on it. He wants to be the sole possessor of her body but does not show genuine interest in her as a person. The power dynamic is unbalanced, with her virtually at his beck and call.

<u>Michelle and Renata</u>

Paz Soldán uses his characters, including the few female characters, to

emphasize women's marginal position in society. Lili Wright notes in her book review: "Women don't fare well in these pages — abused, manipulated, raped, murdered or simply clueless." The women do not have vibrant personalities or high levels of confidence, and their lives and stories centre around men. Judith Butler in her book *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* writes that representation "serves as the operative term within a political process that seeks to extend visibility and legitimacy to women as political subjects", and she considers the "pervasive cultural condition in which women's lives were either misrepresented or not represented at all" (2). While Butler is referring to political representation, the representation and participation of women in literature also extend visibility and legitimacy to women as actors in society. Therefore, the lack of strong female representation or participation in *Norte* does the opposite and abridges their visibility, painting a picture of women as marginalized and oppressed. Michelle and Renata have the potential to be strong individuals who inspire or empower women, but instead their stories and demeanours are lacking against their abusive and manipulative partners and in general.

Paz Soldán chooses to have one of the protagonists be a young woman, and her chapters are the only ones written in first-person narrative, subtly setting her apart from the others. Nevertheless, her story is less enchanting and powerful than those of Jesús and Martín. She has a fairly monotonous plotline, and the interesting elements do not impact her character development dramatically. Michelle is entangled in a relationship with her former professor, Fabián, yet she maintains that relationship solely on his terms. He strings her along without any commitment, and Michelle prioritizes Fabián over her friends and personal life. In addition, he has substance abuse issues, is openly disrespectful toward women several times, and they are occasionally violent with one another in their relationship.

Michelle is a talented artist and writer, but she is preoccupied with what others think, particularly Fabián. When she walks in on Fabián watching pornography and she tells him to turn it off, he calls her a "prude" (135). He also explains that his relationship with another woman did not work because she believed that pornography objectified women (135). In this scene, Fabián reveals clearly to Michelle his feelings toward women, as well as his violent

fetishes. He requests that Michelle slap him during sexual intercourse, and he divulges that he watched graphic and violent pornography yet blames the woman in the film for being "one of the nastiest bitches" for wanting or allowing it (135). Michelle does eventually leave after arguing with him about drugs but returns to him only a few minutes later. Despite Fabián's misogynistic and sadistic attitude in this section, Michelle only comes across as slightly bothered by it. He exudes complete control and dominance over her and demeans her and other women. Instead of standing up for herself and recognizing her value, she pities him for his vices and seems to never see the two of them as equals.

Michelle's agency is also sorely lacking in the third part of the novel after she discovers that she is pregnant. Fabián's initial reaction is that he will support her but does not want to be tied down to her (164). Later, he suggests an abortion and Michelle gets enraged at the thought. She goes to Planned Parenthood but is nauseated and upset by the idea. When she tells Fabián that she refuses to have an abortion, he responds by forbidding her to keep the baby, justifying it by saying that losing his wife had led him to become depressed and that this baby would do the same. As a result of his insistence, Michelle begins changing her mind, "thinking in his terms, seeing things from his vantage point" (165). She admits that, even though she tries to convince herself that getting an abortion is the "right decision," she could not manage to do it. However, despite her refusal and distress regarding that option, she gives in and travels to El Paso with him to have the procedure. He wants them to leave their town to avoid people they know finding out, and she finds that notion ridiculous yet follows his instruction anyway. After the procedure is over, Fabián hugs her, and she thinks: "I would have belted him if only I'd had the strength" (167). It is clear that she wishes to go forward with the pregnancy and it is, in fact, Fabián's strong influence that pushes her instead to go through with the procedure and in the location of his choosing. The entire passage about this significant decision spans fewer than four pages and, although a reader may expect the storyline to be more consequential or impactful for Michelle, it hardly comes up again in the rest of the novel.

It is difficult for a reader not to pity Michelle for lacking the freedom and strength to make the decision on her own without pressure and hostility from Fabián. She puts the decision almost entirely in his hands and her feelings on the matter are ignored,

establishing a clear hierarchy in the relationship. While she may have come to that decision on her own after deliberation, she appears strongly averse to the idea but does what he wants instead. Michelle's decision, which is evidently motivated by Fabián's pressure, emphasizes her passivity in the novels and her lack of authority in her own life.

The passage would have benefited from elaboration and Michelle's character may have been more intriguing if the events in her life allowed for her to grow in confidence and agency. At the end of the novel, she learns that Fabián has a daughter already, and he is going to go meet her in Santo Domingo to start a new life. She does not believe that his eagerness will last long and thinks that he needs rehab. She concludes: "All I'd ever done was enable his vices instead of helping him," taking responsibility for his problems and blaming herself for his addictions and issues worsening (287). Although she is rid of him at the end, it is not by her choice. Her character does not go through extensive character development and seems to serve more as a criticism of academia and its confines.

Renata's character, who is Jesús's wife in Mexico, concedes her control of her life to her husband and repeatedly dismisses his abhorrent behaviour. When Jesús returns to Renata with a bag of jewelry after being in the U.S. for a significant period of time, she is angry that he had been away from her for so long without contacting her. However, as the neighbour points out, she is fortunate to live comfortably, and it is "stupid of her to complain" (236). Jesús viciously beats Renata, and her reaction after the fact is that she does not want to judge him too harshly because "all men make mistakes" (254). Her lack of self-esteem or recognition of her value as a person allow her to settle with someone who acts suspiciously, leaves her for long periods of time, and treats her as less than human, because she believes she should feel fortunate to have someone who at least supports her financially regardless of the consequences. When Fernandez and the Federal Bureau of Investigation question Renata and explain some of the crimes for which Jesús is suspected, she has a hard time believing and accepting it. She admits to herself that she "simply preferred to look the other way" (258). She convinces herself that Jesús changed and is not the man she knew, while the reader is aware that he has actually always been volatile and violent. While her denial demonstrates some of the psychological results of her suffering in an

abusive relationship, it also contributes to the novel's representation of the victimization and marginalization of women.

Conclusion

The unique polyphonic novel by Paz Soldán and Miles's portrayal in English affords both Spanish- and English-speaking readers the opportunity to be immersed in the distinctive and memorable stories of legal and illegal immigrants in the U.S. The novels are strongly rooted in realism and are influenced by Paz Soldán's thorough research on real people and events. Miles's translation brings the stories to life for the Anglophone audience, and her perspective aids in establishing a realistic representation of the characters moulded by Paz Soldán while incorporating her authorial voice and fingerprint.

The writers' decisions with respect to the female characters and their poor and imbalanced representation demonstrate the marginalization and mistreatment of women, particularly women of colour, in North American society. The stories evidence extreme violence against women in everyday life and in heterosexual relationships, accosting readers with this harsh reality. Michelle's lack of character development and agency contrasts dramatically with dynamic male characters, such as Jesús, Martín, Fabián, and even Sergeant Fernandez. While the writers could have sought to empower women and exemplify their strength, resiliency, and agency in the texts, instead they establish a realistic representation of how women are far too often seen and treated. This decision, which is difficult to ignore, may push the reader to consider the reasons behind the drastic underrepresentation and mistreatment of female characters in these novels as well as in other literature and works of art.

The novels confront the readers on the prevalent issue of gender inequality and force them to consider the xenophobic dialogue that resounds too often in the U.S. Each novel in its unique context and writing process holds power in the messages it incorporates and emits to different readerships. A person may revel in following a serial killer's journey down a dark path, identify with Michelle's experience in academia, sympathize with a tormented mentally ill person who cannot seem to communicate with anyone, or he or she may not identify with any of the distinct characters and instead simply be hooked by the realities that the stories convey. Readers may even recognize that, although some immigration or

displacement experiences may be shared, each person has a unique story and journey that does not fit into a tidy box of expectation. Paz Soldán and Miles exemplify that an integral part of enacting change is honestly facing reality, whether that reality shocks, hurts or inspires you. The next step toward positive change is deciding what to do with the knowledge of what has happened and is happening presently.

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