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The Ghost and the Double: Identity, Migration, and Storytelling in Francisco Goldman's *The Long Night of White Chickens*

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ABSTRACT: Francisco Goldman's 1992 novel *The Long Night of White Chickens* explores themes of personal and political instability through characters who move between Guatemala and the United States during the 1970s and 1980s, some of the most violent years of Guatemala's Civil War. Goldman's postmodern novel challenges conventions of both form and subjectivity, as it questions the imposition of restrictive categories on several characters while explicitly crafting their stories. This essay combines an analysis of form and content to explore the unease that characters experience as they traverse a range of national, ethnic, and racialized markers (such as, Latina/o, Guatemalan, Jewish, and indigenous), while they migrate between Guatemala and the US. I focus on the metaphors of ghosts, doubles, and disabled bodies to examine the connections that the novel forges between identity, transnationality, and storytelling. Throughout their migrations, protagonists Roger and Flor compare their status as transnational subjects to images that serve as tropes to express their difference (e.g., ghosts, amputated body parts, and alternate versions of self). I read these images as metaphors for the otherness, invisibility, and fragmentation that mark characters' transnational identities. Specifically, I argue that the metaphors of ghostliness and disability serve to explore characters' embodied differences by rendering their otherness literal. Therefore, I investigate how ghosts and doubles function as ways for characters to reckon with their perceived loss of a stable origin and a personal history.

KEYWORDS: Goldman, Latinx, transnational, Guatemala, spectrality, disability

Francisco Goldman's 1992 novel *The Long Night of White Chickens* explores themes of personal and political instability through characters who move between Guatemala and the United States during the 1970s and 1980s, some of the most violent years of Guatemala's Civil War. Roger Graetz, the novel's narrator who is raised in Boston by his Guatemalan mother and his US-American Jewish father, tells the story of Flor de Mayo Puac, a Guatemalan orphan who was sent to perform domestic work in Roger's Boston home when both were young in the early 1960s. Flor—Roger's caregiver, surrogate sister, and object of desire—returns to Guatemala in 1979 to work as the director of an orphanage, where she is mysteriously murdered in 1983. Roger returns to Guatemala in 1984 intent to solve the mystery of Flor's death though he, instead, assembles a fragmented narrative of Flor's life and of his own ontological concerns.

Rather than the mystery that he sets out to solve, Roger's narrative offers a chaotic reflection on migration, politics, and identity that, according to Cornelia Gräbner, '[replicates] the structure of a meandering, late-night conversation' (55). Readers additionally question the veracity of the unfounded rumors, the embellished newspaper stories, and the sensationalist press that Roger weaves into his narrative. In these ways, the novel presents Roger as an unreliable narrator. Instead of developing the story of Flor's life and death that Roger purports to write, he ultimately

uses storytelling as an exploration of self. Published in 1992, Goldman's first novel stands as a firm example of postmodern fiction through its use of unreliable narration, self-reflexivity, and intertextuality, as it additionally confronts the constructed nature of characters' realities in Roger's failed search for absolute truths. The instability that we find in the novel's form is mirrored in its content, as characters question their shifting conceptions of self as they undergo multiple migrations. As postmodern fiction, Goldman's novel 'share[s] the same questioning stance towards [the] common use of conventions of narrative [and] of the inscribing of subjectivity' (Hutcheon 118).

This essay combines an analysis of form (i.e., Roger's unreliable methods of storytelling) and content to explore the unease that characters experience as they traverse a range of national, ethnic, and racialized markers (such as, Latina/o, Guatemalan, Jewish, and indigenous), while they migrate between Guatemala and the US. I focus on the metaphors of ghosts, doubles, and disabled bodies to examine the connections that the novel forges between identity, transnationality, and storytelling. I take Goldman's own biographical complexity—i.e., his transnational migrations and his writings in multiple genres, which I discuss below—as a springboard for the multiply-situated and ambiguous identities that characters negotiate in *The Long Night of White Chickens*

(henceforth *The Long Night*). Throughout their migrations, Flor, Roger, and Moya (Roger's childhood friend and Flor's former lover) compare their status as transnational subjects to images that serve as tropes to express their difference (e.g., ghosts, amputated body parts, and alternate versions of self). I read these images as metaphors for the otherness, invisibility, and fragmentation that mark the transnational identities of Flor and Roger. Specifically, I argue that the metaphors of ghostliness and disability serve to explore characters' embodied differences by rendering their otherness literal. Therefore, I investigate how ghosts and doubles function as ways for characters to reckon with their perceived loss of a stable origin and a personal history.

Goldman was born in Boston in 1954 to a Guatemalan mother and a Boston-raised, Ukrainian-American father. His 'confused upbringing' was marked by clashes between his aristocratic, Catholic mother and his working-class, Jewish father. As a result, Goldman spent his childhood 'bouncing' between Guatemala and Needham, the 'brutal' Irish-Italian suburb in Massachusetts where he was raised (Jaggi). Like Roger in *The Long Night*, Goldman suffered tuberculosis as a young boy, struggled with the confusion of his English-Spanish bilingualism, and describes himself as 'an oddity, ethnically, being raised in this very white, Irish and Italian neighborhood' (Bach 14). Due to his parents' different backgrounds, Goldman ascribes a 'lack of coherence' to his childhood, a context that made him a 'terrible' and 'maladjusted' student and forced him to 'attend classes for underachievers' (14).

Goldman's oeuvre, fictional and journalistic, spans a striking range of national and regional spaces, historical moments, genres, and (non)fictionalized realities.¹ Importantly, the author's most recent novel, *Monkey Boy* (2021), returns to similar territory as *The Long Night*. In this work of autofiction—that is, the combination of autobiographical and fictional narrative forms—a narrator named Francisco Goldberg returns to Massachusetts to care for his ailing mamita. His return to his childhood home triggers transnational travels in memory between Boston, New York, Guatemala, and Mexico City, all places that have played significant roles in Goldman's life. Like *The Long Night*, the narrator of *Monkey Boy*, Frankie, shares many biographical details with Goldman, including profession, publication record, geography, and parentage (i.e., his Guatemalan mamita and his Jewish, Ukrainian-American father). Both novels also share a deep preoccupation with attempting to reconcile multi-racial, multi-ethnic, and multi-cultural identities.

Critics appear to agree that '*Monkey Boy* creates a circle with *The Long Night of White Chickens*' (Wood). However, the novels' key difference lies in their representations of the narrators' father. The sweet-natured Ira in *The Long Night* becomes a violent and abusive parent in *Monkey Boy*, a characterization that appears truer to life to many critics of the latter (Morales; Jelly-Schapiro; Wood). For Latino journalist and cultural commentator, Ed Morales, for example, the narrative 'allows you to believe that this violence, alluded to several times, is at the root of [Frankie's] inability to reconcile his

many identities' (40). Consequently, critics' readings of *Monkey Boy* have also inspired connections to trauma and hauntings, not unlike the analysis of *The Long Night* that I elaborate below.

Scholars of Central American(-American) studies have also grappled with the contradictions and complexities of Goldman's (trans)national and ethnic identities, especially as they attempt to situate the author within these rapidly expanding fields. Arturo Arias and Ana Patricia Rodríguez are leading voices on Central American diasporic identities and cultural production. While Arias utilizes the awkward term 'Central American-American' to argue for this group's invisibility among US American, Latin American, and Latinx identity categories, Rodríguez counters Arias's discourse of invisibility by arguing for Central Americans' 'excess-ibility.' She contends that 'Central American diasporic writing in the United States is not so much clouded in invisibility or enshrouded by redundancies as Arias would have it, but rather [is] constantly recombining into new destabilizing configurations and reshaping the cultural scapes of Latinidades' ('Literatures of Central Americans' 452).

In Rodríguez's view, Central American diasporic writings transcend the so-called limits of US Latinidad by introducing a range of experiences (e.g., reasons for migrating, ethnoracial identities, and languages spoken) that parallel yet 'exceed' prevailing definitions of 'Latinx.' By studying the literary production of diasporic Central American writers, Rodríguez argues that Central America, rather than remaining the invisible other vis-à-vis the recognized constructions of Latin Americanness, US Americanness, and US Latinidad, instead 'becomes more visible in its diasporic travels and translocations across the world' (452). By gaining visibility as an 'other' US Latinx community, the construct of US Central Americanness, according to Rodríguez, has the potential to destabilize and reshape understandings of US Latinidad rather than remain silent within a static version of the construct. While scholars like Rodríguez and Marta Caminero-Santangelo view Goldman as firmly positioned within a 'US-based Latino literary sub-canon,' Arias challenges this conception of Goldman as a Central American Latino writer by instead labeling the author as 'bi-national.'²

Other published writings—namely, reviews of Goldman's works and interviews that feature the author's own perspective—further complicate Goldman's subject position by considering his placement within Latin American and US American identities. Junot Díaz, for example, counters readings of Goldman as a Latin American writer who writes in English. He suggests, instead, that Goldman '[writes] American literature in the truest sense. Frank knows you can't understand a nation in isolation, outside its relationship to the past and its neighbors. These borders don't exist' (Jaggi). Díaz interprets Goldman's transnational writings as distinctly 'American,' a perspective that challenges reading Goldman as a bi-national writer by expanding the symbolic use of 'American' to its hemispheric designation, which includes both 'Latin American' and 'US American' identities. For Díaz, then, Goldman's transnational affiliations serve to define a sense of Americanness unencumbered by

the borders that restrict the author's labeling to 'Latin American' or 'bi-national.'

Other critics echo Díaz in emphasizing 'American' as a hemispheric rather than as an erroneously national signifier while grappling with Goldman's positionality. Esther Allen, for example, writes the following in her *BOMB* magazine interview with Goldman: 'You [Goldman] refuse to see yourself and other Latinos as a minority culture within the United States. Your work has never been about that. It's about the entire American hemisphere.' By 'counting' Goldman both as a 'Latino' writer and an author who writes the 'entire American hemisphere,' Allen contests interpretations of Latinidad that exclude transnational affiliations. Though Goldman's writings transgress the national and symbolic borders of the US, they remain, for Allen, categorized within both 'Latino' and 'American' signifiers. I point to scholars' differing readings of Goldman to grapple with the slipperiness of the available terms that we use to define transnational and multiply-situated identities like his. In the analysis that follows, I examine theories on spectrality and disability to explore what Maritza E. Cárdenas calls the 'nonspace' that Central Americans occupy vis-à-vis Latinidad, Latin Americanness, and US Americanness (*Constituting Central American-Americans* 6).

I borrow from Avery Gordon and María del Pilar Blanco to establish the presence of the ghost as one that disturbs and haunts, while also allowing for the possibility to heal. Relatedly, I include the writings of David T. Mitchell and Sharon L. Snyder to examine the novel's use of disability as an opportunistic metaphorical device to represent radical difference. My analysis seeks to demonstrate how Roger's use of storytelling evolves throughout the novel. First, he uses Flor's story of life and death as a way of deflecting the truer issues that haunt his tale, which involve his own ontological turmoil regarding his perceived loss of place, history, and stability following Flor's death. Later, as Roger confronts Flor's haunting presence, he begins to tell the story of his own life, and in this way renders storytelling an outlet for self-reflection, reckoning, and healing.

Gordon views the ghost as a real presence that signals trouble, demands attention, and notifies that 'what's been concealed is very much alive and present' (xvi), in this way requiring the haunted person to pry into what is incomplete, repressed, and contained. Both Gordon and Blanco extend the metaphor of haunting from ghostly appearances to a mode through which to analyze the unspeakable and immaterial traces of power and oppression that extend through the past and present of hemispheric spaces. Blanco's emphasis on hemispheric connections, rather than challenge the significance of the nation, applies to the nation a ghostly reading of 'unknowingness' (151). She links the notion of 'unknowingness' to the concepts of doubt and questioning, citing an '*incompleteness of experience* that becomes evident in the observation of haunting' (25, emphasis in original). Blanco explains that doubt is a 'reminder of the unfinished business that is experience and necessary open-endedness,' while adding that subjects are 'constantly questioning how different realities are infiltrating, and haunting, their own perceived land-

scapes, reducing the sense of certainty about the world that surrounds them' (25).

My own analysis borrows from Blanco's productive use of doubt. Like Blanco, I read the uncertainty that characters experience as a result of ghostly encounters as a 'necessary open-endedness' that motivates subjects into questioning and action. Blanco's reading of doubt as a mark of the ghostly—that is, as a reminder of unfinished business—situates the power of haunting in questioning rather than resolution. As Blanco suggests, haunting relies on an incompleteness of experience to stimulate critical thought, rather than a search for complete understanding and concrete definition. Gordon's and Blanco's insights into ghostliness and haunting therefore help me to analyze the effects of Flor's haunting on Roger's repressed concerns over his own identities within the hemispheric setting of the novel.

Mitchell and Snyder examine the representation of disability in fiction, and argue that the disabled body has historically functioned as an exemplary and problematic metaphor to epitomize difference (49). They define 'narrative prosthesis' as a 'perpetual discursive dependency upon disability,' as disability ostensibly holds a distinctive representational power to differentiate characters from 'the norm' (47). Mitchell and Snyder therefore argue that disability often appears in narratives as a problematic and 'opportunistic metaphorical device' that is used to embody radical otherness vis-à-vis groups that are already marginalized due to their positioning within racial, gender, sexual, and other constructed categories (47). The authors expose the 'discomforting relationship' that emerges when disability is situated alongside constructed categories like race, gender, and sexuality: 'as feminist, race, and sexuality studies sought to unmoor their identities from debilitating physical and cognitive associations, they inevitably positioned disability as the "real" limitation from which they must escape' (2). Consequently, they critique the ableist use of tropes of disability to represent difference par excellence.

In their development of the notion of 'narrative prosthesis,' Mitchell and Snyder further view storytelling itself as a type of prosthesis, supplement, or compensation, as, they write,

stories always perform a compensatory function in their efforts to renew interest in a previously denigrated object...stories compensate for an unknown or unnatural deviance that begs an explanation [and they] operate out of a desire to compensate for a limitation or to reign in excess (53-4).

Stories therefore hold the power to explain, transform, and work through. Mitchell's and Snyder's writings help me develop two central aspects of my analysis: first, to critique the use of a disabled body as a metaphor for radical difference, and, second, to identify the use of explicitly crafted storytelling as a mirror to, and eventual outlet for, identitarian displacement and uncertainty.

Flor was sent to Namohet, Boston to care for a tubercular young Roger in the early 1960s. According to Roger, his Abuelita hand-picked Flor from a Guatemalan orphanage so that she could send an 'orphan girl' to be the Graetz family's 'maid,' a necessity in Guatemalan households of wealth and upper and upper middle-class status (*The Long Night* 3). The Guatemalan norms that require a maid in middle- to upper-class households do not apply in the national and social context of Roger's Boston home, where his father, Ira, sends Flor to school and gives her the life of an 'American teenager' despite Mirabel's (Roger's mother) and Abuelita's vehement objections (253). Flor completes high school, attends Wellesley College on a full scholarship, and becomes like a daughter to Ira (61).

Though Flor becomes part of the family to Ira and Roger, the classism that pervades Abuelita's rank in Guatemalan society impedes the development of a familial bond between Flor and Roger's Guatemalan family members (i.e., Mirabel and Abuelita). Flor's relationship with Mirabel is at first ambivalent, though it becomes increasingly unfriendly throughout the former's time in the US. From Abuelita, however, Flor suffers outright disdain. When Abuelita—who, according to Roger, 'had personally helped to overthrow [Jacobo Arbenz]'—visits Namohet, she is outraged at the fondness between Flor and Ira, at the familiarity of Flor's place at the kitchen table, and at the existence of Flor's very own phone line (253-5). Similarly, when Flor visits Abuelita's home in Guatemala on a 'family' trip, Mirabel promises Flor that 'no one would say she was a maid or try to treat her like one' (257). When they arrive in Guatemala and Flor learns that she is to sleep in the 'maid's quarters' and help clean the house, a battle ensues between Flor and Abuelita that ends with Flor returning home early and then pursuing US citizenship to free herself of Abuelita's control (257-262).

In addition to the class conflicts that Flor experiences with Roger's Guatemalan family members, she also navigates other social dynamics such as race, ethnicity, and (trans)national identity in the US. Flor is called 'spik' by other adolescents in the US and is often questioned about her ethnonational background. She tells Moya, for instance, about the time when a 'gross, sweaty man [with a southern accent] came up' and asked "'[a]re you *Filipeño* or what?'" (278). Roger narrates similar stories about the exoticizing curiosity that is directed at Flor by men in bars. Before Roger recreates the flirtatious back-and-forths that he witnesses between Flor and Boston men—which include the men's confusion about Guatemala's location, their questions about poverty in Guatemala, and their compliments to Flor for being 'practically American' (167)—he considers the gendered racialization that underpins such exchanges:

Boston, as the whole world supposedly knows, is infamous for racial intolerance, outside the sanctum of its prestigious universities of course. But Moya has told me that even the Somalian student he befriended in Harvard, a political 'refugee' like himself, when out walking in Cambridge had to put up with drive-by carloads

of teenagers shouting 'n——.' When some slightly more grown-up version of that sort of Boston boy finds himself thinking he might be on to an exotic lay, that's when you get the flip side. (166)

Flor's racialization in the US reveals gendered, sexualized, and exoticized readings of her difference. While men like Moya's Somalian friend are targeted aggressively and unequivocally by racist Bostonians, the 'flip side' that Roger goes on to describe exposes an insidious and patronizing racism that is at once masked and fueled by sexual desire.

For example, as Roger recreates Flor's barroom dialogues with men in Boston who want to sleep with her, he describes the change in men's attitudes toward Flor the moment that she offers a response that strays from meek agreeability. As Roger reports his observations that 'something in [Flor's] attitude is beginning to rile him [any given man flirting with Flor at a Boston bar],' the narrator projects the following internal monologue onto Flor's so-called admirers: 'who does this squeaky beaver think she is?...so she thinks she's hot shit, *he's* Sully, not a dope, not a wimp, not just some red-neck' (168). Here, Roger describes his perception of Boston men's shifting attitudes toward Flor from curiosity to contempt as she demonstrates, first, her intellectual superiority despite her hailing from one of those 'poor countries down there,' and, second, her refusal to sleep with them, effectively shattering the assumption of her as an 'exotic lay' (166-168). Though the racism aimed at Flor is initially cloaked in desire, the result—once Flor challenges readings of her as exotic and sexually available—resembles the racist epithet hurled at Moya's Somalian friend. In sum, Flor's positionalities vis-à-vis conceptions of class, race, ethnicity, and gender in the US lead to her being viewed by a white majority as at once a foreign 'other' (e.g., adolescents ridiculing her by shouting 'spik') and as an exotic object to be tamed and conquered through sex (e.g., the 'exotic lay').

Flor faces a different set of discriminatory practices in Guatemala. After her murder in February 1983—a few years after she decides to return to Guatemala from the US to run an orphanage—the press highlights her status as a 'United States citizen who had spent more than half of her life in her adopted country and had graduated from one of its most elite colleges for women' (6). Newspapers present Flor's case as 'another form of hypocrisy and imperialism: a highly educated US citizen selling, for personal profit, the surviving victims of the *alleged* human rights atrocities that North Americans professed to be so concerned about' (6, emphasis in original). Flor's claims to US Americanness criminalize her in a Guatemalan context that is still grappling with a history of US intervention. The city's rumor mills substantiate the news circulated in print. According to rumors, Flor—the 'gringa-chapina' who is 'creída' and 'muy rara'—owes her success in the US to the 'fact' that she 'used to screw that old Jew' with whom she lived (389). Flor's criminalization and sexualization serve for Guatemalans as 'evidence' of her supposed

selling of girls into prostitution while she worked as director of the orphanage (389).

While Flor's criminalization as a 'gringa-chapina' in Guatemala is politically motivated, her transnational identities and enigmatic origins also shed light on Guatemala's constructions of race and ethnicity. Literary critics and historians such as Arias and Greg Grandin investigate the racial, ethnic, and class complexities that underlie a Guatemalan national project that seeks to exclude indigenous ethnicity. Goldman's novel offers readers indigenous and Ladino characters who complicate the conception of a Guatemalan nation bifurcated by European whiteness on the one hand and indigeneity on the other.³ Flor and Moya, for example, are characters whose phenotypic indigeneity is repeatedly remarked upon. Due to their status as middle-class urban dwellers, however, Flor and Moya are distinguished from the highland indigenous groups who are more ethnically and linguistically marked than the two protagonists and who suffer the worst of the state-sponsored violence that sweeps the mostly indigenous western highlands in the narrative present of the early 1980s (McAllister 276).

Flor and Moya further disrupt a Ladino/indigenous dichotomy in Guatemala through their places of origin. Roger positions Moya as a product of 'the interracial nature of the coastal departments,' where generations of intermingling had produced hybrid subjects of 'Indian, African, [and] Spanish-Moorish' descent (202). Flor's enigmatic origins feature an unknown mother and a father, El Negro Puac, whose nickname connotes a tie to African ancestry while his surname is marked as indigenous. In a letter to Roger, Flor explains that her father's origins are unknown. Considering his nickname, she speculates on his possible origins in predominantly Afro-descendant regions of Guatemala or Honduras (e.g., the Izabal region of Guatemala). Relatedly, Flor remarks that her own features do not 'match the typical notions of an Indian's daughter' (198).

In short, while the discriminatory practices aimed at Flor in the US are based on a white supremacist ideology that positions any deviation from white, English-speaking, and US American as an inferior 'other,' the criticisms she endures in Guatemala are strongly grounded in both hemispheric politics and national constructions of race, ethnicity, and class. Politically, Flor functions for Guatemalans as a scapegoat to voice resentments toward the US. Though Roger vilifies the Guatemalans who use Flor's murder to voice these resentments, he also references multiple instances of US intervention across Central America, in this way inviting readers to recall the US's participation and complicity in creating Guatemala's state of terror. Flor's ties to the US further pose a threat to the status quo of internal Guatemalan social relations. The reality that she—an 'indigenous' orphan hired to work as a maid—lived the privileged adolescence of a middle-class, US American teen and then returned to Guatemala having achieved social mobility, is seen as an affront to characters like Abuelita and Mirabel. For these representatives of Guatemala's Ladino upper class, maintaining power is predicated on immobilizing those who occupy the lower rungs of race, class,

and ethnic hierarchies, such as Flor. Thus, as the rumors report, Flor is 'creída' because she transcends the bounds of Guatemalan taxonomies without possessing the markers of privilege that constitute the status quo in Guatemala (e.g., wealth, European ancestry).

Flor and Moya additionally address the arbitrariness of their labeling as 'indios' in Guatemala. After Moya puts forth that 'all *chapines*' embody a 'tricultural synthesis' due to the mestizaje between European, indigenous, and African populations—though Flor, as additionally US American, is 'quadcultural'—Flor questions the meanings ascribed to a supposed synthesis:

'...for me, and I bet for you too, Moya, the synthesis, such as it is, is really all there is, and I wonder to what degree it actually *is* a synthesis, and not something else. How Indian do you actually feel, ever?...even the average tourist probably sees as much of the highlands as you have in your whole life, am I right? So OK, Guatemala, in what we like to think of as its deepest self, is Mayan. We, who aren't actually Indian, what is it we absorb?' (306, emphasis in original)

Though Flor's question of 'feeling Indian' also risks essentializing the wide variety of indigenous communities recognized in Guatemala, her point, I argue, has to do with challenging the imposition of an identity marker (i.e., indigenous) that does not reflect her cultural life experiences as a Boston-raised, urban-dweller in Guatemala City, nor does it reflect the lives of many other Guatemalans who are similarly labeled. Interestingly, Flor challenges the 'synthesis' of her 'quadcultural' identity because she 'feels' no tie to her supposed indigeneity. She thus questions the Guatemalan ethnonational narrative that subsumes a number of multiply-situated identities within an umbrella of 'indigeneity,' and also casts doubt on the metaphor of 'synthesis' as adequate for describing her ambiguous placement with respect to a number of identity categories in Guatemala (e.g., the tricultural mestizaje of European, indigenous, and African) and the US (e.g., Guatemalan, gringa, Latina).

Having thus set the stage for my reading of Flor's ambiguous positionality, I now turn to two images, the ghost and the double, that characters utilize to (dis)embody a radical sense of Flor's otherness. Both images are imbricated with a sense of double (and multiple) positionality, displacement, and estrangement. Flor's self-conception as a ghost conveys the mystery of her origins and family history. In one of her two letters that Roger includes in the narrative, she writes about her return to Chiquimula, the desert highland town that she left when she was six years old after her father's murder. An old woman in Chiquimula tells Flor that her father was decapitated after taking water from the well of a nearby *finca*. As Flor disappeared after her father's murder—readers learn that El Negro's mistress takes her to the orphanage in Guatemala City where Abuelita finds her years later—the townspeople of Chiquimula assumed that Flor was also killed by the same man who murdered her father. Accord-

ing to the old woman, Chiquimulans had since reported sightings of the ghosts of both Flor and her father, 'say[ing] they could hear [Flor] crying at night from several places in the desert all at once' (206). Amused at the idea of her own ghost story, Flor's letter includes her parenthetical joke to Roger of an '(Idea for a short story: the possibility that all my life I have been a ghost)' (199).

Flor's own sense of ghostliness recalls the notions of doubt, open-endedness, and incompleteness that theorists such as Gordon and Blanco attribute to the spectral's appearance as a literary trope. Though Flor sets out for Chiquimula looking for answers about her family, she leaves the town satisfied despite the limited information she learns. After Roger shows Flor's letter to Moya, the latter's response is that '[Flor] seems more sad about her dress than about her father' (209), as her letter makes several mentions of the nuns who took her favorite polka-dotted dress when she entered the orphanage. I view Flor's acceptance of her unknown past as her openness to mystery. As theorists of spectrality propose, haunting relies on an incompleteness of experience to stimulate critical thought, rather than a search for complete understanding and concrete definition. Flor's acceptance of her unknown origins—i.e., the mystery of where her father came from and the identity of her mother—allows her to view her multiple positionalities as 'opportunities' (306). When Flor and Moya discuss her positioning as 'quadcultural' and Roger's as 'bicultural,' Flor suggests that claiming multiple identities 'can mean nothing or it can mean whatever [one] decides to make of it' (306). Despite the many ways that Flor is 'othered' throughout the spaces she inhabits, her own thoughts regarding her difference reveal an acceptance of the open-ended. While Flor is curious about her origins, she remains seemingly untroubled by the impossibility of attaining the answers she seeks.

In comparison to Flor's openness to the mystery of her origins, Roger's writings on multiply-situated identities reveal a much deeper ontological concern. Roger and Moya both impose metaphors of disability on Flor to describe her difference (i.e., schizophrenia and amputation). To demonstrate how characters utilize these tropes, I include dialogue in which Roger and Moya consider Flor's identity through the image of two people (i.e., a double); one who has suffered the amputation of an arm, and another who is physically 'complete.' The dialogue begins and ends with Roger:

'I'm talking about who she was. At her most real she felt artificial too, or something like that...Flor was never just a Namaset kid! She was two people!'

'...*Una esquizofrénica, vos.*'

'No, because the other one was silent, invisible. Like when a guy gets his arm amputated but can still feel that it's there, still attached to him? He looks, and it's not there? It's as if he's two people, the other one still walking around with two arms, doing entirely different things,

but where? He can't know. He just senses that he's happier or at least more complete somewhere else.' (478)

Roger identifies an opposition between Flor 'at her most real' and as 'artificial too.' I read the 'artificiality' that Roger attributes to Flor as her ability to embody a range of identities in multiple spaces (e.g., a Namaset kid and a gringa chapina). Moya applies a metaphor of 'schizophrenia' to Flor's seeming artificiality as she navigates transnational spaces. Moya's comparison of multiple subjectivities to schizophrenia echoes ideas put forward by cultural theorists such as Antonio Cornejo Polar. For Cornejo Polar, migratory displacements 'duplicate (or more than duplicate) the territory of the subject' (118). He views the trope of schizophrenia as an approach to the 'decentered subject of migrant discourse' that does not attempt to synthesize the 'no less than two life experiences' that migration encompasses (117). Though both Moya's and Cornejo Polar's metaphorical uses of schizophrenia risk a deep misunderstanding and misuse of this complex illness, I take both perspectives to imply that 'schizophrenic' identities are marked by contradiction, displacement, and a sense of consistently shedding and assuming different identities.⁴

Though Moya's rendering of a 'schizophrenic Flor' echoes her own challenge to the notion of 'synthesis,' Roger's idea of Flor as 'two people' utilizes metaphors of doubles and amputation. In considering Flor's identities, Roger envisions two separate physical bodies, one who has suffered the amputation of an arm and is presumably less 'complete,' and another whom he deems 'more complete' and 'happier' due to having both arms intact. Roger's image of a body with a missing arm embodies fragmentation and incompleteness. The distinction that he asserts between the complete body and the incomplete body that has undergone amputation implies a binary opposition that cannot be remedied, especially as it ignores the use of prostheses to compensate for the missing arm. Interpreting Flor's difference through the metaphor of amputation echoes Mitchell's and Snyder's argument of narrative prosthesis as a dependency on disability that gives characters idiosyncrasies that depart from the 'anonymous background of the "norm"' (47).

As Roger and Moya examine the sense of 'artificiality' that they impose on Flor even 'at her most real,' I argue that they risk utilizing disability as an ableist trope that functions as 'an opportunistic metaphorical device' (Mitchell and Snyder 47). According to Mitchell and Snyder, disability problematically appears throughout literary writings to embody a radical otherness vis-à-vis groups already differentiated from 'the norm' by constructed categories such as race and gender (47). Roger's conception of Flor as two people, one of whom is invisible and incomplete because she is missing an arm, exposes Flor's exceptionality as 'radically other' through her embodied difference. This exception cannot be remedied through a prosthetic device that couples her body with an artificial supplement, as, according to Roger, only an alternate version of self that is naturally 'whole' can achieve a sense of happiness and completeness.

I argue that Roger's reading of Flor's multiple identities as 'in-

complete' through the metaphor of an amputated arm idealizes the notions of whole and knowable subjects.⁵ According to literary theorist, David Wills, the prostheticized body—that is, the insufficient or lacking body—is 'not the exception but the paradigm for the body itself' (137). Therefore, the amputated limb serves to epitomize the fragmented state of all bodies, as 'all bodies are deficient in that materiality proves variable [and] vulnerable' (7). Roger negates the fragmented status of all bodies by suggesting that Flor achieve a sense of wholeness only through an alternate version of self that never experienced the loss of a limb.

The imagining of a lost limb serves, I suggest, to parallel the loss of a stable conception of self that Roger attributes to processes of migration, though this line of thought risks idealizing a past wherein Flor's identities were ever 'stable,' as she was 'othered' as an 'india' orphan in Guatemala long before she began her migratory life between Namostat, New York, and Guatemala City. Roger's attempt to 'remedy' Flor's multiplicity through an embodiment of wholeness rather than fragmentation mirrors his attempt to uncover Flor's mysteries—and, thus, make her knowable—through writing and storytelling. In each instance—i.e., in attempting to make Flor knowable through telling her story and in attempting to make Flor whole through an alternate version of self—Roger's idealizations fall short as they cannot change the fragmented and chaotic reality of Flor's identities and life experiences.

As Roger constructs his story about Flor, he includes aspects of his personal history incidentally and, ostensibly, as context that is necessary to understanding Flor as the focal point of his tale. As the narrative progresses, however, Roger's short and casual references to personal history grow into pages of reflection on his own ethnoracial identities and political engagements. For instance, while describing his childhood between Guatemala City and Boston, Roger mentions his summers spent with 'Guatemalan rich kids' at the Colegio Anne Hunt (31). As an outsider who only attended the Guatemala City school during summers away from Boston, Roger attempts to assert superiority at the Colegio by 'want[ing] to be regarded as nothing other than Gringo American' (32). Though Roger can claim 'Gringo Americanness' through his 'bicultural' rearing in Boston by US American and Guatemalan parents, his phenotypic features speak otherwise in a school of rich Guatemalan kids: 'I was flabbergasted and enraged by all these imperturbable Guatemalan kids who thought themselves frankly superior to me, even racially superior! They were richer, most were even *whiter*' (33).

Roger blames his inability to pass as 'white' in Guatemala on his mixture of Guatemalan and Jewish features. He describes his Guatemalan Arrau roots as 'lightly mestizo,' clarifying that some Arraus were even 'green-eyed, blondish *chelitots*,' a term used in Guatemala to mean 'white-skinned' (33). The lightly mestizo features of his mother's family, especially when coupled with their typically light complexions, allow many of Roger's Guatemalan family members to pass as non-indigenous. Roger's Jewish father, however, passes on his 'much darker complexion and slightly wavy

mop of thin black hair' (33). These characteristics, coupled with the Arraus' 'lightly mestizo features,' mark Roger as 'indio' to the schoolboys at Anne Hunt (33). Thus, the assumption by schoolboys that Roger has indigenous heritage is due, according to the narrator, to the 'side of [me] that was Jewish' (33). By attributing his marking as 'indio' to his Jewish features, Roger echoes the idealizations of a Guatemalan national body that excludes its indigenous ancestry, as he performs this very same erasure of indigeneity by ascribing his mestizo features to his Jewishness. This episode reveals not only the perceived superiority of whiteness in the Guatemalan context (e.g., Roger's desire to be read only as a white gringo American at the Colegio), but also the mistaken conflation of whiteness with US American and British national identities, as a boy at Roger's school proclaims that he is 'more gringo' than Roger because his grandfather is British (33).

The Arraus have 'mestizo' bloodlines going back to the Conquest: Roger's great-grandmother was a Pocomil Indian and his grandfather was the illegitimate child of Colonel Rogerio Arrau and his lifelong mestiza mistress (239). Roger acknowledges his 'minority share in that [indigenous] *raza*' and attempts to 'feel moved' by the idea that his ancestors 'really had lived among such pyramids as royalty, priests, warriors, slaves' (240). After pages of tracing his indigenous background, however, he wonders if 'any of this means anything' and negates any identification he might develop with Guatemalan indigeneity by stating that 'you might as well have told me I had ancestors on Mars' (240). Like Flor, Roger's distancing from his indigenous past gestures toward 'not feeling' culturally connected to indigenous communities.

Roger also dissociates from 'Hispanic' and 'Latino' identity markers in the US. Recalling moments throughout his childhood in Boston, Roger states that 'I thought it didn't matter when I was called a spik since anyone could see that I wasn't really a spik, I only sort of looked like one,' presumably due to the Americanized, English-speaking upbringing provided by his non-Latino father (439). A possible reading of Roger's aversion to being identified with the marginalized parts of his multiple identity positions—e.g., indigenous and Hispanic/Latino—signals his internalization of the racist attitudes in the US and Guatemala that deem whiteness as superior in any ethnoracial context. Roger complicates this reading, however, by adding layers to his identification with Guatemalan and indigenous identities which beg the question of whether he is 'authentically' able to claim such histories as a self-proclaimed middle-class Boston kid, despite how 'indio' or 'Latino' he may appear.

For example, Roger's relationship to Guatemalan cultural objects parallels his ambivalence toward his multiple identities. Reading materials, for instance, reveal aspects of Roger's Guatemalan identity to be mediated and performed, as his reading practices reflect the sense of artificiality and superficiality that hinder his full claiming of a Guatemalan national identity. After Flor returns to Guatemala to run an orphanage in 1979, Roger purchases 'just about everything on Guatemala that I could lay my hands on'

(234). Through books, Roger feels that he can share 'some of [the] new *gravity*' that Flor experiences by living in Guatemala (234). To describe the '*gravity*' that he also wishes to attain, Roger lists the canonical works of Guatemalan fiction, philosophy, and history that decorate his bookshelves, while he also relates the 'allure' of 'the esoteric solidity of a row of Guatemalan books across my shelves' (235). As he attempts to summarize specific texts, however, he admits to those that he has not read, though he liked having 'the dramatic titles' displayed on shelves (235).

As readers grow suspicious of the proclaimed '*gravity*' that Roger purports to develop through books that he has admittedly not read, the narrator exposes the gravity that he seeks as strategic, constructed, and performed:

To keep [the gravity] there...all I really had to do was carry a book like Fray Bartolomé de las Casas's *In Defense of the Indians* around with me for weeks on end, opening it at random on subway rides into Manhattan and turning back to Las Casas's 500-page monologue and formal argument, originally delivered four centuries ago before the Spanish Court's Council of the Indies out loud and in Latin, against the Holy Roman Church's and Bishop Sepúlveda's position that the Indians of Mexico and Central America were no better than beasts. (236)

Though Roger buys books about Spanish American history to parallel Flor's lived experiences in Guatemala, his reading practices ironically reveal the mediated distance of his relationship to his mother's home country. First, Roger admits that his reading practices are performative. To appear to possess an understanding of colonial history (and, thus, presumably, of his Spanish American identity), he is to simply 'carry' (not read) a(ny) book like de las Casas's. Rather than read it in its entirety, he is to 'open it at random' to appear serious to onlookers on the Manhattan subway. Second, through his performative reading practices, Roger exposes his disinterest in the 'Indians of Mexico and Central America.'

Though he praises Flor's work with Guatemalan orphans as heroic, he reveals his own distance from what he views as important political work through his uninterested reading of the colonization of indigenous peoples. Roger's performed concern for colonial history—particularly as relates to indigenous groups, as shown by the intertextual mention of *In Defense of the Indians*—is juxtaposed to Flor's life and work in Guatemala. Flor, who is labeled 'india' in Guatemala, works to place indigenous orphans of the war-torn highlands in homes across the US and Europe. Due to her work, history, and ethnoracial marking, Roger considers Flor to be firmly situated within a Guatemalan identity, even though she is also 'a Namomet kid.' Roger's reaction to Flor's lived experiences in Guatemala thus casts doubt upon his ability to claim a Guatemalan identity, as his relationship to his mother's home country remains distanced, mediated, and tenuous.

Roger views his own identity as a troubled mixture of several national, cultural, ethnic, and racial categories. He writes:

...origins such as mine—Catholic, Jewish, Guatemala, USA—can't always exist comfortably inside just one person. This isn't necessarily the biggest problem ever faced...it can even be pretty convenient when you're just looking for something to blame your own general confusion on; the easiest thing is to just ignore it, to not dwell on it at all. But what if you're not the ignoring type? Then you've been born into a kind of labyrinth, you have to pick and choose your way through it and there's no getting back to the beginning because there isn't any one true point of origin. Flor used to tell me to think of it as a great opportunity. (234)

Amid a story constructed around the life and death of Flor, the quote above shows a clear turn of focus to Roger's own identitarian concerns. Present in this quote are concepts that Roger spends hundreds of pages contemplating with regards to Flor (e.g., the difficulty or 'opportunity' of inhabiting multiple identities within one body). Curiously, however, when Roger turns these reflections on personal identity inward, he seems to consider them self-indulgent; he states, for example, that his divided origin is 'not the biggest problem ever faced.' Following these thoughts, Roger describes his attempt (discussed above) to engage with Guatemalan politics through books. I read this succession of topics—from personal identity to political commitment—as Roger's effort to convince readers that he views his preoccupations with identity as trivial in comparison to Guatemala's life-altering political context. Though he tries to add '*gravity*' to his identity concerns through his explorations of history and politics, his preoccupations with personal identity persist, as he admits that he is not 'the ignoring type.'

I argue that Roger's persisting concern over his supposed lack of 'one true point of origin' reflects Gordon's definition of haunting, wherein 'specters or ghosts appear when the trouble they represent and symptomize is no longer being contained...the appearance of specters [notifies] that what's been concealed is very much alive and present' (xvi). Readers are led to believe that the specter that haunts Roger's story is Flor. I suggest, however, that Flor's death uncovers Roger's true ghosts; that is, the nagging doubts that he feels about his identity. Though he attempts to repress his subjective doubt because he considers it trivial in relation to the 'truer' problem of politics, even his political concerns appear half-hearted, as he only responds to these performatively (e.g., his uninterested reading of historical texts).

Roger describes the living Flor as a presence that structured his life. As he reflects upon the moment when Flor almost left Namomet when she was a teenager due to Mirabel's and Ira's troubled marriage and unhappy household, Roger considers Flor's decision to stay as a type of genesis to the remainder of his life: 'With *that*,

Flor's decision to stay with us in Namonet...(because of me), doesn't it stop being chance and become something else? It becomes Flor de Mayo, leading to everything else' (285). Despite Roger's complex origins, the living Flor stood as his 'root;' in his view, she offered causality to what otherwise might appear random. Her decision to stay creates the conditions for 'everything else' that occurs in his life after this moment. Though Roger views his origins as labyrinthine and divided (e.g., lacking 'one true point' [234]), Flor serves as a stabilizing anchor that relieves his confusion. Thus, when Flor dies, Roger loses the sense of rootedness that he constructs around his multiple selves: 'Soon I felt I didn't even have a history. I didn't know what I was trying to heal. Had I lost a relative, a sister as it were? A best friend? A myth? A metaphysical lover? A lie? My own history?' (288). In addition to the loss of Flor, Roger also feels that he has lost a connection to himself, since Flor is bound up in both his childhood memories (i.e., his history) and in his negotiations of identity as an adult as she provides some stability to his self-doubt by connecting him to aspects of his Guatemalan identity.

As Roger questions how to heal from the loss of Flor, he confesses that 'I told myself stories and learned that I could be made of the ones I chose to tell, not simply the ones that life had laid haphazardly around me. But now I chose to tell them silently, and only to myself' (288). Here, Roger lays bare his implicit intention in storytelling. Though he purports to construct a narrative centered around Flor, he exposes his knowledge that he, too, can construct a sense of self around the act of storytelling. Roger's admission of telling his chosen stories 'silently' and 'only to himself,' however, alerts readers to the narrator's misleading intentions about why he tells his story. I suggest that Roger's extended ruminations on Flor's multiplicity reveal the doubts that he harbors regarding his own labyrinthine existence.

Roger's haunting by Flor's ghost reveals his nagging doubt about his own subjectivity, an issue that readers see Roger attempt to address only indirectly, as we are constantly made to feel suspicious of his voice as narrator. Though he tries through storytelling to allay the pain and uncertainty that Flor's death causes, his narrative persists in a state of disorder, doubt, and explicit craftedness. I read the novel's chaotic form as Roger's inability to impose order upon Flor's life, her death, and his own stories. This uncertain and disordered status reflects, I suggest, Roger's growing awareness that the sense of rootedness and history that he experienced in Flor simply covered over the deeper truth of his divided origin, a truth he only begins to discover after Flor's death. Storytelling thus serves, I argue, as an exercise in accepting the disorder and unknowability of the self rather than as a means of excavating the secrets that surround Flor's existence.

Roger's attempted reckoning with his ambiguous origins—which is inspired by Flor's haunting presence—provides a possibility for 'healing' that Gordon describes as follows:

To be haunted in the name of a will to heal is to allow the

ghost to help you imagine what was lost that never even existed, really. That is its utopian grace: to encourage a steely sorrow laced with delight for what we lost that we never had; to long for the insight of the moment in which we recognize...that it could have been and can be otherwise. (57)

Flor's ghost, along with the metaphor of the double that Roger imposes on her, guide him to consider 'what was lost that never even existed' (i.e., an alternate version of a human body that is more 'complete' than one who has lost an arm, and a re-writing of a life lived as a ghost). For Roger, these alternate versions of self provide images through which to explore a life with different outcomes (465). While Roger obsesses about the different outcomes that these alternate lives may have produced—e.g., a Flor who is still alive or a life stripped of the complexities of transnational identification—Gordon's writings serve to reframe his perceived losses as realities that 'never really existed.' Gordon's conception of haunting as a willingness toward healing describes Roger's relationship to Flor's ghost. After he wrestles with a felt loss of personal history and identity upon Flor's death, he becomes open to Flor's ghost as a healing guide that encourages his acceptance of multiplicity as an 'opportunity.' In other words, Flor's ghost incites Roger's openness toward accepting disorder, unrootedness, and ambiguity as aspects of his identity.

I read the end of Roger's story as a reflection of his growing awareness and tolerance of open-endedness and doubt. Having abandoned the pretense of solving Flor's murder, the last page of Roger's narrative shows him boarding the same bus he traveled on months earlier to the Guatemalan coast. Roger's first trip on this bus was marked by indecision and a need to escape. Though he had bought a ticket for the desert town of El Progreso, he did not get off the bus until three stops later, in the coastal town of Puerto Barrios. Amid his apparent confusion, the bus driver and ticket taker laughed at Roger, remarking that '*Este anda más perdido que el Judío Errante*' (426). Roger's story closes with his boarding the same bus and seeing 'that same merrily bemused smirk, that very same bus driver's *ayudante* who'd made fun of me for not knowing where I was going' (570). The ending is left undetermined, as readers never learn which destination Roger chooses on this bus ride. However, I read Roger's return to the familiar confusion, possibility, and mobility of the bus as his final gesture toward knowingly embarking on a journey of doubt, openness, and questioning.

Goldman's postmodern novel challenges conventions of both form and subjectivity, as it questions the imposition of restrictive categories on several characters while explicitly crafting their stories. In this essay, I explored the ambiguous subject positionings of Flor, Moya, and Roger as each character navigated the constructions of ethnicity, race, gender, and class in Guatemalan and US spaces. The appearance of ghosts, doubles, and disabled bodies throughout the novel invited connections to theories within spec-

tral and disability studies. Flor's self-conception as a ghost, along with her haunting of Roger, demonstrates her openness to the mystery, complexity, and open-endedness that characterized her transnational life. On the other hand, Roger's and Moya's imposition upon Flor of opportunistic metaphors of disability to describe her multiple subject positions gestures towards notions of loss, incompleteness, and instability. This reading of the disabled body as 'lacking' not only misrepresents how Flor herself appears to feel about her self-identity, but also reflects Mitchell's and Snyder's critique of ableist discourses within fiction.

As Roger's storytelling develops, readers begin to see his opening toward the transformative and healing power of both the ghost and writing itself. I argue that Roger's deep reflections on Flor encouraged him to (reluctantly) turn his storytelling inward, in this way demonstrating Roger's receptiveness to questioning rather than resolution. Roger begins to tell his own story, then, as a form of acceptance of the seeming chaos of his life rather than as a means of controlling it. Through writing about himself and Flor, Roger aban-

dons his search for complete understanding and concrete definition and instead learns to live with the 'necessary open-endedness' of his transnational existence.

In an interview with Whit Coppedge, Goldman laments what he views as the restrictiveness of his novels' ethnic labeling. In response to his being viewed as a 'Latino' or 'Jewish' writer, Goldman bemoans the 'people who think that because there are Central Americans in my book the book must be about "being Latino" or "politics" rather than about all the things the novel is really about, including its manner of telling itself (style, form, genres, etc.).' While grappling with the questions of 'being Latino' and 'politics' that Goldman justifiably criticizes, this essay also attends to the notions of form, transnationality, storytelling, and personal identity that so complicate the social and political questions that surround Latinidad. Rather than define identity by notions of 'otherness' or 'origin' that further entrench the difference attributed to certain subject positions, this essay attempts to challenge the logic of essentialization that defines and restricts categories of identity.

NOTES

¹ *The Ordinary Seaman* (1997) features a Nicaraguan protagonist, along with a cast of various Central American characters, shipwrecked and trapped on a desolate Brooklyn pier. *The Divine Husband* (2004) transports readers to an unspecified Central American nation and the New York of the nineteenth century to tell the love story of María de las Nieves Moran and José Martí. *The Art of Political Murder: Who Killed the Bishop?* (2007) is Goldman's first nonfiction book. It investigates the controversial murder of Bishop Juan Gerardi two days after the release of a church-sponsored report that implicated the military in the killing and disappearance of some two hundred thousand Guatemalan civilians. In *Say Her Name* (2011), Goldman revisits the life and death of his wife, Aura Estrada, in 2005, while *The Interior Circuit: A Mexico City Chronicle* (2014) treats his emergence from grief in a multi-genre piece that interweaves the author's personal tales with his perspectives on Mexican history, politics, and everyday life.

² In his article in the 2003 inaugural issue of *Latino Studies*, 'Central American-Americans: Invisibility, Power, and Representation in the US Latino World,' Arias states that Goldman is 'not a Central American Latino writer' (169). He clarifies that Goldman's identity is 'that of a bi-national writer: [he] was the son of an American citizen living in Guatemala who acquired his knowledge of the country while attending an American school there for some years' (169). In response, Marta Caminero-Santangelo, in her article, 'Central Americans in the City: Goldman, Tobar, and the Question of Panethnicity,' writes that the distinction of the first novel written in English by a Guatemalan-American author 'might more properly go to Goldman [rather than Tobar's *The Tattooed Soldier*, 1998] depending on whom we decide to "count" as a Guatemalan American author' (192). I include this exchange not to spotlight an example of scholarly disagreement nor to critique the scholarship of two distinguished pioneers in the field of Central American (-American) studies, but rather to demonstrate the complexities that Goldman's identities pose both within his own fictions and the scholarship that analyzes these.

³ Historian Laura Matthew writes that 'In Guatemala today, "indigenous" and "ladino" are typically understood as mutually exclusive categories. Being indigenous means belonging to an ethnic group with roots in the precolumbian past...Being ladino is, in the modern usage, an identity of negation: that is, not indigenous... "Indigenous" is associated with conquest and internal colonialism, while "ladino" is associated with full citizenship and affiliation with the Guatemalan nation-state' (1).

⁴ According to The National Institute of Mental Health, schizophrenia is a serious mental illness that affects how a person thinks, feels, and behaves. Symptoms may include psychotic symptoms (e.g., hallucinations, delusions); negative symptoms (e.g., loss of interest or enjoyment); and cognitive symptoms (e.g., trouble focusing or paying attention).

⁵ In his monograph, *Dead Subjects*, Antonio Viegó argues that dominant social groups impose an inferior status upon ethnic-racialized subjects such as Latina/o/x/s by constructing fragmentation as an undesirable state. As Latina/o/x/s, for example, are 'fragmented' by their attachments to both the US and Latin America, they are viewed as incapable of 'wholly' embodying an identity that makes them fully knowable or legible within a US context. Viegó examines how the desired end of 'wholeness' constructs a racist discourse that calls for 'the undivided, obscenely full and complete ethnic-racialized subject, transparent to itself and to others' (6).

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