

## **The Enchanted and the Everyday: Diversity and the Supernatural in LatinX Young Adult Novels**

In 2017, most have heard the “diversity” buzzword enough to agree that it is important, but how much authentic diversity actually appears in young adult literature? It is vital that diversity is portrayed authentically, sensitively, and vibrantly rather than one-dimensionally or tokenistically. This project investigates the intersections of ethnicity, race, and gender in ChicanX/LatinX YA literature in order to analyze current presentations and possible reception of multiculturalism. Particular attention is paid to an exploration of depth and perceived authenticity of experience.

In this paper, I discuss three popular recent ChicanX/LatinX YA fantasy/science fiction novels (or series): Stephanie Diaz’s 2010 *Extraction* series, Valerie Tejada’s 2015 *Hollywood Witch Hunter*, and Daniel Jose Older’s 2015 *Shadowshaper*. I examine the use of the supernatural as a metaphor and a coping device for conflicts that arise due to racial and ethnic identities and gender constructs. I explore the freedoms and the pitfalls the female protagonists find in their powers and apply that “hypercorrection” to the characters’ complex and authentic realities and, more broadly, to the lived experiences of ChicanX/LatinX young adults in the U.S. today. The intersectionality of the protagonists’ marked hybrid status as teenage girls, Chicanas, and supernatural beings, two of which are obviously realistic marginalized depictions while one is a fantasy, creates an interesting space within which to explore hybridity. I argue that there is a limit to Anzaldúan hybridity as the exemplar for the YA reader and character because of its overly idealistic portrayal of the New Mestiza, which doesn’t work when applied to a teenaged coming-of-age that involves transitioning painfully and often amongst their borderlands identities in ways that do not reflect peaceful coexistence amongst hybrid influences. I propose an alternate model for adolescent Chicana hybridity that takes into account the adolescent experience.