
Border Crossing the West: A Global Nation

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Abstract

My research for this paper focuses on novels about the American West written by women writers at the turn of the millennium and that have girls as protagonists, such as *The Bean Trees* by Barbara Kingsolver published in 1980, *A Gate at the Stairs* by Lorrie Moore in 2009 and *Girlchild* by Tupelo Hassman in 2012. By using a Feminist Critical Regionalism approach, these coming-of-age narratives (*Bildungsroman*) or Girl Narratives reveal themselves to us as decolonizing practices. They acknowledge that colonization is an enduring practice that persists in the form of neoliberalism, one that follows the US imperialist paradigm. They overtly refuse to replicate settler models in regards of jurisdiction, territory, race, and class; but instead, they pursue to unsettle colonial and neoliberal maps. These girls' geographies interrogate not only the effect of the porous national borders but also the metanarrative paradigm of the Old West or the West as America (Campbell 2000) in favor of a more complex diagram of the New West, one that produces decolonized and deterritorialized knowledges. This approach is indebted to Judith Butler and Gayatri Spivak when they argue that a solution to go beyond the nation-state limits into critical regionalisms is through Global Feminism, and to Krista Comer when considers that this is a way to consider the locations of women across the Global Wests and to address issues of precarity, mobility and power.

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