

Gerry: Hi, my name is Geraldo Cadava, and this is Writing Latinos, a new podcast from Public Books.

The Latino story has never been written in full— there are so many experiences to document and share. But Latinos everywhere have written their stories, and the stories of their communities, with a sense of great urgency. Sometimes their narratives are sweeping, sometimes they're particular.

In Writing Latinos, we'll talk to Latino authors about how their writing illuminates Latino experiences.

Latino scholars, memoirists, novelists, journalists, and others have used the written word as their medium for making a statement about *latinidad*. Some of our episodes will therefore be nerdy and academic, while others might be more playful and lighthearted. But all will offer thoughtful reflections on Latino identity, and how writing conveys some of its meanings.

We'll publish a new episode every two weeks. If you like what you hear, like and subscribe to *Writing Latinos* wherever you get your podcasts.

Now, for the show...

I am so delighted to talk today to GRA Mosovski, who is the dean of the Craig Newmar Graduate School of Journalism at the City University of New York.

Gu Graciela is also the author of *The Prophet of the Andes*, an Unlikely Journey to The Promised Land. So thank you so much for joining us. I'm really happy to talk.

Graciela: Thank you for inviting me.

Gerry:

Of course. So the first thing I wanted to ask, very basically is who is Segundo Villanova and where did you encounter this person and what drew you to wanting to write a book about him?

Graciela:

So I first encountered, uh, Segundo Villanueva's story in 2003. I was in Buenos Air then where I'm from, and I was looking for something else on the internet and I found a letter by a rabbi, um, who was asking for donations for this man from Peru who had converted to Judaism, a Catholic who had converted to Judaism, uh, together with a community of hundreds of people and who had migrated to Israel and he was looking for funding for them.

And the letter was a three page letter that I learned, I learned later, was full of errors and exaggerations, but it basically told the story of this man who started out as a peasant Cajamarca in the north of Peru and a Bible when he was a, a, a young man, and started reading the Bible and then had, um, you know, a revelation and, um, abandoned the Catholic church and then ended up, uh, Orthodox Jew, um, in Israel, uh, with hundreds of people and I thought, wow, this if this is true, this is extraordinary. I've never heard a story like that.

So there was a phone number at the bottom of the page, uh, for people who wanted to donate. I did not want to donate, but I wanted to know more. So I, I had this instinct. I thought this is a great story here if this is true, and I really want to know more.

So I went to the phone, I pick up the phone and I rang and I called that number and, uh, the rabbi had died. Uh, but there was a widow who actually was one of the Peruvian converts, uh, Margarita who decided I had an accent and she thought she probably speaks Spanish. So she switched to Spanish immediately and that's how we started.

And so he gave me the, she gave me the phone numbers of Segundo Villanueva and his family. They were in this, uh, settlement in the West Bank, a Jewish settlement called Tapua. And uh, two weeks later I was there and I started doing the reporting that ended up being the book. And what was really, the, the core of the story was true.

Um, this man had opened a bible when he was 17. He was mourning the death of his father. His father had been murdered by a neighbor, and, uh, he was a peasant. They lived in this. You know, remote Hamlet in the north of Ka America, and he had found this bible, Protestant bible hidden in a trunk.

Um, they were Catholics, so they didn't know what this Bible was doing in his father's trunk. And, uh, he opened the book, he started reading and that transformed his life and for the rest of his life. He continued reading and rereading. Then he created, collectively, he created a group of Bible readers.

Um, and then he kept expanding that group and trying to understand what was God telling him through this book. And he completely changed his life and the life of hundreds of people by, by doing that. So, um, there's something of a Borgian, uh, story there that I thought was very interesting to me.

Like somebody who, you know, opened a book and started reading and the book kind of took over and created a reality for him. So that to me was very appealing in a literary sense, but it was really, you know, I really thought it was an extraordinary, uh, real story of identity and conversion and the politics of religion and immigration.

There was so much in the story that I was really interested in that, I ended up writing a full book about it.

Gerry: Absolutely, and there certainly was a full book and more worth of material. I mean, it is a fascinating, fascinating story. One of the things that just blew my mind and kind of shook loose so many ideas I have about anything related to Latin American religion, Latino religion, is, we have these neat boxes of Catholicism.

Evangelical Protestantism, Judaism, and this is a person whose life wove in and out of these different faiths and religious traditions. So, what do you think it was about the themes and the migration into and out of all of these faiths and the questioning and the searching that drew you in as a writer, as a person, as a thinker?

Graciela: Well, there's a connection with my personal story, um, which is not part of the book and it doesn't belong in the book, but I tell a little bit about that in the, in the author's note at the beginning, which is I grew up, um in Argentina, which has one of the largest Jewish communities in Latin America. And so my father is Jewish. My mom is a Catholic from Paraguay, and I was raised a Catholic. When I was nine, my mom decided I wanted to be baptized and she sent me to, to Catholic school. And I did, you know, to me, but, you know, I have for Argentinian Eyes, a very Jewish last name, and it is a Jewish last name.

And my father's family was the closest, my closest family, we, I wasn't as close, um, to my mother's family, uh, in Paraguay. And so to me, those two identities and just, um, You know, particularly the time when I was, uh, uh, religious and I believed in God and I was Catholic, I, I, I stop all of that, um, when I left high school and I'm not a religious person anymore.

But there was a time when I tried to convert my father because the nuns told me that he was going to burn in hell because he wasn't baptized. And, and I understand, you know, being how, um, you know, in this societies, where, where Catholicism had kind of a monopoly of the souls and of the religious, you know, marketplace.

You know, they kind of, you know, everybody else was a Catholic and you didn't see so many, um, Protestants then that, that's something that started really in the fifties, uh, in the region. Um, and so to, to me there was a connection and it was appealing cause it, it also helped me understand some of that reality.

And Peru is a, is a very different society than Argentina, of course. And the Andes Have, there's a different, you know, class structure. There's a different, you know, economic, political life, but there's also, um, a much, much smaller Jewish life in Peru. There were only by then, by then around 4,500 Jews in the entire country. There was 0.01% of the population when Segundo decided to become Jewish. And I remember going to to to, uh, Sorochuco, which is the, the hamlet where he was, um, raised and where he, where his father was murdered. And it's this really remote, you know, uh, uh, cacerillo, you know, on top of the, of the Andes. In, the middle of you know, clouds, you're, you, you're in the clouds there and it doesn't feel like ...there's no horizon there. And, you know, as a middle class, um, woman, I remember driving there and thinking and looking and, and I, I met with his family members and neighbors who are still there and are, they're, you know, they work the land there.

And I thought, how did this guy get, you know, pull this off? I grew up in a very small town and leaving the small town was always a mission in my life. And, and so I'm like, what did it take for him to go from this place to this other place and to convince so many people to follow him?

And the other thing that was really appealing to me when I learned more about his life is that he was always a free thinker. That he was somebody... he did something that is a very Protestant thing to do, which he didn't know when he started, which is, he thought that he could really interpret this book however he wanted, and that is a Protestant idea. You know, this is not a Catholic idea. . And when he grew up a Catholic, uh, the mass was still in Latin, you know, the, it was in Latin until the sixties. And, um, so he couldn't really understand that and he had no access to the Bible, uh, or, you know, or to scripture.

And so when he accidentally found this book, and he read it as a book from the beginning to the end, which is not how you read the Bible, um, he, he decided, he himself, with the power of his intelligence and his resourcefulness, he was going to figure out what this book meant, uh, and, and what it meant to his life.

And so he will find... and it was a very difficult message to understand because it's a series of books that are very contradictory, as you know, because they were written many different, different times and, um, and, and by many different writers. And so just to understand the, the, you know, the contradictions and, and the nuance and uh, it was, it took, it took his entire life and he wasn't done when he died. So that also to me, was very interesting and appealing.

Gerry: Yes, absolutely. This is certainly a book about faith and religion, but there's something about him too that says a lot about just the relentless pursuit of truth and in, in a, a lifelong search to get to the bottom of an issue.

I think that, that, that made him fascinating as well. I'm glad you talked a little bit about, um, your own kind of, uh, migrations when it comes to matters of faith and religion but this book required you to do a lot of deep learning about scripture, religious texts, all of the differences between different versions of the Bible and the Old Testament and the New Testament. And how did it feel to you to become so knowledgeable about this subject that you had decided for yourself that you were not going to live your life in that way?

Graciela: So I think because I learned about all of these history and these texts as a journalist and um, and I could see all of that from a distance... a, a completely fascinated person. Right? One of the ways in which I, I learned about the Bible, a part of reading and, you know, reading the Bible and reading, you know, works on that and talking to experts and talking to scholars was, I listened to this podcast, about the history of writing and the history of English literature. Uh, but there's 10 episodes about the Old Testament or the Jewish Bible and um, and it's told from a historical perspective. And there is 10 chapters. Each one is two hours. Just to explain the influence this series of books will have on the history of literature, and on English literature.

History and, theology and religion, et cetera. All of that informs so much of the world we live in today. And so much of the literature that I grew up reading. And a lot of things kind of suddenly made more sense and I thought, oh, this is where this comes from, and, or, oh, this is the origin of this idea, or this is how this started and then it changed in so many ways. So personally, that was to me very, you know, um, formative in that way and I think the Bible is one of the most important series of books ever written. So I'm like, you know, I should have studied this earlier actually. Right? Um, but, uh, but because I was now not invested religiously in those books, I could see them as, you know, as what, to me, they are like this record of history and culture.

Gerry: In the literature I've been reading about Latino religiosity and Latino faith, it's always connected to some sort of political outcome. Like is this matter of Latino faith going to lead Latinos to embrace conservatism or to embrace liberalism?

And so I almost approached your book thinking that, okay, I'm gonna get a story here about faith in Latin America that is connected to the state and the relationship of this movement to the state. You certainly focus on politics, but you also really focus closely on the actors in this movement.

Um, and I want to know, For you, what was at stake in focusing so closely on their story and telling their story? Not apart from politics, but with politics, as the context or the background for what they were doing.

Graciela: Yes. Thank you so much for asking that question. You're the first one to ask, and I've been waiting for this question.

Uh, so I'm a political reporter by training and I cover crime in Argentina. I, I've been a reporter since 1991, which tells you my age. And, um, and I've always been, and I work for kind of progressive papers in Argentina and then for conservative papers. And, and, uh, I'm, and I've done other books, et cetera, and I, and I've noticed in Latin America and then here as well that, um, when journalists cover religion and poverty, it's always a phenomena. It's never one person with agency or a group of people with agency who just decided to do something.

So I'm a middle class woman who immigrated to New York and because I am a middle class person, I got you know, a fellowship to come here, then another fellowship, and then I got a scholar visa. And then... so my, my experience of migration is an individual story every time. But when you hear about migrants in this country, it's always a massive indistinguishable people who are, you know, who, who, who have no agency. And they end up here and they're always a victim of, of one end or the other. And, and it always bothered me, and I'm not saying everyone does that, but there's like a tendency to do this. And, and the same thing happens in religion. So religion is always, when you talk about Latinos here and about poor people in, in, or impoverished people in Latin America, it's always people who are victims of the manipulations of religion.

And so it's like they're almost innocent. And they're, and there's these pastors or who knows what, or these ideas that kind of manipulate them and make them be, you know, conservative or... and then you, and I'm like, you know, I understand political forces and movements and I know people sometimes don't have access to information.

And some people are used sometimes and some people are, you know, part of, you know, things that are larger than them, but we are all, we all are. And I, I do think that by denying the agency in the storytelling of these, of these lives, uh, we, we just don't help anyone. One, we don't help anyone understand these things better.

And two, It's really condescending and it's It's not, and it's not true. And so to me, you know, I don't, I don't share any of Segundo's political ideas or religious ideas. Um, he's way more conservative than I am. Uh, he was not a feminist, he was not a, you know, he ended up a settler in, in, in the West blank.

He, um, he was very machista, you know, he's, he was a man of his generation and a man who just talked to men, there's, there's very few voices of women in, in the book, and I, I have a note about that saying that because I focus on the religious story and basically this group of readers, Bible readers, and they were all men and all the rabbis were men, and all the priests were men. So it's a very male dominated narrative. And I've tried to bring, there's a lot of women who of, of course, were part of it, and I tried to bring them into the story, but they were not, the decision makers in these things.

Um, but I, you know, I think they are, you know, despite of all of that, what he did, I'm very impressed for what he did, and I think it's an extraordinary thing that he did, and I wanted to tell that story without bringing my own perspective, um, and my own bias, which, you know, there's only much, you know, you, you don't always succeed at that.

And there's probably a lot of that in the story anyway, because I chose how to talk, how to tell the story. But, but an important thing of that was to give them the agency that they had and show that this group of people were actually, um, you know, self-taught Bible scholars who were nerds in their way who really, really knew this book by heart, this series of books by heart, who, uh, they spend hours and hours studying.

They did not have a college degree, they didn't have a formal education. They knew more about this book than a lot of people with those degrees and with those, and with that education because they spend their lives reading and then going outside and going to other books, and reading other books and trying to understand that.

So, I could have told this story as from, just from the outside. And shown them as, as people with no agency and I, I don't think that would have been the truth.

Gerry: Or just actors, not people with no agency or just actors in Peruvian national history or something like that, you know, some...

Graciela: Exactly. Right.

Gerry: Right.

[MUSIC - "City of Mirrors," Dos Santos]

Gerry: Writing Latinos is brought to you by Public Books, an online magazine of ideas, arts, and scholarship. To donate to Public Books, visit [publicbooks.org/donate](https://publicbooks.org/donate).

[MUSIC - "City of Mirrors," Dos Santos]

Gerry:

And I think what you're talking about as agency, I've also been thinking about as. Taking people's faith seriously in a way that doesn't help you understand conservatism or liberalism. I mean, it's not about that. It's about people's faith in taking their beliefs seriously, even if it doesn't help you advance the political goals that you have.

And inevitably when it comes to Conservatism, you end up talking about the Evangelical church, so, I guess, my question would be, you know, if you were talking to, a Latino political consultant or, um, you know, someone deeply immersed in the world of Latino politics, what would be the thing that you would want to tell them that they need to understand about religion?

Graciela:

Um, so I think religion, the term is so many decisions, the decisions in people's lives, and it's just so critical to people's identities. Right? Um, I would say one, one thing that I think is very important to know, if you look at religion and Latin America, is how religious identity is now for the first time since the Spanish came to the, to the, to the land, uh, it's been for the past decades, for the first time in hundreds of years, something that people have the freedom to choose. So what Segundo did, and Segundo is a pioneer in that movement where you can see the shift in religious identity in, in the region where, you know... almost everyone was, almost everyone was a Catholic. The Catholic church had this monopoly. There was a status quo that the Protestant churches were not gonna go to evangelize because everyone was already Christian, Catholic, but Christian. And then that status quo was broken in the early fifties, and then all these missions started coming and they started shifting people away from the Catholic church and into these new churches.

And so this new market of religiousness started, right? And now you have countries like Guatemala and other countries where there's a majority of non-Catholics and a majority of Evangelical or, or Pentecostal. And, and that Pentecostalism is an evangelical, uh, groups are growing at this fast space that is just not just in Latin America but, but you know, in Latin America is one of the places where there there's more fertile ground for this growth. But you see now so many people just dying or you know, who are gonna die in a religion different than the one in which they were born and that was impossible before. So that is a huge change and that gives people... I'm always, you know, I, I remember there was a study, this very fascinating study in Colombia that traced the, the percentage of the population, and I don't remember the numbers, but I can find it, uh, the percentage of people who were going to die in a different religion than the one they were born. And it was, and it was growing by the year, and it was this incredible number of people who were gonna grow and people were. People are now converting to, to everything from Judaism and, you know, uh, Islam and other Christian churches and groups, and groups outside, mormons. You know, there's now this whole kind of, um, fertile ground for conversion. And I do think that has to do with identity and with people longing for something different and for people kind of jumping outside their circumstances. Um, and, and also for people finding answers. You know, the Catholic church in many of these countries was very elitist and was very much a part of the you know, establishment and people didn't feel represented by that or didn't feel heard by that one thing.

One of the reasons why evangelical churches were growing in Argentina at one point was because the evangelicals run, uh, prisons. And so if you went— and those prisons were much safer and they would take also care of your family. So for, the incarcerated population, it was, it was, there was a, a clear benefit and a clear solution for your life if you chose that religion over a different one, cuz you were moved to that. jail or to that prison and then your family was going to be taken care of.

So, you know, I remember also, um, here and a lot of those communities are here because they migrate and those realities come to the US too. And I found when I was doing this, this, uh, I was doing a story about this conversion in, in Colombia. And there's in Colombia, there's um, there's the largest number of new emerging Jewish communities and these people who have gone from Catholicism to a Protestant church and then to juddaism, which is kind of another step. And there's a whole movement now. Um, and I found these Colombians who were, they were from Bogotá. Uh, they are now Ultra-Orthodox. They're Hasidic Hasidics and they live, um, in one Hasidic town near Buffalo, upstate New York. And their visas had expired a long time ago, and ICE officers come into this, um, uh, bus they're in, they're in a bus, and they ask for documents. They ask for their documents, not expecting that those documents were gonna ha give them any clues of anything. They just, and they give them the expired passports. And rhe, the, the officers are Puerto Rican and so they, they realize they speak Spanish and they can't understand why this Hasidim are speaking Spanish and they have expired visas.

And they're like, what is this? The complexity, and like don't assume, you know, this is like the journalism one-on-one, but just you don't assume anything. Like people have, we all have crazy

stories and we all have crazy connections, and we all make decisions that are not necessarily the one you would expect.

Gerry: And I think when we're talking about things *latinidad* then what it means to be Latino in the United States, we have to be open to all of these crazy stories.

Graciela: Exactly.

Gerry: For sure. So speaking of migrations, let's talk just a little bit about yours. You are from Argentina. You settled in New York. You are the dean of a journalism school, but your experience at that journalism school has been largely about bilingual journalism and making sure that there are opportunities for Latinx journalists and Native American, African American, Asian American journalists, and you write a column, a monthly column for the *New Yorker* about Latinx culture and politics. So I guess, uh, you know, I'll ask you the easiest question that's ever been asked of, uh, someone who could identify as Latino. Are you Latina or Latino or Latinx? How do you identify with that?

Graciela: So I do, I do identify as Latina, I guess. You know, no one is a Latino or a Latina. If you, I mean, if you're an immigrant/ When you come from, when you are, when you're in Argentina, you're Argentina. I mean, there's no Latin America from Latin America, you know this. Right? We are all in our countries. Um, so I. Was an Argentine most of my life. I came to the US actually the first time in 1995, uh, to do my master's, um, in journalism. And I lived here until 1996. And I remember having to check the box at the immigration and then at the school, you know, Hispanic, Latino, and I would check that one.

And, and then I came back in 2008 and nine, uh, with a different scholarship, um, a fellowship. And then I came back in 2013 and then we stayed. And it, it took me a while, you know, when did I become a Latina? I guess, that's the question.

Gerry: Are there moments, are there turning points?

Graciela: Right. It's, it's when I realized that when we were staying here, cause we came for nine months, we were gonna go back home and then we just stayed and uh, one more year. Then one more year. And when I realized we were staying and we were really staying, we're gonna probably spend the rest of our lives here if our plan, um, works. And also that I was raising a, a child here, so I came with a two year old. He's now 11. He doesn't, he's a bicultural bilingual boy. He finds it completely natural that he's Argentinian and American and Latino and, you know, many other things. I think we all have multiple identities, right? It's very contextual, uh, and it's very, you know, multi, multi-layered. I, I, I have many other identities. I'm a mom, I'm a journalist. I, you know, um, but I do, um, I do feel, let me put it this way. I do feel when I'm at the school with my, you know, bilingual students and the majority of them are Latinos or when I M in New York in the street, and I realize somebody speaks Spanish and I can speak Spanish, which is always a joy with someone.

I do feel those are my people. I just feel, um, we understand each other immediately, even, even given class differences. And, but there's, there's a type of humor, there's a type of resourcefulness, there's a type of, um, way of looking at the gringos I don't know. There's something about being part of something that is very dear to me and important to me, and it, it, it does add to, to my identity here. So...

Gerry: I wanted to ask maybe, when you're writing about Latino, latinx, Latina subjects, and I don't mean subjects like people, like subjects like topics. Whether you feel like you're an insider or an outsider to those conversations. But then I was also thinking that there's something about Latinidad where Latinos are always negotiating their relationship to that category, Latino. And it's almost like the old saying about *ni de aquí ni de allá*. You're neither here nor there, and you're always an outsider. You're always an insider because you're experiencing from within. You're also seeing it from without. So, so I guess I could ask you whether you write about those topics and, and when you do, do you feel like an insider or an outsider, but maybe to write about latinidad as, as both an insider and an outsider is part of what it means to be Latino?

Graciela: Yes. So... that's a very interesting question and I felt both, uh, I do feel both all the time. Yes. Like if I'm writing, I was writing about, um, uh, you know, if I'm gonna write about Chicano artists, um, I feel like an outsider.

What do I know about Chicano life and art? Nothing. I'm just learning. I mean, I'm reading constantly and I'm learning and I'm fascinated, but I do feel there's, um, I feel, uh, uh, there's like, I don't know, there's like *una hermandad*. I don't know. there's something, you know, that I, there's this. You know, it's been part of the same people, but at the same time, it's a very different reality and I'm very humble.

Gerry: Yea

Graciela: And I'm very clear that, you know, tell me about what it looks like for you. The same thing when I, you know, uh, talk about the, you know, I wrote this piece about Lorgia Garcia Peña for the *New Yorker*, for example, a couple of years ago. And, you know, it was just, just to talk with, um, her students and her and, and just to think about the experience of being, you know, Latino and Latina and black in this country.

And coming from, you know, um, working class family, there's always like class differences and race, you know, divides and, and so I, I'm very, always conscious that my lived experience is very different from that life, you know, from, from that lived experience. I have not gone through instances of discrimination, for example, I, I, I don't, so in that case, I'm an outsider, right?

Gerry: Yeah.

Graciela: But I know I can't relate. But I think that's the, you know, you know, going back to the book and the work, that's, that's, that's the beautiful thing about being a journalist also, that if you're a good one, and I hope I, I, I, I am a good one. Uh, or I try to be a good one, and I try to

teach this to my students at, at school as well. Um, that, you know, just the, the, this double, this double thing about being an insider and outsider and having questions and never assuming that you know, what other people have gone through and being always open to understanding a different life experience and trying to be able to ex... and be being able to explain it.

Um, it's just, you know, I've dedicated my life to that and I think. That also helps. It's kind of like a toolkit that comes handy.

Gerry: It is. It sure does. And, and you know, in many ways I think that that's probably a perfect place to end because it, uh, you know, ties your personal experiences back to, uh, the book that you wrote and your career as a journalist.

I think that we are in this moment too, where we're talking a lot about writers who can authentically represent the communities that they're writing about because they are from those communities or have some experience with those communities. And I think that's an old conversation, in a lot of ways. I remember going to a panel at the organization of American Historians meeting in 2007 that was called something like, uh, writing outside of ourselves. And the question was always, about whether people who aren't from a particular community can write about that community.

And I think that, you know, I think that's a complicated question when it comes to Latinos, because like you said, I mean, when you're writing about Chicano art or something, you, you are an outsider to that conversation. And my entry point into the field of borderland studies or Mexican American history was from my position as being Mexican American and from the Southwest and things like that. But, um, but does that mean that I can't represent or can't write about Guana or Puerto Ricans or Dominicans? I don't know. So maybe, maybe Latino writers have a more complicated relationship to that question of whose experience they're able to authentically.

Graciela: Yeah, I'm, I'm always, you know, I'm always very aware that, uh, Argentines are not necessarily representative we have a very specific, I mean, we are a very small, we have a very small presence. Um, and in, in the history of Latin Latino, uh, Latinx, you know, life in this country, we're not one of the oldest largest, you know, communities here.

And, um, But we are part of, of, of that experience and in, in New York, there's a strong community and, but you know, I'm always, we don't, Argentines don't have, um, uh, I don't know why, but we don't have a reputation for being humble. And this is just an Argentine joke, but, um, but I really, I, I really think that, um, I do as a journalist, I think you can, that's the job actually, to write about experiences that are not yours. To write as an, you know, you're always an, almost always an outsider. And actually the journalism tradition was always the opposite. That you should not write about yourself or your, or things that are too close to you because you're supposed to have a distance and to be quote unquote objective.

I'm very much part of the opposite conversation now where there's this conversation about how, you know, who created that rule and that when, and that rule was created when the, in, when the news industry was dominated by mostly white men, right? And white voices.

And so, and why? And the, and white people were never part of anything. I mean, it was, it was black people or brown people who could not write about their own communities cause then they were too close. Right? Because, because whiteness was the neutral, right? So that there's also the opposite conversation that is very interesting. So I think, I think it's, um, I, I'm happy these conversations happened because at the bottom of, of all of these conversations, there's a history of exploitation. So when, you know, I think. It's, it's exploitation with what we need to be looking for. You know, watching, and that it doesn't happen that somebody with, with more privilege and more power does not exploit others because they have less power.

But, um, I think if you, if you frame it like that, it, it becomes a, a different conversation, which I think is more interesting.

Gerry: Thank you Graciela so much for spending some time with me and um, we will keep in touch and I'll talk to you again soon.

Graciela: Yes, thank you so much.

Take care. Okay, bye-Bye.

[MUSIC - "City of Mirrors," Dos Santos]

Gerry: Thank you for listening to this episode of Writing Latinos—

We'd love to hear your suggestions for new books that we should be reading and talking about.

Drop us a line at [geraldo@publicbooks.org](mailto:geraldo@publicbooks.org)

This episode is brought to you by Public Books. It was produced and edited by Tasha Sandoval.

Our music is "City of Mirrors" by the Chicago-based band, Dos Santos.

I'm Geraldo Cadava. We'll see you again, right here, in two weeks.