

Formalizing Fluidity: Queer Second-person Narration and the Posthumanistic

Turn in Anzaldúa's Later Writings

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Gloria Anzaldúa (1942-2004) excavated her own life to use as fodder for her writing. Combining personal and communal experience, she coined the term *autohistoria*, written in first-person narration, to describe her writing. First-person narration as a technical tool was instrumental in asserting her queer, feminist subjectivity. When asked about narrative choice, Anzaldúa discussed her rationale in the following interview with Debbie Blake and Carmen Abrego (1994):

In my own autobiographical writing sometimes the things are so painful to write about that I have to dislocate myself from myself. So I'll say, 'This is happening to Prietita,' and I'll use the third person. Once I get over the trauma of experiencing this thing I'm writing about and putting it into words, the pain is lessened so then I can say, 'this was me. Yes, this happened to me.' (*Interviews/Entrevistas* 223)

While the majority of Anzaldúa's published writings are written in the first-person, and some of her more 'painful' writing is written in the third-person, under the name of Prieta, two of Anzaldúa's later pieces "Putting Coyolxauhqui Together: A Creative Process" (1999) and "now let us shift...the path of *conocimiento*...inner work, public acts" (2002) utilize uncharacteristic second-person narration. This essay explores the possible queer ramifications of this technique and its implications for the field of posthumanism. I use the term *queer* to describe Anzaldúa's use of second person narration because it refuses the binary of either first- or third-person narration. In breaking down this narrative binary, Anzaldúa nods to posthumanist concepts of multiplicity and interconnection. Due to the autobiographical nature of the essays in question, I argue that the second-person narration is actually Anzaldúa addressing herself, distancing herself from herself as a subject, and simultaneously interpellating the reader as co-creator of the texts, thereby de-centering a single and unified subject. Second-person narration encourages the reader to identify with the narration and to fill in the narrative "gaps" of the essays with their own autobiographical details, while this narrative technique also allows the author to structure the encounter. This type of narration effectively allows Anzaldúa to view herself and her readers as multiple beings. This two-way movement of collaboration and creation of second-person autobiographical writing jars the reader into "shifting" along with the author and furthers Anzaldúa's ideological aim stressing interconnection among all beings.

Second-Person Narration

The formal technique of second-person narration while often found in guide-books and choose your own adventure stories, has witnessed a resurgence in modern and post-modern literature. Narratologist Monica Fludernik has written on the wide range of modalities within second-person narration and notes its more frequent occurrence in Spanish-language texts than those written in English or French. Two Latin-American writers, with whom Anzaldúa was

familiar, Carlos Fuentes and Julio Cortázar, both used this technique in their writing. And more recently Dominican-American author, Junot Díaz has employed the same technique for different (hypothetical) purposes.¹ While the Spanish utilized in Anzaldúa's text mirrors the English second-person narration, it is important to note that Anzaldúa uses the Spanish familiar "tú" address invoking intimacy in her Spanish-language writing in these two texts. The use of "you" in the hybrid-language texts in question, instead of functioning as "stream of consciousness" or reflective-mode narration, as I will explain below, fulfill an ideological imperative.

According to Matt DelConte in his article "Why you Can't Speak: Second-Person Narration, Voice, and a New Model for Understanding Narration" (2003):

the very term second-person suggests a distinct and exclusive narrative category from first and third-person narrations...yet we encounter an inevitable overlap of second-person with either first-person or third-person because second-person narration is always also either first- or third-person. (204)

I appreciate DelConte's recognition that there is something more to second person narration, implying that second person narration is also either first OR third person, but would add that in the case of Anzaldúa's two essays in question, second-person narration queers the first-/third-dichotomy and imbues this narrative position with ambiguity and empathy. For Anzaldúa, second-person narration is both first-person (necessary to account for the autobiographical elements present in text) and plural third-person narration, thus blurring the subject/object divide. The focal "you" of the texts bring to light a shared subjectivity between Anzaldúa the author, the narrative persona in the text and the actual reader(s).² This is especially evident in "now let us shift" where the collective singular "you" alternates with the collective plural "we."

I point to Anzaldúa's contribution to queering of narrative voice while I recognize that the definition of what constitutes second-person narration lacks consensus. In her introduction to the special issue of *Style* dedicated to second-person narration, Fludernik notes that there has not been "an unequivocal definition of what exactly is a second-person text" (qtd. in DelConte 206). Some, such as the Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms, only requires that the narrator address a "you" in the story, others, such as Gerald Prince, refine this to state that second-person narrative "is a narrative the NARRATEE of which is the PROTAGONIST in the story s/he is told" (emphasis in original, DelConte 206). DelConte, however, argues that the above definitions are insufficient as they do not take into account the relationship among narrator, narratee, and story world (207). DelConte's definition of second person narration is as follows: "second-person narration is a narrative mode in which a narrator tells a story to a (sometimes undefined, shifting, and/or hypothetical) narratee—delineated by you—who is also the (sometimes undefined, shifting, and/or hypothetical) principal actant in that story" (207-8). DelConte's more mobile definition leaves room for various applications. His approach to second-person narration differs from Gerald Genette's triangular relationships in that "Genette's concern includes an extradiegetic agent—the author—and how this agent relates to the narrator and character; author, narrator and character comprise the three variables (points) of his triangular diagrams" (DelConte, 216, endnote 7). DelConte assumes a distinction between author and narrator and thus focuses on variables within the fictional narrative.³

For my analysis of Anzaldúa's essays, however, I would like to combine both Genette's triangular relationship (author, narrator and character) with DelConte's completely-coincident narration (where narrator = narratee = protagonist) to approximate what I see Anzaldúa doing with

second-person address to advance her posthumanistic ideology of interrelatedness and connection.⁴ Similar to the lack of consensual definition of second-person narration, the definition of the term queer, retains elasticity in its definition. For the purposes of this analysis, I define queer as a theoretical move intent on showing the inadequacy of binary oppositions with the goal of collapsing the binary upon itself: queer functions as a deconstructive framework.

Anzaldúa Second-Person Narration

Due to the highly autobiographical nature of Anzaldúa's writing and the explicit references to her physical health in the text (she was suffering from diabetes), my analysis does not allow me to separate the author and narrator, while I simultaneously need to account for the reception of the text. I contend that in her essay "Putting Coyolxauhqui Together," Anzaldúa is concurrently the author, narrator, protagonist, and narratee, although she queers the notion of a narratee in that she is speaking to herself while she is also attempting to speak to her readers.⁵ In addition, she, as author, narrator and protagonist is aware of this role:

Your goal is to cultivate an acute awareness of processes at work in your own psyche, and to create symbols and patterns of its operations. The problem is that a process is arrested when you stop to watch it. Another problem is that not only do you want to make the fleeting process know; you want to create a virtual reality of the experience so that the reader goes through it as well. And you only have words to do it with ("Putting Coyolxauhqui Together" 242).

Here is where the need for a queering or posthumanist expansion of the second-person narrator comes in. While both first- and third-person narration revolve around the axis of the narrator, which is necessary but not sufficient for these texts, the second-person narration, which revolves around the axis of the narratee, extends the message of the essay, in the form of the interpellational "you" both to her readers and back to Anzaldúa the author, the writer and the narrator. This is a type of personal self-reflexivity made communal via the multiple receptions of the text.

In the following analysis of Anzaldúa's use of posthumanist mythos, I follow the structure outlined by AnaLouise Keating in her 2013 Society for the Study of Gloria Anzaldúa presentation.⁶ Keating states:

Anzaldúa's posthumanist mythos has multiple interlocking layers, including but not limited to the following four: first, she views herself and all human beings (as well as others) as multiplicitous, with porous boundaries; second, she identifies herself with and as the nonhuman-the alien other; third she thus de-centers the human both by blurring the boundaries between human and nonhuman life and by defining 'life' very broadly; and fourth, she posits an animist-inflected ontology which infuses and grounds this blurred boundary. (oral presentation)

Allow me to illustrate how Anzaldúa's employment of second-person narrative supports one of the theoretical contributions of the essay, that of deconstructing divisions between self and other to underline our interconnectedness. In her essay, Anzaldúa voiced her belief that self and subjectivity are not confined to one's body: "It dawns on you that you're not contained by your skin...It follows that if you're not contained by your race, class, gender, or sexual identity, the body

must be more than the categories that mark you” (“now let us shift” 555). From this perspective, identity markers such as race, gender, and class fall short of accounting for our commonness. She continues, “you share a category of identity wider than any social position or racial label. This *conocimiento* motivates you to work actively to see that no harm comes to people, animals, ocean—to take up spiritual activism and the work of healing” (“now let us shift” 558). While this expansive view of self is explicitly articulated in her final published essay, it is important to note that Anzaldúa was experimenting with this idea in her early writings as well. She discusses this extended subjectivity in third-person narration in her “El Paisano is a bird of good omen” (1982) and “Reading LP” (written 1970s, published in *The Gloria Anzaldúa Reader* 2009) among others.⁷

Not only do humans and other beings have porous borders, but they also have multiple selves. This multiplicity is tied to the queer project of Anzaldúa ontology, “nothing is fixed...identity, like a river, is always changing, always in transition, always in *nepantla*...You begin to define yourself in terms of what you are becoming, not who you have been” (“now let us shift” 556). Anzaldúa conceives of the writing process as communal action and in addition to thanking her “comadres in writing” she also acknowledges that she is not in total control of her process. There is a multiplicity of authors at work in her writing: “Keying in the words, you’re the scribe, the medium channeling the story, and the conductor orchestrating the process” (“Putting Coyolxauhqui Together” 249). Anzaldúa positions herself (and anyone else called by the second-person address) as the scribe, the medium and the conductor of a particular story. Out of these positions, the scribe writes what is dictated, the medium prepares herself to be open to listening and the conductor is the one with the most control. The “conductor” is perhaps the best suited to select the appropriate vessel for the message. Reflecting on this important choice, Anzaldúa writes:

Which genre—memoir, personal essay, or a combination? Memoir is a difficult genre. It’s harder to manipulate the raw material of your own life than it is the details of an invented story. The problem is how to distinguish between you, the actual writer, and you, the narrative persona. The problem is how to improvise the self you create as you compose, how to make the self immediate and alive without falling into self-indulgence, sentimentality, or grandstanding. The problem is deciding which chunks of your inner struggle and pain to cannibalize and incorporate into the text. (“Putting Coyolxauhqui Together” 248)

In addition to generic concerns, Anzaldúa points to the ego responsible for “self-indulgence, sentimentality, or grandstanding” as problematic. Narratively speaking, one way to get past the self (first-person narration) without losing immediacy (as in third-person narration), is to address the self as “other” in present tense second-person narration to appeal to a “reader’s sense of immediacy” (Parker 173). This narrative voice also affords the writer an immediate descent into the protagonist’s psyche,⁸ while simultaneously extending this journey to the plural collective of “yous” reading the text. Explicating the psychic process of writing in “Putting Coyolxauhqui Together” in second-person narration queers the idea of second-person narration as an account of one person’s actual experience; as one person’s account of reality is linked with another’s. This interpretation supports Anzaldúa’s claim that all beings share a common psyche, symbolized as the *cenote* of knowledge and mirrored in Anzaldúa’s sustained inclusion of the Pacific Ocean in her writing.

Posthumanist Interpellation of Second-Person Narration

Employing second-person narration proves effective in treating the self as “other” and the “other” as self in Anzaldúa’s web of interconnectivity. In linking second-person narration with posthumanism, I interrogate the “person” in second-person narration, as Anzaldúa extends her “you” to include a multiplicity of “persons” not all of whom are human. This narrative voice also highlights the non-human other. In addition to animals (snakes, owls, jaguars), Anzaldúa seems to privilege the sea. Both “Putting Coyolxauhqui Together” and “now let us shift” (as well as “(Un)natural bridges, (Un)safe spaces”) begin with similar opening scenes of a “you” walking along the ocean, most often specified as the Pacific Ocean. Anzaldúa explicitly links humans to the ocean:

Every day you visit the sea, walk along Yemaya’s glistening shores. You want her to know you, to sense your presence as you sense hers. You know deep down that she’s not independent of humans, not indifferent, not set apart. At the lips del mar you begin your ritual/prayer. (“now let us shift” 574)

This linkage features the sea as the goddess Yemaya. The anthropomorphization of the (female) sea with lips at which the narrative voice begins her ritual sets a queer tone if one reads the “you” as referring back to Anzaldúa. Perhaps the narrative voice lends to the sensuality of the homoerotic scene described above.

Brian McHale has suggested that one of the meta-themes of postmodernism apparent in second-person narration is love since the mode depends on violating traditional ontological boundaries (between the fictional and the nonfictional realms) in such a way that reading and writing themselves take on an erotic charge. (227)

Anzaldúa’s posthumanistic connection to all beings carries an erotic tone. In her *Interviews/Entrevistas*, Anzaldúa discussed strong sexual feelings toward her father and toward a certain tree with whom she was in love. Additionally, one could also interpret the poem “Interface” (148-152) in *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* as a love affair between a human and an extra-terrestrial. And throughout the 1987 text, Anzaldúa plays with the word “alien” in its immigration usage with feeling like an “other” for the many ways she was different. In Anzaldúa’s animist-inflected ontology, all the world is alive with spirit: “you stand on tierra sagrada—nature is alive and conscious; the world is ensouled...Love swells in your body and shoots out of your heart chakra, linking you to everyone/everything—the aboriginals in Australia, the crows in the forest, the vast Pacific Ocean” (“now let us shift” 558). This love can manifest itself as sensual or erotic due to the strong connection Anzaldúa feels with the world around her.

Second-person narration allows Anzaldúa to connect her personal struggles with planetary struggles (“now let us shift” 542). This connection blurs boundaries between human and “other.” The vastness of the sea parallels the powerful connection queer posthumanistic second-person narration makes evident in Anzaldúa’s later writings. Well beyond identity politics, Anzaldúa’s “you” “share[s] a category of identity wider than any social position or racial label” (“now let us shift” 558). Once radical interconnection is established, Anzaldúa’s spiritual activism demands action: “This conocimiento motivates you to work actively to see that no harm comes to people,

animals, ocean—to take up spiritual activism and the work of healing” (“now let us shift” 558).⁹ The sea imagery mirrors Anzaldúa’s cenote metaphor for collective conscious. Cenotes form a system of connected subterranean rivers, just as Anzaldúa sees all knowledge connected with all beings. Even as the narrative voice fluctuates between personal and generic experiences and spaces, both “Putting Coyolxauhqui Together” and “now let us shift” both begin and end with images of water.

The Reader’s Role in Anzaldúan Second-Person Narration

In as such as writers need readers to receive their message (no writer writes in a vacuum), readers oftentimes “co-construct stories” along with the author (Norrick 2000) (qtd. in Mildorf 76). This is especially relevant with Anzaldúa’s multi-layered writing and even more so in her second-person narrations. If Anzaldúa proposes the self to be multiple and she is open to the many forces that inform her writing process, her reader, then, is perceived to be multiple as well. While it would be speculative to assume an “ideal” reader of Anzaldúa’s published work, the author does offer some explicit clues as to her target audience. Not surprisingly, Anzaldúa’s “target” audience changes over the course of her writing career. Chronologically speaking, *This Bridge Called My Back* (1981) focused on relationships between women (Foreword to Second Edition)¹⁰ and contained pieces written by women of color, most of which were directed toward white women in the feminist movement.¹¹ *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987) has an implied audience on non-mestizas:

But we Chicanos no longer feel that we need to beg entrance, that we need always to make the first overture—to translate to Anglos, Mexicans and Latinos, apology blurring out of our mouths with every step. Today we ask to be met halfway. This book is our invitation to you—from the new mestizas” (preface n.p.).

Making Face, Making Soul/Haciendo caras: Creative and Critical Perspectives by Feminist of Color (1990) was envisioned as sequel to *This Bridge* as:

a book that would confront the Racism in the white women’s movement in a more thorough, personal, direct, empirical and theoretical way. A book that would deepen the dialogue between all women and that would take on various issues—hindrances and possibilities—in alliance building” (xvi).

This anthology would be read in university women’s studies courses to lighten the dependence on *This Bridge* and would expand the voices of women-of-color being heard. *Interviews/Entrevistas* (2000) seeks to promote interviews as another form of writing and knowledge production, pushing the boundaries of what constitutes writing. And the most inclusive implied readership is found in Anzaldúa’s final anthology, *this bridge we call home: radical visions for transformation* (2002), where she states:

In these pages we move from focusing on what has been done to us (victimhood) to a more extensive level of agency, one that questions what we’re doing to each other, to those in distant countries and to the earth’s environment. The knowledge that we are in symbiotic relationships to all that exists and co-creators of

ideologies—attitudes, beliefs, and cultural values—motivates us to act collaboratively...twenty-one years ago we struggled with the recognition of difference within the context of commonality. Today we grapple with the recognition of commonality within the context of difference. (“(Un)natural bridges, (Un) safe spaces” 2)

As the categories of her self-definition broadened, her intended readership seems to have expanded in scope as well. Not focusing only on women of color or women in general, second-person narration in Anzaldúa’s later writings allow her to un-gender her audience.¹² In using the narrative “you,” Anzaldúa avoids gendering the recipients of the narration, perhaps signaling a larger category of belonging beyond gender binaries or continuums. Anzaldúa’s theorization on subjectivities developed over the course of her writing career. Perhaps it is not a coincidence that, to my knowledge, Anzaldúa only employed second-person narration in her later writings, as this narrative voice allowed for her multiple selves and the multiplicity of her readers.¹³

Queering the Writing Process

Anzaldúa constructs a posthumanistic cosmovision which allows for relational identity. Form compliments content in both “Putting Coyolxauhqui Together” and “now let us shift.” In terms of Genette’s analysis, the 1999 essay features an intra-diegetic (inside the text) narrator¹⁴ that speaks to the narratee (self and reader) in the second-person “you” while describing the writing process. Here Anzaldúa is speaking both to herself as self and herself as “other” through the second-person narration to acknowledge a multiplicity of selves and an interconnectedness of self and “other.” Additionally, the narrative “you” speaks to the actual reader, who because they are reading Anzaldúa’s essay, may also be a writer and interested in Anzaldúa’s process as Anzaldúa’s essay is part of an anthology entitled “How we work” with writings intended to showcase processes of different types of labor.

In “Putting Coyolxauhqui Together,” Anzaldúa lays bare her writing process and likens it to the shamanic ability to be both self and “other.” She uses the term *naguala*, the animal in you or your animal counterpart, to describe the necessary fluctuation of a writer being hyperempathetic and excessively detached.¹⁵ For Anzaldúa, the writing process is both an internal process (the writer dipping into their subconscious, a place Anzaldúa describes as a communal cenote of images that she can tap into via sensory deprivation) and an external process as it occurs both within her own body (her writing regime is maintained alongside and sometimes to the detriment of her diabetes regime) and within a community of writers (the tribe of writers she calls her *comadres*).¹⁶ The writer is also not alone as they are guided by the muses. For Anzaldúa, her muse is the *bruja naguala*: her animal companion that allows her to be both herself and other in addition to “powerful, otherworldly and privy to secret knowledge” (“Putting Coyolxauhqui Together” 249). Allowing herself to be the conduit of her muse when she writes, Anzaldúa employs second-person narration to fuel the idea that someone or something outside of herself dictates her thoughts and actions (DelConte 205).

This perspective shift at times proves accusatory as Anzaldúa chastises herself for sacrificing her diabetic regimen to her writing schedule.¹⁷ Writing is then, a very physical process, rooted in her body, and very much a mental and emotional process. Just as she doesn’t celebrate the hybrid subject, Anzaldúa does not glorify the writing process; she considers writing to be “like pulling miles of entrails through your nose” (“Putting Coyolxauhqui Together” 247). Anzaldúa’s

and her readers' tasks, is to re-member the bones of Coyolxauhqui, the Aztec moon goddess who was sacrificed by her brother, the war god Huitzilopochtli. In her feminist revisioning of the Aztec myth, Coyolxauhqui's bones serve as the structure for the story. She also notes how the process of conceiving and writing a story takes time (the narrative time of the essay, three and a half months bookended by observations of the ocean and sprinkled with diabetic care and eating [258]) and how it is never really completed, even after "you put the 'unfinished' story in an envelope, stick it in your mailbox and offer it to the world" (259).

In the later essay "now let us shift," Anzaldúa applies her attempt at exposing processes to the level of detailing her cosmivision or mythos that she calls *conocimiento*.¹⁸ As the project of laying bare her worldview, which includes philosophy, epistemology, ethics and praxis, is perhaps a larger undertaking than explicating her writing process, Anzaldúa's use of second-person narration, I argue, is wider in its scope than in the 1999 essay and even finds its way to queer the footnotes. "now let us shift" footnote 21 reads "The Latin term *respectus* comes from a verb meaning 'to turn around to and look back.' It is the root of the word respect. You wonder if the word perspective comes from the same etymology" (578). The first use of the first-person narration in this essay, however, comes in the Notes/acknowledgements section with the first-person conjugation of the word *querer* with "Quiero" (577) when the author is offering personal acknowledgments at the end of the essay.

This expansion points to a contribution to posthumanism. Alternating between the second-person singular "You" to the third-person plural "We" for the entire essay, Anzaldúa displays radical interconnectedness in the form of the essay. While the introduction is quite expansive in its narrative scope, including references to "Many" and "those," the breakdown of the seven stages of *conocimiento* is narratively rooted in the personal, signified by the use of "you" alongside Anzaldúa's autobiographical inclusions. Each section then expands in an outward narrative movement to the collective "We." Starting with the second-person interpellation hooks the reader as Anzaldúa uses her personal experiences of surviving an earthquake, a mugging and a contentious conference to speak to the collective in a way that leaves room for the reader's differences to be respected and included. Anzaldúa's "we" is not a universal, difference-erasing agent. The narrative "you" creates space within Anzaldúa's autobiographical text for the reader to insert their own similar experiences. Anzaldúa was far too familiar with homogenizing umbrellas to propose one of her own.

...queer is used as a false unifying umbrella which all "queers" of all races, ethnicities, and classes are shoved under. At times we need this umbrella to solidify our ranks against outsiders. But even when we seek shelter under it we must not forget that it homogenizes, erases our difference. Yes, we may all love members of the same sex, but we are not the same...I must constantly assert my differentness...This is the one way I avoid getting sucked into the vortex of homogenization, of getting pushed into the shelter of the queer umbrella. ("To(o) Queer the writer" 264)

As Anzaldúa remains critical of queer as label, she is careful to make her personal reference open enough for the reader to insert their own experience into the account of the experience offered.

Conclusion

This posthumanistic decentering of the self via the formal technique of second-person narration links content and form, creating mobility in the Deleuzian sense. Deleuze states “It’s not enough simply to say concepts possess movement; you also have to construct intellectually mobile concepts” (*Negotiations*, 122). Anzaldúa’s “new mestiza” evolved into the concept of the nepantlera and her Mestiza Consciousness morphed into *conocimiento*. To show this shift of perception, I argue, Anzaldúa employed and expanded second-person narration. Anzaldúa viewed herself as “other” in an attempt to lay bare her writing process and her mythos in the form of a second-person narrative to show that there is little distance between self and other. In effect, Anzaldúa “others” herself to better understand her differentiation and similarities with her readers; a technique she explores in the concept of *nos/otras*, where the slash between the third-person plural “nos” (we) separates but also connects to the “otras” (feminine others) showing the radical interconnectivity that we all share. In this instance, I argue that Anzaldúa’s employment of “you” does, in fact, speak. Queerly, this technique allows her employ the posthumanistic ability to travel fluidly between and among differing perceptions and narrative voices to model a formal application of the theoretical content in both “Putting Coyolxauhqui Together” and “now let us shift.”

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¹ Mexican author, Fuentes, in the novel *Aura* (1962) uses second-person narration both in the present and future to conflate Felipe Montero, the young historian who is to edit General Llorente's memoirs, with the General, as well as the old Consuelo with the youthful Aura. The mixture of fantasy and reality leave the reader questioning the veracity of reality. In *La muerte de Artemio Cruz* (1962), Fuentes also utilizes second-person narration as one of his narrative voices to show Cruz, on his deathbed, speaking of himself in the future tense. Argentine author Cortázar likewise used the disruptive narrative technique of second-person narration in *Graffiti* (1981) to speak of the incommunicability of two graffiti artists who, because we are able to read their messages, will never meet in person. Díaz employs second person narration in "How to date a blackgirl, brown girl, white girl, or halfie" (1999) and in "This is how you lose her" (2012). There are of course, other non-Hispanic authors who have used this technique. Jay McInerney's *Bright Lights, Big City* (1984) stands as a prominent example

² "If readers empathize with these 'you' characters, it is because, like many literary techniques, they put us and the narrated self in a position of a seemingly shared subjectivity. The writers cited here interpret the self as other, while their readers in turn imagine the other as self" (Parker 173).

³ "My triangular figures bear a close physical resemblance to those Genette uses in "Fictional Narrative, Factual Narrative" to chart relationships among different types of fictional and factual texts (766). However, this physical resemblance might be misleading, for our projects differ significantly" (DelConte note 7).

⁴ The closest approximation of Anzaldúa's use of second-person narration is found in Mildorf's essay where she cites Herman. "Herman (1994) discusses what he terms 'double deixis'—instances of *you* where there is 'neither complete concord nor complete discord between grammatical form and deictic functioning, but rather a merely partial (dis)agreement between the form and functions of *you* (392). Doubly deictic *you* makes it difficult for readers to decide whether the pronoun is to be interpreted as generalized or generic *you*, as the protagonist's self-address, as the text's internal address to some narratee, or as an external address to the reader—or, in fact, as a combination of some or all of these possibilities at the same time (402). (qtd. in Mildorf 78)

⁵ "Speaking in Tongues" queers the private epistolary by being published. Perhaps here Anzaldúa is queering the private meditation by laying bare her psychic processes in "Putting Coyolxauhqui Together" and "now let us shift." This mediation acts as a two-way movement, of delving deep into the self and then outward into the world.

⁶ I presented a version of this essay at the 2013 International Conference on the Life and Work on Gloria Anzaldúa hosted by the Society of the Study of Gloria Anzaldúa on a panel with Robyn Henderson-Espinoza, AnaLouise Keating and Kelli Zaytoun. The four of us participated in a collective writing approach to the panel and shared ideas before and after the conference. In our efforts to better understand and promote Anzaldúa's work, we have named this writing collective "El Mundo Zurdistas." I thank my co-panelists and especially AnaLouise for pushing me to think of Anzaldúa's writing in terms of posthumanism.

⁷ Early in the story we learn that Andrea is menstruating—"anda en la garra"—and that during her menses, "she feels fragile, expansive, the limits of her body stretched beyond her skin, she flows out like a sheet, encompassing, covering trees, people, everything around her" ("El Paisano" 154). Her identity and her physical body are thus both presented as fluid. In the blink of an eye she is capable of moving from the top of the mesquite post to the monte where the cattle take shelter. Fluid in the queer theory sense of identity as relational and provisional, Andrea is also fluid in her sense of a spiritual connectedness to nature. This analysis builds on Keating's observation that "the protagonist in this story enacts Anzaldúa's holistic, participatory epistemology and her definition of queer, a definition that includes but goes far beyond sexual identity" (*The Gloria Anzaldúa Reader* 51). LP is likewise fluid. Working on her ranch, she patches the fence in a shirt and boots with no pants—only to realize that skin is a porous border and that she needs denim for protection (Reading LP" 261). Seemingly no border can constrain La Prieta. She even believes that the walls aren't solid, that there are *entremados*, spaces between where LP feels like she could stick her head through the wall (Reading LP" 256). And toward the end of the story, she does in fact go through the wall into a different reality.

⁸ "Second-person narrative can, and frequently does, correlate with great emotional depth since the dialogic relationships it puts at its very center allows for an in-depth treatment of human relationships, especially relationships fraught with intense emotional rifts and tensions" (Fludernik, 466).

⁹ Anzaldúa also alludes to this interconnection in other essays: "They refuse *el conocimiento* (spiritual knowledge) that we're connected by invisible fibers to everyone on the planet and that each person's actions impact the rest of the world. Putting gas in our cars connects us to the Middle East. Take a shower squandering water and someone on the planet goes thirsty; waste food and someone starves to death. Though we comprise approximately 4.5% of the people on the planet we consume 82% of its resources" ("Let us be the healing of the wound" 98).

¹⁰ In “Refugees of a World on Fire: Foreword to the Second Edition” of *This Bridge Called my Back*, Cherríe Moraga notes that if *Bridge* were conceived in 1983 instead of 1979, that “it would speak much more directly now to the relations between women and men of color, both gay and heterosexual” (n.p.) and that it would include a more “international” focus.

¹¹ Anzaldúa’s foreword to the second edition already points to her expansive inclusivity: “We have come to realize that we are not alone in our struggles nor separate nor autonomous but that we—white black straight queer female male—are connected and interdependent. We are each accountable for what is happening down the street, south of the border or across the sea” (n.p.).

¹² Anzaldúa was writing before the “@” symbol became popular to demarcate both the masculine –o and the feminine –a endings in Spanish that some scholars now use. She was also writing before the -x suffix came into popular use.

¹³ As the body of implied readers grow with each publication, it seems as though Anzaldúa finds white/women of color, men/women binaries too limiting and prefers an animist inclusivity that would have continued expanding if it were not for her untimely passing.

¹⁴ As opposed to a hetero-diegetic narrator, who is not a character in the story.

¹⁵ See my article “Shamanic urgency and two-way movement as writing style in the works of Gloria Anzaldúa” and Kelli Zaytoun’s “A Case Study for the Self-in-Coalition: Exploring Anzaldúa’s Legacy of la Naguala with Lugones’ Complex Communication.”

¹⁶ As a practice of intellectual humility, Anzaldúa consistently acknowledges her writing comadres in her published works. In her final published essay before her passing, Anzaldúa especially thanks Keating for the “co-creation” of “now let us shift” (acknowledgements).

¹⁷ This narrative change demands active participation from the reader, but perhaps more interesting for Anzaldúan Studies, marks a critical self-objectification by the author, which, at times, proves accusatory. In light of recent developments, *El Mundo Zurdo* 2009 conference art work “Santa Gloria de la Frontera” and the Society for the Study of Gloria Anzaldúa’s sponsored trips to Anzaldúa’s grave site, his essay speculates on possible connections between Anzaldúa’s self-objectification in the two essays mentioned above with current trends in Anzaldúan Studies that objectify Anzaldúa as a “saint” or as a spiritual “icon.”

¹⁸ Koegler-Abdi in her 2012 MELUS article “Shifting Subjectivities: Mestizas, Nepantleras and Gloria Anzaldúa’s Legacy” recognizes this narrative shift as well and emphasizes the imperative of the title “now let us shift” but does not explore how the formal technique of second-person narration affects the content of the essay. Koegler-Abdi also claims that Anzaldúa’s “direct address contains much less poetic language” (80). I disagree.