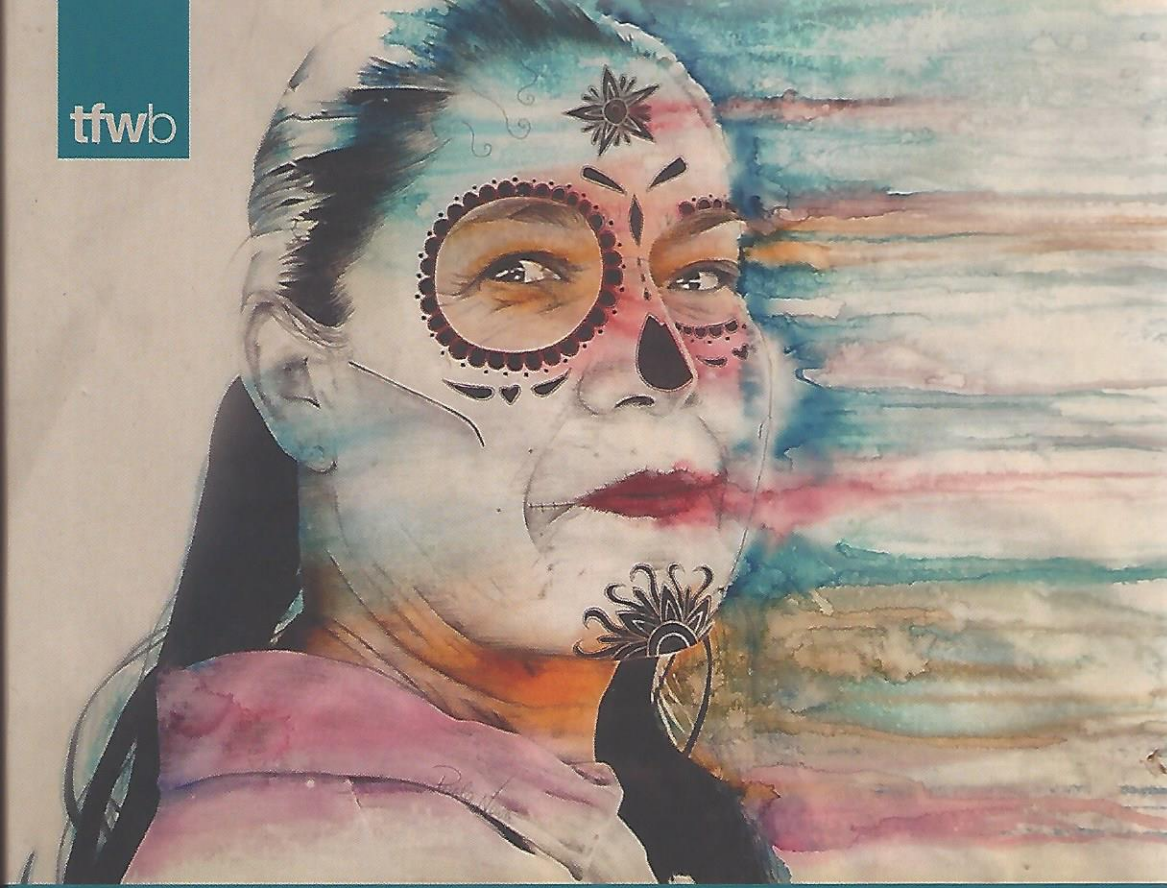


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FRONTERA MADRE(HOOD)

Brown Mothers Challenging Oppression and
Transborder Violence at the U.S.-Mexico Border

EDITED BY CYNTHIA BEJARANO & MARIA CRISTINA MORALES

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Foreword by Michelle Téllez | Afterword by Irene Lara



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We respectfully acknowledge that the University of Arizona is on the land and territories of Indigenous peoples. Today, Arizona is home to twenty-two federally recognized tribes, with Tucson being home to the O'odham and the Yaqui. Committed to diversity and inclusion, the University strives to build sustainable relationships with sovereign Native Nations and Indigenous communities through education offerings, partnerships, and community service.

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Para mi hijo, Joaquín Félix, who gives me love and light each day.

—CYNTHIA BEJARANO

For the first madre fronteriza to touch my life—my mother, who crossed the border to provide us a path to future opportunities while keeping us rooted in family and culture on the Mexican side of the border.

Por la primera madre fronteriza que tocó mi vida, mi madre, que cruzó la frontera para brindarnos un camino hacia oportunidades futuras, manteniendo nuestras raíces en familia y cultura del lado mexicano de la frontera.

—CRISTINA MORALES

We dedicate this book to *fronteriza madres, amás, mamás, mánis*, and those who engage in countless forms of mothering that endure the ordinary and the unimaginable. They inspire us with their resilience.

—CYNTHIA AND CRISTINA

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CHAPTER 2

Frontera Madre(hood) and Survival Tactics of Urban Life

MARISOL RODRÍGUEZ SOSA

Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez

Frontera madre(hood), the central concept of this anthology, argues that the geopolitics of border living/making/crossing/deconstructing generates a form of border motherhood in U.S.-Mexico border cities. This chapter, written from Ciudad Juárez, on the Mexican side of the border, explores and discusses the ideas that resonate from south of the border: How does the geopolitics of border living affect forms of madre(hood) south of the U.S.-Mexico border? How do Mexican mothers and families adapt and define ways of life to survive in a place as hostile as a militarized border city? My narrative unfolds from the *testimonio* of my first years living as a mother in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, where I moved in 2008 for work reasons with my family and a one-year-old baby. Thus, from the perspective of a researcher and a mother who has faced migration processes and lives south of the U.S.-Mexico border, I seek to reveal mothering practices that I had to quickly learn to coexist or adapt to what it means to live at this border.

Living in a northern Mexican border city means living in the territory of two countries, two nationalities, two societies, two cultures, and two power structures, which unfold between the north of Mexico and the south of the United States. This creates a binational territory with cross-border urban life and cross-border risks that arise from this proximity. Thereby, madre(hood) in a border metropolis means being a mother in

anisms born in the face of fear. Somehow, even in the most severe public insecurity, women have found a way to defend their individuality and freedom, to continue being women and mothers, and to strengthen our madre(hood) to protect and care for our children, demonstrating that the role of women and mothers is essential for the transformation of the communities we inhabit.

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