



The Guardians by Ana Castillo

A Ninth Grade Honors Group Novel Study:
A Work in Progress



*Theme: Living on the Border--
What it Means to Be
Illegal/Legal*

Theme: Living on the Border--What it Means to Be Illegal

To be *Illegal* in America is to be an undocumented immigrant. To be illegal is to not be an American citizen. In *The Guardians*, the author explains, “my brother trying to cross without papers was obviously against the law” (Castillo 13). When Rafa tries to come home to see his only son, he is deemed illegal. His only mistake is not having paperwork; for this error, he may end up dead or worse.

Immigration is a huge issue in the novel, and today. People try to leave in search of new opportunities or to reconnect with loved ones, like Rafa, and sometimes they don't make it across the border. In *The Guardians*, many of the characters are not U.S. citizens. Gabo is undocumented. He is technically attending school illegally in the U.S. until he becomes legal. His father Rafa is also illegal, but he pays a coyote to cross the border. Now he is missing, and his family does not know where he is. His wife, Ximena has been murdered for the same crime. This story reflects contemporary issues in American today, unfortunately.



Living on the Border--What it Means to Be Illegal

Being illegal means that a person is in America without U.S citizenship, and living on the border in the case of the characters in *The Guardians*, means living in the border town of Cabuche, New Mexico. In the book Regina explains, “[Gabo] says he is going to college. That is, if the government lets him. If he can’t get residency he won’t be going nowhere but back to Mexico” (Castillo 8). This shows that even though Gabo is like every other kid in America, the fact that he isn’t legally in the country holds him back from doing things he aspires to do; unfortunately, this is the case for many illegal immigrants.

In some cases people have to travel across the border for money or family, which is a very dangerous trip. After Gabo’s parents had been separated while crossing the border “the bodies of four women had been mutilated for their organs. One of them was Ximena was Gabo’s mother, this may seem a farfetched and scary story but things like this do happen. This topic sheds light on the struggles that many families experience. They are all struggling and many members of their family have lost their lives or have had to make these dangerous trips across the border.

Sophia Pellegrino



Theme: Living on the Border--What it Means to Be Legal Joe Stevens

- The Guardians takes place in New Mexico. The hispanic heritage of the characters is shown and it proves to be strong. Being a legal citizen of the USA is something to be proud of, especially for members of Regina's family.
- A quote that shows what it means to be legal is, "I kept Gabo this time around because I want him to finish high school" in America (Castillo 3). This makes it seem like being a US citizen is a prestigious honor to Regina.
- Some people in Regina's family are illegal immigrants including her nephew, Gabo. They want him to become a legal citizen because it means that he and other family members will have a better life and education. Being a legal citizen is something to be proud of. Regina's brother, Rafa, went missing and I believe he went back to Mexico to avoid being caught and deported.



Living on the Border: What It Means to Be Legal

Usman Shahid

- ❑ The novel, The Guardians by Ana Castillo, is written in the setting of New Mexico. This is relevant to the book since they deal with situations of legal and illegal people, and they show the evident hispanic heritage through the characters we have read about so far (including Regina, Rafa, Gabo, and Miguel). In addition to this, Regina's nephew, Gabo, is an illegal immigrant, but she strongly believes that he deserves a better education, which is why she wants him to become a legal citizen in America. This could help build his future, life, and assist him in being able to grow his education.
- ❑ The meaning of being legal in the United States of America is when people are here, staying here, and are permitted by the law, and not breaking any rules by their presence. It is a big deal to Regina and the rest of her family. Many other families who are Latino are not always as lucky to be here legally. Being an illegal immigrant can put people in danger, so it is a relief to the families that can be here legally.
- ❑ Throughout the first two chapters, there has been some discussion about legal and illegal immigrants in the United States. Regina explains, "I kept Gabo this time around because I want him to finish high school" (Castillo 3), This implies that she wants him to get a great education and be able to grow his life, and hopefully he will be able to become a legal citizen. Luckily, Regina is a citizen which allows her to stay safely, and she just wants the same for Gabo.



This photo not only shows Hispanic immigrants, but immigrants from all over who have become citizens.



*Theme: Living in the
Borderland--the Effects
of Environment*

Theme: Living in the Borderland--the Effects of Environment

Ava Pellegrino

The effects of the environment in *The Guardians* range from how the social aspects of it shape the people and how the actual climate affects people. It seems that the desert that stretches across the novel's landscape has caused a lot of problems for the people living there. Rafa, for example, would be safe and sound if he hadn't



needed the help of coyotes to get him across the border. Regina even says, “So the problem is Rafa, my brother, can't just come across without paying someone” (Castillo 4). The coyotes run the stretch of dangerous land that is required to get across; coyotes smuggle people across the border. Rafa thinks that his son shouldn't grow up in the US and that he should be in Mexico with his family. Because of this desire, his family struggles. Gabo explains, “I felt Tia Regina breathing hard until her sobbing began” (Castillo). Gabo goes on to talk about the way that he cries every night, too.

Theme: Living in the Borderland--the Effects of the Environment

Living in the borderland, like Regina and Gabo are doing in the novel can have negative impacts on them, their community and what they want to see happen in it. A lot of people won't have to go through the dangers of trying to cross over the Mexican border without knowing what lay in between the two places. Regina talks about the space in between Mexico and America, "No there's nothing out there. But you know what? They're out there--los mero-mero cabrones. The drug traffickers and body traffickers" (Castillo 4). Living in the borderland is a struggle throughout the whole novel and has had a negative impact on Gabo, Regina and her brother, Rafa.


Abigail Hernandez



For example, Regina explains the death of Gabo's mother, Ximena, when he was younger by saying, "The coyotes said no, the women had to go in another truck. Three days later the bodies of four women were found out there in that heat by the border patrol. All four had been mutilated for their organs" (Castillo 4). Both Regina and Gabo are heartbroken by the murder of Ximena. Rafa can't come across the border without paying illegal coyotes which is both difficult and dangerous.



Relationships



“I was looking down at Miguel’s white tennis and thinking how I’d like to be able to afford a pair of those for Gabo for his Birthday because I know he likes to play basketball” (Castillo 18).

This quote shows that although Regina is having a serious conversation with Miguel about whether or not she should adopt Gabo, she is still thinking of her nephew. The fact that she remembers every little detail like Gabo playing basketball really shows the reader how much she cares deeply for him; even though he might not know it just yet.

Gabo & Regina’s Relationship:

The love between a tía & her sobrino

Gabo is a fifteen-old boy who would do anything for his family. Regina is Gabo’s aunt who has a job at the local school as a teacher’s aid. Gabo is under Regina’s roof for the time being for Gabo’s father (Regina’s brother) is missing and Gabo’s mother is dead.



This quote shows that even when Regina doesn’t know it, Gabo is trying to take care of her. It represents how close their relationship is, and even when Gabo is offering Regina his work money, she does not take it (even though she might need it).

Gabo explains, “The money I earn I put away. My tia has earned it [...] When I return from work, after my shower, I do my homework in my cuatro, so my tia’s sleep is not disturbed” (Castillo 18).



Lea Mendelson

Gabo's Career Path and Tia Regina's Feelings About It

Angela Ndocaj

When Gabo graduates, he wants to be a part of the church and his Tia Regina is concerned for him. Not only does Regina feel disappointed about this, but she feels that Rafa will too.

One way you can tell she is disappointed is by her stating it is her fear. Regina says, "My biggest fear is he is going to become a priest. Wait 'til Rafa heads about it. He'll be so disappointed" (Castillo 7). You can also tell that Gabo wants to be affiliated with the Church and that there are other people disappointed about the path he is going to take, like his friend Jesse. Jesse says "Man. You really are weird" (Castillo 45). Jesse is the type to go fooling around with girls, parties, and alcohol while Gabo does not want in on that. He is inspired by the Bible to be a good person and always follow the rules of the Book of God.




This could be the theory of corruption in the church and what Regina does not want Gabo involved with.

The relevance of Gabo wanting to become a pastor and affiliated with Church may predict his future. Later on, Gabo might become a priest and something bad might happen. Regina's fear is not that he is going to become too good of a person will no flaws. It is instead that he may be blinded by the Bible and forget everything about life since he is so fixated on pleasing God. Regina and her family don't seem very religious, but Gabo proves to differ. Another possibility might be that the Church is corrupted, and Regina doesn't want Gabo to fall into that lifestyle. This is a time of gangs and major illegal activity, especially considering Gabo's mother, Ximena, and her death. Even Rafa is now missing.

Gabo's Religious Path And How Regina Feels About It

Alexandru Platon

In *The Guardians* by Ana Castillo, the author emphasizes two completely different attitudes toward religion from the characters' point of view. This idea is presented through Gabo, a 15-year-old boy, and his aunt Regina, who live together.



Gabo aspires to become a priest for the Franciscan Brothers, which is clear in, "I have already chosen los Hermanos Franciscanos," when he imparts his desire to his patron saint, St. Francis (Castillo 21).

Regina admits Gabo's affinities for the Church with disfavor, which is clear when she says, "My biggest fear is he's gonna become a priest," as she divulges her most inescapable fear (Castillo 7).

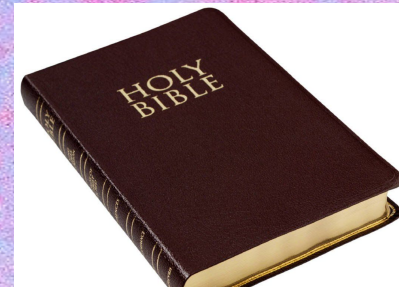
This particular aspect of the novel transmits an important message to the reader by describing one of the ways in which society adapts to the presence of multiple opinions on a subject. Since Regina does not support Gabo's idea of becoming a priest, yet they both live together surrounded by the same people. They can easily find fellows, which shows that the public today is no longer limited to a single identical belief.

Gabo's Religious Path and How Regina Feels about It

-Regina's nephew Gabo wants to become a priest when he is older and is very passionate about his religion. But, Regina has different opinions about Gabo becoming a priest.

- "My biggest fear is he's gonna become a priest. Wait 'til Rafa hears about it. He'll be so disappointed" (Castillo 7).

-It is brought up multiple times throughout the book how Gabo wants to become a priest. He is very involved in his religious path. His guardian Regina has different thoughts about his dream. She makes it clear in this quote that she does not want him to become a priest.



Miguel's Relationship with Regina

Miguel and Regina's relationship with each other is one of close friends. But little does either one know, they both admire each other. Although they are close friends they like to flirt here and there. Regina realizes that Miguel has probably had a romantic relationship with almost every one of the staff members. She says, "I may not say nothing, being a fifty-plus-year-old widow, but I still look. Miguel was handsome in his own way but more important, for the purpose of our errand, tall and very strong-looking" (Castillo 14). This shows how Regina finds Miguel handsome but she doesn't think she is good enough. She compares herself to all the other woman and just thinks less of herself, though she is quick to appreciate his physical strength when she needs help.

Miguel even has his own nickname for Regina, Redhead. Castillo writes, "As for finding Redhead's brother, I said I'd help" (Castillo 40). This also shows how he cares enough to help Regina find her missing brother, but also how he refers to her by his affectionate nickname for her. It is clear that sooner or later in the book, Miguel and Regina will end up together because they both may come clean about how they actually feel. There is clear foreshadowing to this fact in all of these small flirtatious statements.

This picture is two friends who are flirting but keep their feelings hidden.



Miguel's Relationship with Crucita

Catherine King

The relationship between Miguel and his ex-wife, Crucita is better since they have divorced. Initially they were supposed to grow together as a couple, but they grew in two separate directions. Miguel went in his own direction and Crucita went in the opposite. Castillo writes, "how a couple is supposed to grow to keep the relationship strong. Well, Crucita grew in her direction and I in mine" (Castillo 40). In this quote, it is clear that they have both grown apart, and that neither was able to keep the relationship strong.

In addition, Miguel confides in Regina and explains the truth of his prior marriage. He says, "I shared the rather shameful news of my wife's infidelity with Regina" (Castillo 40). Clearly, Miguel still has some negative feelings about his marriage; Crucita cheated on Miguel. This is relevant to the book's overall meaning because Regina is now close enough with Miguel that he is able to confess one of his most shameful secrets. Opening up to Regina about his past with Crucita shows the level of trust he has for her. He also opens up to the audience making it clear that he has a special spot in his heart for Regina.



In the image to the left is a representation of Crucita's infidelity toward Miguel.

Miguel's Relationship with Crucita

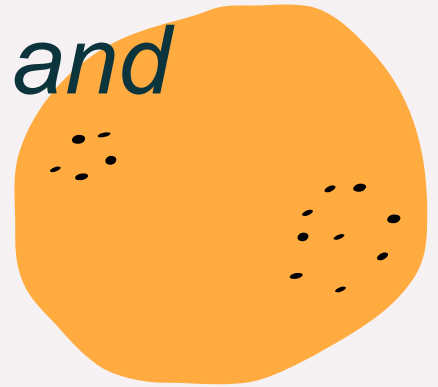
Crucita shapes Miguel's perspective of spouses. The story about them is that she chased Miguel and they eventually had children. However, throughout their relationship they had separate views and ideals. Miguel explains, "People talk about how a couple is supposed to grow to keep the relationship strong. Well, Crucita grew in her direction and I in mine" (Castillo 40). He is so affected by his previous relationship that he is personally offended when Regina brushes it off, as he has dated every female coworker besides her. Due to these failed relationships, Miguel has a set (and flawed) perception of women, their motives, and their personal bonds with others. His experiences with Crucita make it clear that his mindset has the potential in the future to effectively create turmoil between him, Regina, Gabo, and the people around them. This relationship provides foreshadowing of what might happen to his future relationships.



Hassan Oats



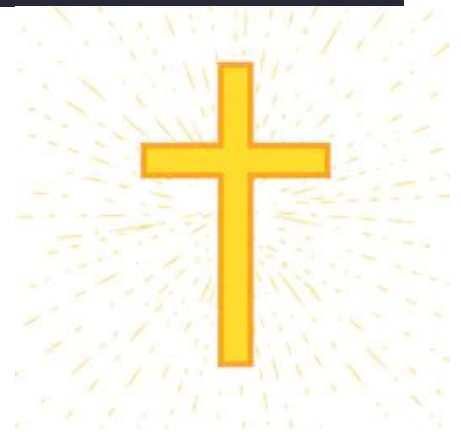
*Theme: Catholicism and
Other Religions*



Alejandra Afanador

Theme: Catholicism/Other Religions In The Novel

Religion in *The Guardians* is an evidently discernable theme in the novel. It is most prevalent in Gabo's sections of the novel in particular. Primarily, his sections themselves are in the form of letters to a saint, in which Gabo explains that he aspires to become a priest and be one with the Lord. He also refers briefly to his tía Regina and father Rafael (Rafa for short) and their relation to the church. Yet, Gabo himself is sincerely devoted to his goal of becoming a priest. And despite Regina's conflicts with the church, she does mention having a favorite archangel. It seems that she does believe in religion, just not necessarily the church.



"My dad and tía are a lot alike when it comes to not trusting the Church. 'Millions,' they each say, like they had been saying it all their lives, 'millions of mexicanos among the faithful, living in poverty. And the Church—so rich.' 'Religion is the opium of the masses'" (Castillo 21).

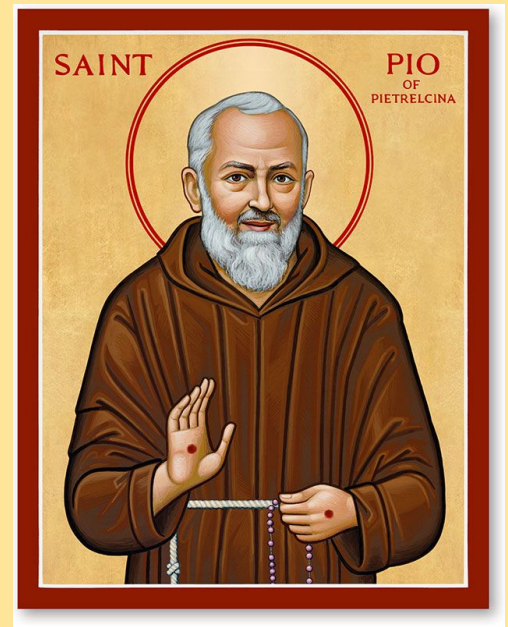
"I [Regina] decided on [calling Mr. Betancourt] Miguel because it reminds me of my favorite archangel. I call upon el arcángel Miguel whenever I need serious help, with this side and the other side. By that I mean here and across the border in México and I mean this life and whatever's on the Other Side" (Castillo 27)

Anthony DiLascio

His Reverence, Saint Padre Pio

And Gabo's relationship with said Saint.

Religion is the driving factor of the character Gabo, and Gabo's sections are in the form of letters to Saint Padre Pio who is pictured on the right. Saint Pio, and by extension our Lord and all other Saints, guide Gabo throughout his life and give Gabo his maturity and outlook on life. Gabo's faith is why he is so kind hearted, and the author uses his personal letters to Padre Pio as a vehicle to give us readers a deeper, more intimate look into Gabo's emotions and true feelings.

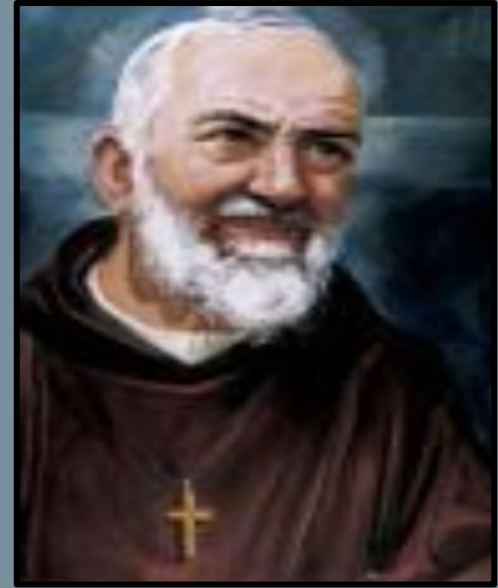


“Su Reverencia, el Santo Franciscano, Padre Pio: Venerado Santo, gracias for permitting me this great honor to write to you in heaven” (Castillo 17).

“San Pio, thank el Senor for me, por favor, for all His blessings and considerations of His imperfect servant, but most especially for sending my this bot who is a mirror to my own spiritual shortcomings” (Castillo 46).

Saint Padre Pio

In *The Guardians*, the character of Gabo has a strong connection to his religion. In the story, Gabo writes letters to Saint Padre Pio in his section of the book. Saint Padre Pio is a guide in Gabo's life and he respects him highly. At one point in the story readers even learn that Gabo aspires to be a priest. This topic has a strong connection to the book because of Gabo. With his commitment to his religion and being one with the lord, he highly respects the saints.

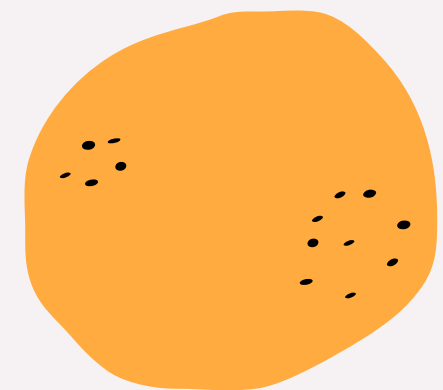


“Santo and friend of God thank you for listening to me. My saludos to you, the lord my Father in Heaven. Please ask him to look down on me kindly. [...] I want you to know that I not only read the Bible but everything” (Castillo 37).

“Su Reverencia, el Santo Francisco, Padre Pio: Venerado Santo, gracia for permitting me this great honor to write to you in heaven” (Castillo 17).



Theme: Coyotes & Los Traficantes



Throughout the first two chapters of *The Guardians*, people called coyotes are human traffickers. People pay the coyotes to bring them across the border to the USA or Mexico but it doesn't always work because it is extremely dangerous to be affiliated with these illegal operations.

“He’s been back and forth across that desert, dodging Border Patrol so many times, you’d think he wouldn’t even need a coyote no more” (Castillo 4).

“When Rafa and Ximena were returning they got seperated. The coyotes said no, the women had to go in a another truck. Three days later the bodies of four women were found out there in that heat by Border Patrol. All had had been mutilated for their organs. One of them was Ximena” (Castillo 4).

The coyotes have relevance to the book so far because if Rafa and Ximena hadn't tried to cross the border, Gabo would not be living with Regina. Ximena would not have been murdered. Gabo would still have a mother. Rafa would not be missing. The coyotes are a bigger part of the story than people realize.



The Coyotes

Jack Baker

#20 - Los Narcotraficantes

Meaning

This slide is about the Los Narcotraficantes. Los Narcotraficantes are the drug traffickers.

Relevance

Currently, the Los Narcotraficantes are only connected to Regina & Gabo's story. Regina suspects that Rafa, her brother got involved with the drug traffickers and is missing because of them. Rafa is also Gabo's father and Gabo is hoping his father will return one day. Regina is trying to find out where Rafa is by interrogating the drug traffickers.

Quotes

“They’re out there-los mero-mero cabrones. The drug traffickers and body traffickers” (Castillo 4).

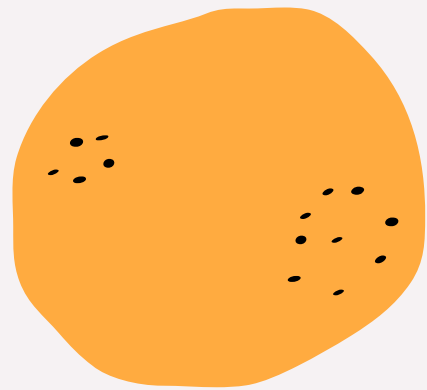
“The Santa Teresa border isn’t used for a lot except the business of the narcotraficantes” (Castillo 44).

Image - The Santa Teresa border





Characterization



Characterization: Gabo

In *The Guardians*, by Ana Castillo, Gabo is an important character. The novel talks about him, Regina, his aunt, and many others in his family.

Quote 1: “I know that God gives us drudgery to keep us from being idle, Padrecito. As I unpack the cans of string beans y garbanzos to line the shelves, it is a meditation to the Lord” (Castillo 19).

Quote 2: “I heard him crying into his pillow one night. He probably envisions his father being killed by a coyote and left in the desert like what happened to his mother” (Castillo 12).



This is relevant to the novel because as mentioned above, Gabo is an important character in the novel. This is because he and Regina are on the hunt, searching for his father, Rafa. This situation is affecting him and his mental state as described in quote 2. However, he learns how to cope with this problem by seeking faith in the Lord as shown in quote 1.



Characterization: Jesse Arellano

Maria Manis

Jesse is Gabo's best friend. They met on the basketball court at the Catholic high school in Santa Teresa. When they first meet, Gabo is confused with about who Jesse is, Jesse says, "You not from around here or somethin'? My older brother is El Toro Arellano [...] You know, the guy who helped start los Palominos back in the day? He's doing time over there in La Tuna now. [...] Are you really that out of it man?" (Castillo 44). Jesse is much different than Miguel. Miguel is a much more religious man compared to Jesse whose brother is in the gang, Los Palominos. When they talk about alcohol, drugs, and parties, Gabo finds this to be very unreligious, but Jesse thinks it's normal. Jesse's response to this is, "you are really weird." Jesse's presence is relevant to the book because Gabo is a main character and Jesse is Gabo's best friend; yet, they are complete opposites.



Characterization of Jesse Arellano



Kiera Jandongan

Jesse Arellano is Gabo's best friend. They meet on a basketball court at the Catholic high school in Santa Teresa. The first time they meet, Jesse explains who he is. At first, Gabo doesn't know Jesse's status, and then apologizes for his ignorance. In the novel, Jesse Arellano says, "My older brother is El Toro Arellano [...] You know, the guy who helped start los Palominos back in the day?" (Castillo 44). Gabo then explains how known Jesse's brother is as leader of the Latino gang, Los Palominos.

This topic is relevant to the book as a whole because Jesse Arellano is a decently big part of Gabo's life. Jesse definitely influences him. For example, Jesse explains what life is really like when people become a part of Los Palominos. This opens up Gabo's eyes to what reality is like when people have no family other than other gang members.

Characterization: Miguel

Khadija Tahir

Miguel is self-driven and smart. Even though he is divorced he still has a good relationship with his children and is still a part of their lives. Miguel explains, “I went over and got a beer for myself and a snow cone for Xochi, I looked around for Crucita and my son” (Castillo 35). Miguel and his family go to a bazaar sponsored by the Catholic Church and Miguel still is caring towards Crucita, even though they aren't together. Of course, he cares about his children more. It is natural for him to serve his family and make sure that everyone is comfortable.

Miguel is kind and caring by offering to help Regina find her brother and is focused on improving the community. He hears about a community that needs teachers and decides to teach history there. He thinks he is good teacher, but he is not a showoff type of guy. Miguel also offers to pay for one of Regina's pies when he drops it on the floor; he is generous, too. The relevance of Miguel's personal characteristics is important in understanding Miguel, because he helps Regina find Rafa. Regina's brother is really important to her, so, dissecting Miguel's character helps readers to predict what will happen next.

(I personally want Miguel to help Regina find her brother.)



Characterization: Miguel

Sophie D’Innocenzi

In the book indirect and direct characterization can be applied to describe Miguel. Using indirect characterization, it can be inferred that he has trust issues with women as a result of his wife’s affair. Using direct characterization, it is known that Miguel is a very helpful and kind person. This is because Regina talks about how he reminds her of her favorite Archangel to whom she looked at for help.

“I decided on Miguel because it reminds me of my favorite Archangel” (Castillo 27).

“On the other, it turned out to be what changed the life of a guy whose heart needing some serious mending” (Castillo 35).

Miguel plays a huge part so far in Regina and Gabo’s life. With Rafa missing, Miguel has been nothing but kind and helpful with trying to find him. Since Miguel is one of the main characters in the book, his actions matter a lot.



Miguel's Children: Xochitl & Michael

Nathalie Pujadas

Miguel and the relationship that he has with his children have both good and bad parts. Miguel's explains what family life has taken from him, "I never got to put my findings down on the dirty wars fueled by the School of Americas alumni; family took over. Cructica and I were expecting our daughter, Xochitl, before we finished college. Soon after Xochi, our son, Little Michael, came along" (Castillo 32-33). In this quote it is clear that Miguel never really got to experience life the normal way. Because of his children being born when he was still young, he was rushed into parenthood at an age when people in college should be having fun.

Even after having children, however, Miguel tries to keep his dream alive. He continues, "But I held on to my dream of getting into a doctoral program" (Castillo 33). Miguel talks about how having children at an age when people should be having fun can take a major toll on everything that happens in life. Miguel struggles with learning how to keep his dreams alive, but also balancing marriage and being a father to his children, which is not easy.

This topic is important to *The Guardians* because throughout the book all of the characters talk about negative influences in their lives, and dreams they hope to achieve. Working through hardships and maintaining and pursuing dreams are major themes in the novel.

These pictures show the struggle that people go through when they have to experience something like this at such a young age. When young, people have all these dreams and ambitions that they have for their lives, but when something like having a child happens, all dreams go away because reality kicks in, and now they have to be responsible and be able to support your child and family.



Miguel's Children

Adrien Argana

Michael Betancourt, or Miguel, a history teacher, is a divorced man who still keeps a relationship with his kids. His ex wife's name is Crucita and his kids names were Xochi and Little Michael.

“Crucita and I were expecting our daughter, Xochitl, before we finished college. Soon after Xochi, our son, Little Michael, came along” (Castillo 33).

“Anyway, we--Crucita and I--still try to do things with our kids” (Castillo 33).

Miguel talks about how his business life became more important to him than family life and how he began to become separated from them. He knew they were not meant to be at that point. His ex wife on the other hand was still interested in the marriage and wanted a happy family, but it couldn't work out.



Characterization: Regina

Regina is a very prominent character in Ana Castillo's *The Guardians*. Out of the four narrators she is one of the main. This novel is about her family and this is how she relates to *The Guardians*.



The meaning of this slide is to show who Regina is. From what I see she is a powerful women who cares about her family. With her being a widowed lady who is older, she is very self-sufficient. While being shy at sometimes. She overall cares for her family. When her brother disappears she worries like any good family member would do. Regina also has been through alot and lives on.

“I was looking down at Miguel’s white tennis and thinking how I’d like to be able to afford a pair of those shoes for Gabo for his birthday because I know he likes to play basketball”(Castillo 26)
(showing how she cares for her family)

“Sometimes I feel like I have lied many lifetimes, not just one. And not just my own.”(Castillo 39)
(telling how she even knows she has been through lots)

Characterization of Regina

Characterization is the development of the actions and behaviors of fictional characters in a novel. In The Guardians by Ana Castillo, Regina is one of the most important characters in the book.

“First I baked two pies, then three, then the rest of the night I was baking pies. It gave me something to do when I couldn’t sleep” (Castillo 24).

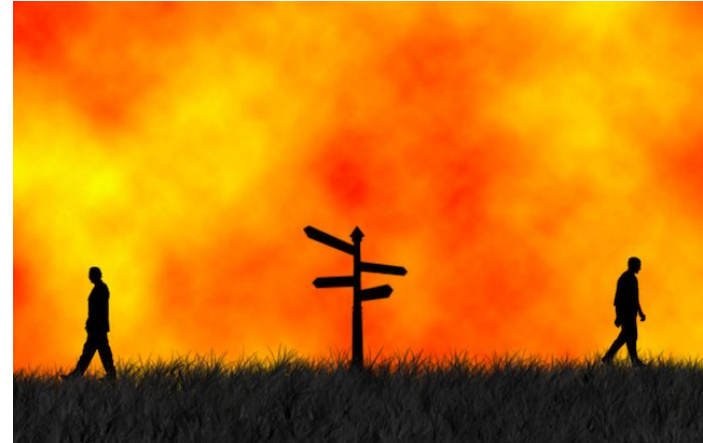
“My biggest fear is he’s gonna become a priest” (Castillo 7).

The relevance of this topic to the novel is that Regina is one of the main characters. Throughout the first two chapters of the novel, readers learn more about the type of person she is by seeing her actions, mental struggles, and beliefs. Her past and the struggles that she has faced throughout her lifetime become more clear. In addition to all of this, it becomes clear what Regina wants for Gabo’s life and what she does to cope with feeling stress and anxiety. She uses baking pies as an escape and to calm her emotions and thoughts. Regina is strong, but still has many fears. The quotes above show readers a perspective at her life, along with her views and beliefs.



Regina Friends: Uriel Dereck Potes

So far in *The Guardians*, Gabo describes the relationship between his tia and her only friend, Senora Uriel. While describing her he mentions how Regina and Uriel never see each other. This is realistic in the fact that when you are an adult you are busy and don't have time to be talking to old friends--especially someone like Regina who works, takes care of her sobrino, and always tries to come up with get rich quick schemes. Gabo explains, "She always mentions la Senora Uriel, but they never see each other. Too busy with work and life" (Castillo 43). It is sad that Regina doesn't see her friends because life just drifts them apart. The relevance of Uriel to the whole book is that it shows how Regina doesn't have time, and she has too much on her plate. Regina at the moment is working, raising Gabo, trying to find Rafa. If Rafa is truly in danger, Regina needs to find him fast. She can't drift away and put it aside like she does with her friends.



Characterization: Tiny Tears

Ella Reyngoudt

Tiny Tears is an important character because she is a strong female, but gang life alters her perception of family.



“Tiny tears already has a baby. I asked her one day if she was planning on getting married once she finished high school. She stared at me with a scowl, as if she resented my question” (Castillo 46).

“Tiny Tears hardly ever speaks. But behind all the makeup I fear it is a very scary girl” (Castillo 46).

Tiny Tears’ relevance to *The Guardians* as a whole is that she is one of the most strong women so far. Many women in this book are strong and she is just one of them. Throughout the novel, the theme of unconventional family life appears in various characters like Tiny Tears, a teen mom and a member of Los Palominos gang. However, Tiny Tears can barely read and she is almost failing her classes. Her future is not promising, but she is a survivor.

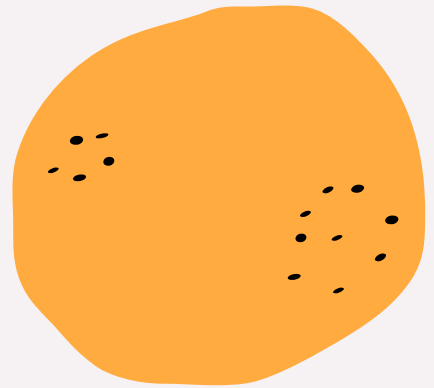
Characterization: Ximena

Ximena was Gabo's mother; she died while trying to cross the border. Ximena was murdered by coyotes or paid traffickers and was taken then, mutilated for her organs. The author writes, "All four [border crossers] have been mutilated for their organs. One of them of Ximena" (Castillo 4). Since Ximena died, Gabo is now being raised by his aunt Regina. This event is relevant to the book as a whole because throughout the book problems with the coyotes arise. The murder of Ximena shows how the coyotes kill and cause characters sadness. The author writes, "He won't say nothing out of respect for Gabo's dead mother. Just the mention of Ximena and the boy falls apart" (Castillo 4). This event makes the family more scared and worried about what the coyotes can do. Another problem that Regina and Gabo have with the coyotes is that Gabo's father Rafa, attempted illegally crossing the border with the help of the coyotes but is now missing.





The Family Trees

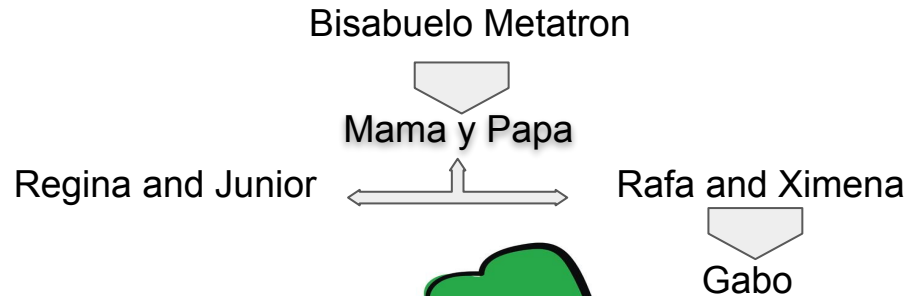


Family Tree: Regina/Gabo

Dea Jera

Family is extremely important in *The Guardians*, but unfortunately there's not a lot of family around for Regina and Gabo.

“Sometimes I dream that I live on the other side of the clouds. There I’ve seen my mama again. I’ve seen my father. I’ve seen my grandfather Metatron” (Castillo 28).



The family tree is very relevant to this Regina trying to find Rafa, Gabo’s father. his father is one of the only immediate is missing which shows the lack of family doesn’t have a lot of people left, that’s



book. So far, the book has been about Gabo’s mother was killed by coyotes and family he has besides Regina. His father Gabo and Regina have. Their family tree why it’s extremely important to them.

The graph to the right is of Gabo and Regina's family.

The red represents those who've passed. Rafa is red because he is missing and presumed to have died.

"So all Gabo has to count on is his father. And me, of course, his tia Regina" (Castillo 8).

As of this second chapter, *The Guardians* is about family. This slide is important because it organizes the information about their family we've been given in so many pages in a neat comprehensible diagram.

Family Tree: Gabo and Regina's Family

