

Of Monsters and Women: Feminist Response to Gender-based Violence in Galician Noir

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ABSTRACT

*This article contrasts strategies of resistance to gender-based violence in two examples of audiovisual media which draw on or subvert the burgeoning genre of Galician noir; season one of the TVG-Netflix hit *O sabor das margaridas* (2018) directed by Miguel Conde and the women-centred grassroots feminist web series *Monstras* (2020) directed by Eire García Cid. These divergent case studies muddy the binary of female victimhood and male aggression whilst drawing attention to the hegemonic sexual politics and socioeconomic systems which facilitate and endorse violence against women and girls. Yet while *Monstras* stands as a paradigmatic example of a socially conscious, ideologically driven artistic response to patriarchal violence, the feminist attributes of *O sabor das margaridas* are largely trumped by commercial concerns, shown for example through the eroticisation of violence. Though Galician noir has made a breakthrough on international streaming media by foregrounding women's resistance to gender-based violence, this tends to be manipulated by the bid for viewer ratings. Fundamentally, it continues to be in alternative media where some of the most revolutionary conversations about women's rights are taking place in the Galician cultural sphere.*

RESUMO

*Este artigo contrasta diferentes estratexias de resistencia á violencia de xénero en dúas obras audiovisuais que empregan ou subverten as convencións do noir galego; a primeira tempada de *O sabor das margaridas* (2018) de TVG-Netflix, dirixida por Miguel Conde, e a webserie feminista de base centrada na muller *Monstras* (2020) dirixida por Eire García Cid. Estes estudos de caso diverxentes complican o binarismo patriarcal da vítima feminina e a agresión masculina á vez que chaman a atención ás políticas sexuais e os sistemas socioeconómicos hexemónicos que facilitan e afianzan a violencia contra as mulleres e as nenas. Porén, aínda que *Monstras* é un exemplo paradigmático dunha resposta artística socialmente consciente e impulsada ideoloxicamente á violencia patriarcal, os atributos feministas de *O sabor das margaridas* vense en gran medida superados polas preocupacións comerciais, mostradas por exemplo a través da erotización da violencia. Aínda que o noir galego deu un gran avance nos medios internacionais de streaming ao poñer en primeiro plano a resistencia das mulleres á violencia de*

xénero, isto adoita ser manipulado pola aposta da valoración dos espectadores. Fundamentalmente, segue a ser en medios alternativos onde se están a dar algunhas das conversas máis revolucionarias sobre os dereitos da muller no ámbito cultural galego.

KEYWORDS

Galician noir – audiovisual - feminism – gender-based violence - *Monstras - O sabor das margaridas*

PALABRAS CLAVE

noir galego – audiovisual - feminismo – violencia de xénero - *Monstras - O sabor das margaridas*

‘o verdadeiro violento vai ser volver á normalidade’

(the real violence will be going back to normality)

(*Monstras* 2020)

INTRODUCTION

In defiance of the relative invisibility of the Galician language on the global screen, Galician noir, the quintessentially Galician take on the literary and cinematographic detective genre, has recently made its mark on international audiovisual streaming platforms. Titles such as the Galician-language *O sabor das margaridas* (*Bitter Daisies*) (2018-20) and the Galician and Portuguese-language co-production *Auga seca* (*Dry Water*) (2020-21), as well as Spanish-language offerings like *Fariña* (*Cocaine Coast*) (2018) (which contains some dialogue in Galician), *Vivir sin permiso* (*Unauthorised Living*) (2018-2020), *El desorden que dejas* (*The Mess You Leave Behind*) (2020) and *Rapa* (2022) have succeeded in exposing diverse new audiences to Galician culture and landscape by drawing on a genre that is arguably ‘a touchstone of popular culture’ (Bould 2005: 108). Characterised by striking, bleak scenery, low lighting, a tight-knit community disturbed by a crime and a sense of foreboding, the noir plot tends to pivot on ‘una inversión del orden y signo de los principios éticos y estéticos’ (‘an inversion of order and symbol of ethical and aesthetic principles’) (Colmeiro 1994: 61). Said to simultaneously bolster and undermine patriarchal ideas of womanhood (Tasker 2013: 354), the genre unearths anxieties surrounding the

intersections of gender, race, sexuality, nation and identity (Oliver and Trigo 2002: 15) through its 'focus on community and transgression' (King 2011: 67). These concerns are especially poignant in the context of non-state languages and communities, and indeed Galician cultural production has historically been characterised by discourses of resistance that respond to systematic oppression by the Spanish state (Miguélez-Carballeira 2013: 3). As substantial scholarship has shown, the appetite for televised Galician thrillers stems from the literary sphere, with the Galician reimagining of the *novela negra* (Spanish detective novel) having risen to prominence in recent decades (Gaspar Porras 1995: 111). In contrast to the more stereotypically gendered representations in earlier works of fiction in which detectives were usually men, with women more likely to be depicted as victims of crime, many of the key characters in more recent examples of Galician noir narrative are women who take centre stage as detectives and investigative journalists (López 2019: 305), a trend that is mirrored on screen. Both literary and cinematographic representations often foreground social critique relating to gender-based issues such as prostitution and violence against women and girls (Rivero Grandoso 2020: 305).

This article will examine responses to gender-based violence in two contrasting examples of female-centred Galician-language audiovisual media which evoke or undermine the noir genre; the feminist activist web series *Monstras* (Monsters) (2020) directed by Eire García Cid, and the first season of the successful TVG-Netflix series *O sabor das margaridas*, directed by Miguel Conde. Taking as a starting point Sara Ahmed's theorisation of the 'feminist killjoy' (2017), the impetus for feminists to voice uncomfortable truths about patriarchal oppression, I contrast approaches to tackling heteropatriarchal oppression in a mainstream television and an independent online series. The article begins with a contextualisation of both series in relation to film noir, before analysing thematic content relating to gender fluidity, sexuality, sorority, and violence respectively.

If the objective of feminists is fundamentally to 'demolish the current system of social governance, which they identified as patriarchal and capitalist' (Mackay 2015: 264), the female protagonists in these series might be said to function as 'killjoys' by working at odds with the establishment to challenge violence against women, navigating Ahmed's indication of feminism as 'how we survive the consequences of what we come up against by offering new ways of understanding what we come up against' (2017: 22) through gendered experiences of the 'uncomfortable realities' typical of noir (Davies 2019: 231). The series analysed here stem from distinct ideological and artistic positionings which influence their treatment of gender-based violence and gender politics more broadly. Circulated to a niche audience online, *Monstras* represents a paradigmatic example of a radical feminist countercultural response to patriarchal violence, whilst *O sabor das margaridas* forges new paths as a female detective-led television series that has been marketed via a global streaming platform. While the latter is in many ways pioneering given not only its exportation of

the Galician language to foreign audiences, but also its feminist attributes which reconfigure patriarchal aspects of traditional noir, these are, I argue, somewhat trumped by commercial concerns. As I shall outline, the sorority that characterises both series is undermined in *O sabor das margaridas* by problematic stereotypes and the eroticisation of violence. A characteristic focus of fourth wave feminism (Couceiro Castro 2021: 68), gender-based violence represents ‘a pivot for the intersecting systems of heteropatriarchy, racial capitalism and colonialism’ (Phipps 2020: 161), and the divergent ways in which it is treated in these distinct forms of media demonstrate the extent to which audiovisual cultures ‘non andan á marxe da cultura patriarcal dominante’ (‘don’t function at the margins of dominant patriarchal culture’) (Ledo Andión 2019: 17).¹

MONSTERS AND KILLJOYS

The crowdfunded production *Monstras*, by the radical feminist collective Corentena Producións (‘Quarantine Productions’), has been promoted as the first ever Galician-language web series with an explicitly feminist agenda. As detailed on Corentena’s website (Corentena Producións), commitment to the Galician language is fundamental to their decolonial feminist politics, evoking ‘a incoerência de gritar contra a ditadura da heterossexualidade, do machismo e da transfobia em espanhol’ (‘the contradiction of shouting about the dictatorship of heterosexuality, *machismo* and transphobia in Spanish’), in the words of Daniel Amarelo (2020: 18). The series was created, produced and directed without any institutional support by a team of twenty-three women; of particular note in the context of the 2018 #másmujeres movement which called for more representation of women in the Spanish film industry. The five short episodes of *Monstras* explore feminist sorority and revenge through four friends named Moira, Lea, Pía and Mabel who are hiding out at the flat of another girl named Xulia having carried out a violent act of revenge on a male perpetrator of intimate partner violence. Attracting a niche audience (episode five documenting 4546 views as of August 2022), the series was screened on YouTube immediately following the Spanish government-imposed state of alarm at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in July 2020, made available in a free and accessible streaming format at a time when viewers remained confined to their homes. The setting for most of the series is inside Xulia’s flat, located in the provincial Galician city of Lugo, with outside scenes only appearing again in later episodes through flashbacks to the assault and at the end when the women walk defiantly through the street. The narrative is interspersed with original clips of for example internationally famous cases of sexual misconduct by Plácido Domingo, Harvey Weinstein and Roman Polanski that culminated in #MeToo, the 2016 global feminist movement against sexual harassment, as well as the Sección Femenina (‘Women’s Section’), the women’s Falangist organisation charged with imposing fascist, ultra-Catholic ideals on women during Franco’s dictatorship. This is juxtaposed with clips of footage of the British Suffragette Emily Davison falling in front of the king’s horse and militant feminist rap by artists such as Bad Gyal, Mujeres en

lucha ('Fighting Girls') and *A xustiza pola man* ('Justice By The Hand'). The safe space of the flat is disrupted by the girls watching a shockingly graphic controversial rape scene from Gaspar Noé's *Irréversible* (*Irreversible*), which is precluded with a trigger warning at the beginning of the episode. This serves as a representation of the harmful impact of media as a means to normalise violence, as along with the protagonists the viewer is obliged to watch the images and hear the harrowing sounds of a woman being sexually assaulted. Notably, the audio of the rapist's jeers is dubbed in the hegemonic language of Spanish, jarring in the midst of the conscious use of Galician throughout the series.

Monstras does not by any means represent a clear-cut example of Galician noir, and as an example of radical feminist counter culture it is certainly not promoted as such, yet I argue that it evokes elements of the genre through its dark aesthetic, focus on mystery and lawlessness, the struggle between the individual and society and an impending sense of anxiety and claustrophobia. Rather than a typical 'whodunnit', the gradually unravelled mystery in this case centres on the motives for the crime, a ploy that Javier Sánchez Zapatero incidentally identifies in the work of Galician crime writer Suso de Toro (2014: 811). The noir trope of the dangerous femme fatale, which has had a far reaching influence on the filmic depiction of violent women (Neroni 2005: 21), is reconfigured as a figure of empowerment and sorority through the depiction of a community of women who defy heteropatriarchal norms, their transgression and sexuality celebrated rather than condemned as in traditional Hollywood narratives (Staiger 1995). The series in fact decisively undermines the mainstream noir genre through its alternative, women-centred focus, predominantly interior setting and increasingly defiant tone, with a mystery told from the perspective of the perpetrators of an activism-driven crime that corresponds to the association of noir with social and political change in the Spanish state since the Franco regime (Davies 2019: 210). Despite having been relatively invisibilised in Spain at large (Zecchi 2014: 9-10; Feenstra, Gimeno Ugalde, Saringen 2015: 27), women's filmmaking is beginning to gain traction in Galicia (Ledo Andión 2019: 11), though there continues to be gender bias in the audiovisual sector (Carballal et al. 2021). Initiatives such as *Monstras* counteract the patriarchal conditioning of mainstream media. Like the documentary filmmaking of Adriana Páramo Perez explored in this issue (2022), the in many ways controversial work of Corentena Producións demonstrates how in women's cinematography 'the gaze devolves into a point of view shaped by ideology and so becomes contestable, open to challenge, debate and rethinking' (Nair and Gutiérrez-Albilla 2013: 7). *Monstras* in many ways complies with Jennifer Cooke's assertion of 'audacity' as a key feature of feminist life-writing, in that its thematic and stylistic content represents 'a public challenge to conventions, characterised by boldness and a disregard for decorum, protocol, or moral restraints' (2020: 1-2), taking a 'killjoy' approach to social change through violent retaliation. Corresponding to the strategies identified by bell hooks with regard to Black filmmakers working in a context of white supremacy who 'feel compelled to assume responsibility for producing resisting images' (2009: 88), opposition to hegemony is often identifiable in Galician

and women-led audiovisual cultures produced from within the patriarchal Spanish state.

By way of stark contrast to *Monstras*, *O sabor das margaridas* (2018-20) is a two-season television venture that also represents a first of sorts, as the first Galician-language show to be broadcast by Netflix following its initial release by Televisión de Galicia, and now at the forefront of the recent wave of Galician noir. Subtitled in multiple languages, the show has achieved international renown, making the top ten of the most streamed foreign-language series in the UK and Ireland within a month of its release (El País, 2020; The Guardian, 2021) and drawing attention to Galicia and its language far beyond its borders. Whilst season one was created for local television with a modest budget supported by the Galician government, Netflix provided a much larger budget for the second season which is targeted at both local and international audiences. Despite the competing interests involved in producing such a series, its success has not only brought international attention to Galician-language cultural production, but also contributes to the normalisation of the unstable Galician audiovisual sector, which has to constantly compete with hegemonic film industries. In contrast to the interior setting of the web series, *O sabor das margaridas* capitalises on panning shots of often recognisable rural landscapes of inland Galicia. Centred on the investigations of female police officer Eva Mayo (alias Rosa Vargas), the narrative of season one begins when she arrives in the small Galician town of Murias to investigate the disappearance of the teenager Marta Labrada and ends up uncovering a child prostitution ring in which multiple sectors of the local community are complicit. It later comes to light that Eva is also looking into the unsolved murder of her own eponymous sister Margarida (whose name, meaning Daisy, appropriately symbolises the innocence and purity [La Vanguardia 2021]) in the town some years prior. Similarities can be drawn with the American cult thriller series *Twin Peaks* (1990-91), which also involves an outsider detective investigating the disappearance of a young woman in a small rural town that turns out to be embroiled in a prostitution ring. Patriarchal violence is portrayed as hidden yet rife in the community, reinforcing the at times gratuitous 'woman as victim' narrative, with numerous men in the local community preying on young girls, paying for sex, or directly involved in the sex trafficking industry, feeding into the enduring prevalence of sexual violence as a form of audiovisual entertainment (Oliver 2016: 95). In season one this is witnessed for example through teenager Rebeca who is being groomed by her schoolteacher and is a victim of revenge porn whilst her *guardia civil* (policeman) father Mauro is complicit in the child prostitution ring under investigation. The portrayal of masculinity is however nuanced through characters such as the noble detective Alberte who strives for gender equality and respects Eva's authority, unlike Mauro, who undermines her. In contrast to most of her male colleagues, Eva is portrayed as highly competent and committed to the case, and succeeds in putting the culprits in jail, recovering Marta's recording of underage sex parties as evidence. She is herself however also arrested for kidnapping and stealing the identity of another police officer named Rosa Vargas, a contradiction

of her agenda to help other women, conforming to Janet McCabe's caution regarding the conflicted role of noir women detectives, for 'how these sleuths solve crime, often compromising other inequalities to secure a conviction, reveals uneasiness in the power of the law to protect women as well as how female bodies are disciplined as a consequence' (2015: 31). Both seasons of the show are replete with references to Dante Alighieri's *Divina commedia* that signpost themes of human weakness, descent into sin, and the impending doom of noir. Each episode takes its name from extracts of the cantos included as epigraphs in the original Italian (notable given the show's commitment to linguistic authenticity) which correspond to the purgatory of sex trafficking.

Similar to the quest that drives the plot of *Monstras*, *O sabor das margaridas* responds to mainstream feminist concerns through its focus on a female detective who enacts the rape revenge trope to counter gender-based violence. The series highlights the 'profound connections between capital accumulation and violence against women' (Phipps 2020: 16) through capitalism's endorsement of economic and sexual violence in the sex trafficking industry, as explained by Castro and Reimóndez:

O feito de que moitas mulleres teñan que prostituírse para sobrevivir fai que se considere tamén una forma de violencia económica, pero é sobre todo o carácter simbólico da prostitución (é dicir, o feito de que a sociedade considere normal que un home poida merca una muller ou crianza para o seu pracer sexual) o que fai que sexa considerada una forma de violencia extrema contra as mulleres.

(2013: 159)

The fact that many women have to sell their bodies to survive means that it is also a form of economic violence, but above all it is the symbolic essence of prostitution (that is, the fact that society considers it normal that a man can buy a woman or child for his sexual pleasure) that means that it is considered a form of extreme violence against women.

Yet this sexual and economic violence is also normalised through its portrayal in the series itself. In opposition to underground, woman-centred approach of the feminist web series, *O sabor das margaridas* ultimately undermines its own critique of the commercialisation of women's bodies by capitalising on the eroticisation of sexual violence for patriarchal aesthetics and profitable ratings. This reflects how capitalism perpetuates racist heterosexist norms by appropriating social movements such as feminism for its own ends (Banet-Weiser 2018).

I turn now to closer analysis of the conflicting ways in which *O sabor das margaridas* and *Monstras* depict women resisting the patriarchal status quo, to a greater or lesser extent engaging in queer resistance by adopting 'una posición, política y provisional, un conjunto de prácticas y saberes que desafían los saberes y las identidades normativas' ('a political and provisional position, a collection of

practices and knowledges which challenge normative knowledges and identities') (Suárez Briones 2019: 20). As women representing the periphery who work against authority, the protagonists of *Monstras* strive for a decolonial approach to patriarchal violence enabled by the state, engaging in 'a form of struggle and survival, an epistemic and existence-based response and practice' (Mignolo and Walsh 2018: 17). The web series satirises the hypocrisy and apathy of governments through a clip of right-wing Galician President Alberto Núñez Feijóo holding a minute's silence for victims of gender-based violence. As with various examples in *O sabor das margaridas*, the anti-establishment stance of the *Monstras* girls is apparent in their criminality, which is juxtaposed with a clip embedded in the narrative of Britain's first female prime minister Margaret Thatcher discussing the need for 'orderly freedom' to prevent a 'tyrannical state'. Miriam Couceiro Castro emphasises that 'o feminismo ten o deber de criticar un mundo que non foi deseñado para nós, visibilizar as realidades existentes, abrazalas e intentar humanizar cada espazo' ('feminism has the duty to criticise a world that was not designed for us, to visibilise existing realities, embrace them and attempt to humanise each space') (2021: 20), and indeed the visibility and humanisation of militant women are key concerns here. The characterisation of the protagonists deconstructs patriarchal two-dimensional stereotypes of villainous women as hysterical or promiscuous, as in the case of the traditional noir femme fatale, whilst complicating the 'masculinisation' of women who commit violence which is typical of 'culture's struggle to safeguard its values' (Roche and Maury 2020b: 15). Patriarchal associations between femininity, passivity and nature are reclaimed through the dissidence of the self-professed eponymous female 'monsters' (with the feminine ending in the Galician conspicuously reclaiming their gender). Upon deciding to commit an act of violent retaliation, the women howl elatedly like wolves, perhaps an allusion to the feminist reclaiming of the 'wolfpack' during mass feminist protests mobilised in response to the 2017 'Wolfpack' rape trial (Abrisketa and Abrisketa 2020: 932). Tapping into patriarchal fears of the 'madwoman' trope by mimicking an animal associated with violence and death in traditional Galician culture (Garrido González 2020: 195), these women 'monsters' embrace the wild, animalistic and indeed, rural, elements of their femininity in their rebellion against systems of oppression:

-Para os medios e a sociedade imos ser monstras.

-E quen non ten medo ás monstras?

[-For the media and society we are going to be monsters.

-And who isn't afraid of monsters?']

In this, they adhere to Jack Halberstam's theorisation of the monster as the antithesis to dominant ideology, as they draw attention to the unthinkable and the abhorrent, namely violent feminist retaliation, for 'the monster always represents the disruption of categories, the destruction of boundaries, and the presence of impurities and so we

need monsters and we need to recognize and celebrate our own monstrosities' (1995: 27). Indeed, the figure of the monster has been reappropriated by feminist and queer scholars such as Donna Haraway, who argues that 'monsters have always defined the limits of community in Western imaginations' (1991: 180), reimagining the very concept of human. For Margrit Shildrick, the monster represents an 'other' that reflects 'the leaks and flows, the vulnerabilities in our own embodied being' (2002: 4). In the face of gendered preconceptions about acts of violence, the self-professed 'monstrosity' of these women is paradoxically humanising, in a queer feminist reclaiming of taboo issues.

REVISUALISING 'FEMININITIES'

The multifaceted and complex characterisation of the five female individuals in *Monstras* reflects a nuanced spectrum of 'femininities'. In contrast to the glamorous, typically 'feminine' depiction of many of the female characters in *O sabor das margaridas* and its sexualised focus on women's bodies which even features in the credits, the viewer of *Monstras* is exposed to 'gritty', taboo elements of womanhood, such as menstruation, flatulence, defaecation, vibrators, and unshaven armpits, that patriarchal society has sought to control. The protagonists jokingly parody patriarchal expectations for women to wear clean underwear in case they come to harm by commenting on their need to wear it in case of arrest. At a climactic point of tension when details of the assault appear on the news, Lea remarks that she has just got her period, undermining the silencing and invisibilisation of women's bodily functions. The girls are often shown taking on stereotypically 'masculine' poses, for example sitting with their legs wide, smoking and sharing a joint, exuding a 'female masculinity'; societal indifference to which 'has sustained the complex social structures that wed masculinity to maleness and to power and domination' (Halberstam 1998: 2). This is highlighted through inclusion of a famous clip of the boxer Barbara Buttrick, who defied patriarchal convention in the 1940s and 1950s as female world-champion in the male-dominated sport of boxing, remarking that 'girls aren't the delicate flowers they used to be'. These women do however also celebrate the typically 'feminine', putting on face masks and nail polish, playing dress-up, dancing, cooking together and doing the washing up, even as this perpetuates the associations between womanhood and the domestic or the aesthetic. The four who carry out the assault wear 'heavy', punk clothing, with colourfully dyed hair and piercings which speaks to alternative, queer subcultures and rebellion against the system. Yet they also wear tops displaying global brands such as the stereotypically 'girly' Hello Kitty and the Spice Girls, known for their 'girl power' mantra, as well as local cultural allusions that point to a commitment to the Galician nation, with t-shirts displaying the English-language version of the Galician supermarket chain Gadis' community-building phrase 'Let's Live Like Galicians' (see Liñeira 2022 in this issue), as well as the logo of popular local beer Estrella Galicia and the name of Pub Quirós, a bar in Rodeiro. Pía is visibly judged by a nosey, Spanish-speaking neighbour for wearing a t-shirt emblazoned with a reference to

counterculture icon Bob Marley. Xulia, who was not involved in the assault, is arguably codified as the typically 'girl-next-door' archetype due to her sweet, hospitable nature and more stereotypically 'feminine' style of dress. However, she too defies social mores of femininity - her PhD is in a (male-dominated) STEM field, she openly discusses her former sexual partners, she answers the door holding a carving knife (for protection) and at the end of the series, she defiantly picks her nose in front of a man who verbally harasses her in the street, undermining patriarchal authority. It should be noted that the protagonists are all young, commercially attractive, slim (with the exception of the abuse survivor Lara), cis-gendered and able-bodied white females, even if aspects of their alternative, gothic aesthetic do not conform to patriarchal ideals of feminine beauty.

Eva Mayo in *O sabor das margaridas* in many ways also complies with the 'monstrous' disruption of categories, as a female outsider who defies rampant misogyny and corruption to bring down a human trafficking ring, a feminist killjoy in that she is a 'spoilsport because she refuses to convene, to assemble' (Ahmed 2010: 65). By resorting to physical violence and sexual manipulation in her indefatigable quest for justice, the character renegotiates gendered tropes of noir, 'a genre in which violence is the central trope of relationships between the sexes and in which the transgressive woman, as femme fatale or female dick, has long served as a register for anxieties about female sexuality and power' (Mizejewski 2005: 125). From within, she disrupts the police force and the justice system which can be read as representations of the neoliberal, patriarchal order; she challenges the lack of arrests made for crimes related to gender-based violence and exposes police corruption, showing how challenging sexual exploitation 'is ultimately to challenge male privilege on every level, from the political to the personal' (Penny 2022: 23). Eva's dominance is apparent from the outset, as the very first episode begins with a tracking shot of her back in her Guardia civil jacket, flanked by two male subordinates. As a successful young female detective from outside the small-town community, she poses a threat to local police officer Mauro, who is unable to trust her, with good reason as it turns out that he is complicit in the trafficking ring. She therefore adheres to the double bind of the feminist killjoy in that 'when you expose a problem you pose a problem' (Ahmed 2017: 37). When her male colleagues question her actions, she asserts her authority by responding angrily 'é o meu caso e lévoa como quero, informo do que considero conveniente' ('it's my case and I'll investigate it as I wish, I'll inform you about what I consider necessary'). Mauro's wife harbours unfounded suspicions that her husband is having an affair with Eva, her jealousy compounding stereotypes of women competing for male attention. Eva's portrayal as a strong female character is nevertheless somewhat undermined by her acute psychological issues (which are melodramatically heightened in season two), for although this be considered humanising and corresponds to the noir motif of the troubled detective, it reinforces stereotypes about female hysteria. Typical cinematographic portrayals of violent women as 'desatadas e incontroladas' ('unhinged and out of control') (García Cid,

2022) are parodied in *Monstras* through the lyrics of feminist rap, 'unas locas andan sueltas' ('some crazy women are on the loose'). For her part, meanwhile, the character of Marta Labrada in season one of *O sabor das margaridas* also heeds Ahmed's call for feminists to be 'willful' (2010: 64), in that she has been blackmailing her wealthy male clients for money with recordings of their sexual encounters. Like the 'monsters' of the Corentena webseries, she proactively goes against the grain, even where this involves risk, though she falls into the trappings of patriarchal stereotypes relating to women's deviousness and promiscuity. Rebeca describes her as not well liked 'polas pintas. Porque trapichea, porque Marta vai sempre ao seu. Pasa de todo sen importarlle un carallo que digan o pensan dela, e iso mórame moito' ('because of the way she looks. Because she deals, because Marta does her own thing. She doesn't give a damn what anyone says thinks or thinks about her, and I think that's really cool'), admiring her independence and rebellion in the face of patriarchal violence. Marta's 'audacity' (Cooke 2020) provides the evidence that brings down the trafficking ring, however this leads to her death, reflecting the paradox of representations of women in popular visual culture:

we see independent girls who don't care what anyone thinks, making their own way in a violent world. These tough girls seemingly provide new role models for fighting back. And yet, they are continually punished for fighting back. These hunting, hunted girls are both predators and prey. They are both brutal and brutalized.

(Oliver 2016: 111)

Challenging patriarchal violence in this series is fundamentally shown to come at a high price.

QUEER FEMINISM

Defying the apparent lack of Galician audiovisual production which challenges sexual and gender normativity (Colmeiro 2017: 138-39), the rejection of the heteropatriarchal order inherent to queer feminism is reflected in both series through non-normative identities and sexualities which 'contaminan y cuestionan los esencialismos y los universalismos' ('contaminate and question essentialisms and universalisms') (Gracia Trujillo 2022: 25). In both examples, 'o non normativo resiste, e crea coa súa palabra, coa súa mera existencia, mundos posibles' ('the non-normative resists, and creates with its words, with its mere existence, new worlds') (Suárez Briones 2020: 34), though this is less effective in *O sabor das margaridas* than in *Monstras*. Numerous paradoxical allusions to Catholicism throughout *O sabor das margaridas* counteract the omnipresent evidence of sin, emphasising the hypocrisy of organised religion and the neoliberal heteropatriarchal order. The events in the first season occur during the Pope's visit to Santiago, which is symbolic given that as the head of the Catholic church he represents a figure of heteropatriarchal masculine authority over female and

queer bodies. In an ambivalent example of queer feminist resistance, Marta's friend Rafa initially withholds information from the police to protect Marta because she has a crush on her. In a somewhat stereotypical representation of queer identity as a threat to Christian morality, she is part of a group of women devil worshippers who rebel against the establishment by stealing from the local church. Her murder at the hands of a sadistic pervert towards the end of season one only serves to reinforce the heterosexist violence the series successfully challenges in other respects. In a clichéd representation of the small-town community, meanwhile, the detective Eva can to an extent be considered a queer feminist character who causes suspicion as an unattached, childless, career-driven woman. Her more typically 'masculine' characteristics and unisex apparel (leather jacket, jeans and boots) conform to the patriarchal association of female characters with masculine attributes in police dramas (Carballal et al. 2021: 145). Just like Marta Labrada, Eva uses sex to her advantage, playing into patriarchal tropes of the devious woman stereotypically using her 'feminine wiles' to manipulate men, she drugs a client so she can go undercover and avails of erotic strangulation and torture to obtain information from a collaborator. Yet by dressing in provocative, figure-hugging outfits when she disguises herself a client, an escort and a member of hotel housekeeping staff respectively, the character plays to the male gaze that can be said to solidify a show's commercial success and 'builds the way she [woman] is to be looked at into the spectacle itself', as proclaimed by Laura Mulvey in her landmark essay (1975: 26). Under the guise of a lesbian encounter, Eva obtains information from sex worker Ana (who in an example of cultural othering is Galician but feigns being Mexican to appear more 'exotic' to clients), despite the surveillance of Ana's pimp. By its very nature, their relationship is subversive even as it conforms to mainstream tastes, as the Spanish-speaking barmaid Samanta comments: 'En un pueblo pequeño como este es poco frecuente' ('In a small town like this it's not common'), though this serves to perpetuate stereotypes about the invisibility of queerness in rural communities (see Barreto 2020). The erotic charge between the pair plays to the heteropatriarchal conditioning of same-sex desires, as Ana seductively passes Eva key information that leads her to the men involved in trafficking. When Ana suggests that they have sex, Eva replies 'Non. Non é o meu' ['No. it's not my thing'], conforming to the heterosexist status quo though she is in fact revealed to be queer through gratuitous sex scenes with a female journalist in season two. Suspicion regarding the validity of Eva's liaison with Ana ultimately leads to the latter being killed.

In *Monstras*, meanwhile, the homoerotically charged bond between the girls, alluded to by the LGBTQ symbolism of Xulia's unicorn 'onsie', evokes the queer resistance inherent in decolonial feminism, as described by Ochy Curiel: 'el deseo de repeler ese virus colonial patriarcal se conecta con intentar repeler al virus colonial cisheteropatriarcal (sic) que nace y continúa gracias a esa misma violencia colonial' ('the desire to repel that patriarchal colonial violence is connected with trying to repel the cisheteropatriarchal colonial virus that is born and continues to exist thanks to that

same colonial violence') (Curiel and Falconí Trávez 2021: 112). This is portrayed for example through scenes of the girls in bed together that feature on the series promotional poster, as well as sharing a bath, undressing together and communally engaging in the intimate, phallic act of brushing teeth. These images of women being comfortable and indeed vulnerable in each other's presence are a far cry from the microaggressions and violence we see associated with any glimpses of men, whose faces are never shown on camera. They read aloud from the Oscar Wilde novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891), which notoriously caused scandal in Victorian Britain for its unconventional, homoerotic themes. The emphasis on mutual admiration, self-confidence and body positivity challenges heteronormative competition between women and societal judgement of the female body: 'gústame o meu nariz [...] gústanme as túas tetas' ('I like my nose... I like your tits'). This contrasts with the misogynist abuse and commodification of the female body depicted through doll symbolism in both series; a close-up of a naked Barbie doll discarded and covered in mud near the very beginning of *Monstras* and the kleptomaniac Bernabé 'selling' Eva a doll's head in *O sabor das margaridas*. Xulia and Lea 'twerk' for their own entertainment rather than the male gaze, wearing infantile cartoon pyjamas which destabilise associations of sexiness. The sexual tension between Lea and Pía is established early on as they sit beside each other on the sofa and Lea stares erotically at a beauty spot on Pía's back, the other girls egging them on by chanting their rhyming names. The artistic Pía sketches two hands intertwined in a clenched fist that represents feminist activism, foreshadowing how she and Lea clasp hands before they share their first kiss, one of the climactic moments in the series during which the camera pans over a painting of the feminist reimagining of the Medusa, smoking with her snake's teeth bared in attack. Their relationship celebrates what Halberstam theorises as wildness, 'the orders of being that colonial authority comes to tame' (2020: 3-4), but unlike the overt objectification relating to same sex desire in *O sabor das margaridas*, the camera focuses on the observer rather than the observee, lingering on Pía as she watches Lea dancing. The pair later have sex (though this more subtly alluded to than the stylised, revealing sex scenes in *O sabor das margaridas*, with the camera focusing on Lea's face as she is in the throes of pleasure) and are last seen arm in arm in Santiago de Compostela's Praza de Cervantes ('Cervantes Square'), proclaiming their homosexuality in an iconic public Galician space. Heteronormative ideals of male-female relationships are also undermined in the web series by Lara taking out a restraining order and then leaving her abusive partner and Xulia laughing about her failed past relationships with men. Mabel is seen making fun of male impotence by parroting a man's voice, mimicking him by derogatively speaking Spanish as opposed to Galician in a negative association of the dominant language with masculinity. Like Coirentena's short film *As mulleres salvaxes*, the title of which literally translates as 'The Wild Women', *Monstras* revindicates the queer feminist 'wildness' of women's emotions, desires and experiences in defiance of heteropatriarchal normativity and control. Despite the subversive and non-normative sexualities explored in *O sabor das margaridas*, however, female queer

characters Ana and Rafa in season one die at the hands of men, whilst in season two, Eva's female love interest is revealed to be complicit in sex trafficking, which undermines the queer feminist potential of the show.

FEMINIST SORORITY

Notably the women in both shows carry out acts of violence as a means of revenge in solidarity with other women. The exclusively female-oriented domestic space in *Monstras* is presented as a shared refuge from heteropatriarchal influence and masculine authority, showing how 'if we want to undermine the regimes of power that oppress and threaten to dominate us, we have to cultivate a new way of life that stands counter to them and eventually that is just other to them' (McWhorter 1999: 190). Such an approach is complemented for example by the inclusion of footage of a feminist-led event paying homage to 'as Mariás' ('the Marias'), female symbols of unconventionality and resistance in Santiago de Compostela during the Franco dictatorship. The supportive, intimate bond between the group of women, which recalls the feminist solidarity between a group of women discussing sexual harassment in Xiana do Teixeiro's 2018 Galician-language film *Tódalas mulleres que coñezo* ('All The Women I Know'), speaks to Marta Pérez Pereiro's work on the potential empowerment of the non-familial 'tribu' for identities which fall outside the dominant framework in Galician cinema: 'A experiencia persoal é así o punto de partida para contar historias de colectivos que non fan parte dos grandes relatos, senón que, por contra, se presentan como microrrelatos nos que a mostración do íntimo adquire unha cualidade emancipatoria' ('Personal experience is in this way the point of departure for telling stories about groups that don't make up the great stories, but rather, are presented as micro-stories in which the portrayal of the intimate acquires an emancipatory quality') (Pérez Pereiro 2019: 214). The women support one another; when Lea asks 'se saíu todo ben que hostias facemos aquí?' ('if everything turned out ok, what the fuck are we doing here?'), Pía replies 'eu creo que estar xuntas' ('I think we're just being together'), emphasising the value of feminist solidarity, 'son unha muller moi independente e tal, pero estes días con vós...' ('I'm a very independent woman and all, but these days with you guys...'). They run the household as a team, dancing, having fun and singing the viral internet song 'ayúdame que mi casa está sucia' ('help me, my house is dirty') whilst helping each other with typical domestic activities such as cooking and cleaning to defy the isolation and drudgery typical of labour carried out by women, complicating restrictive associations between womanhood and the domestic, private sphere. Problematically, the other girls initially keep Xulia in the dark about why they need a place to crash, though when they do admit their crime to her, she is made complicit through no fault of her own. Initially horrified by the violence, when Xulia finds out that the attack was carried out against a perpetrator of gender-based violence, she remarks 'cámbiao todo' ('that changes everything'), asserting feminist solidarity with abused women. She refers to the other girls 'as furias do século 21' ('the furies of the twenty-first century') in reference to the

female gods in Greek mythology who enacted revenge on male wrongdoers, and throws a party for the five of them in appreciation. Moira, who has a criminal record already, takes responsibility to cover for the other girls in case they are arrested by making a confession video: 'a alternativa a esta condena era unha vida enteira de sumisión' ('the alternative to this sentence was an lifetime of submission'). She embeds activism in the broader struggle for women's rights: 'eu necesariamente me sinto apelada e concernida polo sufrimento de todas as mulleres' ('I feel concerned by the suffering of all women'). The final episode foregrounds the voice of Lara describing to a group of women the graphic physical, sexual and psychological abuse she has been subjected to at the hands of her partner. In a testimony which serves as the motor for the other women beating him up, she accuses the authorities and society at large of their outright complicity in violence against women and the protection of male abusers:

el xuroume que me mataría cando denunciarei. Eu sei que me vai matar. Ninguén, nin a xuíza, nin a policía entenden isto [...] É el ou son eu. Nin reinsertión, nin hostias. Que se vai reinsertar nesta sociedade? Nesta sociedade misóxina? Vai ser esta sociedade que lle diga que está mal violar e matar as mulleres?

[he swore he would kill me when I reported him. I know he's going to kill me. No one, not the judge or the police understand this [...] It's me or him. No rehabilitation, for fucks sake. He's going to be rehabilitated in this society? In this misogynist society? It's going to be this society that tells him that it's wrong to rape and kill women?]

Once there is no longer risk of prosecution and the girls leave the flat, one of them the Galician-language message 'vémonos na rúa' ('see you in the street') on the mirror in lipstick, symbolically reclaiming the street for all women through use of an implement stereotypically associated with femininity. They return to the street in black hoodies and doc martens, evoking soldier-like militancy as they stride in sync to the soundtrack of Sara Hebe's aptly titled feminist Spanish/English-language rap manifesto 'Fck the Power'.

Female sorority is also at the heart of *O sabor das margaridas* in the restless determination of Eva to find the culprits involved in sex trafficking. Her actions are motivated by finding out what happened to her dead sister, and latterly to avenge the death of Ana and save Rebeca and other exploited girls. Enacting a feminist ethics of care, she sets out to sabotage the system which has failed to protect and achieve justice for women, for 'politics to end sexual violence needs to undo the structures that sustain it' (Phipps 2020: 166). Unlike in *Monstras* however, the women in *O sabor das margaridas* are constantly punished for their rebellion and independence. Eva is an outsider to both the police force and the local community who collaborates instead with marginalised sex workers, following the tradition of detectives in Galician crime

fiction as 'peripheral to the periphery' (King 2019: 126). She gains the co-operation of men such as a client who hacks the dark web, but also relies on vulnerable women to help her. When resisting patriarchal oppression, individual women face different risks relating to the characteristics of class, race, sexuality and national identity (Boyce Kay and Banet-Weiser 2019: 607). In contrast to Eva's privilege in terms of race, class and employment status, Cuban immigrant Samanta is a racialised former sex worker who is verbally abused by her boss, her boyfriend and thugs in the street. She therefore embodies the link between racist capitalist exploitation and patriarchal violence (Phipps 2020: 161; Vergès 2021: 5) and the 'matrix of domination' (Hill Collins 2000: 18) faced by female, immigrant sex workers of colour. In hegemonic audiovisual culture it may be assumed that just the inclusion of racialised characters is enough to counter racism (hooks 2009: 92) when this in fact serves to perpetuate problematic stereotypes, for as N. Michelle Murray explains in her work on the cultural representation of immigrant domestic workers in Spain, 'immigrant women find themselves marked as different within a culture that negotiates its own history of difference, along with a postcolonial angst that has been an undeniable feature of European nationalisms in the twenty-first century' (2018:17). Samanta is the only Spanish-speaking character in the first season of *O sabor das margaridas*, her Cuban accent drawing attention to her immigrant identity. This is in spite of the fact that actress Yelena Molina speaks Galician (Yelena Molina, 2016). Although she is 'othered', Samanta shows feminist agency as she looks after other young sex workers and rescues Marta when she finds her being held captive in her boyfriend's outhouse, at great risk to her own safety. Meanwhile, despite being harassed and exploited throughout the series, Mauro's teenage daughter Rebeca also tries to undermine authority and help other girls, for example by defying her father and refusing to hand over the recording which proves his guilt. As Kelly Oliver reminds us, such popular depictions of tenacious young women fighting back against oppression nonetheless indulge in and therefore normalise their suffering: 'while these films feature tough girls who can fight off their attackers and protect themselves, they also contribute to our acceptance of assault' (2016: 18). Such is the case for sex worker Ana who puts her life at risk to save trafficked minors and avenge the death of her friend by passing information to Eva:

Ana: Hai poucas cousas na miña vida das que estou orgullosa e isto é unha delas. Por primeira vez sinto que estou facendo algo ben.

Eva: Ana, isto é perigoso.

Ana: Eu sei. E non vou marchar ata que colles o culpable, e paga polo que fixo. Débolle a Erika.

[Ana: There are few things in my life that I am proud of, and this is one of them. For the first time I feel like I am doing something right.

Eva: Ana, this is dangerous.

Ana: I know. And I'm not going to leave until you find the person responsible, and he pays for what he did. I owe it to Erika.]

This leads to Ana's tragic murder (one of the many examples of the fatality of women in the show) which motivates Eva to work harder to save other girls, complying with the typical portrayal of women's aggression in commercial cinema as a response to acute loss or trauma (Oliver 2016: 114).

VIOLENT WOMEN

Rage provoked by trauma evokes the wave of feminist anger in the wake of the #MeToo movement, an example of the productivity of anger explored in black feminist thought. In discussing the potential of women's rage as a means for change, Audre Lorde has famously declared that: 'Every woman has a well-stocked arsenal of anger potentially useful against those oppressions, personal and institutional, which brought that anger into being. Focused with precision it can be a powerful source of energy serving progress and change' (1984: 127). Of course, how anger is experienced, articulated and acted upon relates to social privilege such as that of the main characters in these series, and is contingent on factors relating to intersections such as race, class, culture and health (Chemaly 2018). While the titles of the *Monstras* episodes, 'Pánico' ('Panic'), 'Culpa' ('Guilt'), 'Amor' ('Love'), 'Euforia' ('Euphoria'), 'Odio' ('Hate'), reclaim the patriarchal suppression of emotions as well as the stereotypical representation of violent women as overly emotional (García Cid, 2022), in *O sabor das margaridas* Eva's anger at Ana's death catalyses her quest for justice. The protagonists in both series capitalise on their anger to resist, defying patriarchal appropriation of women's emotional responses (Boyce Kay and Banet-Weiser 2019: 607) and contesting stereotypes about Galician as well as women's passivity. Ahmed reiterates however that 'feminists are not calling for violence. We are calling for an end to the institutions that promote and naturalize violence' (2017: 253), yet the women in both series defy traditional gendered stereotypes of passivity, care and conformity by enacting rage-fuelled violence in response to patriarchal oppression, a nod to the blurring between right and wrong that is typical of noir. The gendered depiction of violent women in cinema, often confined within fictional genres such as noir, exposes the dominance of heteropatriarchal norms (Roche and Maury 2020b: 3). While violence committed by men tends to be justified or expected, women who commit violence 'are challenging, *difficult* subjects who undermine some of the most entrenched gender norms of Western culture' (Loreck 2016: 4), their violence subjected to intense patriarchal conditioning unlike that of men (Roche and Maury 2020a: 332). The soundtrack of *Monstras* includes Spanish feminist rap group IRA ('ANGER')'s 'Mantenlo patriarcal' ('Keep it patriarchal'), with lyrics 'maleducadas que se han vuelto muy violentas' ('rude girls who have turned very violent') which emphasise the sexism surrounding women's violence. The rape revenge trope is further enhanced in season two, as Eva orchestrates the mass poisoning of fifty-two male paedophiles at a sex party in the season finale. Notably, the feminist potential of Eva's actions in both seasons is undermined by the fact that she physically intimidates innocent women who stand in her way. Indeed, in a twist on the typical noir resolution,

season one ends with the revelation that she has ruthlessly held captive an innocent fellow female police officer in order to steal her identity and pursue the case. Further limiting feminist retribution, the male pervert who tortures and kills Rafa remains at large, untouched by the investigation.

In *Monstras*, on the other hand, the women's violence is directed exclusively towards one man who is a known abuser of their friend, though their actions reflect the productivity of anger and stand for a broader commitment to women's rights. The ethos of the series is especially poignant given that it was screened at a time when women were confined at home with their abusers, whilst convictions for related crimes in Galicia fell to an all-time low (Arias 2021). Indeed, the tagline 'o heteropatriarcado é unha pandemia' ('the heteropatriarchy is a pandemic') (Corentena Producións) on the website of the collective which created the series equates systemic inequalities relating to gender and sexuality with the global health crisis of COVID-19. Xulia's palpable fear at the sound of her doorbell ringing in the middle of the night immediately evokes the constant threat of violence faced by women even in their own homes. In a flashback to the revenge assault, we see the girls in a low-angle night-time shot kicking the unnamed man, who is out of shot. This focus on the women subverts the mediatic focus on the victim in violent crimes against women and reclaims the night-time street for women's safety. This is followed by a close-up of Lea's masked face spitting at him, 'tódolos días cortaremosche a polla e volveremosche a coser' ('every day we will cut off your dick and sew it back on'), in a challenge to patriarchal violence through symbolic castration. Their militancy is symbolically mirrored when playing chess – when one of the girls comments 'ninguen é imprescindible' ('no one is vital') in relation to grandmaster Kasparov's famous and significantly gendered queen sacrifice, another reminds her that he was beaten by 26 year old woman Judit Polgar. One of the girls tells the other off for using 'tenedor', the Spanish word for fork, in a game of word association; she responds with the word 'terrorista' (terrorist), evoking militant retaliation against Spanish imperialism. Inviting the viewer's discomfort regarding women's violence (Loreck 2016) which the director García Cid explores in her award-winning video essay on the topic (2022), the narrative is interspersed with clips of convicted female murderers; the German anti-capitalist Ulrike Meinhof and American serial killer Aileen Wuornos, who represents both a victim and perpetrator of extreme violence. Other allusions to women's violent revenge in *Monstras* include the reference when the girls play charades to *Kill Bill* (2003), the Hollywood movie the plot of which involves a woman defending herself and her unborn child, and the soundtrack of Tremenda Jauría 'Si yo me voy, me voy matando' ('If I leave, I'll leave killing'). By taking the law into their own hands, the women are arguably perpetuating the violence they seek to challenge. Yet unlike in *O sabor de margaridas*, and in a reflection of the show's ethos, the violence carried out by the women in *Monstras* turns out not to be fatal, though 'polo menos vivirá con medo' ('at least he will live in fear') as his ex-partner Lara has done until now. Given the gendered nature of violence it is assumed the victim won't admit to the police that he was assaulted by girls. Mirroring the

monster symbolism used by Ana in *O sabor das margaridas* to describe the aggressive predation of the men, 'estamos rodeados de monstros' ('we are surrounded by monsters'), and appropriated by the girls who carry out the attack in *Monstras*, Lara writes to her abuser 'entereime de que os monstros tamén sangrades' ('I found out that you monsters bleed too') on a religious prayer card depicting Christ, challenging Catholic ideals of idyllic marriage, submissive womanhood and noble suffering. The final scene is of Lara in a train station, defiantly and safely leaving behind the setting of her abuse and regaining her independence in a public space. This has only been made possible because of violent retaliation against her ex-partner, given that the law has not managed to protect her. Notably, unlike countless women who have been subjected to abuse, she has the financial means to set out on her own. She turns to look at the camera and removes her sunglasses, symbolically moving from the dark to the light.

CONCLUSION

These contrasting examples of Galician noir audiovisual media can both be considered feminist in that they muddy the patriarchal binary of women's victimhood and men's aggression, drawing attention to the hegemonic sexual politics and socioeconomic systems which facilitate and endorse violence against women and girls. Yet given the vastly different approaches and aims that determine each case study, this is achieved to varying degrees; one is a local TV hit which has evolved into global commercial entertainment, the other a crowd-funded, independent, underground feminist initiative. *Monstras* reconfigures the mainstream category of noir and conforms to the definition of feminist audiovisual production as 'counter-cinema' (Dirse cf. Johnson and Mulvey 2013: 25), succeeding in 'recuperar, re-significar y, de nuevo, hacer circular desde un compromiso compartido' ('recuperating, resignifying and again circulating from a shared commitment') (Ledo Andión 2016: 69) to demonstrate the importance of women's artistic creation, as well as alternative media, in challenging capitalist-driven patriarchal norms of the film industry and society at large. By creating a queer feminist space it allows the women to negotiate their agency on their own terms, while the empowerment of women in *O sabor das margaridas* is made possible only within the parameters of extreme patriarchal control. Despite its progressive focus on feminist sorority between strong female characters with queer and racialised identities working against patriarchal power structures, *O sabor das margaridas* manages to bolster a number of heteropatriarchal tropes, reflecting how conventional film noir succumbs to male desires (Place 1978: 47). As a form of popular culture and product of consumption, the TVG-Netflix series sexualises women's bodies and gives an at times gratuitous and even glamorous depiction of sexual violence, kidnapping, torturing and killing women. This subscription to patriarchal tastes ultimately undermines any politically-conscious message, for 'reveling in the assault of girls and young women on film works to further normalize violence toward girls even as it gives us fantasies of feminist avengers who fight against it' (Oliver

2016: 115). Though Galician noir has made a breakthrough on the international media circuit by foregrounding women's responses to gender-based violence, this is manipulated by commercial pressures and the bid for viewer ratings. Fundamentally, it continues to be in grassroots media where some of the most revolutionary conversations about women's rights are taking place in the Galician cultural sphere.

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