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Natalie Nye

*Elizabethtown College*, nyen@etown.edu

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### Cover Page Footnote

The only changes I made were to the changes in the formatting of the title page and I had to shorten the paper because it went over the page count after I made the changes to the title page. I took out a few words to get it to the correct length, but did not make any major changes to the paper.

## Projection of Social Affairs Through Literature in *Tears in Rain* and

### *Weight of the Heart* by Rosa Montero

Natalie Nye

*Elizabethtown College*

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#### **Abstract**

Rosa Montero developed the books *Tears of Rain* and *Weight of the Heart*, which discuss the social issues in today's society, by using her character development in a futuristic world. Bruna Husky the main character is a techno human that only has 10 years to live. She is in a world where techno's are discriminated against and global warming has dramatically changed the way people live today. Bruna faces issues of finding love and deciding what to do with her limited time on earth. Rosa uses Bruna and the other characters to project the problems of today's society into this futuristic setting. The conclusions on the analysis of the first two books in the series will be presented and how they relate to our current society

*Keywords:* Memory, Death, Corruption, Discrimination, Environment

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#### **Introduction**

Rosa Montero's life as a writer began very early. She was born in 1951 in Madrid. She suffered tuberculosis and had to stay indoors for many years (Ruiza, Fernández, Tamaro). She was finally able to leave the house when she was nine years old, but during her time in quarantine she began to write (García). Throughout her youth she became interested in theater and participated in Madrid theater groups in the seventies (Official Page). She began to study

Psychology at the Complutense University of Madrid before changing to journalism (Official Page). She studied journalism at the Higher School of Journalism in Madrid between 1970 and in 1975 received a Degree in Journalism (Official Website). Today, she is well-known and has received many awards such as the 1981 National Journalism Award, the Madrid Press Association Award 2005, the Spring Novel Award, and continues to write for newspapers regularly (Pratt, Martin, Mack).

Rosa Montero, a famous Spanish journalist and author, uses the imperfect character, Bruna Husky, in her books to demonstrate the struggles and challenges faced in pursuit of a long and satisfied life. In her novels, she demonstrated her perception of the world's daily problems to make a more realistic book for the reader (Grosso).

In this work, I focus on the first two books of her trilogy. The setting of the trilogy is in the future, following the investigations of its protagonist, Bruna Husky, a detective. The trilogy in chronological order, with the year of publication, is: *Tears in Rain* (2011), *Weight of the Heart* (2015), and *The Times of Hate* (2018). In an interview with Grosso, in 2014, Rosa Montero said, when speaking about the first book, “This novel is a bit anomalous within my production,” just before the second novel came out in 2015. While most of her books are contemporary fiction, this trilogy takes place far in the future, yet is one of her most realistic novels in her opinion.

Part of Monteros inspiration for the trilogy was Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* movie from 1982. There are some references to the film, such as:

“One day Yiannis had shown Bruna the mythical old 20th century film where the replicants were first spoken of. It was titled *Blade Runner*. It was a strange and well-intentioned work towards the reps, although it was somewhat irritating: the androids had

little to do with reality and were generally rather stupid, schematic, childish and violent ... there was something deeply moving about the film” (*Tears* 240).

Montero admits that the title of her first novel resembles and even takes a phrase from the film, *Tears in Rain*. Grosso indicates, "From there she takes a fragment in which a replicant accepted his end and assumed that all his memories would be ‘lost in time like *Tears in Rain*’." One cannot distinguish a teardrop compared to a raindrop, and for the replicants they cannot distinguish their memories. It is this idea that Rosa Montero focuses on in her novels and because of that she adopted that quote as the title of her first novel.

### **Analysis**

The setting for both novels is in the future in the year 2109 (Pratt, Martin and Mack). Montero stated about the first of the novels, “This novel, although it takes place in 2109, is one of my most realistic works because it worries about the smallest trifles of daily life. I think I have imagined a world very close to reality” (Grosso). With that, the protagonist detective Bruna Husky, faces many problems and possibilities to overcome them. Bruna is a replicant, also known as rep or techno. Technos are beings that are designed and grown in a factory and can only live for ten years. Due to her limited identity and life, Bruna responded to situations very differently. Within Bruna's experiences, we can see that repeating themes that Montero wants to make memory and death, the environment, and references to the past.

### **Memory and Death**

Montero said, "The main theme of the novel is the greatest tragedy of the human being that consists of coming to this world full of passions and desires and then being devoured by death in a breath" (Grosso). Human life is very short, but for us, sometimes it doesn't appear to be so short. In her first book, Montero emphasizes the short timeframe of Bruna Husky's limited

life. There is an exact quantity for her life: ten years, which changes how Bruna lives. Sometimes it seems that she does not have to care about what she does because everything will end soon. During other occasions, she cares about each moment and lives to the fullest, aware of her demise, the date already marked on her calendar. Has anyone ever asked us if we wanted to know when we are going to die? Would you live differently? For Bruna, the answer is yes.

Bruna cannot escape premature death and she knows it (Pratt, Martin & Mack). Montero described the situation as, "Everything that human beings do is against death, and that includes raising financial empires, invading the neighbor's country to making love and writing a book" (Grosso). She exemplified those human characteristics in her book with Bruna Husky. Husky counts the days and months until her death, and Montero said, "The critical awareness of mortality gives you a more intense perception of life." (Grosso). There are humans who also experience this limited timeframe. For example, when someone is diagnosed and only has a few months to live. Montero wants to show an intense perspective to help people live their lives to the best of their ability.

The opening sentence of the first novel Bruna thought, "She remembered that she was going to die. But not now" (*Tears* 11). Bruna is reminded throughout the novels that she is going to die and more specifically how much more time she has left. Montero shows this by having Bruna countdown in years, months, and days until her death. In the first book the count is, "Four years, three months and twenty-seven days" (29). It continues within the book many more times (38, 71, 211). Not only is she counting repetitively, but it is with a high frequency, to the point where it is almost every day. The pages continue counting the days left for Bruna: twenty-four, twenty-three, each time closer and closer to death, (38, 71).

The second book continues counting down the same as the first book and in total counts more than twenty times in less than the two months that elapse in the second book. (*Weight* 59). The count began on the first page of the second book with, "three years, ten months, and twenty-one days" (11). The second novel is circular, in that it ended and started with the count, but the emotion is very different on the last page. On the first page, Bruna is thinking how, "she couldn't waste her time on that nonsense" because her lifespan is short. On the last page she said, "And she laughed out loud. It was the first time that Bruna Husky laughed after doing the count ... she thought of a happy heart" (371). At the end of the book she is not concerned; she has come to terms with her reality and is happy because she still has many possessions and good friends.

Despite her optimism on the last page of the second book, the transition from the first page to the last is not easy. Bruna describes her situation as "a person condemned to death" (*Weight* 14) and also explains the difference between time for humans and technos, "two months in the life of a rep equals two years in a human," (25). Bruna thinks that she has to use her time wisely because each second has a great *Weight*. She must value every moment in her life because there is not much time left and she is afraid for when her last day arrives (105). Furthermore, when Bruna told a story to an orphan girl, she wondered, "Do you know what it's like to be constantly persecuted by death?" (*Weight* 172). Bruna explained what this means and projected her feelings of reality into the story. Bruna was learning about herself, because she had to tell it in a way that would not upset the girl, but find a happy ending for the story, and her own life.

When Bruna discovered the identical copies of technos, Nopal, the memoirist who put his childhood memory in Bruna's brain illegally, suggested that she search for the other Merlin. First, Bruna thinks "I am going to dedicate my life to finding him" (*Weight* 288) and then she thinks it's better if she doesn't, and that thread led to the thought, "I don't want to die" and then

she counted her remaining time (*Weight* 288). She doesn't want to die because she cares about her life. She does not want people to waste their life when they have the gift of a life of more than ten years. Montero wanted to show that humans do not live as if we have a short life, and more often we live as if we will never die. Bruna asked the Mathematician who helped her go to Pori, why he was not using his life. She said, "You could live, instead of vegetate" (313), she couldn't understand why someone wanted to waste their life.

Bruna's close experience to death at the end of the second book could be what changed her mind to a more positive outlook. She was close to dying in Finland after her fight with Daniel, but she did not die, she survived (*Weight* 359). Now three years seemed longer than it did before. She said, "I was alive, and I was happy to stay alive" (371).

One of the problems that results from the nearness of death is Bruna's loneliness. One insight into her loneliness is in the first book when Bruna is talking to a psychologist:

We Reps lack that essential bond... We have never been truly unique, truly necessary for anyone... I mean that way that children are necessary for their parents, or parents are necessary for their children. Also, we cannot have children ... and we only live for ten years, which makes forming a stable couple very difficult, or an agony (*Tears* 154).

That describes Bruna's perspective on the difference between reps and humans because the difference is how soon they will die and that distinguishes how they live. She continued to think about the death of her techno boyfriend, Merlin, who died two years before the start of the first book, but his death is still very overwhelming for her. She continued saying, "I want to say that (technos) are not truly important to anyone... You can have friends, even good friends, but even with the best of friends you would not occupy that basic place of belonging to the other. Who is going to worry about what happens to me?" (*Tears* 154). That is one of the deepest

reflections from the first book when she said that technos are, "islands inhabited by only the castaway in the midst of a motley sea of people" (29). Technos could not have the relations that humans have because of how the world was created. Humans have a mother and father and children, but reps do not have them because they were created in a factory.

Bruna feels lonely first for being a rep in general, and second because the only time when she was not lonely was when she was with Merlin, and he died. His death continues to hurt her two years later. Due to this pain, she feels like she should be alone, but at the same time she wants more than loneliness. She has an emotional battle between her subconscious desire to be loved and her conscious desire to avoid the pain she felt from losing Merlin.

Throughout the novels we can see Bruna's attempt to be more open with her emotions, but she is struggling with the fear of suffering like she did when Merlin died. She thinks that because her life is short, it is not worth loving. She thinks that the pain is worse than the time together in happiness. In our world today, people who lose someone sometimes find it very difficult to open up and have another relationship for fear of losing someone else. It seems to her that it is part of being techno. When she is with Yiannis at Olé's bar, he is talking about his new love. But Bruna is not happy for him and dwells on her loneliness (*Tears* 405). Later in the book, when Bruna has Bartolo, an alien pet, she says for the third time that "she would call a protector to take care of him" (180). She always says she was going to get rid of him, but she never did because she actually likes his company at home instead of being alone.

We find out more about Bruna's tendency to feel lonely when we read about Pablo Nopal, the man who inserted his own memories into Bruna's head (which is illegal because all the technos should have made up memories). Nopal has felt alone all his life and wants to find the techno who shares his memories (*Tears* 195,198). He will not be alone because someone, Bruna,

feels the pain of his experiences the same way as him. Montero uses this to explain a bit more why Bruna feels lonely and it is because of her memories of Nopal's bad experiences, such as the murder of his father, and spending time in the basement for punishment as a child (197).

The relationship between Bruna and Nopal also shows that humans feel loneliness just like technos. People want to relate their circumstances to someone else's, and when someone thinks that a series of circumstances has happened to them, but not to anyone else, they feel alone. We are always looking for people who seem similar to us and who can understand us. For Nopal, the desire to have someone like himself, so that he is not alone, is so strong that he takes a risk and loses his job to succeed (*Tears* 195). The company discovered that he illegally implanted his own memories into a techno and fired Nopal.

Also, in *Weight of the Heart*, we can see Bruna's difficulty in being open with people. For example, when she is talking to Lizard about the orphan, she has an aggressive response to Lizard, rejecting him for being part of her life, but Lizard was only trying to help her (*Weight* 59). Bruna does not have the patience to wait for Lizard to share his complete thoughts. It was better for her to say something rude rather than give Lizard a chance to learn about her life and open up to him. In the second book there is a time that Bruna is not alone. It is when she is more like a human than a techno. She realizes she has a twin; a techno exactly like her. Clara, her twin, says that "you are the closest thing to an authentic family that we can have" (280). At that moment, Bruna sees the truth in that statement (280). Now she has someone else and they stay together until Clara dies at the end of the second book.

In addition, Bruna is conflicted over whether to be alone or to have someone in her life. The person for her is Paul Lizard. Bruna wants him to show her a lot of attention and affection but there are still times when she is afraid that she will lose him. An example is when they have

sex and she feels lonelier and questions his love for her. She feels isolated and says that there is "the impossibility of being loved" (107) in her life. In this case, Bruna did not feel loved less; she felt as if the contact was something physical and not emotional for Lizard, but she wanted more than a physical connection.

Despite her desire to be loved, in the beginning of *Tears in Rain*, Bruna talks about her first love with Merlin and how it was a mistake (29). With this situation on her mind, she doesn't want to commit to a new relationship with Lizard. The desire to have someone or to stay alone is seen in our world when someone has lost their love at an age when they don't know how much longer they will have or so they do not have to relive the pain. In Bruna's situation, the person has to decide if the possibility of losing another person is worth it.

The conflict within Bruna is so strong because she continues to grieve over Merlin's death and other couples remind her of him. In Nabokov and Chi's room, their romantic objects put Merlin's memories in her head (*Tears* 232). After being intimate with Lizard, she began to feel more than just the physical sensation. She says, "The little gesture of Lizard had left her defenseless" (330). Her effort to be alone does not work because she starts to feel more for Lizard. After they met, Bruna wanted to find someone that night similar to him, saying, "Maybe, a guy as big as Lizard, a giant human whom he would implore for her android sex" (122).

In *Weight of the Heart*, they grow closer by continuing to work together, and Bruna's desire increases. One day Bruna "tried to seduce him" (*Weight* 96), when they were on the crime scene. She has the feeling that she needs more than something physical: she needs something sentimental. Montero writes "the sentimental need left her bewildered and reducing her to a needy and pathetic creature" (Peso 98). Bruna did not want to feel like this and sometimes

pretended it was not the truth, but she could not control it. The need of all beings is to love and to be loved, although not so much is missing in their life.

### **False Memories**

Lastly, Bruna Husky is fighting for her own identity against her false memory. Montero said “Memory and identity is one of my fundamental themes. Identity is based on memory and our memory - that of all humans - is a lie, an invention. We think we remember things, but in reality, we are constantly reworking them, we always change them as we go” (Grosso). Technos are born at the age of 25 and that is why they do not have childhood memories, but to prevent the problem of technos without normal memories, humans implant false memories in their brains. That exemplifies the idea of humans constructing false memories. In Bruna's case, she has atypical childhood memories because she has the memory of a human named Pablo Nopal. He illegally put his memories into Bruna's brain. His memories are distraught because his youth was very bad with his parents dying and interaction with other abusive family members. Due to the fact Bruna's memories are from a human, they are much more complete than that of a normal techno. This puts Bruna in between a human and a techno.

Due to her mental difficulties, Bruna went to a psychologist every week, but one that is not helpful (*Tears* 151). She doesn't like the psychological because she thinks he doesn't understand the difference between humans and technos. She thinks differently than everyone else. In the second book, she said, "Too human to be techno but disappointingly techno to humans. The loneliness of the monster was absolute" (*Weight* 177), because she does not fit into either group, her loneliness increases. In the second book, Bruna tried to tell a story from her childhood memories, only to realize that she never knew the whole story only the beginning of the story. She never knew because it was Nopal's memory. She became angry for believing her

false memory (71). As Montero said, humans create their memories and, in the future,, they do not remember exactly what happened, except what their mind built this time that may be very different from reality (Stark, Okado, Loftus). Bruna's memory is a hyperbole of the human mind, but it is closer to the truth than many people think.

When Bruna was speaking to the alien and knew that he could read her mind, he explained that he likes to hear what people say because "many times what humans think is not what you later say" (Peso 279). We can see within the book that Bruna often did not say what she thought out of fear or to be politically correct. Humans are afraid of what other humans think of themselves and that is why they do not say everything they think and sometimes lie instead of telling the truth. It can be very simple like saying nothing when someone has food in their teeth, or when someone says they like someone else's clothes, but they do not. Reading that section of the book invites the reader's introspection of their life to see if they had similar experiences.

### **Theme Two: The Environment**

The second theme in the trilogy is the environment and references to the past. Montero explains why she has created a world like this:

The world seen through my novel has a positive balance. If you had explained to someone from 1909 everything that happened - the two world wars, Nazism, Stalinism, the Hiroshima bomb ... - he would have been shocked. But in the 20th century the welfare state has been reached, there have also been many advances in human rights and the consolidation of democracy, among others" (Grosso).

Many of the characteristics of this future world are possibilities for our future depending on what we do in the next one hundred years. The sea level rises and engulfs islands completely. For example, Bangladesh, Venice, and Manhattan do not exist in the future (*Tears* 226). Other

problems resulting from the sea level rising are people dying of hunger, diseases, and violence between people fighting for limited resources that remained on the planet (*Tears* 227). This increase in sea level is with the increase in the world's temperatures melting the glaciers. Despite all the bad things, there are also positives. For example, there is a democratic government governing the entire planet, United States of Earth.

The second book continues to talk about how humans have adapted to live in the new environment. It discusses *lung parks*, where artificial trees produce oxygen more efficiently than natural trees. The oxygen level is depleted, and one has to pay a lot to live in areas with sufficient oxygen (*Weight* 36). There are zones separated at different levels based on air purity (*Weight* 302). There were also changes in what people eat in the future. They ate jellyfish because they infested the oceans, "Humanity basically fed on those filthy bugs" (*Weight* 180).

### **Discrimination**

The novel also represents the real world by showing the discrimination against different beings. Discrimination is a problem that we have faced and continue to face, one which is exemplified in the future in the book. In the book, there are humans, technos, and aliens. The groups do not like each other. In the first book, some humans discriminate by changing the central files to make it appear that technos have caused many problems in society (*Tears* 23). An example is that they change the history of plagues to say that technos used the plagues to kill humans (*Tears* 228). The lie was perpetuated by humans who wanted to put more fear in people and create a disproportionately bad image of technos. In the book, there are extremists, but there are small nuances of discrimination between normal people as well.

Bruna is very upset that people discriminate against her and technos, but she is also discriminatory against aliens. Brunna has the idea that associating with an alien reduces her social

status (*Tears* 136). Every time she gets to her apartment Bruna makes eye contact with an alien and always thought something was wrong with him. For example, “the bug was turning exits and entrances into martyrdom” (237). Due to the investigation, Bruna has to search for an alien in Olí’s bar; she thinks of aliens as bugs where there are not so many on Earth (*Weight* 101).

When Bruna asked for help when Cata Caín was killing herself, the emergency service asked if she was human or techno. Bruna said, "That question is unconstitutional, and you know it" (*Tears* 19). She continued saying "everyone knew that they prioritized humans" (*Tears* 19). Since reps have such a short life, emergency personnel do not prioritize technos.

Another example is when Bruna went to the Forensic Anatomical Institute to see the body of Cata Caín, the man who assumed they were family just because she was another techno (*Tears* 31). These discriminatory situations bothered Bruna (*Tears* 19,31). She is hypersensitive to the unfair situation of technos, and often became angry. It can be compared to discrimination against Muslims in the United States today. In a survey they found that at least 48 percent of respondents had an experience of discrimination in the past year (Hauslohner, 2017). It is not necessarily the same situation, but Montero used it to present a situation that can be compared to our society.

When Miriam Chi, the leader of the MRR, spoke to Bruna about the relationship between humans and technos, she said, “Come on Husky, you know that we are totally discriminated against. We are a subsidiary species and third-class citizens” (*Tears* 61). For them, it is a fact of the world and they don’t rely on the world being fair. For example, in this situation Miriam decided not to go to the police for help because she knew that the police would not have helped her because she is techno. Today, that happens when organizations will not help because they are racist or discriminate against certain groups. It is unfair, yet, a real-life situation for people.

All technos die after 10 years of a disease called TTT. The problem is that only 0.2 percent of the medical research budget is attributable to a cure for TTT, "even though the Reps are 15 percent of the population and they all die of the same disease" (*Tears* 63). Why don't they put more effort into research for a cure when 15 percent of the population are dying of the same thing? If the entire human population were dying of the same disease, they would dedicate many more resources to find a cure. Today, COVID-19 has similar characteristics. Doctors around the world are researching open source for a cure or vaccine which would normally not be available for free. In the book TTT only occurs in a discriminated group, so they do not allocate enough money to find it. Humans designed technos to be manufactured so you can distinguish them from humans physically. They make technos with feline eyes to identify who is a techno or not (77).

There are some cases in the book where reps kill people and then kill themselves because of chips implanted into their heads. The media and extremists convince the population that all technos are bad and want a revolution. Normal people are scared and start to hate reps. Bruna thought "Or maybe anti-rep fanaticism was growing much faster than she thought" (*Tears* 101). When people don't know what's going on, they conform to the ideas of the media and other extreme groups. In this case, technos are the scapegoat like other groups in our past such as the Jews during Hitler's reign. One day Bruno took the train and when she left, there were people who looked at her with fear only because of her identity of being rep (*Tears* 215).

Bruna helped a human escape from an extremist, but instead of being grateful for what a techno did, the humans were afraid of her. "The person they should fear was that shitty thug who kept crying, cowering on the floor, but no, the one who intimidated them was the rep, the different one, the cursed laboratory monster" (*Tears* 164). Even after helping people, humans are

still afraid. They are not grateful; the bad image of the technos persists. Sometimes in our society stereotypes are strong and people do not have confidence to change their beliefs.

Another time when Bruna was eating in a restaurant a man came up to her and said, "Haven't you realized that you are the only monster?" (*Tears* 207). There is discrimination in thinking and doing small things, but it is very direct to say something so rude in front of other people. It is something to have discriminatory thoughts, but to behave in an openly discriminatory manner with no fear of repercussions is very different. It makes one wonder about the types of discrimination in our world and how we can go about eliminating them.

Discrimination also occurs in the second book. For example, a man "spat with hatred," "If the reps don't know how to control yourselves, you will have to be exterminated like mad dogs" (18). Bruna was not bothered much because she said it was normal for her to experience that kind of discrimination. Bruna helped an orphan girl, saving her life and after that the girl said, "Expect something from you? Of a rep? I don't want anything from you" (22). The girl was not grateful that Bruna saved her. Her behavior was accepted because her savior was a rep.

One instance is when Bruna went to the house of Loperena, who hired Bruna for an investigation. Loperena asked Bruna if she knew her ancestors even though she knew that Bruna did not have them. Bruna knew that Loperena wanted to embarrass her and that bothered her a lot (*Weight* 65-66). Again, in a bar, a man said 'rep' before correcting himself to say techno-human', but he said it in such a pejorative way (149). Phrases like that are something technos had to cope with because they couldn't do anything about it. Bruna met a man who had two last names and she said that nobody has two last names but "imbeciles" or "the egocentrics, to differentiate themselves from techno-humans" (151).

There is legal segregation in this futuristic world. There are two Floating Lands, and both do not allow techno's or aliens to live there, only humans (*Tears* 125). Also, if there is a mutant in the floating lands, they expel them to live on Earth (250). Mutants are not welcome on Earth and often times they have to live in different places outside of normal society (*Weight* 307).

Moreover, Bruna encounters sexism in the floating lands. In the first book we only see some sexism, but in the second book, when Bruna goes to Labari (one of the floating lands) we can see much more discrimination. In the first book, Bruna went to speak to Labari's ambassador, and he was very angry that she was a techno at his embassy, and even more so because she was a woman (*Tears* 292). The language is extreme that he used comparing her to the "buckle of your shoe" (292). When Bruna reaches Labari she found the anti-feminine sentiment very strong. There, women did not inherit anything from the family. She said, "Women were nobody, they were nothing. Less than the reps on Earth" (*Weight* 188). Furthermore, women are not allowed to speak unless a man gave them permission (195). When Bruna answered a question, the man didn't even look at her because she was a woman. The man only recognized when Bruna's partner answered (189). The worst of all was that when a woman married; she had her feet bound with a rope to show that her husband took care of her (198). They like that fact; they are proud of it. A woman from Labari said, "The lock indicates that my husband supports me... Many would like to carry it. It is an honor" (198). No one in their normal mind would agree; it is a humiliating fact. Women were treated like animals with leashes.

### **Theme: Corruption**

The government in that futuristic trilogy is very corrupt with many problems. When Bruna goes on a run, she reached an area abandoned by the government, which was the territory of a gang (*Tears* 74). There were prostitutes asking Bruna if she wanted their services, and also

offering illegal drugs to better her sexual experience (74). Another example of government corruption is when the government completely erases the existence of a place so that people do not remember it. They created a myth to put fear in people so that they do not go there. "Onkalo was erased from the central archives, from public memory, from encyclopedias, from maps" (*Weight* 332-334). The government decided what the populations should know and not know.

Not only the government, but politicians are corrupt as well. Marlagorka "was known to have been selling part of the nuclear waste to ultra-religious and ultra-nationalist terrorist groups" (*Weight* 362). He does not care that it is illegal because it is beneficial to him. He is greedy and only wants more for himself at the cost of everyday people. The groups that obtain the nuclear power use it against innocent people and Marlagorka does not care. When politicians are corrupt, normal people will also start to become corrupt. You do not care about the rules if the rules aren't followed by the officials. A corrupt system produces a corrupt society. For example, in the book when Bruna is in the north, she talks to a woman who at first said that she could not help, but after Bruna bribed the woman she helped (307). There are many countries in the world where this corruption is present, such as Mexico. For many years, the government was corrupt and so were the workers including the police who accepted bribes instead of giving a ticket. The police would prefer money for themselves rather than the people paying fines to the government (Mexico Corruption Report). Of course, that is not the case for all the police, but it is a problem in the Mexican system today.

Another issue arises in the north where there is not enough food. In the markets, people wait in long lines for their turn to get rations for their families. Bruna watched as the army trucks arrived and the soldiers took almost all the food from the market and left very little for the people (*Weight* 314-315). The army did not care about the people, they took all the food and left.

Children are contaminated by polluted air just because they do not have the money to pay for clean air and the government does not help (*Tears* 210). Despite its problems, the Earth's government is a democratic government united on the entire planet that has never existed before (210). The other governments of that time are dictatorial, totalitarian, or autocratic so a united democratic earth is a huge accomplishment (201). It is like many governments today. There is corruption and many other problems, but there are systems that are much worse. Although it is important to recognize that there are benefits in a democratic government, people should not accept the corruption. In a conversation with Yiannas talking about the situation, he said that they must "work to perfect it" but Bruna replied that there is not enough time for her (210). She is not going to witness the change to a better world.

There are examples in our world today of that kind of censorship. The phrase "information is power" comes to one's mind. When the population is informed, they can make better decisions. In history there are many cases when governments do not share knowledge with people and in fact suppress the ability to have that knowledge. The government remains more powerful due to this suppression. For example, in China the internet is heavily censored. If you look for information on the events of Tiananmen Square in 1989, you will not find information on the so-called Tank Man and civil unrest. Not only that, but other information is also censored if the government does not want people to see it (*What Happens When*). There is a reference when Bruna said, "they kept their subjects completely disinformed" (*Tears* 251).

In the second book we find out about an underground group that has a lot of power despite their 33 members. It has power over the main sectors of the economy including armed weapons, pharmaceuticals, and energy (*Weight* 175-176). It is a great example of corruption where 33 people have all the power to control three entire sectors of the economy.

Corruption is in the government and also in business as well. For example, the factories that manufacture technos say that there is only one of each techno, but in truth they make ten copies of each techno (*Weight* 278). They can avoid detection because they don't use the second copy until the previous copy has already died and they also place each copy in a different part of the world so that it is unlikely that their paths cross (278). The only reason to do that is that you don't have to pay for a new techno design. This angered Bruna because it violated techno rights because each techno becomes nothing more than a product (278). That idea is a human debate, to be unique but at the same time to be part of a group. The factories eliminate technos uniqueness.

Montero discussed problems within our society like social movements and drug problems. Within the first novel, Bruna saw a boy already addicted to drugs. Bruno thought, "that creature with a scrawny body had surely stolen and hit and maybe even killed to get the money for his doses" (*Tears* 79). He was only a child, but he already needed the drug to live. In reality, there are many situations where children start doing drugs and then cannot stop. They remain in a horrible cycle; only looking for the next dose. In the second book, she talks about young people using a love drug to have fun. Others use *caramelos*, an illegal version of oxytocin (156). There is also a place in the second book called a hedoné, which is a place where it puts an electrical pulse to the brain to release dopamine. People do it and become addicted; they do not want to eat or drink. They do it until they cannot pay anymore. People become vegetables. That kind of place is illegal in many regions, but in the north, it was legal (*Weight* 308). It is not something of our world now, but there are people who escape the real world through drugs. In those cases, people do not seem like the human they were before. They are someone completely different. In the book she said, "It is like an opium den ... They were places that made her sick" (310).

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, Rosa Montero's trilogy talks about problematic issues in our society today, but in a fictional and futuristic setting. She explores the themes of memory and death, the environment and references to the past. In her characterization of Bruna Husky, she analyzes human problems and how someone can overcome these difficulties. Due to Bruna's circumstance of being a replicant, she has the internal debate to decide how to spend her short life. She is jealous of people who have long lives and is angry when they waste their lives. It can be a reflection when the people in our world want more time or opportunities in their lives. She cares, but sometimes she wastes her life on drugs or alcohol.

Our world today has many problems and every time there are solutions, the problems evolve. In the book, Montero shows problems such as the negative effects on the environment and the effects on our population. One has to pay to live in places where there is clean air, and if you do not have money your health suffers. There is also corruption in the future just as there is today. It is a problem for the entire system from politicians to police, businesses, and even normal people. The social problems of discrimination between species in this novel is like discrimination between races today. Not only is there discrimination between races, but also between the sexes. Bruna shows her annoyance at the situation of women on the floating lands. Although this situation is extreme, women are still not treated the same as men.

Throughout his book, Montero describes daily problems in our world. Readers can learn from situations, and how characters deal with those problems. Sometimes characters can improve the situation, but other times their reactions make the situation worse. It is possible to learn from fictional books; the characters match real life situations and Montero's trilogy is a great example.

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