

Borinqueña suggests: Stories of women scientists from Puerto Rico in the book “Ciencia Boricua”! ^[1]

Submitted by [Greetchen Díaz-Muñoz](#) ^[2] on 18 February 2014 - 11:29am



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Borinqueña emphasizes the contribution of Puerto Rican and Hispanic women in science and technology and provides a space to discuss topics of interest about the empowerment of women. In "Borinqueña suggests" we will share our opinion about different resources

that could be useful for your personal knowledge and your professional development.

Hi Borinqueña!

Have you read the book *Ciencia Boricua: Ensayos y anécdotas del científico puertorrico* [3]? *Ciencia Boricua!* is a book that collects amazing and singular essays about science and Puerto Rico. This anthology was written with the general public in mind, especially young people, and explains scientific concepts in "**rice and beans**". As an initiative of CienciaPR, it should not be surprising that I recommend its reading. However, my motivation today is to highlight the contribution of **Puerto Rican women scientists** in the content of this book and thus give you more reason to read it!

Among the essayists, **seven** females contributed with very interesting and diverse topics. Who are these Borinqueñas? What were the scientific topics explained in their essays?



If you are interested in **microbes** you have to read the essays co-authored by Dr. Lilliam Casillas Martinez [4]. In these writings, Lillian tells from her adventures collecting soil samples to isolate the genomes of microorganisms present in the forests of Puerto Rico until her experience investigating microbial communities in extreme environments.

Speaking of microbes, Dr. Veronica Segarra [5] has used **yeast as a genetic model** in scientific research (like me). You can't imagine how many things science has learned by studying this organism, especially on cancer research. If you want to learn about other uses of yeast beyond

the making of beer and bread, you need to read her essay.

Since I mentioned bread, who does not like a piece of bread accompanied by a sip of coffee? Precisely, one of the essays by [Dr. Uriyoán Colón Ramos](#) ^[6] explains the conflicting results between studies about the **effects of coffee** in humans. These contradictions and still unanswered questions make the coffee an unsolved medical mystery ...And, are you addicted to coffee?

There are very dangerous addictions like the ones [Dr. Carmen Maldonado](#) ^[7][Vlaar](#) ^[7] studies. By reading her essay you will learn about the research projects conducted in her laboratory with the collaboration of colleagues on the island in the **drug addiction** field and the neurobiological basis that explain it.

As you maybe already known our nervous system controls a number of aspects in our lives. [Dr. Yaihara Fortis Santiago](#) ^[8] got romantic about this topic and explains in her essay **where emotions are stored**. Now, make no mistake. If the first thing that comes to your mind is the heart ... you'll be amazed about your amygdala function (not the ones in your throat) in this process! After reading her essay, you'll see with other eyes people who say they have a broken heart!

And if it comes to emotions, how many of you have felt the presence of an annoying “mime” in the kitchen? What a hassle! Well, your opinion about them may change when you find out that the study of their **genome** have been essential in the development of research on human diseases. Cool, right? This essay is one of several wrote by our vice-director and co- editor of the book *Ciencia Boricua*, [Dr. Monica Feliú Mojer](#). ^[9]

Yes! in this book there are topics for everyone ... To those adventurous Borinqueñas we recommend reading the essay by Dr. Johanna Padró Irizarry: **The truth that you should know about Indiana Jones**. A great way to show the reality of work as an archaeologist contrasting what the popular film shows. I'm sure you will love it!!

But I can't tell you more! You must get the book, because it is a jewel of the Boricua Science and even more because through its reading you can discover more stories of Puerto Rican women in science and their life in this amazing field. Finally, I will like to ask, do you also have stories like these ones? Well, maybe you could be the next Borinqueña that publishes her essay in a future edition of *Ciencia Boricua*!

Know more about the author, [Greetchen Díaz](#) ^[10] and follow her on Twitter ([@GreetDíaz](#) ^[11]). Kimberly Cabán contributed to this story.

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