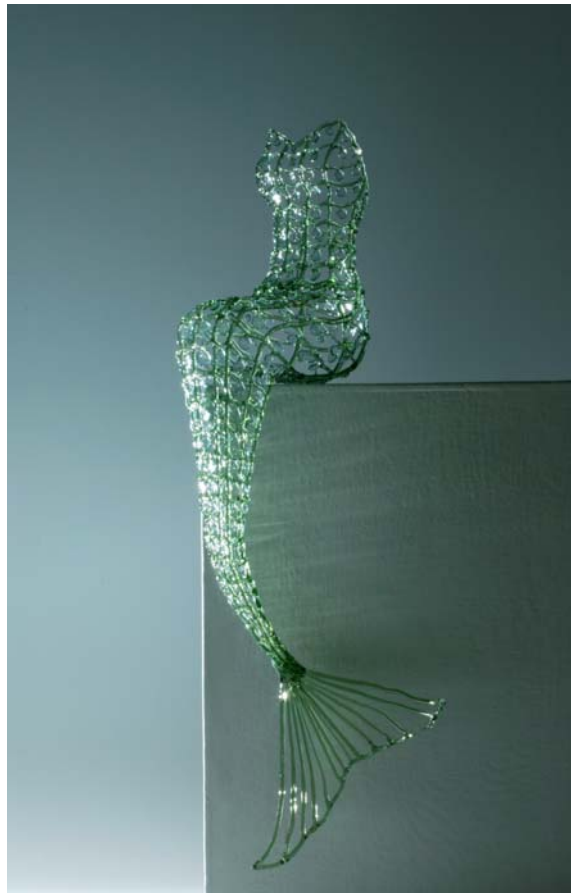


feministas unidas



Mermaid Suit

glass piece by Carmen Lozar

*A Coalition of Feminist Scholars in Spanish, Spanish-American, Luso-Brazilian,
Afro-Latin American, and U.S. Latino Studies*

f e m i n i s t a s

Founded in 1979, **Feministas Unidas** is a Coalition of Feminist Scholars in Spanish, Spanish-American, Luso-Brazilian, Afro-Latin American, and Hispanic Studies. As an allied organization of the Modern Languages Association, **Feministas Unidas** sponsors panels at the annual convention. As an interdisciplinary alliance, we embrace all fields of study relating to Hispanic women.

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About the artist

Carmen Lozar's work includes diminutive celebrations of the everyday, small pieces that venerate daily life. Taking a hot bath, sleeping alongside a loved one, eating voraciously out of a garden - there is nothing particularly unusual about any of these events, yet the documentation of small pleasurable occurrences serve to provide stable ground in an often pessimistic and jaded world. An icon that reveres the taste of last year's sun-ripened tomatoes also serves to remind us of the potential of future summers. These accounts often present improbable interactions with nature, appearing innocuous or even charming; they are full of the faith, which accompanies hopeful idealism.

The pieces are created through the process of flameworking. Using a torch Lozar manipulates hollow tubing and solid rods of glass to construct figures and objects that are then sandblasted and oil painted. The pieces may lose some of their "glassy" qualities, but for the artist the most important attributes of the material remain: A sense of movement retained from the molten stage, and a sense of fragility. Flameworking lends itself to the creation of delicate and intimate portraits, which, in turn, highlight the overall intention of the work.

Born in Illinois in 1975, Carmen Lozar uses glass as a means manifesting emotional perception in a physical form. During her undergraduate career at University of Illinois she interned at Bullseye Glass Factory in Portland, Oregon and attended Pilchuck Glass School as a Saxe award recipient and staff member. After completing her BFA she ventured to China, Indonesia, Thailand, and India to explore eastern traditional art. Upon her return she moved to the Southwest and opened a casting and flameworking facility in Tucson, Arizona.

In October of 2000, Carmen accepted a residency from Corning Museum of Glass and went on to be awarded a Master of Fine Arts from Alfred University in New York in 2003. Carmen shows regularly across the country and was a demonstrator at the International Flameworking Conference in Salem, NJ – She will return to the conference in 2008 as the keynote speaker. Carmen has been a demonstrating artist at The Glass Art Society Conference in St. Louis as well as a visiting artist to universities across the country. She currently resides in Bloomington-Normal where she is faculty at Illinois State University and Illinois Wesleyan University.

Feministas Unidas Profiles



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Maria DiFrancesco is an Assistant Professor of Spanish at Ithaca College (Ithaca, NY). She received her PhD and MA degrees from the University at Buffalo, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures. Her doctoral dissertation focused on transgression in contemporary Spanish women's writings. Although she has published articles on short fiction by Carme Riera and Cristina Fernández Cubas, she has forthcoming publications on works as diverse as Miguel de Unamuno's *Nada menos que todo un hombre*, Pedro Almodóvar's *Pepi, Luci Bom* and *Entretiniéblas* and Lourdes Ortiz's "Fátima de los naufragios" and "La piel de Marcelinda." Most recently, Maria has been working on a series of articles examining images of migrant women in contemporary Spanish literature, film and other forms of popular media. To this end, she will be chairing a panel at the Northeast Modern Languages Association conference in April 2007 entitled, "Race, culture and immigration in contemporary Spanish literature and film." She has been a dedicated member of Feministas Unidas since her graduate school days and is the listserv moderator for the group.

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Letter from the President/Carta de la presidenta

Tempe, 10 de diciembre 2007

Estimad@s colegas:

En primer lugar, deseo comunicaros que el estatus de asociación aliada del MLA, del cual goza Feministas Unidas, ha sido renovado por el MLA. Las revisiones se hacen cada siete años, de tal manera la próxima revisión de nuestro estatus se realizará en el 2014.

En segundo lugar, reiteraros la invitación para el *cash bar* que se realizará durante el MLA. Este acontecimiento de tipo social tendrá lugar en el Courtyard Marriott/Magnificent Mile (Chicago) el 28 de diciembre de 5:00 a 7:00 de la tarde. Dicho *cash bar* se celebrará en colaboración con WCML, WIG y WIF. Esta será una magnífica oportunidad para charlas con colegas de otros departamentos en un ambiente distendido y amable e intercambiar ideas y estrategias. Además del *cash bar*, como siempre, la asociación celebrará la junta de soci@s en el mismo Courtyard Marriot a las 3:00 pm. Nos reuniremos en la recepción del hotel y decidiremos si ir a mi habitación o reunirnos en el bar del mismo hotel.

Las dos sesiones de Feminista Unidas este año prometen ser de alta calidad y de un amplio interés tanto para el público general como para nuestra asociación en particular. Gracias a todos l@s participantes por su colaboración y presentación de las ponencias: Candyce C. Leonard, Wake Forest Univ.; Maria Elsy Cardona, Saint Louis Univ.; Sara E. Cooper, California State Univ., Chico; Lisa Petrov, Muskingum Coll.; Jennifer Ann Zachman, Saint Mary's Coll.; Silvia Bermúdez, Univ. of California, Santa Barbara; Íñigo Sánchez-Llama, Purdue Univ.-West Lafayette; Debra J. Ochoa, Trinity Univ.; y María Elena Soliño, Univ. of Houston.

Por último desearos una Feliz Navidad y recordaros la importancia de participar activamente en la Asociación: con ideas, con paneles, con noticias... y con todo aquello que nos ayude a fomentar nuestras redes de contacto y nuestra visibilidad.

Saludos cordiales,

Carmen de Urioste
Feministas Unidas, presidenta

Letter from the Editor/Carta de la editora

Bloomington, 10 diciembre, 2007

Queridas todas,

Para comenzar, y como siempre, agradecer a las personas que han colaborado directamente en la elaboración de este boletín. A mi estudiante Erin Cox que compiló algunas de las novedades editoriales que han aparecido en diversos medios de divulgación; a Carrie Young en Printing Services de IWU que se ha encargado de enmaquetar este número; y a la Oficina de Dean and Provost de IWU que corre con los gastos de copia y correo de este boletín de diciembre de 2007. También a todas aquellas que me han enviado noticias, publicaciones, fotografías, e información de todo tipo incluida en este boletín—pido disculpas anticipadas por si se me ha olvidado incluir algo.

Quisiera informar que nuestra página web ya está hecha y en marcha. Esta es la dirección <http://titan.iwu.edu/~hispanic/femunidas>

En la sección de Profiles/Perfiles encontraréis a Maria DiFrancesco, Ithaca College, nuestra *listserve moderator*. La idea de Profiles/Perfiles es dar a conocer a las personas que trabajan o han trabajado más de cerca en esta organización. Por favor enviadme directamente foto y bio a mi correo electrónico cferrada@iwu.edu

En este número también se incluyen 3 de los 4 ensayos que se leerán en el panel del MLA 2007 de pedagogía: *Feminists aren't funny? Humor as a Pedagogical Tool* organizado por nuestra tesorera Candyce Leonard, WFU.

En la sección *Publication and Research* se incluye una compilación de tesis doctorales y de maestría que está haciendo Lou Charnon Deutsch. La idea es fomentar el diálogo sobre temas de interés para las mujeres. Por favor, enviad la siguiente información a la dirección electrónica de Lou ldeutsch@notes.sunysb.edu : nombre del estudiante, nombre de la directora de tesis, título y una descripción breve (50 palabras)

Para el número de mayo 2008, por favor enviadme una copia electrónica de documentos, reseñas, noticias, publicaciones y demás directamente a mi correo electrónico.

Mucha suerte con el trabajo de fin de curso y que tengáis unas vacaciones estupendas y relajadas.

Un abrazo,

Carmela Ferradans
Feministas Unidas Editor

Feministas Unidas Essay Prize

The winner of the *Feministas Unidas Essay Prize 2007* is Janis Breckenridge, Hiram College with her essay “Performing Memory and Identity: Albertina Carri’s *Los rubios*”.

The Executive Committee of Feministas Unidas, an allied organization of the MLA, is pleased to announce a call for papers for the Fifth Annual Feministas Unidas Essay Prize competition for scholars in the early stage of their career. The Feministas Unidas Essay Prize is awarded for an outstanding unpublished essay of feminist scholarship on women writers in the areas covered by our organization’s mission: Spanish, Spanish-American, Luso-Brazilian, Afro-Latin American, and U.S. Hispanic Studies.

The purpose of the essay prize is to promote feminist scholarship on women writers by those who are entering our profession or who are in the early stages of their professional career. The prize is the product of collaboration between Feministas Unidas and the Asociación Internacional de Literatura Femenina Hispánica. The selection committee is drawn from officers and members of Feministas Unidas and the editorial board of *Letras Femeninas*. Feministas Unidas reserves the right not to award the prize in a given year.

AWARD: \$200 and publication of the essay in the December issue of the journal *Letras Femeninas*. The author of the winning essay must be a member of the Asociación de Literatura Femenina Hispánica at the time of publication of the essay.

ELIGIBILITY: Graduate students, instructors, lecturers and untenured assistant professors who are current or new members of Feministas Unidas are eligible to submit their original research for the prize.

GUIDELINES:

- An unpublished paper completed in the year 2007
- Length: 18-25 pages, double-spaced, including notes and works cited
- Format: MLA style. Prepare the manuscript according to instructions for “Anonymous Submissions”
- Languages: Spanish or English
- **Deadline for submission: August 15, 2008**
- **Announcement of award: September, 2008**

ITEMS TO BE SUBMITTED:

- Essay
- 200-word abstract of the essay
- Author’s c.v.
- Submit all materials in the following ways: **one hard copy and as an e-mail attachment**

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Feministas Unidas at MLA 2007

Cash Bar Arranged by the Women's Caucus for the Modern Languages, Women in German, and Feministas Unidas

Friday, 28 December • Cash bar at 5:00 p.m., Ontario, Courtyard Marriott

Feminist Trajectories: desde las monjas to the New Left

Program arranged by Feministas Unidas. Presiding: Carmen de Urioste, ASU

carmen.urioste@asu.edu

Silvia Bermúdez, University of California-Santa Barbara. "We Are Not There Yet: Feminism/Post Feminism in Contemporary Galicia."

Íñigo Sánchez-Llama, Purdue University. "Galleguismo, género sexual y modernidad en la España finisecular: análisis de la polémica entre Emilia Pardo Bazán (1851-1921) y Manuel Murguía (1833-1923)."

Debra Ochoa, Trinity University. "Martín Gaité's *Visión en Nueva York*: Critique of the Postmodern."

María Elena Soliño, The University of Houston. "Moving Behind the Lens: Half a Century of Women Filmmakers in Spain."

Feminists aren't funny? Humor as a Pedagogical Tool

Program arranged by Feministas Unidas. Presiding: Candyce Leonard, WFU

leonaca@wfu.edu

María Elsy Cardona, Saint Louis University. "Autocrítica y autovalidación en las tiras cómicas de Maitena."

Sara E. Cooper, California State Univ, Chico. "Something to Laugh About: Issues of Gender and Sexuality in 1959-1960 Cuban Comics."

Lisa Amor Petrov, Muskingum College. "La risa femenista: Mexican Directors Teach Subversion."

Jennifer A. Zachman, Saint Mary's College. "Feminism on Stage and Beyond: The *Maria Guerreras* of Madrid."

MLA 2007 Conference Papers

Feminists aren't funny? Humor as a Pedagogical Tool

Something to Laugh About: Issues of Gender and Sexuality in 1959 Cuban Comics

Sara E. Cooper

California State University, Chico

One of the challenges of teaching undergraduate Spanish majors about Cuba is to find ways to communicate the subtle ironies of social reality in the post-revolutionary era. Students tend to have been subject to years of anti-Castro and anti-communist propaganda, which often makes them think that they know something about the Cuban people, when actually they know little to no specifics. Also, they want to generalize their understanding of Latin American culture and regional identity to include Cuba, which as a Caribbean nation with a socialist economy and political structure has unique cultural and social mores—for instance around issues of gender and sexuality. My current research on Cuban humor has afforded me a new way in which to approach this topic in my Spring 2008 Senior Seminar called Viewing Cuba, and this will be the subject of my presentation today.

Since the onset of the Cuban Revolution in January of 1959, Cuban women have been encouraged to embrace their femininity as well as to exhibit physical, intellectual, and moral strength. This is the ideal of the New Woman, who is expected to work alongside the New Man to develop a New Society. In the context of the mid-20th Century Caribbean and Latin America, this is a tall order. Cuban cultural production of this era shows how difficult it was for society to fully support a fresh perspective on gender and sexuality. The *tiras cómicas* present a very accessible vehicle through which to convey Revolutionary mores and ideals. Cubans (like counterparts anywhere) are accustomed to seeing in the comics a representation of everyday life, where their values and preoccupations are presented in situations both quotidian and absurd. As the island makes a transition from a mostly illiterate population to one of the most literate in the world, what venue could be more

ideal to illustrate the changing reality than graphic art accompanied by short and pithy sayings? My research shows that comics in 1959-1960 do demonstrate shifting values and political realities, but not necessarily the projected alteration in gender roles. In particular, the comics pages of the popular magazine *Bohemia* shed light on the very slow process of change brought about by the Revolution. Studying the regular “Humorismo” pages as well as the new “Humorismo y Revolución” section (both graphic art), one can see that in contrast to the celebration of the woman revolutionary in the news and feature stories of the same magazine, the comics pages are still very much in the control of male, and somewhat misogynist, artists. The comics from January 1959-July 1961 represent the Revolution as a masculine sphere, one that women may best enter through stereotypical roles such as wife, mother, or daughter. We also see that heterosexual sex, adultery, emasculation, and female seductiveness still serve as the butt of jokes for the reading public. Given such visual cues juxtaposed against magazine stories glorifying women revolutionaries, as well as the Che Guevara treatises on “El hombre nuevo” and “Las mujeres y la revolución cubana,” I hope that students will comprehend the ironic difference between ideological tenets and social reality.

I will present this material in approximately the fourth week of a fifteen-week semester. Students will be required to read the two Guevara essays and think about a series of related questions prior to class. The questions will focus on Guevara’s expectations around men’s and women’s behavior in the revolutionary context and will ask the students to consider how their own gender expression is affected by societal influence today. In class, I will begin by providing information on perceptions of Latin American masculinity (Murray; Sifuentes-Jáurequi) and femininity (*La sartén por el mango*), then engage the students in an initial discussion on how the Guevara essays seem to conform to or deviate from the “standardized norm.” As a prelude to introducing my research on the *Bohemia* comics, I will ask the students to contemplate the following: how comics in the contemporary US portray gender, how earlier comics portrayed gender (e.g. Archie, Betty Boop),

how they think Latin American comics might have been representing gender over the last fifty years, and what they would expect to see in the comics pages in Cuba at this time. I will encourage them to think especially about the ways in which revolutionary thought would impact visual representation of gender and sexuality, and whether aspects of race and ethnicity would enter into the equation. We will take a few moments to consider and discuss these issues.

A large portion of class time (approximately one hour) will be dedicated to a power point presentation of approximately one hundred images from the *Bohemia* comics pages, providing commentary and eliciting analytical responses from the class. Before showing the images, I will explain how I gathered the material, how it fits in with existing research on this era in Cuban culture (including the genre of comics, issues of gender and sexuality), and what presentations and publications I have based on this research. Students will be encouraged to take notes on the images that strike them as particularly interesting or supportive of a point they would like to make. Also, they should take notes on general characteristics of men, women, and inter-gender relations as depicted in the comics. I will advise them that after the power point presentation, they will be required to answer questions showing their comprehension, retention, and ability to analyze the material presented. The following three sections include description of and commentary on the comics I will show in class (and in the Feministas Unidas panel). The descriptions are included here in the absence of the actual comics, but will not be read aloud during the presentation; during class time, I will have students read aloud the captions that accompany each comic.

Men and masculinity: The first point I would make is that the great majority of the “Humorismo y Revolución” comics feature men only, although the regular “Humorismo” page continues to portray both men and women, the latter often sexy and young females in some sort of compromising position (an issue I will take up in due time). In the Revolutionary comics, as in the regular comics, men are depicted as soldiers and revolutionaries, musicians, agricultural workers,

country bumpkins, family men, businessmen, barbers (especially in early comics, juxtaposed against “barbudos”), bums, politicians and corrupted government officials such as Trujillo, coal miners, children in the classroom, and a personification of the Cuban Revolution (by Pecruz) In the regular comics, men are drawn practicing a wide range of behaviors in diverse situations; we see the ubiquitous deserted island scenario, office scenes, sports and other leisure activities, and several renderings of the domestic sphere. Although some men in the regular comics are shown as gullible, weak, or cuckolded, more often they fall within the expected norms of masculine gender expression: strong, sexually potent, economically powerful, simply dressed, and politically aligned with the Revolution. More will be said about the philandering male in the section on gender relations; suffice it to say for now that he appears frequently within the general comic pages.

The rendering of the masculine figure in the Revolutionary comics is extremely political. Positive depictions of men tend to be equated with the revolutionaries, as in those sporting bushy hair and beards; rural *campesinos* who are marveling at the changes the Revolution is bringing; young boys implementing the ideals of the socialist regime; or the “average Juan” who is excited about revolutionary change. For instance, in the first issue of *Bohemia* to be issued under the new regime, the “Humorismo de la Revolución” page offers five comic panels (all by Silvio), four of which feature happy *barbudos*. One panel shows a clean-shaven man feeling an inferiority complex, another has a small boy equating a barbudo to Santa Claus, and two depict barbers that are in heavenly contemplation of so much hair to cut (51.1 p. 177). The first February issue of the year offers a twist on a familiar saying, “Cuba es una isla rodeada de barbudos por todas partes” (51.5 p. 176).

The good Cuban male will support and appreciate the Revolutionary changes, like an urban dweller who goes into a store to exchange three red shirts for one in olive green, referring to the army colors worn by Fidel, Che, and the other military personnel now in power (51.23 p. 158). In one issue

that came out during the first push of agrarian reform (51.15 p. 174), we see examples of many positively portrayed masculine types. One panel features two men cutting sugar cane and comparing smoke from a new tractor to a revolutionary fire, another has two *campesinos* comparing the benefits of agrarian reform to the scandalous U.S. idea of digging a canal through Cuba, and one shows a man so enamored of his new tractor that his wife despairs of him coming to bed. The cigar-smoking husband stares wide-eyed at his new farm equipment under a crescent moon. His wife combines a curvaceous form with an innocent, “country” aspect, representing all that is assumed to be positive about the Cuban rural woman, yet her charms are not enough to compete with the shiny mechanic modernism that lures the man from his bed. Considering the stereotypical self-representation of Cuban men as very interested in sex, the situation is humorous in itself. Added to that is the phrase below the comic: “Sueño realizado: --Viejo, ¿Vas a pasar toita la noche mirándolo?” The issue also includes one of Pecruz’s *tiras* with a boy in the new school uniform and a hat with the single star of Cuba, thinking “Liberación Económica” and saying “Hay que tener fe... Que todo llega...” A second rendering of revolutionary youth has a young boy at a store with his father choose a sparkling tractor as the toy that he wants, to the obvious approval of both the father and the female clerk. As the months go by, Pecruz’s Revolutionary youth becomes increasingly aggressive and bellicose, such as in a panel where the youth stands holding a bat, arms crossed, face sporting an angry frown. The caption reads, “¡Aguanten las bombitas, que ahora la bronca va a ser conmigo!” (51.27 July 5, 1959 p. 159).

Negative portrayals of men equate corruption with obesity, elegant tailoring, and foreignness. A panel by Antonio has an obese boxer, labeled “Latifundista,” tottering around the ring, with the caption below titled En Malas Condiciones and saying “¡Lo malo es que no hay nadie que ‘tire una toalla!’” (51.28 p. 158). A May 1959 Pecruz comic juxtaposes the iconic Revolutionary boy, trotting down the “buen camino,” with very fat, bald man in a tuxedo (overwritten with the epithet

“Contrarevolución”), holding his hands in front of his eyes. The slogan below proclaims the old saying, “No hay peor ciego, que el que no quiere ver” (51.17 p. 158). In the same issue, a kind looking man in a simple suit tells another much surlier one in a Panama hat, fancy guayabera and wing-tips, assumedly a professional politician, to not give up hope, as elections only are prohibited for 30 years. In a Pecruz comic at the end of April 1959, two men in simple dinner dress point to another man in much fancier attire and whose stance proclaims his arrogance, complaining of his attitude and suggesting he be sent to do agricultural work (51.20). Another Pecruz panel from August of the same year shows a group of unshaven thugs with surly expressions or evil grins and vampire fangs, brandishing clubs, machine guns, canons, grenades, and the like. In the background, two clean-cut police officers look on smiling, and a fighter plane stands at the ready. The caption reads, “Los Batistianos: ¡¡Esto es Miami, Chaquito!!” (51.30 p. 142) The blatant rendering of the Cuban exiles as criminals stands in patent opposition to all the benign, even friendly, Cuban islanders depicted in other comics on the same page.

The non-Cuban men portrayed usually are either assumed to be United States politicians or businessmen or Latin American right-wing politicians. Dozens of comics feature the dictator of the Dominican Republic, Juan Trujillo, sometimes with Somoza, who always is shown either perpetrating some act of cruelty or in a state of fear and apprehension due to the radical changes occurring in Cuba. Often he is shown holding a skull (51.7, 51.11 p. 174). He has nightmares of liberty coming in through his window (51.13 p. 158), sweats over what he hears on the short wave (51.15 p. 174), sees the Revolution “hasta en la sopa” (51.17 p. 158), and shows up as a miniscule frightened child upon seeing his shadow—which bears the inscription “Pueblo Dominicano” (51.28 p. 158). He is shown to be both cruel and a coward, the direct opposite of the New Cuban Man. The message to Cuban men is very clear: although the new society still expects that “boys will be boys,” and men are allowed a wide range of professional and personal identity, urban Cuban men need to

incorporate a new sense of respect for the *campesino* and his needs, and the prime directive is to be supportive of revolutionary ideals. The New Man will not be obsessed with individual financial gain nor hold on to purely selfish goals; he must adapt to the new social order, accept certain privations for the good of the whole, and in general follow the “buen camino” in the diverse areas he populates.

Women and femininity: Next I plan to show the class the spectrum of representations of women in the comics. In contrast to the broad spectrum of masculinity seen in the comics, women are most often portrayed in roles more directly linked to their gender in both revolutionary and “regular” comics, either as extremely sexy “objects” of the male gaze or as sexless house frau types in behaviors typically associated with the female gender. The voluptuous Cuban woman is a regular feature of the comic pages in *Bohemia*. Typical comics found in the general “Humorismo” pages include, for example, the sexy secretary. In one panel, a woman with enormous breasts and hips, barely covered by a filmy dress, crosses in front of her bosses, one of whom says (while staring at her chest region) “Es lo que necesitábamos aquí: un nuevo rostro.” (51.1 p. 144). Similar in focus, a panel in February depicts a businessman (suit and tie) staring at the ample legs that an applicant showcases through a long slit in her strapless dress that shows even her stocking garter. Genially he says to her, “Enseguida la asignaré algún trabajito extra” (51.8 Feb. 22, 1959). In the February 8, 1959 issue a double dose of “Humorismo” makes up for the lack of a Revolutionary humor page, and among the 17 cartoons, 11 focus on gender and sexuality, usually to the detriment of the females depicted. As might be expected, we see the sexy secretary, in this case sitting on her boss’s lap and saying into the telephone, “Le digo que está ocupado. ¡Yo tengo porque saberlo!” In another cartoon, a voluptuous, elegant woman with an annoyed look on her face makes a dig at her escort’s lack of financial resources. Another gold-digger representation has a femme fatale figure asking a man, “Así que según el contrato no puedo casarme. ¿Ni siquiera por dinero?” The idea that sex and her body the only commodities that a woman has on her side is lampooned in a panel depicting a young man, his

parents, and his fiancée in the family living room. The smiling mother is whispering to her concerned-looking son, “Creo que tu novia quiere impresionar favorablemente a tu papa,” referring to the sexy strip-tease that young woman is performing. Another promiscuous, albeit seemingly naïve, young lady, standing in front of the Marriage License office with her husband-to-be, asks to be the first one to sign, since it has brought her luck in all her other marriages. Two cartoons are fairly innocuous, one showing a housewife beating the rugs (and money falling out) and another showing a man and woman in a rather awkward situation with hula-hoops. The last two cartoons depict men somehow tricking or coercing women into sexual relations. In the first, the man is revving up a motor attached to the shore of an island, and the woman exclaims, “¿Quieres decir que durante los dos últimos meses esta ‘no era’ una isla desierta?” In the last comic, a plain young man is launching himself at a lovely and busty woman sitting in the car next to him, saying, “No me creas impulsivo: es que alquilé este carro solo por una hora.” In all the depictions, either the woman is correctly playing the role of the housewife, or she is using her sexual wiles to take advantage of a man, or on the contrary, being hornswaggled by an unscrupulous guy.

Also quite common is the housewife, who tends to be the butt of the joke. In the first issue of 1959 a husband remarks to his wife, who sits disconsolate in front of her vanity table, which is covered with ointments and crèmes, “Ya no eres tan bonita como eras; no eres siquiera tan bonita como eres”(51.1 p. 144) This is particularly ironic in a magazine that still runs advertisements for beauty treatments, depilatories, and perfumes. In another panel on this same page, a husband is carrying an outhouse to his wife, who is stuck in the water, evidently having lost her swim suit. The message seems to be that her shape would be so horrid that a mere towel would not be sufficient to cover it (51.1 p. 144). A third panel in this issue shows a pair of newlyweds ready to get into their car, and the wife is saying “¡De ahora en adelante, manejo yo!” Slightly different from the others, but still treating women in a derogatory fashion, this comic portrays the ball-breaking wife who acts

passive only until “hooking” her man, then allowing her controlling nature to emerge. In the July 1959 issue, there is one positive, albeit mocking, representation of a housewife and two more in line with those just discussed. The smiling and super-efficient wife in one panel sweeps her husband’s poker winnings off the table into a dustpan, to the amazement of the male guests. In the other two panels, we see one just-married bride eating a large piece of cake because “ahora no hay necesidad de vigilar la línea” and one henpecked husband who somehow has been forced to dress up as a mouse. He says indignantly, “Es mi ultimo experimento. Veremos si me impongo de una vez a mi mujer” (51.25 p. 160). Such depictions of the married woman—her figure and her personality—make the ubiquitous comics of cheating husbands quite understandable, at least from the masculine point of view!

When women appear in the Revolutionary comics, they do so in a much more limited set of roles. In the issue 51.41 for example, three out of five comics feature women as the main focus; in each, the woman plays a gender-stereotypical role of housewife and mother. In one comic, by Níco, an older woman in a frumpy housedress explains her savings plan to a man, assumed to be her husband. She explains that she saves the money leftover from rent in the large piggybank and that leftover from electricity in the much smaller one. Both of the other panels are authored by Silvio; in one, a young boy talks to his mother as she stands in front of the stove, dressed in a dress and apron. He tells her he no longer wants the little brother he asked her to order from Paris, since now Cubans need to reduce imports and save dollars. In the other, an apparently middle-aged woman, showing a little cleavage and clearly wearing makeup and jewelry, plays the role of the gossip, commenting on the addition of regional instruments to the Havana Philharmonic. All three comics focus on issues related to the Revolution, presented in such a way that they would either reflect expected feminine characteristics or appeal to the experience of female readers. On the one hand, women are portrayed as being participatory in the Revolutionary process, such as the saving of household funds thanks to

the nationalization of housing. In this comic, however, the housewife's unattractive physical appearance (she is round, dowdy, with a large and discolored nose and hair up in a bun) is compounded by her seemingly redundant plan for keeping clear her monetary status. Her husband, on the other hand, while not attractive, at least has on a shirt and tie, and his facial expression shows much more alertness than the sweet yet humble look on the woman. The gossip shows a different perspective of the female, in that she is both elegant and smart, using the idiosyncratic Cuban humor to remark on changes in the social setting. "¡Quién lo iba a decir, Doña Clotilde: parece que en algún papel pautado les encontraron alguna conga electoral!" The importance of the female presence in the Revolutionary humor page can't be overrated; however, the placement of women in the domestic sphere, and their portrayal as somewhat simple, or rather as slightly malicious, is troubling. In another issue a family sits around the radio and hears an announcement that public employees will receive a raise in pay. The joke is visual in nature, in that each figure is shown to have a stereotypical desire for spending the money, as shown in the thought bubbles above their head; the dog thinks of a bone, the baby and ice cream cone, the woman a pair of shoes and matching purse, and the man a sexy brunette. (51.1 Feb 15, 1959) In a later Silvio comic, a wife and mother looks on with wide-eyed delight as her husband helps their son take his first steps. Her exaggerated bust and buttocks, together with her rather simple expression, make her an attractive and non-threatening female witness to the primarily male triumph; the man exclaims to her, "¡Mira, Cuca, ya el niño también es fidelista, 'dio un paso adelante'!" (51.21 p. 158). Similarly, one Pecruz comic shows a plump mother performing her maternal duty, feeding her son both a balanced diet and ideology, telling him to eat up his potatoes so that he gets as strong as the Cuban peso (a double irony not lost on the modern reader, 51.22 p. 158).

Rarer (but still present) are the comics on the Revolutionary humor pages that focus on the overtly objectified female body. The last January issue in 1959 has one example of the more blatantly

sexist comic that usually is reserved for the regular comic pages. A woman with impossibly large jiggling curves and a wasp waist is startled to hear a man exclaim a Revolutionary-themed *piropo*, the common form of compliment issued on the street. Wide-eyed, he asks, “Oye mi’jita: ¿ese movimiento también es del 26 de Julio?” (51.4 p. 167) A July panel by the same artist, Silvio, presents another popular piropo of the times; here, upon seeing a woman whose bounty seems too large to be carried by her tiny feet in high heels, a man exclaims in amazement, “¡¡Latifundista!!!” (51.26 p. 158). Another example, by Pecruz, depicts a bombshell entering an elevator, as two male onlookers comment, “¡No te dije que la carne iba a bajar!” (51.23 p. 158) Sometimes the Revolutionary comics point to the stereotypically sexy Cuban woman as an object, both of desire and of pride, that can help “sell” the Revolutionary ideals. A comic by Pecruz has a balding man pointing over his shoulder to a curvy gal in a strapless gown and saying, “¡Los productos cubanos son mejores, y son nuestros!” (51.12 p. 158) Here he underlines the need to buy domestic products rather than imports, while subtly suggesting that women, like commercial products in the stores, are there for the consumption of the New Cuban Man.

Inter-gender relations: Lastly, I will present how relations between the sexes usually is shown to be problematic in the comics pages. Marriage in general is seen with a cynical eye, as with four panels from the general “Humorismo” page of February 22, 1959 where the *noviazgo* is portrayed more as a business deal and married couples engage in mutual violence, either physical or verbal (51.8). The typical difficulties experienced with in-laws is the subject of a panel where a woman turns the corner in her home to see a saw poking through the wall, emerging exactly at the mouth of a frowning portrait of her mother. The man sardonically laughs, “¡Ja! ¡Ja! Fíjate lo que el vecino le está haciendo a tu madre” (51.6 n.p.) In both the general and revolutionary comics, frequently men insult or complain about their wives because they are nosy and engage in gossip; in a representative example a rotund man with a furrowed brow complains, “Fíjate si se mete en todo lo que hacen los

vecinos, que le dicen Senado Americano” (51.31 p. 142). The sly political cast to the joke gives a hint of how women are disrespected through humor; since the behavior of the United States senate is very much under fire at this time, comparing the woman’s behavior to the number one enemy of the state is a profound statement.

Infidelity also is seen as humorous in the comics. A very humorous panel from the “Humorismo y Revolución” page in April 1959 shows the still prevalent societal complicity with the man who strays from his wife. The drawing is of a woman angrily shaking her finger at her husband, who only slightly chagrined rejoins, “Nada, mujer, es que hay que cooperar con la revolución, pore so traigo la fachada pintada.” The title of the panel is “Ciudadano Obediente,” both making fun of the individuals who will tout new justifications for old behaviors and yet also underlining the official mandate that all Cubans do need to find ways to be dutiful revolutionaries (51.16 p. 158). On seeing such a comic one does fear that social change will occur only slowly and painfully in the arenas of gender role expectations and permissible sexuality. A comic that appears later in the year turns the joke around, as a man comes home from work to find his curvaceous wife, whose figure is marked with black handprints in strategic places. She blithely remarks, “El campesino que quedamos en alojar, ya vino... es un carbonero de la Ciénaga de Zapata” (51.31 p. 142). Titled “Cooperando,” the comic reflects generalized fears experienced by Cuban men at allowing other males in the home through the campaigns of literacy and agricultural exchange. This obsession with keeping women safely under wraps is most famously rendered in the tripartite film *Lucía*, but in contrast to the honest and revolutionary wife in the film, this comic shows the wife to be wily and promiscuous, like most representations of the Cuban woman from this period of *Bohemia* comics. Although women might find some sense of empowerment from the image, it still provides justification for the argument that women are not truly cooperating with the revolutionary agenda.

A similarly pessimistic look at love and marriage appears in the weekly joke page *Agilidad Mental*. In one issue containing ten jokes, seven have to do with gender and sexuality, three of which suggest a less than ideal outlook on marriage. In one, a man is caught by his wife eying another woman, another jokes about lessening sexual appetites in marriage, and the most cynical explains why handsome Rogelio married a woman twenty years his senior: “Cuando se necesitan billetes de banco no se preocupa uno de su fecha” (51.9 p. 17). A less common vision of marriage, in itself positive and romantic, is presented in a June 1959 comic by Pecruz, which offers fairly direct praise of Revolutionary efforts in its depiction of a country scene in which a man tells his girlfriend that they can wed right away, thanks to the agrarian reform act (51.24 p. 158). Given the preponderance of cynicism on this topic, one is more tempted to laugh at the future surprises in store for the country maiden who will soon enter the coveted state of matrimony.

The topics of flirtation and sex are eminently common in the Cuban comic pages. Even in the Revolutionary pages one finds examples of this. A Silvio comic entitled “Las cosas claras” refers directly to a recent political edict while taking advantage of a sexual double entendre to drive home his point. The drawing consists of one man raising the tablecloth and peering underneath to see the other man’s hand resting on the knee of the woman sitting next to him. The voyeur points out, “¡Está bien que jueguen, pero... por debajo de la mesa nada, nada! ¿O es que no oyeron a Fidel Castro?” One guesses that the young woman might be his daughter, which adds to the humorous suggestion that due to the Revolution a father would be more permissive with his daughter’s conduct, as long as it fell within Revolutionary parameters (51.5 p. 176).

Guided Discussion: After showing the power point of 1959 comics and delivering my lecture, punctuated with student commentary, I will divide the students into groups and have them answer several of the comprehension and analysis questions. Each group will be responsible for presenting

the answers to their assigned questions in front of the entire class; they will have approximately 30 minutes to prepare their answers.

Comprehension questions:

1. ¿Cómo se representa a la mujer en los comics de *Bohemia* de 1959?
2. ¿Cómo se representa al hombre en los comics de *Bohemia* de 1959?
3. ¿Qué retrato del matrimonio se encuentra?
4. ¿Cómo es la comunicación entre mujeres y hombres en estos comics?
5. ¿Cuáles son las semejanzas y diferencias entre los comics de “Humorismo” versus los de “Humorismo y Revolución”?

Análisis questions:

1. ¿Qué significa el panorama de la representación de las mujeres? ¿Es sorprendente?
2. ¿Qué significa el panorama de la representación de los hombres? ¿Es sorprendente?
3. ¿Qué significa el panorama de la representación del matrimonio? ¿Es sorprendente?
4. ¿Por qué hay tantos comics que representan la sexualidad?
5. ¿Es evidente un cambio social en cuanto a los géneros sexuales?
6. ¿Se ven claramente los elementos de raza étnica? ¿de clase socio-económica? ¿Qué significa esta presencia/ausencia?
7. ¿Cuál es la imagen que más les hizo reírse y por qué?
8. ¿Qué han aprendido de esta presentación? ¿Cuáles preguntas les quedan?
9. ¿Fue útil estudiar el género y la sexualidad a través de los comics?
10. ¿Qué saben de la importancia del humor en Cuba?
11. ¿Por qué es importante ver y analizar ejemplos de la producción cultural como los comics?

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12. ¿Si pudieran diseñar un proyecto de investigación— algo inspirado por esta presentación — cuál sería?

To conclude the class unit, I will give them a much shorter preview of what I found in my study of *Bohemia* comics from 1998-1999, summarizing the changes that I see have taken place over the forty years since the beginning of the Revolution. I also will encourage them to analyze the cultural production that surrounds them at all times, in order to have a more critical understanding of how their society is being represented.

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La risa feminista: Mexican Directors Teach Subversion

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In two important collections of essays on feminism and cinema, Multiple Voices in Feminist Film Criticism and Feminism & Film none of the authors propose that humor is especially significant to feminist filmmaking, or even to films directed by women. The editors of Multiple Voices published in 1996 state that their aim was to include what they refer to as “multivalent feminist agendas,” principally organized into two categories: first, a critique of the ideology of dominance promoted by patriarchal forces, and second, an inquiry into the differences and disparities among women (3). But none among the writers see comedy as a means of critique, or important to a symbolic representation of inequality. Feminism and Film, published in 2000, presents three essential questions feminist theory asks about film: how meanings about women are produced, what signs are used to produce these, and how and why desire structures the cinematic imagery of women (2); again, humor is conspicuously absent. Indeed, it would appear that feminist filmmakers are either decidedly not funny, or humor is not an exceptionally effective tool for feminist filmmakers.

Regarding Mexican cinema expressly, one is more likely to find feminist articles on women vis-à-vis melodrama than comedy. When comedy is treated, as in Rafael Aviña’s Una mirada insólita: Temas y géneros del cine mexicano, published in 2004, humor is overlooked as a means of effecting a specifically feminist critique, or even as a current means of questioning Mexican social norms and traditions. There is a stigma to comedy that too often renders it inconsequential, not sober enough to merit serious academic attention. Clearly, I disagree.

Today I will argue that in the case of two contemporary Mexican films, both written and directed by women, humor is decidedly central to the structure and meaning of each. And in a third film, it’s the women’s laughter at the end that sharply punctuates their acts of resistance to male

dominance and authority throughout the movie. Through these films the women directors outline an argument against the cultural dominance of machismo in Mexican society and cinema. The laughter of the women on screen as well as of those in the audience critique Mexican patriarchal systems of privilege directly and indirectly. The images and words that inspire laughter model subversion and thus teach the audience members to subvert the authority both past and present, of these same systems designed to keep women and marginalized men out of the spheres of political, economic and cultural influence. Humor is the means to an end: undermining the powers that be.

The three films I'm discussing today are all "auteur" creations in that they were both written and directed by the same person and are consequently dominated by a single individual who provides the audience with both the artistic vision as director and the subject matter as screenwriter. Given that all of the films also feature female protagonists portrayed by accomplished actresses, what the films say and how they show it are determined chiefly by women. First there's Entre Pancho Villa y una mujer desnuda released in 1996, based on the play by the same name published in 1993 by Sabina Berman, co-directed by Isabelle Tardán and the playwright herself. Second, I'll discuss En el país de no pasa nada released in 2000 (the same year as Amores Perros) written and directed by MariCarmen de Lara, best known for her short documentary work and for whom this was a first attempt at a feature-length film; and finally I will mention, Sin dejar huella released in 2004 written and directed by María Novaro, who first garnered international attention and acclaim in 1991 with the box-office hit Danzón. In all three films, humor plays an insubordinate role in that each film engages what Stallybrass and White call "the politics and poetics of transgression" (1986). That is, principally through symbolic inversion, parody, double entendres and comedic serendipity, these women directors challenge their audiences to rethink gender roles, expectations and societal norms in Mexico and beyond. All of the films successfully destabilize the dominant cultural ideology of male privilege by carefully representing its incongruities and irrationalities; thereby exposing the ideology

to ridicule and contempt, something humor from a feminist perspective regularly accomplishes successfully (Gillooly 475). Humor here is intelligent and political, sometimes seemingly “light” but never frivolous.

Before I turn to the films themselves, I feel I should engage the question of whether or not these can be judged to be feminist films, or ask if they employ specifically feminist humor. Given that feminists are all too frequently accused of having no sense of humor, I almost resist entertaining this line of questioning because as far as I’m concerned, a film that makes women laugh, that is about women, made by women *for* women is by definition, to me at least, feminist. Still, depending on the definition of “feminist humor” these films may not be identifiable as examples of such.

Recent research on feminist humor consistently refers back to Lisa Merrill’s 1988 article, “Feminist Humor: rebellious and self-affirming” –a title that signals the prescriptive if not slightly obvious argument Merrill makes: that feminist humor is a comedy that ultimately affirms rather than denigrates women’s experience (275). She mentions that Bergson and Freud claimed respectively that comedy is collective and assertive (272-3); that is, humor is based both on a sense of group solidarity through identification, and on the dynamics of an aggressor taking aim at a mark. Because humor often depends on the incongruous or the unexpected, public humor indirectly brings attention to the status quo as its contrast. Not surprisingly then, women have generally been discouraged from meaningful forays into the realm of comedy, especially the subgenres of satire or parody, precisely because the tension released by laughter is more acceptable when it travels downward, towards those less powerful. The target of a joke is, as a general rule, someone lower down the social hierarchy (272-3); to “attack” upwards is to risk censure –one reason why perhaps humor by women comediennes has for so long been, and sometimes still is, of the “dumb blond” variety. But, that of course assumes a male spectator. What happens when the audience is perceived or assumed to be female?

When the audience is female, humor that targets men may well effectively reinforce women's group identity, but it may not be effective as feminist humor according to Janet Bing. In her article "Is Feminist Humor an Oxymoron?" she argues in favor of an "inclusive" feminist humor that doesn't direct its barbs at men so much as target systems and problems (28). For her, humor that attacks men is divisive and likely to be counter-productive to bringing about social change (22). In order to be wide-ranging in its power to influence and subvert power structures, humor, she says, must not allow the subordinated to more easily accept the status quo by simply venting frustration (24). For comedy to be effective for feminists interested in undoing the inequities women bear, Bing argues it must suggest alternatives to the source of frustration, not merely allow women to better tolerate their intolerable situations (24). Of all the films that may be guilty of simply "venting" in this way, En el país de no pasa nada may be seen as such because the film appears to endorse popular stereotypes of women, rather than convey realistic alternatives. However, I will argue that in fact the writer/director MariCarmen de Lara's critique is sufficiently radical to avoid the label "counterproductive" and is more likely using stereotypes with the intent of subverting them through her precise use of humor in the film. There is, in other words, a double text at work (Walker, 13, cited in Gillooly).

With these ideas in mind, let's turn to the films under consideration by these Mexican women who have been identified or self identify as feminists. How do they point towards alternatives to the power structures that hold women down while simultaneously making the audience laugh as they poke fun at those very structures? How do they undermine the male privilege that too often goes unchallenged in Mexico?

The funniest and most poignantly satirical of the three films, Entre Pancho Villa y una mujer desnuda stands out as the one most overtly in dialogue with Mexican history, traditionally and exclusive the history of men. Berman's film combines parody and the satirical dismantling of history,

with feminist auto-criticism; the humor of the film dialogues specifically with the social, sexual and political realities of Mexican society of the late '80s early 90's –a period of increasing tension between the traditional values of revolution and the neo-liberal values of NAFTA. One critic states that the play the film is based on antagonizes and parodies two main goals of Spanish America: one, the desire for revolution and two, the anxiety of modernity (Meléndez 525); the film adaptation of the play does this as well.

The film centers on the relationship between two adults nearing middle age –Gina and Adrián; each have ex-spouses, children and emotional baggage. Some of the humor of the film comes from the exaggerated sexuality they share as lovers. Their inability to keep their hands off each other and their desperation for each other physically is played by the actors on screen as a mild parody of soap opera passion. Their arduous love-making appears cliché and funny. To add to the cliché, if not the humor, immediately after their sexual encounters Adrián leaves Gina, sometimes disappearing without a trace for days and weeks, but eventually even for months. To complicate things, Berman creates characters that are paradoxical in that they personify opposing ideals at once. Gina is, on the one hand, an owner of a *maquiladora*, an economic neo-liberal, but she is socially progressive as an independent, unmarried, professional woman; and yet she also acts like a silly girl in love, unexplainably wishing for a more stable and meaningful relationship with Adrián, hoping even for a child with him, though she already has a son studying at Harvard. Adrián is equally paradoxical in that he is a writer and intellectual, dedicated to political causes and revolutionary ideals, yet is terribly immature and egotistical in his personal relationships. Contradiction and paradox not only characterize the protagonists, they define the very themes of the film, which continuously presents opposing situations and dialogue with incisive humor. These themes straddle diverse sociopolitical and economic beliefs as well as the past and present in Mexico (Meléndez 536-7). Humorous contradictions abound in the film that at once makes us laugh and think.

The bulk of humor in the film comes in the form of Pancho Villa, who intervenes in the story of Gina and Adrián as the arbiter of supreme machismo. Interestingly, he is also a contradictory figure in that he combines a commitment to progressive revolutionary ideals with a traditional and conservative machismo. In the clip I'll show now, we'll see his hyper-masculine violence and exaggerated machismo. [Show brief clip of Pancho Villa's "*historia intercalada*"] The intertextual reference here is unmistakable: Don Juan Manuel's medieval *ejemplo* from El Conde Lucanor, "*De lo que contesçió a un mançebo que casó con una mujer muy fuerte y brava.*" This didactic text originally intended for a male audience, is here reversed. For Berman's female audience, the lesson is not the humor markedly differs from the original in which the woman learned to obey; she became, if you will, another domesticated animal owned by her husband: "Et daquel día adelante, fue aquella su muger muy bien mandada et ovieron muy buena bida" (201). With Pancho Villa, the woman's submission and conformity at the end earned her nothing. Moral of Berman's story: when dealing with a macho man, don't bother giving in, it won't get you anywhere.

When Gina breaks up with Adrián definitively, Villa, who until then appears only in separate scenes, materializes and starts giving Adrián advice on how to get her back. His incongruous and plainly outmoded ways of thinking humorously clash with the modern world in which the protagonists live; each time his values are attacked, he suffers a literal wound. Fed up with Adrián's inability to commit, Gina moves on to Ismael, a younger lover who allows her to lead in more ways than one, and gives both Adrián and Villa fuel for their hyper-masculinity. Of course, the younger man isn't able to win the macho game against Adrián, whose manliness (a weakness of Gina's established in the opening scene of the film) still attracts her.

Though this film is undeniably humorous, and feminist (the butt of the joke is frequently an outmoded machismo that's incongruous with the world in which the characters live and love), it doesn't truly comply with Bing's mandate that the humor present alternatives. The end of the film

sees both Adrián and Gina at an impasse, unable to resolve their conflicts. Neither humor nor the younger lover save the day. Nevertheless, I would argue that the fact that there is no resolution is, in itself, an alternative to the modern (read masculine) demand for closure and finality. The postmodern preference for open-endedness and multiplicity dominates Berman's text and film and prohibits a facile ending that magically fixes a complex power struggle between the sexes.

Of the films under scrutiny, En el país de no pasa nada, directed and co-written by MariCarmen de Lara, is the one that most merits the label "light comedy" in that it does not at any point weigh the audience down with the gravity of the social problems faced by women, yet it does make a number of very poignantly acerbic jokes about the powers-that-be in Mexican society. Aimed at a hip audience the film offers a hopeful vision to young Mexican adults that the corruption and crime plaguing their country, and Mexico City in particular, can be curtailed. The film follows its middle-aged protagonist, Elena Lascuráin, from neglected and bored housewife, mother of grown children, to rejuvenated and awakened entertainment professional, with a new lover, and a sexy singer and her music group "*Los sueños mojados*" for clients. The humor of the film centers on the opposite trajectory her husband's life takes as he goes from well-positioned and over-paid businessman to abandoned ex-crook. Many of the laughs the audience enjoys are at his expense, as he deals with the incongruity of his "first world" expectations and the "third world" realities of the band of bungling miscreants that kidnap him and accelerate his descent.

We laugh heartily at the fall of Enrique Laguardia and find it just, much as we celebrate Elena's rise; however, the comical serendipity and chaos that rules in the film and that ultimately overturn traditional power as symbolized by Enrique, constitute a greater critique of patriarchal modernity. At the start of the film, we see the protagonist enjoying a guilty pleasure: watching a video reality of herself in a fantasy role that shows her both active and sexually potent. It is episode three, which presupposes episodes one and two. This image plays to the stereotype of upper class

Mexican women who have too much time and money on their hands to do much of anything more serious or important than watch *telenovelas*. Elena's imaginaries aren't however mere entertainment; they are rehearsals that allow her to later act on her own behalf and eventually discover the truth when confronted with a video tape in which she sees her husband cheating on her. It's important to note that this truth comes to her as much as she seeks it. Receptivity and passivity, typically associated with the feminine, aren't subordinated to masculinity's prime value of activity and are instead also effective in producing results. Elena convinces herself that the video she received of her husband in the arms of another woman is a "video reality" created by him to inspire jealousy. Still, she bites the bait set for her by a cohort of Laguardia's secretary, and her curiosity leads her to a chance meeting with the band her husband's mistress lives with (the sexy singer who ends up her client); together with a drug-induced encounter with the mistress herself, everything eventually leads Elena to a self-realization. Superstition and its important relationship to coincidence also leads indirectly to the justice the audience feels Enrique Laguardia receives as his bloated ego is deflated and he descends from a position of power and privilege to the dark depths of insignificance and nonexistence. His disgruntled secretary, approached by another female worker has a spell cast with some *agua bendita* to rid herself of her insensitive and sexist boss, Enrique, AKA Guillermo González.

Enrique has not only created an alter ego in the form of Guillermo to hide his various white collar crimes, he has faked a trip to Europe to be able to spend more time with his mistress. During the bungled kidnapping, amateurishly carried out by the mistress's theater cohorts, the story leaks to the press of money laundering by Guillermo González. His disappearance becomes a happy convenience for his boss as much as for his secretary. Another series of mishaps and accidents leads to the fake death of Laguardia, who after his funeral tries to contact his wife, now enjoying her new life without him. "*Adios viejo!*", the audience says to itself. The justice and humor here are sweet

precisely because the crimes are not merely those of corrupt officials or greedy businessmen, but rather those of patriarchal and *machista* Mexico. We all smile with Elena at the end of the film as she happily dances during the video-shoot of her new client's band because we know that she has liberated herself not by deliberately warring against her enemy, but by taking smart advantage of the opportunities chance, serendipity and the forces of chaos threw her way. The lesson humor teaches here is one of balance, between action and inaction, between the feminine and the masculine.

The least comical of the films under consideration is Sin dejar huella. It isn't a comedy in the same way the other two films are; we don't laugh throughout the film at jokes aimed at patriarchal conventions and privileges. Instead, we watch as two women thumb their noses at those very institutions and get away with it. After a journey of crime and escape *a la* Thelma and Louise, I include this film in my trio of subversive "comedies" because, unlike Thelma and Louise, Ana and Aurelia do not have to choose death over capture; they are laughing at the end. They have challenged male authority by daring to determine their own lives; they have gone so far as to kill men (albeit unintentionally); and they escape "without a trace" to forge their own future, on their terms. Here humor doesn't teach how to subvert the powers that be; it is what signals its success. Nicole Hollander, the brilliant cartoonist who created the ever-irreverent Sylvia, asked: "Can you imagine a world without men?" Then responded with the punch-line: "No crime and lots of fat happy women." The film Sin dejar huella challenges her assumptions of women's natural "goodness" but seconds her sentiments when it ends with two female outlaws laughing happily as they reach the promised land of Cancún, still whole and the winners of their wrestling match with the public and private patriarchies of Mexico.

Are these films feminist? Clearly they are. Are they funny? Sometimes a little, sometimes a lot. But their humor isn't mere entertainment, or even simply impertinent. The humor here is transgressive and subversive because it questions basic assumptions of patriarchal authority and

modernity; it shows that the realm of the feminine, the chaotic and serendipitous, and women themselves are also powerful, so much so, that they are forces that can not be contained nor ever fully dominated. And that's no joke.

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Feminism on Stage and Beyond: The *Marías Guerreras* of Madrid.

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Para las mujeres, hacer su propio humor sobre un escenario supone cuando menos una triple transgresión: ocupar un espacio público, pero no cualquier espacio público sino la escena, uno de los espacios públicos por antonomasia, y ocupar el espacio simbólico y poético del humor. (Virginia Imaz 265)

From April to June 2002 in the Teatro de Las Aguas in Madrid, the Asociación de Mujeres en las Artes Escénicas staged their first collaborative performance, *Tras las tocas*, amid resounding accolade from theater critics. The members of this Madrid-based association call themselves *Las Marías Guerreras*. This ingenious sobriquet not only pays homage to the Spanish actress María Guerrero, but also intimates the decidedly feminist goals of the association. Founded in March of 2001, the organization seeks to “promover, fomentar y divulgar la presencia de las mujeres en las Artes Escénicas [y] construir un espacio vivo de creación e investigación escénicas dirigido por mujeres creadores y fomentar la difusión de sus iniciativas y producciones” (A.M.A.E.M 3). Since the debut of *Tras las tocas* the *Marías Guerreras* have energetically continued to produce unique and intriguing theater, successfully integrating feminist theory and praxis to successfully realize the Association's goals both on stage and beyond. To date, the *Marías Guerreras* have staged numerous original theatrical productions, hosted workshops, published three volumes (each including original plays, essays, and analyses), and participated actively in discussing feminism and women's theater in national, international, and online venues.

The *Marías Guerreras* are not alone in their collaborative feminist work; rather, their association reflects a recent trend in contemporary Spanish theater: that of women's theater collectives founded upon and committed to feminist principles. In less than 15 years, five women's theater collectives have emerged in Spain: The Sorámbulas, in Alicante (founded in 1992); Proyecto Vaca, in Barcelona (1998); the A.M.A.E.M. in Málaga (1999); the *Marías Guerreras* in Madrid

(2001); and DONESenART, in Valencia (2005). What is most notable about this phenomenon is the profound dedication of these associations to promoting the work of women theater professionals as well as their participation in the feminist project of examining, recuperating, and re/writing the feminine experience.

The present analysis investigates the use of feminism and humor in two works by the Madrid-based Marías Guerreras. The theatrical production to date of the Marías Guerreras is extremely varied and often employs a serious tone to examine subjects such as war and domestic violence in dramatic pieces such as *Todo irá bien* and *Matar*, respectively. At the same time, however, these “teatreras” are acutely aware of the efficacy of humor as a means to convey their feminist message. The present study examines the feminism and humor in two works in particular—*Tras las tocas* and the cabaret *He dejado mi grito por aquí, ¿lo habéis visto?*¹ From the collaborative origins of each piece to the question and answer sessions with the audience that followed each performance, both dramas reflect feminist theory at all levels, not only in terms of theme and form but also in terms of the works’ creation and production. It is important to note here that the work to date of the *Marías Guerreras* is characterized by what I would call a blending of contemporary feminist theory. Much as the association itself embraces a diversity of theatrical professions—counting among its members not only playwrights and actresses but also directors, stage managers, costumers, scenographers, etc.—their work engages metaphorically with the multiplicity of contemporary feminisms. Whether portraying the social construction of gender, reclaiming the female body as subject not object, or critiquing the socio-cultural and economic structures that sustain inequality, the work of the Marías Guerreras suggests a multifaceted feminism or, what Alicia

¹ *Tras las tocas* and *He dejado mi grito* are published in the volume *Primer Ciclo de las Marías Guerreras en Casa de América* and all citations are from this edition. All references to the performance of these plays, unless other wise noted, refer to the performances I attended: *Tras las tocas*, Teatro de las Aguas, June 2002, Madrid and *He dejado mi grito por aquí*, Teatro de las Aguas, June 2004, Madrid.

Redondo Goicoechea has called “un feminismo polifónico”—actively and necessarily engaging differing strains of contemporary feminist thought. As Rosa María Rodríguez Magda has noted:

Los debates en torno a la mujer como sujeto del saber y agente social, como objeto de violencia y discriminación, la utilización erótica del cuerpo femenino, la identidad sexual, el posicionamiento del feminismo frente a los conceptos de género y raza, las tecnologías reproductivas, la imagen de la mujer en las diversas esferas de la cultura... siguen siendo problemáticas abiertas donde las diversas tendencias aportan perspectivas enriquecedoras.

Both *Tras las tocas* and *He dejado mi grito* engage in these debates, blending serious themes with humor that engages the audience. Sometimes biting and subversive, yet always compelling and poignant, the humor in these works serves as an affirmation that feminists are indeed funny.

In *Tras las tocas* the laughter of the spectators begins as they enter the foyer of the theater, where they are greeted and welcomed to the convent by the Madre Superiora, dressed in full habit and wimple. Immediately the audience is drawn not only into the work—in a very comical manner, as the actress Esperanza de la Encarnación has witty, ad lib conversations about the “convent”—but also into the gendered theme of the play.² The specific female role indicated by the habit is one of chastity, subservience, and certainly religious devotion. The ensuing monologues of the “sisters,” however, will subvert this initial vestimentary code of literal and figurative confinement.

The lights come up on a group of nuns, all dressed in the same manner as the madre superiora, facing the audience and praying on kneelers. The fabric covering the kneelers hides their bodies from the audience—further confinement—as they recite the Hail Mary. Even before Sor

² *Tras las tocas* originated as a series of individual pieces (monologues or scenes) that were then woven together, through the ensemble work of a “grupo de trabajo” --actresses, playwrights and directors, etc. into a complete work. The ensemble group “mujeres reinventadas,” charged themselves with exploring and reinventing the “grandes mitos femeninos de la literatura dramática universal” (program). The result was a revision, or rewriting of six well-known female protagonists—Salome, Medea, Iphigenia, Laurencia (of Fuenteovejuna), and Adela and Bernarda of García Lorca’s *La casa de Bernarda Alba*.

Salomé, Sor Medea, Sor Ifigenia, Sor Laurencia, Sor Bernarda, and Sor Adela begin to tell their respective stories, the roles indicated by the clothing and prayer are comically subverted when, seemingly from boredom and/or doubt, the sisters play with the cadence of the prayer. Either trying to say as much as possible without taking a breath or playing with emphasis:

SOR IFIGENIA.- *(En la voz de Ifigenia el rezo se convierte en una serie de oraciones cargadas de una intención ambigua, sin falta de respeto, pero hilarante.)*

DIOS te salve, María

LLENA eres de gracia.

El Señor es contigo.

Bendita tú eres

Entre TODAS las Mujeres,

Y BENDITO es el FRUTO de tu vientre, JESÚS. (197)

While the sisters are able to recuperate the cadence of the prayer, their moments of doubt, frustration, and irreverence foreshadow not only the subsequent revelations of transgression by each sister, but also the demythification of the chaste archetypal mother figure to whom they pray and about whom, it seems, they already have their doubts.

The title of this first scene, *Los rezos*, is significant inasmuch as it indicates a particular dramatic technique that is repeated throughout the play. Much like the responsorial style that characterizes the recitation of the Hail Mary, when each character recounts her story the others assume a choral role. While the choral role marks an immediate intertextual connection to theater and tragedy, it also serves the subversion of feminine archetypes. Each of the protagonists will ultimately reclaim her voice, breaking the silence to which she was sentenced by the canonical narrative that confined her identity. As each character reveals her identity, the others—in their choral

roles—remind the audience of the “official” version of that story and frequently respond with appellations to the virgin.

Structurally then, the work is divided into seven scenes, each of which is protagonized by one of the notorious women as she takes center stage, reveals her identity, and relates her version of the events. The staging of each woman’s account unites the form of the work to its thematic content and feminist goals by visually placing the protagonist of each scene in the center of the stage. Each “sister” will stand while her “audience” listens in a seated or kneeling position, thus suggesting visually the character’s reclaiming of authority in the telling of her story. Similarly, each character at the moment of her retelling removes her wimple and habit. This gesture, symbolic of the escape from confinement, also denotes the peeling off or removal of culturally constructed-gender roles, revealing them as costumes or habits (pun intended) in the performance of gender. Importantly, the removal of the habit does not interfere with what feminist theater theorists have termed the visual “under-display” of the female body (Aston 95). A means of “dislocating feminine glamour,” this under-display frustrates the patriarchal gaze since underneath the habits, the women are wearing long, loose fitting gowns—thus removing the focus on the female body as an object of sexual desire that needs to conform to the cultural definitions of feminine beauty. The staging of the work thus further emphasizes its feminist retelling, as the characters are afforded a “gaze-free” environment in order to become authors not only of their stories but also of their sexual desire. Each character reclaims and exalts her sexuality and body, free from the confines of the patriarchal gaze.

While the revelations of Medea, Iphigenia, Bernarda, and Adela explore themes of gender, power, and political oppression with a more serious tone, the use of colloquial language and its incongruence with the persona of the canonical characters as well the transitions between scenes provide a comedic release for the audience. In Salomé’s scene for example, the temptress (or femme fatal—in Oscar Wilde’s version), becomes Salome, a young girl dancing at a nightclub who suffers

the rejection of unrequited love. She relates her encounter with Juan, a foreigner, who, “va de exótico y de distinto. Un prigao y un guiri, eso es” (202). Juan enticed her with promises of love that he failed to keep and then left. While the reinvented Salomé desires revenge—as he leaves she shouts “Volverás en bandeja de plata”—her story does end with beheading of the Baptist. On the contrary, in accordance with work’s use of humor and contemporary references, as well as with the feminist recourses of ambiguity and contradiction (to frustrate a closed linear narrative), Juan simply never returned. “No le volví a ver nunca. Supongo que no consiguió quedarse. Los trámites, los papeles, los permisos de residencia” (203).

Additional humorous moments occur as the work eloquently moves from one scene to the next and the characters carry out domestic activities that have historically been designated as feminine. The titles of the scenes 2-6 indicate these typically female occupations—*La carta, Las fregonas, Las cebollas, y Las sábanas, and El bordado*. In each of these scenes the task serves as a background to or is interrupted by the narrative reinvention, which (literally) takes center stage, thus poignantly juxtaposing “shocking revelations” between the “mere” feminine chores. The performance of these acts is often carried out comically against a background of singing, praying, or of the bells of the convent. As the stage directions at the beginning of scene three note:

Encabeza la fila de ‘limpiadoras’ IFIGENIA, con un plumero que va quitando el polvo a todas las figuritas, sillas, mesas, crucifijos y demás elementos imaginarios. La sigue MEDEA con un cepillo de palo largo; detrás ADELA y SALOMÉ, van sacando brillo al suelo con unas bayetas en los pies. Por último BERNARDA, va repasando hasta la última motita a mano, y limpiándolo en un trapo. Hacen una procesión limpiadora al ritmo del Salve Regina (208).

The singing of the Salve Regina and the leitmotif of the virgin—an archetype that has played no small role in the construction of female gender roles—are not gratuitous, of course, but

purposefully and elegantly woven throughout the work. The image of the virgin calls to mind patriarchal entrapment of female corporality between the notions of temptress/Eve/prostitute and virgin/angel/saint. The mythological/literary narratives surrounding the characters of *Tras las tocas* have indeed been categorized according to these binary oppositions. As the women retell their stories however, it becomes evident that these designations are a product of the cultural codification of gender. The chaste narrative of the virgin will be comically and completely subverted in the final scene when la Madre Superiora (who has been observing from a position behind the spectators) approaches the stage for her retelling.

The circular and cyclical nature of the work, finds its realization in the final scene—entitled “La aparición mariana” when the female archetype to whom the sisters have been praying throughout the work arrives and observes “¿Qué otra gran mujer falta en este claustro?” (226). In this highly comical scene, the narrative surrounding this chaste archetypal figure is subverted and revealed as a construct. The disparity between Mary’s account of her life and the constructed narrative that has historically defined her is further foregrounded as the other characters interrupt her story by interjecting reverent epithets that she denies:

TODAS.- Ora pro nobis

MARÍA.- A mi los hombres siempre me han gustado más que mojar pan. Sobre todo el mío, mi José [. . .]

IFIGENIA.- ¡La Virgen!

[. . .]

MARÍA.- Bueno de eso, de eso precisamente quería hablaros. [. . .] Lo de mi virginidad . . fue un . . invento [. . .] Cosa de los hombres. Los hombres nos quieren a estrenar, como si fuéramos un par de zapatos nuevos.

.....

Alguien tenía que redimir el supuesto pecado de nuestra madre Eva, que otro había inventado, y me tocó a mí la china. Un entuerto para deshacer otro entuerto . . .

IFIGENIA.- Virgo Virginum

MARÍA.- Eso la virgen de las vírgenes. Cuanto daño ha hecho eso. (226-229)

As the virgin's revelations bring the work to a close, amid resounding laughter from the audience they also serve to transform the physical and metaphorical space that the women inhabit. In contrast to the closed space suggested by the convent and reinforced by each character's description of her entrapment—most highlighted in Adela's scene and descriptions of Bernarda's house—this final scene suggests freedom, open-endedness and transformation. In fact the irreverent, comical portrayal is a concrete example of the Marías Guerreras use of feminist humor, which as Merrill notes is "is strong, rebellious [and] empowers women to examine how we have been objectified and fetishized and to what extent we have been led to perpetuate this objectification" (279). The ensemble group "Los transparentes" continues this "aggressive and intellectual" use of comedy to explore female objectification in the cabaret *He dejado mi grito por aquí ¿lo habéis visto?*.

A collective creation, *He dejado mi grito* was first performed at the Encuentro de Mujeres Iberoamericanas Creadoras in Cádiz. It later went through many revisions and additions before being performed, in various locations around Spain, and was later published in the first volume of the *Marías Guerreras en Casa de América*. Much as *Tras las tocas* subverts the sacred space of the convent, *He dejado mi grito*, reinvents the cabaret. Juxtaposing the "over-display" of the female body with themes such as war and domestic violence, *He dejado mi grito* highlights the constructed nature of sexy cabaret performer. Importantly, the cabaret genre with its history of being a subversive space of transgression, serves as the perfect "space" to critique contemporary socio-cultural conditions. In defining cabaret form, Coenie de Villiers, states that it is a "civilized protest that satirizes socio-political conditions and seeks new forms of artistic and sociopolitical expression"

(129-130). Thus defined, the goals of Cabaret reflect feminist goals and are equally akin to feminist humor's call to "challenge the status quo" (Bing 30.) In this manner the Marías Guerreras use subversive humor to "challenge existing ideas and power relationships" (Homes qtd. in Bing 30). The use of music, dance, and metatheater form an integral part of this challenge.

Structurally the work is divided into five "bloques" or scenes and an epilogue: "Las presentaciones", "El mundo en el que viven", "Observación del macro-mundo", "El grito. Los gritos", y "Cambiemos nuestro mundo". While seemingly separate scenes—each with a different dramatic nucleus, as is appropriate for a cabaret—the recurring themes of injustice, marginalization, and socially constructed gender norms serve to eloquently connect the seemingly heterogeneous scenes. The first two scenes have a more serious tone. The "cabareteras" perform frivolous songs and dances that are poignantly and ingeniously interrupted by statements about war and gendered violence. To give the audience a rest from these more serious portrayals, scene three explodes with humor as the performers exploit all elements of dramatic discourse to take the work to its comedic height.

The scene begins abruptly with the announcement: "Interrumpimos nuestro espectáculo para contarles en directo lo que está aconteciendo en estos momentos en la CUMBRE INTERNACIONAL DE TODOS LOS PODERES" (173). In the metatheatrical performance that follows, each woman—having added specific accessories to her cabaret costume—assumes the role of one of the "world powers"—political, religious, military, economic and media. The presenter announces that unfortunately "el Poder Judicial" has been kidnapped and therefore is not in attendance. Each power is then introduced in turn by the presenter and has the opportunity to address the audience. The humor is achieved through the use of different musical styles, hyperbole, and self-contradicting lyrics. Each "power" sings an original song with music and lyrics appropriate to her position.

El Poder Político takes stage to the strains of a tango and begins her song by singing about the importance of compromise, while the other performers sing the one-word chorus: “negociar”. Her song, however, rises to a frenetic tempo and closes with the proclamation that she will govern “con tu apoyo o sin tu apoyo / Con consenso o sin consenso / Quien decida seré yo” (176). The Military power’s song sounds appropriately like a march and she continually contradicts herself, exposing hypocrisy: “Ven y verás / ven y verás / lo fácil que te resulta matar [. . .] Prohibido matar, / no digo matar/ no es matar [. . .] Es defensa / Es intervención / es un conflicto por un mundo mejor” (176-7). Perhaps the most comical and poignant song is that of el Poder Religioso. In an excellent parody of the Beatitudes she sings:

Bienaventurados los sin techo porque de ellos es el privilegio de no pagar la letra del chalet. Bienaventurados los inmigrantes pues acabarán siendo buenos navegantes [. . .]
Bienaventurados los parados [. . .] porque ellos conocerán el reino de los cursos gratuitos y la precariedad de los contratos. Bienaventurados los que controlan sus pobres instintos contra natura porque de ellos será el sexo de los ángeles. Bienaventurados las mujeres porque” (181).

The entire song, exquisitely performed by Rosalía Ángel, provokes vigorous laughter in the audience and is an excellent example of feminist humor as it parodies a sacred text to point at cultural hypocrisy. Additionally, the irony of the last unfinished line—there is a long pause as the performers look directly at the audience with expressions of confusion—is certainly in line with Bing’s definition of a “feminist joke” as one that makes women’s concerns central and is also “rebellious and self-affirming (22, 31). It is self-affirming in that each receptor can finish the line as he or she wishes. At the same time it is rebellious since it challenges the audience to think about how gendered norms have and are still providing stereotypical conclusions to that sentence.

The scenes that compose the last part of the play continue to challenge socio-culturally constructed norms of masculinity and femininity as well as social inequality. In the penultimate scene “El grito. Los gritos” the performers demonstrate the importance of giving voice to the silenced. They invite an audience member on stage and encourage him or her and the whole audience to shout. It is a bitter-sweet scene as they begin by shouting about the frustrations of daily life: “he perdido el bolígrafo,” “odio hacerme la cera,” and “se me pegan las lentejas” but end on a more serious note defining: “el grito de terror,” “el grito de dolor,” and “el grito de rabia. The latter are certainly feminist shouts against violence and injustice.

The epilogue that closes the work is a song entitled “Quiero parar,” which ends the play on a hopeful note of power and a call to activism: “Que no me canten ni me bailen mi canción. / Tengo mi voz: quiero gritar / llega el momento, estate atento, / de salir de esa corriente de callar” (193-194). Clearly these cabareteras have found their “lost shout” and in so doing have affirmed that feminists are indeed funny and should use their voice and their sense of humor to point out injustice and hypocrisy.

While the work of the *Marías Guerreras* is as diverse and varied as the association’s members, it is clearly united by its commitment to feminist theory and practice. Whether serious or comedic, the *Marías Guerreras*’ active association and collaboration is both thought provoking and socially engaged, demonstrating a clear feminist mission. Their work not only entertains—often using humor and satire—but also engages the spectators, promoting a feminist perspective that questions, critiques, and dialogues with the gendered norms and power structures of the contemporary world.

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Reviews/Reseñas

Diosdado, Ana. Paloma Pedrero and Yolanda Dorado. *Staging Terror: Madrid 3/11*. Karen Leahy and Phyllis Zatlin, Trans. New York: Estreno Plays 2007. 51 pp.

The world must never forget the tragic events that took place in Madrid on March 11, 2004 when ten coordinated explosions ripped apart four rush-hour commuter trains claiming nearly two hundred lives, injuring over two thousand people and leaving an indelible mark upon the people of Spain. Such is the premise behind *Staging Terror: Madrid 3/11*, the most recent publication in the series *Estreno: Contemporary Spanish Plays*. The text provides English translations of a trio of theatrical works originally commissioned (along with eight other one-act plays) by the Spanish government for the first anniversary of the terrorist attack. The commemorative project, *Once voces contra la barbarie* or *Eleven Voices Against Savagery*, was conceived in homage of the terror victims as an effort to explore the attitudes and conditions that can motivate such an attack as well as its devastating effects. Stringent guidelines were maintained: only pieces with small casts, minimal sets and limited duration were accepted. No work could exceed ten minutes in length.

Iride Lamartina-Lens and Susan Berardini, the editors of *Staging Terror*, have carefully selected three dramas that provide a variety of perspectives while featuring a gendered approach to this particular terrorist act. Created by prominent female playwrights of distinct generations, the works present a surprising array of female protagonists, especially given the strict limitations regarding cast size. At the same time, the meticulously structured anthology adheres to a logical progression that suggests chronological advancement.

The slender volume opens with Ana Diosdado's *Harira* and, not coincidentally, the majority of the action takes place before the characters hear the tragic news. The play focuses on the empathetic, daily interactions between two women who, despite differences in ethnicity and class—a Muslim woman works in the home of a middle class Spaniard—forge a bond through their common experiences of cooking, parenting, and shared understanding of the challenges faced by immigrants. Set entirely in the small, intimate space of the kitchen and presenting a private conversation centered on everyday routines and familial ties, the play focuses on the personal, individual experience of March 11. However, the looming presence of a clock (stuck at 7:30, the approximate time of the initial blast), a daily wall calendar (conspicuously changed from March 10 to March 11 at the play's inception) and the constant background "music" in which the names of the victims are rhythmically enumerated, constantly remind the spectator of the historic tragedy about to unfold. The symbolic ending—upon hearing of the tragedy, the two women embrace and "let out a silent piercing scream" (12)—simultaneously expresses an overwhelming, unspeakable grief and the necessity for cultural understanding.

The next play, *Ana 3/11* by Paloma Pedrero, takes place in the immediate aftermath of the attack. Much as the bombs violently destroyed the trains, the viewer witnesses the catastrophic shattering of individual lives. An increasingly heightened sense of uncertainty, fear and hopelessness overwhelms the three female characters (significantly named Ana 1, 2 and 3) each of whom anxiously awaits information on the fate of a single victim, Angel. These women, completely isolated despite their shared grief, represent the quintessential female roles of lover, wife, and mother. Contemplating the intricately complex web of relationships directly affected by just one of the many casualties from this

immense tragedy, the spectator begins to grasp the enormity of the disaster on both a personal and a national scale.

Finally, Yolanda Dorado's *Oxygen*, the third and final piece included in *Staging Terror*, closes the volume by emphasizing the enduring psychological effects of shock, trauma and survivor guilt. In contrast to the previous works, this play depicts the devastating impact of the terrorist attack on those who directly experienced the violence. Suffering a profound identity crisis, the protagonist re-evaluates her routine existence and deliberately undertakes a radical life change. In this way, Dorado underscores the (perhaps inevitable) transformations that result from calamity and suggests that successfully overcoming trauma need not imply a return to the status quo.

Each of these dramatic pieces relies upon individualized focalization to portray collective trauma: personal stories convey a national disaster. Each work further delves into the emotional repercussions of loss, adamantly avoiding both sensationalism and vengeful ire. In fact, Anjali Vashi's astute observation that "this was neither simply a recounting of the events that occurred in the train stations that dark day in Madrid, nor was this solely a private 'slice of life' peek" (xiii) though specifically referencing *Ana 3/11*, aptly describes the approach of the entire collection.

Staging Terror does not assume an informed reader with expertise in contemporary Spanish theater. Instead, the volume targets a broad, English speaking audience. Short biographical sketches of the playwrights, brief interpretive notes on each work, and black and white photographs of the stage productions aid the novice reader in contextualizing these socially committed works. The collection will, however, have special appeal to those interested in women's studies, commemoration and collective memory, the history and culture of contemporary Spain, and literary representations of terrorism in particular or violence more generally.

Janis Breckenridge
Hiram College

Ligia Minaya Belliard. *Mi corazón tiembla en la sombra*. Sto Domingo: Ediciones Librería La Trinitaria, 2007. ISBN 978-99934-39-46-2. 114 páginas

El título de esta exitosa novela de Ligia Minaya Belliard viene de los versos de un poeta haitiano, Jacques Romain, que dicen "In the shadow, my heart trembles" (98) citado en la novela por el personaje principal. La sombra es un *leitmotiv* en la obra y por supuesto su propuesta es polisémica, lo que hace más sutil la complejidad temática del tramado de la historia.

Si bien el asunto principal se desarrolla como una novela de detectives en la que una protagonista mujer, periodista, va en busca del paradero de una extranjera desaparecida, la situación es propicia para que dependiendo de un tinglado de variados hombres, director del periódico, chofer, fotógrafo, jefe de policía, cónsul, gobernador, saneadores, religiosos, entre otros, logre encontrarse a sí misma, además de encontrar a la desaparecida causante de la aventura. Este desarrollo la convierte en una novela de búsqueda interior, de cuestionamiento de lo que es ser mujer dominicana y de lo que es ser mujer en control de la palabra y del silencio. Ambos ámbitos del decir y del callar surgen en múltiples situaciones de la historia otorgando un poder fortalecido e intenso a quien se apodera de la palabra.

La sombra que se subraya desde el título y hace temblar los corazones se relaciona más que nada con aquellas áreas oscuras propias del ‘desconocer,’ del ignorar, del no querer entender. Toda sombra depende de una luz, y esa línea tenue entre ambas marca uno de los planteos profundos de la novela: el sentido de los límites, tanto los reales, como los impuestos y mucho más los imaginarios. Traspasar los límites es un tema retante de esta novela: obvios son aquellas fronteras impuestas por el género, los límites internacionales, los regionales, los religiosos, los históricos por nombrar algunos de los que están en juego.

Con el pretexto de que es una extranjera la desaparecida en el sur del país, salen la periodista, el chofer y el fotógrafo rumbo a un mundo que es tan ajeno a la protagonista como a la extranjera perdida. Ir por “camino que parecían laberintos, como si camináramos en círculos, por terreno jamás pisado” (55) es un modo de entrar en ‘lo dominicano’ desconocido. Se adentra el personaje en la sombra de su país, no sólo a nivel socio-geográfico, por la pobreza, la ignorancia, el abandono civil, sino por llegar a un territorio donde la historia ha sido escrita con las versiones apropiadas para tapar grandes errores de injusticias de otras épocas. El área está marcada especialmente por lo ocurrido en 1921 con Liborio, y en 1961 y 1962 con los Mellizos. Estos dos momentos relacionados entre sí han sido hábil y convenientemente desdibujado en la Historia (mayúscula intencionada) patria nacional, imponiéndoles desde la versión oficial sentidos ideológicos que, según lo narrado por diversos personajes que aparecen en la novela, no tenían. El entrecruzado y emocional relato de aquellas matanzas aparece fragmentado en diversas conversaciones y sin embargo, logra un peso que traspasa la frontera del texto histórico oficial, sembrando fuerte incertidumbre frente a su veracidad.

La cercanía de San Juan de la Maguana y de Palma Sola al tenebroso y a veces incierto límite entre Haití y la República Dominicana complican aún más el sentido de entrar en territorios peligrosos. La frontera entre los dos países ha sido motivo de muchas páginas literarias, siendo el lado haitiano un interrogante del misterio de qué hay del otro lado de una frontera incierta.

La protagonista sin proponérselo busca su ‘dominicanidad’ entre compatriotas que le muestran constantemente un lado en sombras, desconocido que la distancia de ellos; su posición de reportera, con el poder y respeto que le confiere, la hace comprender los obstáculos que el género aumenta. Ser mujer no facilita su misión, como lo muestra cada paso de la historia, y los hombres al alejarse del espacio urbano se autorizan para dirigirla y marcarle el rumbo, como lo hace el chofer. Fuera del territorio de la capital, las versiones de la historia oficial se debilitan, y, como los caminos laberínticos, se refieren a sí mismas, ignorando a propósito sucesos que las mancha e involucra. Muchos límites por traspasar, muchas certezas para adumbrar, muchas sombras para iluminar: la novela plantea instancias sin respuestas claras, sin caer en maniqueísmos fáciles, sin pretender más que contar una historia que entretiene y deja preguntándose sobre sombras y límites a muchas lectoras.

Ester Gimbernat González, Editor *Confluencia*
Professor Hispanic Studies
University of Northern Colorado

Publications and Research

The Will to Heal: Psychological Recovery in the Novels of Latina Writers. Felicia Lynne Fahey
University of New Mexico Press
212 pages
\$27.95

For the past three decades, Latin American and Latina women writers have used autobiography, fiction, and a blend of the two genres to address the psychological struggle to heal from both personal and political traumas. Felicia Fahey focuses on six fictional autobiographies as literary representations of psychological recovery: Alina Diaconú's *El penúltimo viaje/The penultimate journey* (1989), Manuela Fingueret's *Hija del silencio/Daughter of Silence* (2000), Luisa Valenzuela's *La travesía/The Crossing* (2001), Sara Sefchovich's *Demasiado amor/Too Much Love* (1991), Laura Restrepo's *Dulce compañía/The Angel of Galilea* (1995), and Ana Castillo's *The Mixquiahuala Letters* (1989).

These novels are presented in two groups. Diaconú, Fingueret, and Valenzuela explore the psychological effects of the Argentine Dirty War of 1976 to 1983, while Sefchovich, Restrepo and Castillo, examine more general sociocultural issues of politics and gender in Mexico, Columbia, and the United States. This literature, authored by and about women, reveals the uncertain journey of the protagonist who, in order to heal life's wounds, faces the forbidden and painful territory of the autobiographical process and the consequences for the individual and community that this interior journey has. Analyzes six fictional autobiographies: Ana Castillo's *The Mixquiahuala Letters*, Alina Diaconu's *The Penultimate Voyage*, Manuela Fingueret's *Daughter of Silence*, Laura Restrepo's *The Angel of Galilea*, and Sara Sefchovich's *Too Much Love*, and Luisa Valenzuela's *The Crossing*.

Central at the Margin: Five Brazilian Women Writers. Renata R. Mautner
Bucknell University Press
216 pages
\$49.50

Central at the Margin examines the work of five Brazilian women writers: Julia Lopes de Almeida, and women's power within and outside the family; Rachel de Queiroz and the relation between backcountry "matriarchs" and city wives and workers; Lygia Fagundes Telles and the crumbling world of the coffee aristocrat; Clarice Lispector and what constitutes a Brazilian, a woman, a writer; Carolina Maria de Jesus and the definition of marginality at the margin.

Latinocanada: A Critical Study of Ten Latin American Writers of Canada. Hugh Hazelton
McGill-Queen's University Press
312 pages
\$80

A burgeoning new branch of Hispanic literature, Latino-Canadian writing is now becoming part of the Canadian and Quebec literary traditions. *Latinocanadá*, a critical anthology, examines the work of Hispanic writers who have settled in Canada over the past thirty years and includes newly translated selections of their work.

The exiles, immigrants, and travellers represented in Latinocanadá include Jorge Etcheverry (Chile), Margarita Feliciano (Argentina), Gilberto Flores Patiño (Mexico), Alfredo Lavergne (Chile), Alfonso Quijada Urias (El Salvador), Nela Rio (Argentina), Alejandro Saravia (Bolivia), Yvonne América Truque (Colombia), Pablo Urbanyi (Argentina), and Leandro Urbina (Chile). Their poetry and prose ranges from magic realism to tragedy to satire to science fiction and often depicts the experience of adapting and settling in Canada. Hugh Hazelton discusses the historical background, national literatures, and contemporary trends in the authors' countries of origin. He also includes a detailed analysis of each author's work, influences, and themes and their involvement with the Canadian and Quebec literary worlds.

Josefina Niggli: Mexican American Writer: A Critical Biography. Elizabeth Coonrod Martinez
University of New Mexico Press
317 pages
\$24.95

This is the story of a remarkable woman whose artistic mission was to relate Mexican cultural history to English-language readers. A world-renowned playwright in the 1930s and best-selling novelist in the 1940s, Josefina Niggli published at a time when Chicana/o literature was not yet recognized as such. Her works revealed Mexico from an insider's point of view, although she found herself struggling with publishers who wanted an American hero pitted against a Mexican villain.

Niggli's life experience transpired in Mexico, Texas, the East Coast in the pre-World War II years, and North Carolina, with jaunts to Hollywood and to England, all in an era when few U.S. women writers were able to publish. Only recently has Niggli received critical attention as scholars of Chicana/o literature recognize her as one of the earliest Mexican American writers to focus on life lived between two cultures and nations. This scholarly biography, which includes selections from some of Niggli's unrecognized writings, is designed to solidify her place in the literary canon.

"Elizabeth Coonrod Martínez's exceptional book, *Josefina Niggli, Mexican-American Writer: A Critical Biography*, is a magnificent contribution to the scholarly study of the life and works of the brilliant binational and transnational writer, Josefina Niggli. From poems to short stories and theatrical plays to novels, [Martínez] provides the reader with extensive and detailed biographical data interspersed with key selections of Niggli's lesser known or unpublished writings. Martínez's groundbreaking book will be a fundamental work for any future study undertaken on this Mexican American writer's creative production and on Chicana/o literature in general."—María Herrera Sobek, author of *Chicano Folklore: A Handbook* (2006) and associate vice chancellor at the University of California, Santa Barbara

Elena Poniatowska: An Intimate Biography. Michael K. Schuessler
University of Arizona Press
272 pages
\$19.95

Descended from the last king of Poland, born in France, educated at a British grade school in Mexico and a Catholic high school in the United States, Hélène Elizabeth Louise Amelie Paula Dolores Poniatowska Amor—otherwise known as Elena—is a passionate, socially conscious writer who is widely known in Mexico and who deserves to be better known everywhere else. With his subject's

complete cooperation (she granted him access to fifty years of personal files), Michael Schuessler provides the first critical biography of Poniatowska's life and work. She is perhaps best known outside of Mexico as the author of *Massacre in Mexico* (*La noche de Tlatelolco*) and *Here's to You, Jesusa!* (*Hasta no verte, Jesús mío*). But her body of published books is vast, beginning with the 1954 publication of *Lilus Kikus*, a collection of short stories. And she is still writing today. Schuessler, who befriended Poniatowska more than fifteen years ago, is a knowledgeable guide to her engrossing life and equally engaging work. As befits her, his portrait is itself a literary collage, a "living kaleidoscope" that is constantly shifting to include a multiplicity of voices—those of fellow writers, literary critics, her nanny, her mother, and the writer herself—easily accessible to general readers and essential to scholars. Available in English for the first time, this insightful book includes 40 photographs and drawings and an annotated bibliography of Poniatowska's works—those that have already been translated into English and those awaiting translation.

Queer Transitions in Contemporary Spanish Culture. From Franco to la Movida
Gema Pérez-Sánchez

Gema Pérez-Sánchez argues that the process of political and cultural transition from dictatorship to democracy in Spain can be read allegorically as a shift from a dictatorship that followed a self-loathing "homosexual" model to a democracy that identified as a pluralized "queer" body. Focusing on the urban cultural phenomenon of *la movida*, she offers a sustained analysis of high queer culture, as represented by novels, along with an examination of low queer culture, as represented by comic books and films. Pérez-Sánchez shows that urban queer culture played a defining role in the cultural

and political processes that helped to move Spain from a premodern, fascist military dictatorship to a late-capitalist, parliamentary democracy. The book highlights the contributions of women writers Ana María Moix and Cristina Peri Rossi, as well as comic book artists Ana Juan, Victoria Martos, Ana Miralles, and Asun Balzola. Its attention to women's cultural production functions as a counterpoint to its analysis

of the works of such male writers as Juan Goytisolo and Eduardo Mendicutti, comic book artists Nazario, Rubén, and Luis Pérez Ortiz, and filmmaker Pedro Almodóvar.

"The topic is significant because still today much remains to be done in mapping the contributions of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgendered peoples to the Spanish cultural landscape. By giving priority to the study of women authors and sequential artists dealing with lesbianism, *Queer Transitions in Contemporary Spanish Culture* boldly and accurately situates itself within leading studies of sexualities." — Silvia Bermúdez, coeditor of *From Stateless Nations to Postnational Spain*

A Companion to US Latino Literatures. Edited by Carlota Caulfield and Darién J. Davis
<http://www.boydell.co.uk/5566139X.HTM>

248 pages

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13 digit ISBN: 9781855661394

Price: 85.00 USD / 50.00 GBP

Tamesis Books

Carlota Caulfield, professor of Spanish and Spanish-American studies at Mills College, has co-edited the *Companion to U.S. Latino Literatures* with Darién J. Davis, associate professor of history and Latin American studies at Middlebury College in Vermont. The book was published last month by

Tamesis Books, UK, the leading academic imprint outside Spain specializing in scholarly editions and monographs relating to the literature, history, art, and philology of the Spanish-speaking world.

According to Tamesis Books, the volume documents the linguistic and cultural diversity of Latino literary output in the U.S. Unique in its scope and perspective, it focuses on various literary genres and cinema related to Latinos. Each essay considers Latino writers who were born or raised in the U.S., as well as Latin American writers who took up residence in this country but may also be considered part of the literary scene of their countries of origin.

Each contributor offers their original perspective on the subject matter or theme, resulting in an inclusive spectrum of the voices of the U.S. Latin American diaspora.

Contributors include: Eva Bueno, Carlota Caulfield, Elizabeth Coonrod Martínez, Darién J. Davis, Jorge Febles, Lydia Gil, Armando González-Pérez, Patricia M. Montilla, Vincent Spina, Antonio Tosta, and Sergio Waisman.

The *Companion to U.S. Latino Literatures* features the following topics:

- Introduction: Pluralism in U.S. Latino Literature: A Historical Perspective
- Resistance, Revolution and Recuperation: The Literary Production of the Mestizo/Mexican-American/Chicano
- The Importance of Being Sandra (Cisneros)
- The Island as Mainland and the Revolving Door Motif: Contemporary Puerto Rican Literature of the United States
- Am I Who I Am? Identity Games in U.S. Cuban Literature
- Afro-Cuban Identity in the Theater of the Diaspora
- Between the Island and the Tenements: New Directions in Dominican-American literature
- Three Central American Writers: Alone Between Two Cultures
- American Dream: Jeitinho Brasileiro: On the Crossroads of Cultural
- Identities in Brazilian-American Literature
- Argentine Writers in the U.S.: Writing South, Living North
- Balancing Act: Latin American Jewish Literature in the United States
- U.S. Latina Caribbean Women Poets: An Overview
- The Latino Film Experience in History: A Dialogue Among Texts and Collaborators

A Mapmaker's Diary. Selected Poems. Carlota Caulfield.

Carlota Caulfield has published *A Mapmaker's Diary. Selected Poems*. Translated by Mary G. Berg in collaboration with the author, with the New York publishing House White Pine Press.

<http://www.cbsd.com/inventory.aspx?id=21960> and
<<http://www.whitepine.org/catalog.php?show=2007>>

“Carlota Caulfield has given us a work of great sensuality and rare luminosity, suffused with an intelligence that is both playful and meditative. Her pleasures and discoveries become ours, her

tender, often sly observations are crafted for inheritance. But it is Caulfield's devotion to the daily sacred that helps inspire our own." —Cristina García

"The poetry of Carlota Caulfield is characterized by journeys, by wandering memory that seeks to travel all the world's roads, to sail to all its islands. The speakers in her poems are voyagers in perpetual transit, symbols of that wandering creature that human beings inevitably turn into when they are exiled from paradise, that is to say, from their

mother's womb. The poet's eye yearns to see everything, take possession of everything, with never a pause to draw a breath. An eye that perceives all, including the fleeting passage of time and space."

—Issac Goldemberg

"Haunting incantatory poems by Carlota Caulfield, beautifully translated by Mary G. Berg. Writing about loss and memory and the redemption that comes of confronting the wound, Caulfield summons up the inner life in the dream music of the inexpressible." —Chana Bloch

The recipient of the first Spanish American International Poetry Prize, "Dulce Maria Loynaz," in 2002, Caulfield is known for her erudite, multifaceted writing, and has written ten poetry collections. She has received numerous writing awards, such as: the Italian International Poetry Prize "Ultimo Novecento" (1988); the Honorary Mention in the Poetry Latino Literature Prize, Latin American Institute (New York, 1997); Premio Internazionale "Riccardo Marchi-Torre di Calafuria (Italy, 1995); and Mención de Honor in the "Federico García Lorca Poetry Prize" (U.S.-Spain, 1994). Caulfield received a Licenciatura in history and philosophy from the University of Havana; MA, Spanish and Latin American literature, San Francisco State University; and PhD, philosophy and letters, Tulane University. She was born in Havana, Cuba, and has also lived in Dublin, Zurich, London, Barcelona, New York, New Orleans, San Francisco and Berkeley. Caulfield has taught at Mills College since 1992. She currently makes her home between Berkeley, California, and London, UK.

White Pine Press is a non-profit literary publisher, established in 1973, which publishes poetry, fiction, essays, and literature in translation from around the world. For the past thirty years we have been at the forefront in bringing the rich diversity of world literature to the English speaking audience. White Pine Press seeks to enrich our literary heritage; to promote the cultural awareness, understanding, and respect so vital in our rapidly changing world; and to address complex social and human rights issues through literature.

"In a publishing world dominated by celebrity books and glitzy bestsellers, White Pine Press titles are refreshing anomalies. White Pine Press has published Nobel Prize laureates William Golding, Pablo Neruda, Juan Ramon Jimenez, and Gabriela Mistral. Its distinguished roster also includes Robert Bly, Maurice Kenny, William Matthews, and James Wright, all winners of the American Book Award, the National Book Award, or the Pulitzer Prize. White Pine's commitment to international literature is reflected in its publication of acclaimed writers including John Montgague of Ireland, Tomaz Transtromer of Sweden, Antonio Machado of Spain, Alfonsina Storni of Argentina, and Rolf Jacobsen of Norway. White Pine also consistently champions both established and emerging American writers."

-Herb Hadad - *Poets and Writers Magazine*

Una isla con cara de mujer Prominentes mujeres de la cultura en Cuba. María del Mar López-Cabrales

Colorado State University ISBN: 1-930879-50-4 US \$22.00

Una isla con cara de mujer nos introduce a la vida y labor cultural de prominentes mujeres de la cultura cubana contemporánea que se expresan a través de la literatura, las artes plásticas, los medios de comunicación, la música, el arte dramático y la danza. Común a estas mujeres es su lucha por los derechos de las mujeres cubanas y de otros sectores marginales oprimidos. Todas ellas han realizado arriesgadas propuestas artísticas que han revolucionado sus áreas de trabajo tanto desde un punto de vista estético como de contenido. A través de las entrevistas realizadas por la Dra. María del Mar López-Cabrales podemos tener un nuevo enfoque de la labor creativa cubana de los últimos años y del sello que en ella imprimieron las mujeres.

María del Mar López-Cabrales, es profesora titular del Departamento de Lenguas y Literaturas Extranjeras de la Universidad del Estado de Colorado (EEUU). Su línea de investigación se centra en los estudios de mujer en Latinoamérica y España en la época contemporánea.

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Generation X Rocks Contemporary Peninsular Fiction, Film, and Rock Culture Edited

by Christine Henseler, Randolph D. Pope

June 2007

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pages: 288

Essays in this volume explore the popular cultural effects of rock culture on high literary production in Spain in the 1990s.

Christine Henseler is Associate Professor of Spanish at Union College. Randolph D. Pope is Commonwealth Professor of Spanish and Comparative Literature at the University of Virginia.

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Mujeres, literaturas, políticas y compromisos en el Nuevo Milenio: diálogos trasatlánticos
Compilación y prólogo de Guadalupe Cortina
Ediciones Nuevo Espacio

ISBN: 1-930879-52-0 US \$24.95

Mujeres y literaturas latinoamericanas e hispanicas, escritura creativa, enseñanza, crítica de estos quehaceres y participación política en el nuevo milenio, son algunos de los temas recurrentes en este libro. Estas preocupaciones surgieron durante el Décimo Congreso de Literatura Femenina Hispánica llevado a cabo en la ciudad de Querétaro hace algunos años.

Un numeroso grupo de escritoras, críticas, catedráticas, maestras y estudiantes, representando varios puntos del planeta decidieron averiguar la dirección que escritura y escritoras tomarían en el nuevo siglo. ¿Cuál sería la función de la literatura escrita por las mujeres latinoamericanas, hispanas/latinas en el siglo veintiuno? Este cuestionamiento resalta particularmente porque el campo académico no siempre es el más adecuado para la actividad política, los riesgos de una identidad empoderada femenina son muy altos. Esta colección de ensayos que surgieron a raíz del encuentro en Querétaro intenta bosquejar algunas de las posibilidades vigentes.

Guadalupe Cortina, Prólogo. Alicia Partnoy, "Los molinos de la memoria", homenaje a Elena Poniatowska. Alicia Partnoy, "La narrativa de las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo: Estrategias textuales de resistencia a la desaparición". Victoria Cox, "Estrategias de resistencia a la violencia: El testimonio de dos autoras argentinas" Julie Hempel, "The Masking of La Niña Bien: Identity Surfaces in Guadalupe Loaeza's "Besos satánicos". Patricia Varas, "Elena Garro: Una visión femenina de la hibridez mexicana" María Alicia Garza, "(Re)Inventando el imaginario corporal: el cuerpo abyecto en 'Orfandad' y 'Sahara' de Inés Arredondo" María Victoria García-Serrano, "La escritura/escritora desquiciada de *La intimidación*, de Nuria Amat" Cristina Gutiérrez Richaud, "Anatomía de la melancolía —Un himno a la enfermedad Creadora—" Leah Fonder-Solano, "Inversión, ironía y la toma de conciencia: El papel del analista en tres cuentos psicoanalíticos de Cristina Peri Rossi" Shelley Godslan, "¿Un modelo para el milenio? La novela detectivesca feminista española Concha Alborg, "*Modelos de mujer*, de Almudena Grandes: Mujeres sin medida"

Los otros cuerpos: Antología de temática gay, lésbica y queer
Moisés Agosto, David Caleb Acevedo y Luis Negrón

Los otros cuerpos: Antología de temática gay, lésbica y queer desde Puerto Rico y su diáspora es una reunión de muchos cuerpos. Una figura que marca sus contornos con sus textos, sus historias ocultas de una literatura marginal e invisible. Los textos recogidos en esta antología representan un amplio espectro de la manifestación literaria puertorriqueña de finales del siglo XX y principios del XXI. Los otros cuerpos constituye una nueva fundación, la apertura de un nuevo espacio. Un espacio que hoy se consagra para 44 escritoras y escritores, ejemplificando la más diversa expresión. Muchos cuerpos en un cuerpo, que privilegia su voz para identificar las preocupaciones, motivos y anhelos de la comunidad gay, lésbica y queer.

Manuel Ramos Otero, Luis Negrón, Carlos Vázquez Cruz, Max Chárriez, Alfredo Villanueva Collado, Maribel Ortiz, Ana María Fuster Lavín, Manuel Clavell Carrasquillo, Miguel Juan Concepción, Ricardo Santana Ortiz, Emilio del Carril, Yolanda Arroyo Pizarro, Alexandra Pagán Vélez, Larry La Fountain Stokes, Chenoa Ochoa, Juan Pablo Rivera, Charles Rice González, Jaditza Aguilar Castro, Abniel Marat, Karen Méndez Sevilla, Chiara Merino Pérez Carvajal, Aixa A. Ardín Pauneto, Rane Ramón Arroyo, Ángel Antonio Ruiz Laboy, Benjamín Milano Albino, Héctor Jiménez, Aida Negrón Rodríguez, Luz María Umpierre, Miguel Ángel Náter, Sheyla Rivera, Miguel Figueroa, Abdiel Echevarría Cabán, David Caleb Acevedo, Robert Vázquez Pacheco, Lilliana Ramos Collado, Moisés Agosto Rosario, Rosalina Martínez, Nemir Matos Cintrón, Daniel Torres, Rubén Ríos Ávila, Jossiana Arroyo, Frances Negrón Muntaner, Arnaldo Cruz Malavé, Javier E. Laureano

Políticas de igualdad en España y en Europa.

Ediciones Cátedra. 216 págs. ISBN: 978-84-376-2396-2

¿Cuál es el significado de la igualdad de género? ¿Cómo se enmarca el problema de la desigualdad de género en las políticas públicas? ¿Qué soluciones se dan a ello? Este libro trata de contestar a estas preguntas a través de un análisis de los «marcos interpretativos» de las políticas de igualdad en España y en Europa. Los temas tratados son la conciliación de la vida familiar y laboral, la violencia de género, la desigualdad de género en la política y los derechos de lesbianas y gays. Nuestra pregunta, benévolamente provocadora para todas las personas interesadas en políticas de igualdad, es: «¿Qué hay debajo de la alfombra de las políticas de igualdad?». Esta cuestión nos lleva a reflexionar más detenidamente sobre la manera en la que se enmarcan las políticas de igualdad, con la idea de que unas políticas de género más conscientes de sus propios límites y prejuicios estarán, consecuentemente, más dispuestas a la mejora continua y a la superación de sus propias debilidades, y por lo tanto, serán más eficaces en la promoción de la igualdad entre mujeres y hombres.

ÍNDICE: CAPÍTULO1. ¿Qué hay debajo de la alfombra de las políticas de igualdad? Un análisis de «marcos interpretativos» en España y en Europa [María Bustelo y Emanuela Lombardo] CAPÍTULO2. El género en los marcos interpretativos sobre la «conciliación de la vida familiar y laboral» [Elin Peterson] CAPÍTULO3. La representación de la violencia contra las mujeres como un asunto de género y un problema público en España [María Bustelo, Silvia López y Raquel Platero] CAPÍTULO4. La desigualdad de género en la política: «marcos interpretativos» en España y en la Unión Europea [Emanuela Lombardo] CAPÍTULO5. Mucho más que matrimonio. La representación de los problemas de lesbianas y gays en la agenda política española [Raquel Platero].

CA P Í T U L O 6. Los «marcos interpretativos» de las políticas de igualdad en España y en Europa: conclusiones [Emanuela Lombardo y María Bustelo]

Palabra de mujer. Hacia la reivindicación y contextualización del discurso feminista español.
Editorial Fundamentos (Madrid, 2007).

Palabra de mujer constituye un estudio de las contribuciones de seis escritoras españolas al desarrollo y evolución de las ideas feministas en España. A través del análisis de los textos, tanto literarios como ensayísticos, de Concepción Arenal, Emilia Pardo Bazán, Carmen de Burgos, Lidia Falcón, Montserrat Roig y Lucía Etxebarria, se exploran las causas y orígenes de subordinación de la mujer española, a la vez que se articula la visión de estas seis autoras en torno a la cuestión femenina. El libro proporciona un estudio detallado de temas claves en el campo de los estudios sobre la mujer: la configuración del ideal del ángel del hogar, los orígenes del concepto de la mujer moderna o emancipada, las teorías esencialistas y constructivistas en torno al género, la controversia suscitada por 'l'écriture feminine', el feminismo materialista y la visión de la mujer dentro de la cultura posmodernista. Asimismo, *Palabra de mujer* contextualiza estos temas a base de integrar la filosofía y producción literaria de estas autoras dentro la tradición euroamericana de la escritura femenina/feminista. Las aportaciones de las escritoras españolas se estudian por ello no solo desde un punto de vista autóctono, evaluando su significado y relevancia dentro de la Península, sino también transnacional, estudiando comparativamente sus aportaciones dentro de la tradición occidental. Este libro permitirá tanto a estudiantes como críticos profundizar en la naturaleza de la escritura femenina/feminista española, trazar su evolución y descubrir sus conexiones con otros textos feministas fuera de la Península.

Mirrors and Echoes: Women's Writing in Twentieth-Century Spain
Edited by Emilie L. Bergmann and Richard Herr 2007,
Gaia Books, in association with the University of California Press

ISBN: 978-0-520-25267-7

“With contributions by well-known and respected critics, writing of a very high caliber, and essays that explore hitherto uncharted territory, *Mirrors and Echoes* is a welcome addition to the growing literature on Spanish women's writing.”

—Lou Charnon-Deutsch, author of *Narratives of Desire: Nineteenth-Century Spanish Fiction by Women*

Throughout Spain's tumultuous twentieth century, women writers produced a dazzling variety of novels, popular theater, and poetry. Their work both reflected and helped to transform women's gender, family, and public roles, carving out new space in the literary canon. This multilingual collection of essays by both scholars and creative artists explores the diversity of Spanish women's writing, both celebrated and forgotten.

Emilie L. Bergmann is professor of Spanish at the University of California, Berkeley. Richard Herr is professor of history, emeritus, at the University of California, Berkeley.

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Mujeres ensayistas del Caribe hispano: hilvanando el silencio.

Lourdes Rojas, Anne Freire Ashbaugh y Raquel Romeu
Colgate University
Verbum, Madrid 2007

Abarrotes. La construcción social de las identidades colectivas en América Latina. Lucia Provencio (Edición).

Universidad de Murcia, 2006
ISBN: 84-8371-579-1

Mujeres y Movimientos Guerrilleros: Nicaragua, El Salvador, Chiapas, y Cuba. Karen Kampwirth
Mexico: Plaza y Valdes Editores, 2007.

"This is an intelligent and well-researched book—essential reading for helping academics and practitioners think through the complexities of women's lives during and after revolutions. Kampwirth's book will chart a new course for us to study women as individuals, not just as a group, with regard to political and social revolutions. A book that superbly captures the real lives of women revolutionaries—without over-romanticizing the revolutions or the roles of women."—Tracy Fitzsimmons, Shenandoah University

The revolutionary movements that emerged frequently in Latin America over the past century promoted goals that included overturning dictatorships, confronting economic inequalities, and creating what Cuban revolutionary hero Che Guevara called the "new man." But in fact, many of the "new men" who participated in these movements were not men. Thousands of them were women. This book aims to show why a full understanding of revolutions needs to take account of gender.

Karen Kampwirth writes here about the women who joined the revolutionary movements in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and the Mexican state of Chiapas, about how they became guerrillas, and

how that experience changed their lives. In the last chapter she compares what happened in these countries with Cuba in the 1950s, where few women participated in the guerrilla struggle.

Drawing on more than two hundred interviews, Kampwirth examines the political, structural, ideological, and personal factors that allowed many women to escape from the constraints of their traditional roles and led some to participate in guerrilla activities. Her emphasis on the experiences of revolutionaries adds a new dimension to the study of revolution, which has focused mainly on explaining how states are overthrown.

Karen Kampwirth is Associate Professor of Political Science and Chair of the Latin American Studies Program at Knox College. She is co-editor of *Radical Women in Latin America* (Penn State, 2001).

Renée Vivien Poemas Traducción y prólogo de Aurora Luque. Epílogo de Maria-Mercé Marçal
Ediciones Igitur Poesía, 31

ISBN 978-84-95142-52-8

Nuestra es la noche
Hora del despertar... Abre tus párpados.
A lo lejos afila sus luces la luciérnaga.
El asfódelo pálido emana puro amor.
La noche llega. –Vamos, amiga extraña mía.
La luna reverdece el azul de los montes.
La noche es nuestra. El día, que sea de los otros.
Sólo escucho en la hondura de bosques taciturnos
el crujir de tu ropa, de las nocturnas alas.
El acónito en flor, de un blanco quejumbroso,
exhala sus perfumes, sus íntimos venenos...
Un árbol traspasado con un soplo de abismos
nos cerca con sus ramas, ganchudas como dedos.
El azul de la noche se expande y fluye. Ahora
es más ardiente el goce y es la angustia mejor.
El recuerdo es hermoso como un palacio en ruinas...
Fuegos fatuos, entonces, recorren nuestras vértebras,
pues resucita el alma de las tinieblas hondas.
Solamente la noche nos convierte en nosotras.
La Nuit est à nous
C'est l'heure du réveil... Soulève tes paupières.../Au loin la
luciole aiguise ses lumières,/ Et le blême asphodèle a des souffles
d'amour./ La nuit vient : hâte-toi, mon étrange compagne,/ Car la
lune a verdi le bleu de la montagne,/ Car la nuit est à nous comme à
d'autres le jour.//
Je n'entends, au milieu des forêts taciturnes,/ Que le bruit de ta
robe et des ailes nocturnes,/ Et la fleur d'aconit, aux blancs mornes
et froids,/ Exhale ses parfums et ses poisons intimes.../ Un arbre,
traversé du souffle des abîmes, /Tend vers nous ses rameaux, crochus
comme des doigts.//
Le bleu nocturne coule et s'épand... À cette heure,/ La joie est plus

ardente et l'angoisse est meilleure,/ Le souvenir est beau comme un
palais détruit.../ Des feux follets courront le long de nos vertèbres,/
Car l'âme ressuscite au profond des ténèbres,/ Et l'on ne redevient
soi-même que la nuit.//

Renée Vivien es el nombre literario de Pauline Tarn, nacida en Londres en 1877 de padre inglés y madre americana. En 1899 se instala en París con una herencia que la pone a salvo de preocupaciones materiales y que le permitirá alentar las publicaciones de sus amigos y dedicarse a viajar durante largas temporadas. En París conoce a Natalie Clifford

Barney, actriz y escritora iniciada en los salones literarios –era amiga de Pierre Louÿs-, con quien mantiene una tortuosa relación intermitente. La baronesa Hélène de Zuylen (que cuidó a Vivien al final de sus días y que colaboró con ella en varias obras) le aportará estabilidad sentimental. Desde 1904 Renée mantuvo una relación casi completamente epistolar con una misteriosa admiradora de Constantinopla, esposa de un diplomático, llamada Kérime Turkan-Pacha, que alimentará su mitomanía con un ensueño oriental prohibido y lejano. Vivien hablaba así de sus viajes:

He entrevisto la maravilla egipcia, el encantamiento de los faraones desaparecidos, a Isis de alas verdes, extendidas como signo de protección a los muertos, a Anubis con cabeza de buitre que pesa su corazón en la balanza suprema, a Neftis, la diosa que atiende al alma temerosa. Sí, he visto todo esto y he regresado con el deseo de ver más, de ver otra cosa, de ver hasta volverme ciega, de verlo todo en la Tierra y de ver hasta en el Más Allá. Nunca se ve suficientemente lejos, nunca se ve lo suficiente. Este insaciable instinto de exploración lo aplicó también a su obra de creación, que, amplia y desigual, abarca muy variados géneros. Novelas, relatos, prosa poética (Brumas de los Fjords), adaptaciones de Safo –amplificaciones que explicitan la carga homoerótica del original griego-, teatro y narrativa en colaboración, e incluso una biografía de Ana Bolena. En 1901 publica su primera colección poética, *Études et préludes*, a la que seguirán nuevos títulos: *Cendres et poussières*, *À l'heure des mains jointes*, *Flambeaux éteints*, *Sillages*, *Haillons*. Sus obras, en las que Gide declaró no haber encontrado nada valioso, están impregnadas de “un baudelairismo profundo, central, generador”. La influencia del

“turbador Baudelaire” y del “tierno Verlaine” ya fue detectada por sus contemporáneos. Vivien, con las espléndidas herramientas de la poesía simbolista finisecular, construye un mundo lírico decadente y hedonista. Lleva a sus más radicales consecuencias algunos de los registros de la fatalidad nihilista y de la perversidad voluptuosa tan en boga en el arte de 1900. Sus versos están poblados de Ondinas, Bacantes, Ofelias, seres noctívagos y destructivas amantes. Su lengua es lujosa y sensual, y a la vez extrañamente inmediata. Las flores raras, las piedras preciosas, las sedas y perfumes no llegan a asfixiar la franqueza anhelante de la voz de la autora. Vivien es maestra en la exploración de los sentidos: sinestesias, correspondencias y asociaciones inesperadas se plasman con matices sutiles y delicados en ritmos impecablemente fluidos. En sus libros, Vivien explora acuciantemente nuevas maneras de decir el deseo; los cantos exaltados a la sabiduría de los sentidos y del cuerpo darán paso, en los últimos títulos, a una desesperada y morbosa indagación en la muerte. Todo ello se resuelve, en el conjunto

de su obra, en una afirmación intemporal y subversiva del deseo. Vivien escribía, como Cernuda, para lectores del futuro. Renée Vivien murió de anorexia en París a los treinta y dos años.

M.A. and Ph.D. Dissertations—in progress

Lou Charnon Deutsch is planning a database of M.A. and Ph.D. dissertations in progress on topics relating to Hispanic or Luso-Brazilian women. The purpose is to further dialogue among theses advisors and future educators about topics of interest to women. The plan is to publish the results in the Feministas Unidas newsletter and/or AILFCH's publication GraFemas. Please send the following information to Lou: Name of Student, Name of Director, Title of thesis or dissertation, and brief description (50 words or less). Email: ldeutsch@notes.sunysb.edu

Nieves Alonso “Mapping Mothers and Daughters: Recovering Memory and a Genealogy of the Maternal” explores the treatment of the mother-daughter bond in contemporary Spanish women novelists from the postwar era to today. It analyzes and contextualizes this bond from an initial stage of annihilation of the maternal figure during the Francoist regime, when official discourses institutionalized the maternal within its ideological apparatus, to the recovery of the bond as a recurrent theme in Spanish women's narrative today that parallels the recovery of Spain's historical memory.
Director: Dr. Lou Charnon Deutsch
Stony Brook University

Melissa Culver “La novela sentimental femenina del XIX español como teoría y práctica estética” This dissertation examines the aesthetic dimensions of the works of nineteenth-century women novelists rather than their identificatory strategies, in order to recuperate the feminine values that rejected the aesthetic ideology of their contemporaries.
Director: Dr. Lou Charnon Deutsch
Stony Brook University

María Cristina Soler “Silencing Women's Voices: Censorship and Women's Literature in Franco's Spain.” This dissertation focuses on a number of novels by women writers such as Elena Soriano which were not published at the time they were written, since they dealt with women's social issues too subversive in Franco's Spain.
Director: Dr. Lou Charnon Deutsch
Stony Brook University

Danny Barreto “Haunted Homes: Family, Fear and Nation in the Literature of Late-Nineteenth Century Galicia.” Looks at how fears about the family and incest in the Galician Gothic novel read as metaphors for anxieties about nascent nationalist movements with special attention to works written by women or dealing with ghostly feminine figures of the Galician literary imaginary.
Director: Dr. Lou Charnon Deutsch
Stony Brook University

Lidia León-Blázquez “Telarañas: narrativas femeninas de la vanguardia española” explores women’s access to the intellectual sphere during the Vanguard movement in Spain by looking at textile-textual metaphors, women’s exclusion from written culture, their metanarrative projects as evidence of their intellectual and theoretical capability and in general the relation between feminine writing and avant-garde writing.

Director: Dr. Lou Charnon Deutsch
Stony Brook University

Rogelia Lily Ibarra “Redefining National Spaces: A Response to Hegemonic Constructions of Nation in the novels of Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda and Emilia Pardo Bazán”. This dissertation studies the problematic relationship between nation and women in two canonical writers, Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda and Emilia Pardo Bazán, and how that relationship informs the representation of national spaces in their novels. It shows how each responds to hegemonic divisions of national space and disrupts imposed/accepted binaries to challenge national master narratives.

Director: Dr. Maryellen Bieder
Indiana University

Donna Chambers “From Within the Birdcage- Societal Revelations in the Works of Angela de Azevedo” Reflective of the significant societal changes in early modern Spain, Angela de Azevedo’s plays challenge period notions on gender by protesting the practice of marriage brokering and the commodification of women. From a feminine perspective, Azevedo illustrates the moral, social and political decline of a society that favors money over traditional values.

Director: Dr. Bárbara Mujica

Georgetown University

News/Noticias

- From Luzma Umpierre

Luzma Umpierre's poems have been chosen to appear in the new editions of both the *Heath Anthology of American Literature* as well as the Norton Anthology amidst a myriad of stellar figures in American Literature that include Maya Angelou, Adrienne Rich, Marge Piercy among others. Another one of her poems will be included in *Understanding the Latina/o Experience in the United States: Readings in Ethnic Studies* to be published by John Jay College in New York.

The revista *Centro*, the premier journal of Puerto Rican Studies in the United States, will devote a special issue to the poetry and life of Dr. Luzma Umpierre. An article on the Linguistic contributions of Dr. Umpierre's poetry will appear written by noted Puerto Rican linguist Dr. Alma Simounet-Geigel, a Professor of English at the University of Puerto Rico in Rio Piedras. The issue will also carry an interview with Dr. Umpierre on her life "language" in Puerto Rican society. The journal should be out in January of 2008

- From Juana Suárez

El manuscrito *Cinembargo Colombia: Ensayos críticos sobre cine y cultura* ha recibido Mención Especial con recomendación para publicación por parte de la Fundación Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano y la UNESCO. La noticia se ha dado a conocer dentro del 29avo Festival Internacional de Cine de La Habana. El trabajo preliminar había sido subvencionada por una Beca de Estímulo a la Investigación sobre cine del Ministerio de Cultura de Colombia en el 2006.

Treasurer's Report

Membership Recorder and Treasurer's Letter

Dear Colleagues,

My role as Treasurer and Membership Recorder for Feministas Unidas began with the Fall 1999 issue. Below is a summary of our funds from Fall 1999 through Fall 2007:

YEAR	GENERAL FUND	SCHOLARSHIP FUND
F 1999	\$ 334.30	\$ 1,715.00
S 2000	-596.13 (negative balance)	1,780.00
F 2000	198.00	1,850.00
S 2001	1,546.33	1,960.00
F 2001	743.85	1,970.00
S 2002	1,728.23	1,995.00
F 2002	2,600.52	2,155.00
S 2003	4,087.97	2,300.00
F 2003	4,785.88	2,330.00
S 2004	5,715.00	2,345.00
F 2004	6,253.15	2,575.00
S 2005	6,505.00	2,990.00
F 2005	7,067.00	2,840.00
S 2006	8,109.00	2,980.00
F 2006	8,984.00	2,930.00
S 2007	10,092.00	3,035.00
F 2007	10,633.00	3,150.00

Three factors that have created the dramatic increase in the General Fund between the fall of 2000 and the fall of 2007 are worth noting:

- 1) When our General Fund balance was critically low in 2000 and 2001, a number of our members contributed so that we could manage our expenses. In addition to personal checks, the contributions included individuals paying for refreshments and other expenses of our business meeting at the annual MLA gathering.
- 2) At the December 2000 business meeting, the membership elected to raise annual dues by \$5.
- 3) When Carmela Ferradáns began her editorship of our newsletter in the fall of 2005, Illinois Wesleyan University has paid the expenses of our newsletter.

The current General Fund balance permits us to keep our web site updated, to operate comfortably our business meetings, and to update our newsletter with color and formatting changes.

Thank you for your continued support.

Best Wishes,
Candyce Leonard

Dec 2007 Treasurer's Report

Submitted by Candyce Leonard

AN IMPORTANT NOTE: Our General Fund has continued to increase significantly due to the generosity of **Illinois Wesleyan University** where our newsletter editor, **Carmela Ferradáns** teachers. IWU has paid the expenses of our newsletter since Carmela began her editorship in the fall of 2005. We are grateful to both Illinois Wesleyan and to Carmela for such monetary assistance allows Feministas Unidas to operate more efficiently.

A. GENERAL FUND

Previous Balance	\$ 8,984.00
Deposits (dues and bank interest)	<u>1,649.00</u>
Subtotal	10,633.00
DEBITS: Postage and photocopying due from 2006/2007	<u>40.00</u>
Current General Fund Balance	\$ 10,493.00

B. SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Previous Balance	\$ 3,035.00
Contributions	<u>115.00</u>
Current Scholarship Fund Balance	\$ 3,150.00

Fall 2007 Membership Form

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE AT <http://titan.iwu.edu/~hispanic/femunidas>

New Member/Renewal Form for JAN-DEC 2008 ____ (year/s for which you are renewing/joining)
JAN-DEC 2009 ____

Founded in 1979, Feministas Unidas is a Coalition of Feminist Scholars in Spanish, Spanish-American, Luso-Brazilian, Afro-Latin American, and U.S. Hispanic and Latino Studies. Our Coalition publishes a newsletter in the spring and fall, and as an allied organization of the Modern Language Association, Feministas Unidas sponsors two panels at the annual convention.

As an interdisciplinary alliance, we embrace all fields of studies and culture relating to Hispanic women.

- ☐ Professor (\$20)
- ☐ Associate Professor (\$20)
- ☐ Assistant Professor (\$15)
- ☐ Instructor (\$10)
- ☐ Graduate Student (\$10)
- ☐ Other (\$10)
- ☐ Institution (\$25)

For all International Airmail Postage, please add \$5

Name _____

(NEW ONLY) E-Mail (please print clearly) _____

(NEW ONLY) Preferred mailing address: _____

I would like sponsor a young scholar or graduate student with membership in Feministas Unidas:

Individual that you are sponsoring _____

E-Mail name (please print clearly) _____

Preferred mailing address: _____

SCHOLARSHIP FUND—Your contribution: _____

Send this form with a check in U.S. funds payable to **Feministas Unidas** to:

Candyce Leonard, Feministas Unidas
Humanities Program
Wake Forest University, PO. Box 7343
Winston-Salem, NC 27109-7343

(e-mail corrections to: leonaca@wfu.edu) TO ADD OR REMOVE YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS TO OUR
LISTSERVE

1) send a message to majordomo@lists.ithaca.edu.

2) in the body of the e-mail message, add yourself by typing "approve femuni.admin subscribe femuni username@address.edu

3) in the body of the e-mail message, remove your name by typing "approve femuni.admin unsubscribe femuni username@address.edu

Fall 2007 Membership List

Email names and dues expiration date

Below is an updated listing of each e-mail name as listed in the Membership database, and the year in which your dues expire. (e-mail corrections to: leonaca@wfu.edu)

TO ADD OR REMOVE YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS TO OUR LISTSERVE:

- 1) send a message to majordomo@lists.ithaca.edu.
- 2) in the body of the e-mail message, add yourself by typing "approve femuni.admin subscribe femuni username@address.edu
- 3) in the body of the e-mail message, remove your name by typing "approve femuni.admin unsubscribe femuni username@address.edu

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Alborg	Concha	07	calborg@sju.edu
Allbritton	B. Dean	07	ballbrit@ic.sunysb.edu
Alzate	Gaston	08	galzate@calstatela.edu
Anastasio	Pepa	07	cllarja@hofstra.edu
Anderson	Blanca	08	bandersn@loyno.edu
Andrist	Debra	07	andrist@shsu.edu
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Weissberger	Barbara	07	weiss046@umn.edu
Williams	Lorna V.	07	
Yarmus	Marcia D.	07	mjcody@aol.com
Zachman	Jennifer	10	jzachman@saintmarys.edu
Zeno	Ana	07	ajm89@cornell.edu and

Feministas Unidas Documents

FEMINISTAS UNIDAS BY-LAWS (1999)

Article 1 - NAME OF ASSOCIATION

The name of this association shall be:

FEMINISTAS UNIDAS, a Coalition of Feminist Scholars in Spanish, Spanish-American, Luso-Brazilian, Afro-Latin American, and U.S. Hispanic Studies.

Article 2 - OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this coalition are: To create and sustain a national network of feminist scholars in the fields of Spanish, Spanish-American, Luso-Brazilian, Afro-Latin American, and U.S. Hispanic Studies who join to strengthen the intellectual environment in which they work by means of: exchange of ideas and information; cooperative research projects; organization of conferences; preparation and presentation of papers and panels; gathering and dissemination of bibliographical data; interchange of classroom materials and methodologies; assistance with publication; career counseling and mentoring; contacts with feminist scholars in Spain, Portugal, and Latin America; and other appropriate joint intellectual endeavors.

Article 3 - MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

1) Membership. The membership of this coalition is open to all those with a professional interest in its objectives, employed or unemployed, of all academic ranks, including graduate students, creative writers, and those who are otherwise engaged in the fields related to Spanish, Spanish-American, Luso-Brazilian, Afro-Latin American, and U.S. Hispanic literatures, languages, and cultures.

2) Dues. The national annual membership fee shall be assessed according to rank and paid by calendar year January 1- December 31. Members who have not paid dues within six months of the start of the calendar year shall be put on inactive status. The monies from the collection of national dues shall be used to carry out the projects of the coalition, including the publication of a newsletter and the arrangements for the annual meetings.

Article 4 - STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION OF COALITION

FEMINISTAS UNIDAS shall be organized on a national level by means of an Executive Committee consisting of a President, a Vice-president, a Treasurer, and a Secretary-Newsletter editor. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for initiating action to be carried out by the national membership as well as for implementing decisions taken by the national membership.

Article 5 - ELECTION OF NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The President, Vice-president, Treasurer, and Secretary-Newsletter editor shall be elected for a two-year term by the general membership. A ballot for this purpose shall be distributed by mail, either with the Newsletter or separate from it, by April 30 in the year before term of office is to begin. If an office is unfilled at any time, elections may be held following a schedule determined by the Executive Committee.

Nominations for these offices shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary-Newsletter editor at the time of the Annual Meeting or by mail before 1 February of the year in which elections are to be held. Nominations from the floor at the Annual Meeting are accepted, as are self-nominations. A simple majority of votes shall determine the winner. In case of a tie vote, or if no one receives a simple majority, ballots shall continue to be taken until a winner emerges.

The term of office shall begin on January 1 and run through December 31. The Vice-president will automatically assume the position of President following the two-year term of office. The Secretary-Newsletter editor and Treasurer may be reelected to their offices. The out-going President may become a candidate for an office other than president immediately following her term.

Article 6 - DUTIES OF THE MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1) The President shall preside at the Annual Meeting and shall call meetings of the Executive Committee; shall have the authority to appoint ad hoc committees to carry out specific projects or resolve specific problems; shall delegate the work of the membership body and the Executive Committee. The President shall see that elections are called and carried out according to the provisions of these By-Laws.

2) The Vice-president shall act as president in the absence of the President; shall carry out directive tasks assigned by the President and/or Executive Committee; shall become the President in the year following the two- year term as Vice-president

3) The Secretary-Newsletter editor shall keep the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the coalition and of any Executive Committee meetings called; shall be in charge of arrangements for Annual Meeting; shall be in charge of the correspondence of the coalition and Executive Committee.

4) The Treasurer shall collect the dues, pay the bills, keep the accounts, and maintain the membership roster; shall be responsible for recruitment and publicity activities of the coalition.

Article 7 - DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1) Carry out projects decided on by national membership.

2) Initiate action related to all activities dealing with the objectives of the coalition.

3) Recruit new members and keep the membership roster current

4) Collect dues and keep the financial records of the coalition.

5) Publish the Newsletter of the coalition.

6) Keep the correspondence of the coalition.

7) Seek out and maintain means of cooperating with other feminist organizations, including the Women's Caucus of the Modern Language Association, the Commission of the Status of Women in the Profession of MLA, etc.

8) Seek out and maintain formal associated status with professional organizations such as the MLA, M/MLA, etc.

9) Seek grants and other funding for the projects of the coalition.

Article 8 - MEETINGS

1) Annual Meeting. FEMINISTAS UNIDAS shall meet once a year at the same time and in the same place as the annual meeting of the Modern Language Association. Meetings of the Executive Committee may be called at any time.

2) The coalition has the right to convene a Conference separate from the Annual Meeting at Mu. but not in lieu of the Annual Meeting.

Article 9 -VOTING PROCEDURES

1) Voting on issues brought before the members at the Annual Meeting shall be by voice or show of hands. A simple majority is sufficient to carry.

2) Voting on issues brought before the Executive Committee shall be by voice or show of hands. A simple majority is sufficient to carry.

3) If a vote should be necessary other than at the time of the Annual Meeting. It shall be the responsibility of the Secretary-Newsletter editor to distribute and collect the ballots.

Article 10 - PROCEDURES FOR AMENDING BY- LAWS

Motions to amend the by-laws must be sent to the Executive Committee two months before the Annual Meeting. The Executive Committee shall send copies of the proposed changes to the members at least one month before the Annual Meeting.

The motions to amend the by-laws shall be discussed and voted on at the Annual Meeting and go into effect immediately upon adoption.

A majority vote shall be required to adopt the proposed amendments.

Article 11 - PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

When necessary to expedite the business of the meeting of FEMINISTAS UNIDAS, the President shall invoke Robert's Rules of Order as the parliamentary procedure to be followed by members.

MLA affiliate review report

Date: March 22, 2007

To: The MLA Program Committee

From: Carmen Urioste-Azcorra, President, Feministas Unidas, Associate Professor,
Spanish, Arizona State University

Re: Allied/Affiliate Organization Review by MLA Program Committee in May 2007

Organization: Feministas Unidas (Established 1980; allied status dates from 1986, last reviewed 2000)

1) Brief history of the organization since the last review

From the last review, Feministas Unidas has continued growing as a feminist coalition. During these years its executive committee has been as follows:

Presidents: Elizabeth Horan (2000-02); Beth Jörgensen (2002-04); Margarita Vargas (2004-05); and Carmen de Urioste-Azcorra (2005-07);

Vice-presidents: Beth Jörgensen (2000-02); Pat Greene (2002-03); Margarita Vargas (2003-04); and Carmen de Urioste-Azcorra (2004-05);

Secretary: Cynthia Margarita Tompkins (1996-Present);

Treasurer: Candyce Leonard (1999-present);

Newsletter Editor: Cynthia Margarita Tompkins (1996-2005); Carmela Ferradans (2005-present);

Listserv moderators: María Asunción Gómez (2000-06); Maria Di Francesco (2006-Present).

At the 2000, 2001, and 2002 MLAs, Feministas Unidas organized two panels, one on pedagogy—in the form of a workshop or roundtable—and the other one on research, dealing with issues of literary, critical, and cultural theory. We changed this approach during the 2003 and 2004 MLAs. During those years FU hosted a Business Meeting at the time of a regular session as a recruitment tool. Since this strategy did not appear to work, FU decided to go back to the old format and use both slots for panels at the 2005 MLA. As in the past, we arranged the business meeting in a hotel room and scheduled it right before the Presidential address. Calls for proposals, papers, and roundtable presenters related to the two Feministas Unidas MLA sessions are always issued in the Feministas Unidas listserv, the Newsletter (which appears twice a year), and the website (<http://www.asu.edu/languages/femunida/>) as well as in the Winter and Spring issues of the MLA newsletter.

In 2006 we celebrated the organization's 25th anniversary with the edition of a collection of essays of feminist readings in the five areas the organization represents: Spanish, Spanish-American, Luso-Brazilian, Afro-Latin American, and U.S. Hispanic Studies. The edition of such collection was in *Letras Femenimas* (see enclosed volume). The volume was edited by former presidents Beth Jörgensen (2002-04) and Margarita Vargas (2004-05).

Starting with volume 26.2 (Fall 2006), the Feministas Unidas Newsletter has an ISSN for the print issue (1933-1479) as well as for the on-line issue (1933-1487). Feministas Unidas Newsletter is part of the permanent collection of the Library of the Congress.

In 2002 Feministas Unidas established the Feministas Unidas Essay Prize competition, aimed at promoting feminist scholarship on women writers by those who are entering our profession. The Feministas Unidas Essay Prize is awarded for an outstanding unpublished essay of feminist scholarship on women writers in the areas covered by our organization's mission: Spanish, Spanish-American, Luso-Brazilian, Afro-Latin American, and U.S. Hispanic Studies. Graduate students, instructors, and untenured assistant professors are eligible to submit essays. The prize is the product of collaboration between Feministas Unidas and the Asociación Internacional de Literatura Femenina Hispánica insofar as the outstanding article is published in the Winter issue of *Letras Femeninas*. The recipient received a \$200 award. The selection committee is drawn from officers and members of Feministas Unidas and the editorial board of *Letras Femeninas*. The call for submissions is distributed via the listserv and in the Newsletter (See appendix for the fliers on the Call for Submissions).

Feministas Unidas normally organizes a panel at the Twentieth-Century Literature and Culture Conference, which takes place in Louisville.

At the 2007 MLA, Feministas Unidas is going to hold a cash bar with WCML, WIG, and WIF. As Feministas Unidas' President, I hope this will be the first step for new collaborations between the associations.

2) Evidence of ongoing activity since the last review

FU publishes a newsletter, which appears twice a year. Up to December 2005 the editor was Cynthia Tompkins, Arizona State University. From January 2006, the new editor is Carmela Ferradans, Illinois Wesleyan University. Also, the newsletter is published in e-form: for the Arizona issues the address is <http://www.asu.edu/languages/femunida/> and for the Illinois Wesleyan issues the address is <http://titan.iwu.edu/~hispanic/femunidas/> (under construction).

Feministas Unidas has a listserv, established in 1998. From April of 2000 to January 2006, the Feministas Unidas listserv was housed in Florida International University, where it was moderated by María Asunción Gómez. In January 2006, it moved to Ithaca College, where it is being moderated by Maria Di Francesco. (See report of the listserv moderator in appendix).

The minutes of the Business Meetings are published in the Newsletter. (See enclosed minutes for the 2000 MLA, the 2001 MLA, the 2002 MLA, the 2003 MLA, the 2004 MLA, and the 2006 MLA). The essays awarded in the Feministas Unidas Essay Prize were:

2002: "From the Bottom of My Pain:" Living Dangerously in *El aire tan dulce* of Elvira Orphée" by Aldona Pobutsky, Wayne State University;

2003: "Razing Their Voices: Carmen de Burgos's Subtextual Revisions of the Works of José Zorrilla and Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer in *El veneno del arte*" by Amy Bell, Texas Wesleyan University;

2004: "Finally Free: The Female Artist and the City in Dulce María Loynaz's *Jardín*" by Jana Francesca Gutiérrez, Auburn University;

2005: "De Rosario Castellanos al hombre ilustre, o entre dicho y hecho hay un problemático pecho" by Emily Hind, Wyoming University;

2006: "Women and the Discourse of the Underdevelopment in Rosa Chacel's *Memorias de Leticia Valle*" by Debra A. Faszler-McMahon, University of California, Irvine.

3) Evidence of involvement

Prior to each business meeting, nominations and suggestions for the following year's MLA session topics are solicited from the membership via the organization's listserv. Feministas Unidas panels and roundtables have always involved broad representation from the diverse constituencies embodied by the MLA. In addition to a wide array of ranks, from graduate students to full professors, the membership of Feministas Unidas is extremely diverse, including scholars from many different kinds of institutions, from small state colleges and liberal arts colleges, to private and public research universities.

The following list of members (with their academic affiliations) who have presented in Feministas Unidas programs at the MLA over the past seven years attests to the diversity and inclusiveness of our membership activities:

- 1) Elizabeth Rosa Horan, Arizona State University
- 2) Elizabeth C. Martínez, Sonoma State University, California
- 3) Rosalía Cornejo-Parriego, Penn State University, University Park
- 4) Nancy Gutierrez, Arizona State University
- 5) María Asunción Gómez Silva, Florida International University
- 6) Alicia del Campo, University of California, Irvine
- 7) Rosemary G. Feal, State University of New York, Buffalo
- 8) María Claudia André, Hope College
- 9) Patricia Greene, Michigan State University
- 10) Mary Jane Treacy, Simmons College
- 11) Ivette Romero-Cesareo, Marist College
- 12) Amy K. Kaminsky, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
- 13) Laura J. Beard, Texas Tech University
- 14) Alexandra Alopria, Vassar College
- 15) Eva María Woods, Vassar College
- 16) Cristina Ferreira-Pinto, Austin
- 17) Debra Ann Castillo, Cornell University
- 18) Beth Jörgensen, University of Rochester
- 19) Lisa M. Vollendorf, Wayne State University
- 20) Lourdes María Álvarez, Catholic University of America
- 21) Alice A. Weldon, University of North Carolina, Asheville
- 22) Gresilda Tilley-Lubbs, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
- 23) Elizabeth Rodríguez Kessler, California State University, Northridge
- 24) Amanda Holmes, McGill University
- 25) Janis Breckenridge, Hiram College
- 26) Ángela Pérez Mejía, Brandeis University
- 27) Patricia V. Greene, Michigan State University
- 28) Patricia Klingenberg, Miami University
- 29) Debra D. Andrist, University of St. Thomas
- 30) Adriana Rosman-Askot, The College of New Jersey

-
- 31) Deanna Mihaly, Emory and Henry College
 - 32) Maria Van Liew, West Chester University
 - 33) Peggy Sharpe, University of Mississippi
 - 34) Joyce Lynn Tolliver, University of Illinois, Urbana
 - 35) Patricia N. Klingenberg, Miami University, Oxford
 - 36) Anna Klobucka, University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth
 - 37) Catherine Connor (Swietlicki), University of Vermont
 - 38) Roselyn Costantino, Penn State University, Altoona
 - 39) Michelle Joffroy, Smith College
 - 40) Ann Sitting, Metropolitan Community College, Nebraska
 - 41) Dara Goldman, University of Illinois, Urbana
 - 42) Sara E. Cooper, California State University, Chico
 - 43) AnaLouise Keating, Texas Women's University
 - 44) Mikko Tuhkanen, East Carolina University
 - 45) Suzanne Bost, Southern Methodist University
 - 46) Juanita Heredia, Northern Arizona University
 - 47) Emma R. García, Colby College
 - 48) Joanna Bartow, St. Mary's College of Maryland
 - 49) María Elena Soliño, University of Houston
 - 50) Margarita Vargas, (SUNY-Buffalo)
 - 51) Joyce Baugher, Tulane University
 - 52) Meghan Gibbons, University of Maryland
 - 53) Julián Olivares, University of Houston
 - 54) Valerie Hegstrom, Brigham Young University
 - 55) Cynthia Tompkins, Arizona State University
 - 56) Magdalena Maíz Peña, Davidson College
 - 57) Dawn Slack, Kutztown University of Pennsylvania

4) Organization's purpose

Feministas Unidas is a coalition of feminist scholars in Spanish, Spanish-American, Luso-Brazilian, Afro-Latin American, Caribbean, U.S. Hispanic and Latino Studies. The coalition was formed as a result of two meetings held December 28 and 29, 1979 at the MLA Convention in San Francisco, growing out of the consolidation of interested members from "Women in Spanish," the Women's Caucus of the MLA, and the Women's Caucus on the Modern Languages. After successfully holding meetings and panels at MLA sessions over the following seven years, Feministas Unidas became an allied organization of the MLA in 1985.

The objectives of the Feministas Unidas coalition are: To create and sustain a national network of feminist scholars in the fields of Spanish, Spanish-American, Luso-Brazilian, Afro-Latin American, and U.S. Hispanic Studies who join to strengthen the intellectual environment in which they work by means of: exchange of ideas and information; cooperative research projects; organization of conferences; preparation and presentation of papers and panels; gathering and dissemination of bibliographical data; interchange of classroom materials and methodologies; assistance with publication; career counseling and mentoring; contacts with feminist scholars in Spain, Portugal, and Latin America; and other appropriate joint intellectual endeavors.

5) Bylaws

After its formation in 1979, the first official meeting of FU took place on December 28, 1980 at the MLA convention in Houston, TX, where the by-laws for the coalition were adopted. For a complete copy of the bylaws see appendix.

6) Membership numbers

Our current membership is 213 members. See appendix for a current membership application.

7) Description of dues structures

Due to the increase in postage and printing cost, Feministas Unidas decided to raise its membership dues (+ \$5) at the Business Meeting of December 2001. From 2002 to present Feministas Unidas dues have been as follows:

Professor and Associate professor \$20.00; Assistant professor \$15.00; Instructor, graduate student, and other \$10.00; Institution \$25.00. For international airmail postage, a supplement of \$5.00 is added.