

range of spiritual practice with a stronger presence of non-European religions, especially among non-elites. Santería (Way of Saints), or Regla de Ocha (Rule of Osha), has deep roots in Cuba, dating to the slave trade. This Yoruba-origin religion has incorporated elements of Catholicism into its New World practice. Miguel De La Torre (2003) documents Santería in the Cuban American population and its interaction with Catholic and other religions in the Miami area. Michelle A. González (2006) argues that regardless of race, Afro-Cuban culture is integral to Cuban culture and religion. Others have highlighted the role of Judaism among Cubans and Cuban Americans (Behar 2007).

Latina/o religious expression and identification is as diverse as the Latina/o population itself. It draws on the distinct historical legacies of Latin American national origins, and their specific relations with, and arrival in, the United States. Though still predominantly Catholic, Latinas/os are becoming more religiously diverse in the twenty-first century.

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Sexuality

Juana María Rodríguez

Generally imagined as referring to who you are or what you do sexually, the word “sexuality” is used to name a wide range of social identifications predicated on sexual object choice, romantic desires, political identifications, social affinities, and/or erotic proclivities. Discursively linked to activities of procreation, reproduction, and social organization, sexuality also functions to name nonreproductive sensory pleasures and modes of erotic and amorous expression that exceed gender or genitals and are not reducible to sexual identities such as heterosexual, bisexual, lesbian, or gay. Formed through its relationship to other categories of social difference and forms of embodiments, Latinx sexuality is best understood by probing the ways it is mobilized, encountered, and sensed in the body and in the world. Rather than a precise codification of sexual practices, communities, or forms of erotic expression, the histories, politics, and scholarship that surround Latinx sexuality register the ongoing exchanges of power that instantiate and trigger multiple forms of social control. That the delights of corporeal exploration, fantasy, and sexual joy might persist despite these mechanisms of sexual regulation suggests the unruly ways desire disrupts and reroutes these disciplinary flows.

In dominant discourse, rather than being aligned with pleasure, Latinx sexuality has long been framed as pathological and a menace to Anglo civil society. Historicized accounts demonstrate how embodied understandings of Latinidad predicated on nationality, color,

class, physical and cognitive norms, gender, age, immigration status, and other registers of difference impact understandings of Latinx bodies, desires, and sexual practices. In the late nineteenth century, racist nativist impulses fed directly into the burgeoning eugenics movements that swept through the United States and lasted well into the twentieth century, resulting in a range of efforts to control the sexuality and reproduction of newly conquered and colonized subjects. These racialized discourses that rendered Latinx bodies and sexualities as dirty, deviant, and diseased continued to be marshaled throughout the twentieth century and were forcefully activated during the Bracero Program that brought millions of male migrant workers, many of whom were Indigenous Mexicans, to the United States (Loza 2011). On the East Coast, early sociological accounts, such as Oscar Lewis's *La Vida: A Puerto Rican Family in the Culture of Poverty—San Juan and New York* (1966b), specifically linked what Lewis termed “cultures of poverty” to aberrant forms of sexuality and gendered deviance. These immigrant waves had significant and lasting effects on both the perceived and the practiced sexual realities of migrant communities, disrupting kinship patterns and sexual practices, while also creating new sexual opportunities for those who no longer felt bound to the inherited sexual norms of their communities of origin.

The characterizations of Latinx culture as sexually deviant and dangerous that emerged as a result of immigration, forced annexation, and colonial occupation have remained central to depictions of Latinxs within U.S. popular culture. While a select few light-skinned men ascended to the status of “Latin Lover” in early Hollywood, most were depicted as drunken brutes who sexually abused women, or as desexualized or feminized (and therefore abject) comic figures (Berg 2002). These associations transformed over time, ebbing and flowing

in relation to labor demands and other social factors, while depictions of sexualized Latino masculinities continue to draw on images of the patriarchal macho, a racialized term used to script Latino men as abusive and sexually threatening. Latinas have been represented in a similarly stereotypical manner as either sinners or saints, emphasizing the implied cultural and sexual difference of Catholicism from Anglo-American Protestant norms. The result has been images of Latinas as virginal martyrs who are victims of the machismo of their culture; as “spitfires” who are wild, untamed, and exude uncontrolled sexuality; or as mothers whose excessive reproduction mark them as aberrant or manipulative agents intent on planting “anchor babies” in an effort to secure U.S. state resources. These characterizations are also racially coded, impacting those Latinxs who visually register as Indigenous or black in ways that align with the perverse particularities of those racial stereotypes. These sexualized associations have become foundational to Latinxs’ ethnic, racial, and gendered identities as (non) citizen subjects of the United States, marking Latinx sexuality as wholly excessive, yet always lacking.

Early scholarship in the fields of Chicano and Puerto Rican studies—academic initiatives that emerged as part of activist movements—responded to these sexualized characterizations with sanitized patriarchal images of the *familia* that supported heteronormative nationalist projects. Organized around a politics of “traditional” values and political unity, these representations of cultural nationalisms actively erased other historically and socially significant sexual practices and forms of gendered expression from public view, or else portrayed them as manifestations of corrupt influences brought about through migration or association with Anglos (R. T. Rodríguez 2009; C. Beltrán 2010). However, Latinas engaged within the various social movements of the 1970s and 1980s quickly pushed back

against masculinist formulations of ethnic nationalism to forge more dynamic understandings of the cultural significance of sexuality. On the West Coast, Chicanas formed their own organizations such as Las Hijas de Cuauhtémoc and Las Adelitas de Aztlán, and on the East Coast, specific caucuses within the Young Lords were organized to address the impact of sexism on both men and women, eventually leading that group to speak out in early support of the gay liberation movement (C. Beltrán 2010; Blackwell 2011).

During the 1970s and 1980s, Latinas also joined with other women of color to counter the Eurocentrism within U.S. feminist and gay and lesbian movements, and discussions of sexuality and sexual practices were often a central feature of these consciousness-raising efforts (Blackwell 2011). The ground-breaking anthology edited by Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa (1981), *This Bridge Called My Back*, specifically addressed the cultural and political necessity of analyzing how race, gender, and sexuality were mutually constructed, and became a foundational text for an emerging women of color feminism. Many of the feminist and queer writers of that generation wrote of the pain of feeling ostracized by their families and cultural communities of origin for expressing a sexual identity that was not predicated on heterosexuality or traditionally defined gendered roles (Moraga 1983b; Anzaldúa 1987). Latina lesbians were particularly active in forging spaces that considered the impact of sexuality and sexual identities, forming newsletters, editing anthologies, and creating local and international groups through the Encuentros de Lesbianas Feministas de América Latina y el Caribe (J. Ramos 1987; Trujillo 1991; Pérez 1998; de la tierra 2002; J. M. Rodríguez 2003). Within these circles, Latinas actively debated the cultural significance of sexual practices such as pornography, bisexuality, sex-work, sadomasochism, transgender identity, and gender roles such as butch

and femme. At times, these discussions resulted in the exclusion or censorship of those who did not conform to imagined community standards of sexuality (Hollibaugh and Moraga 1983; de la tierra 2002; J. M. Rodríguez 2003, 2014b). The advent of AIDS in the 1980s brought an urgency to activist efforts to respond to the crisis with explicit and culturally relevant discussions of sex (J.M. Rodríguez 2003; Roque Ramírez 2010, 2011). LGBT Latinx groups in California, Texas, New York, and elsewhere formed volunteer community organizations to meet the physical, psychic, and spiritual devastation that surrounds the AIDS pandemic, and some groups later succeeded in securing funds and increased legitimacy to continue those efforts. As new medical interventions have emerged—interventions that benefit only some—the funding and political energy surrounding community sexual health projects has dwindled even as new cases of AIDS continue to impact the most vulnerable members of the Latinx community: youth, transgender women, sex workers, and others impacted by poverty, racial discrimination, and social precarity.

While different constellations of queer Latinx community groups have dealt quite explicitly with the politics and passions surrounding sex and sexuality, these attempts to impact Latinx representation remain marginalized. In most Latinx-produced forms of cultural representation, particularly films intended for “cross-over” (that is, for non-Latinx) audiences, depictions of idealized Latinx families have served as a way to counter mainstream associations of Latinx sexual deviance, even as they often promote sanitized images of self-sacrificing mothers and strict hardworking fathers. Efforts at cinematic representation generally ignore issues of domestic violence, socially authorized forms of male promiscuity and dominance, the cultural shaming of sexually active women, nonheterosexual practices and identities, and those who do not conform to gendered

norms. Independent films remain the most robust visual medium for depictions of transgender, queer, and nonheteronormative Latinx sexualities, with some notable films including *La Mission*, *Gun Hill Road*, *Mosquita y Mari*, *Tangerine*, and *Mala Mala*.

Given the centrality of sexuality to representations of Latinx populations within dominant society, and its pivotal role in the long history of political and social engagement within the activist and academic practices, it is no wonder that questions of sexuality have become a central feature of Latinx studies. Latinx sexuality, specifically the cultural associations attached to our multiply-coded bodies, has been investigated through art (L. E. Pérez 2007; Gaspar de Alba and López 2011), music (Aparicio 1998; D. Vargas 2012; Vazquez 2013), dance (Ovalle 2010; Rivera-Servera 2012; C. García 2013), ethnography (Roque Ramírez 2007; Decena 2011; S. Peña 2013), literature (Chávez-Silverman and Hernández 2000; Esquibel 2006; Lima 2007; R. Ortiz 2007; Soto 2010), film and media (Noriega and López 1996; Fregoso 2003; C. E. Rodríguez 2008), performance (J. Muñoz 1999, 2009; Negrón-Muntaner 2004; Paredez 2009; L. Gutiérrez 2010), and cultural criticism that cuts across these various genres (E. Pérez 1998; Quiroga 2000; J. M. Rodríguez 2003, 2014b; Asencio 2009a; La Fountain-Stokes 2009; Hames-García and Martínez 2011).

Reflecting cultural and racial identities formed through colonialism, enslavement, state policies of incarceration and detention, and the day-to-day precarity of low-wage labor, racial hostility, and sexual violence and harassment, much of the discourse on Latinx sexuality, particularly female sexuality, has been tied to narratives of survival and resistance. These accounts often elide more complex questions of how sexual pleasure might endure or the multiple ways that sexual subjects might engage racialized abjection or sexual violence on their own terms. Despite the seeming abundance

of critical work on Latinx sexuality, specific work that presents more explicit depictions of Latinx sexual pleasures and erotic practices remains less widely circulated, albeit with notable exceptions. Graphic accounts of Latinx sexuality include the literature of gay Chicano writer John Rechy (1963), an early chronicler of underground homosexual sexual culture in Los Angeles and elsewhere; Arnaldo Cruz-Malavé's (2007) account of the tempestuous life of Juanito Xtravaganza, a Puerto Rican hustler in the 1970s; Jaime Cortez's (2004) bilingual graphic novel *Sexilio/Sexile* about the life of trans activist and former sex-worker Adela Vázquez; the many irreverent comics of openly bisexual Erika Lopez (1997); and the salaciously rich "as-told-to" autobiography of porn legend Vanessa del Rio (2010). In the performance arena, Xandra Ibarra, who performs under the name La Chica Boom, draws on hypersexualized and racialized references in what she terms "*spictacles*"; Elizabeth Marrero performs as drag king "Macha"; the queer collective Butchlalis de Panochtitlan explores butch intimacies; and April Flores, a self-identified "fat-girl," has made a name for herself in queer and BBW (big, beautiful women) pornography. Increasingly some academics are becoming bolder in addressing topics such as online sexual practices, BDSM, bisexuality, pornography, sex-work, and other more socially charged articulations of Latinx sexuality (Decena 2011; I. Ramos 2015; J. M. Rodríguez 2014b; D. Vargas 2014; González-López 2015).

While certain inroads have been made in portraying more diverse and nuanced forms of Latinx sexuality in the media, the arts, and the academy, the same cannot be said of the Latinx political arena, where monogamy, marriage, and romanticized versions of family continue to dominate discussions of immigration reform, reproductive rights, the criminal (in)justice system, and labor policies. Sexual realities such as bisexuality, polygamy, under-age sexual activity, multiple families,

and the multifaceted sex industry are rarely discussed as relevant to Latinx politics, or, if so, are depicted as problems to be solved, not social actualities that need to be addressed. In response to representations within both mainstream Anglo and Latina/o political agendas that depict Latinx sexuality as dirty, Deborah R. Vargas has reappropriated the term *sucio* (dirty, dishonest, and impure), as a queer Latinx analytic “in relation to contemporary neoliberal projects that disappear the most vulnerable and disenfranchised by cleaning up spaces and populations deemed dirty and wasteful” (2014, 715). This racialized sexualized excess that refuses to disappear at times operates locally under the names *chusma*, *chola*, or *chonga* as a means to censor and shame those who refuse to perform normative Anglo sexuality (J. Hernandez 2009). This ongoing tension between attempts to sanitize Latinx sexuality by reducing it to the sphere of the private in the service of social acceptance and more radical and capacious manifestations that reject the politics of respectability, and the shame, censorship, and social stigmatization upon which it is based, remains at the heart of attempts to bring discussions of Latinx sexuality into greater view. While the discourses that surround sexuality can only be understood at the nexus between various historically situated forms of social discipline and articulations of individual and collective expression, the willful and wayward corporeal and psychic pleasures that sexuality also ignites, more often than not, elude the traps of linguistic capture to hover in the vapor of memory, feeling, and the sensorial.

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Social Movements

Randy J. Ontiveros

Ricardo Falcón was killed on August 30, 1972, at a gas station along a lonely stretch of highway in southern New Mexico. The twenty-seven-year-old activist was caravanning to El Paso for a convention of the La Raza Unida Party (LRUP). When the group pulled over to cool a broken radiator, Perry Brunson, the white owner of the station, insisted they pay for water. An argument ensued, and Brunson shot Falcón twice. According to Falcón’s colleagues, locals refused medical help or the use of a telephone (Castro 1972). Brunson, later discovered to belong to the segregationist American Independent Party, was released from jail without bail. In December 1972, he was acquitted of manslaughter (E. Vigil 1999).

Falcón’s death is the sort of event that sometimes sparks a wave of protests and launches a movement. His didn’t. Activists with LRUP organized press conferences and filed legal motions, but Falcón’s murder went ignored by the public. Stories like his raise hard questions about political life: Why do some injustices ignite collective action, but not others? What conditions must exist on the ground for organizing and mobilizing to be effective? How do waves of protest start and end? These are just some of the questions posed by scholars of social movements, a term first used in 1850 by the German sociologist Lorenz Von Stein (Tilly and Wood 2009). Herbert Blumer (1949), an early authority, defines them as “collective enterprises to establish a new order of life.” The phrase is most often associated with leftism, and

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