Puerto Rican Literature, 1988–96: An Annotated Bibliography

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This bibliography presents some of the most recent works of literature written by Puerto Ricans born and raised in the United States. Its contents testify to the proliferation of literary voices within the Puerto Rican communities in the United States. As Juan Flores anticipated eight years ago, women's voices have contributed enormously to a different characterization of the Puerto Rican experience, and writers from different corners of the United States (such as Philadelphia, Boston, and cities in California, Georgia, and Missouri) have a significant presence in today's literary production. The aesthetic projects of these new writers have begun to rearticulate the poetics of the earlier work of Nuyorican writers.

Geographical diversity differentiates this bibliography from Edna Acosta-Belén's "The Literature of Puerto Rican Migration in the United States: An Annotated Bibliography": the literature presented here is no longer the exclusive domain of writers from New York City. Even though a younger generation of Nuyorican writers continues to produce vibrant literature, this bibliography documents a wider trajectory of the Puerto Rican diaspora. This broader perspective can be seen in the work of Judith Ortiz Cofer, Martin Espada, Aurora Levins Morales, and others.

Despite deep cuts in funding for Puerto Rican studies and ethnic studies in general, literary as well as critical production in these areas has flourished, and critics from the United States and Puerto Rico have become increasingly interested in literature written by Puerto Ricans in the United States. Although major publishing houses have been slow to publish these writers, we have seen a proliferation of criticism in Spanish about this literature, an increasing number of dissertations written exclusively on Puerto Rican writers, and numerous conference panels dedicated to the subject. With more than two hundred participants from Puerto Rico and the United States, the September 1996 Puerto Rican Studies Association conference in Puerto Rico attested to that vitality.

This bibliography is meant to complement and update Acosta-Belén's. Thus I cite only texts not found in her bibliography. For authors who have not published in the last eight years, I refer the readers to previous bibliographies. Marc Zimmerman has recently published a bibliography that includes Puerto Rican authors: U.S. Latino Literature: An Essay and Annotated Bibliography (Chicago: March/Abrazo, 1992). I mark with an asterisk texts listed in his bibliography. Because of the limited scope of this bibliography, I have cited a few other bibliographies that could complement this effort.

Anthologies


Includes works of well-established writers such as Judith Ortiz Cofer and Nicholasa Mohr.


A reprint of the works published in 1979 in Revista Chicano-Riqueña. Includes: Jaime Carrero’s The FM Safe, Miguel Algarín and Tato Laviera’s Olú Clemente, and Miguel Piñero’s The Sun Always Shines for the Cool.


A collection of Spanish poetry written by authors born in the United States and Puerto Rico.


Stories by new writers, including Abraham Rodríguez, Ed Vega, Judith Ortiz Cofer, and Ed Morales.


Works by both young and well-established Latina writers, including Judith Ortiz Cofer, Sandra María Esteves, and Nicholasa Mohr. Reflects on growing up female and Hispanic.


Poetry and prose, some previously published, by well-established writers.


Poetry, short stories, and criticism. Includes works by Puerto Rican authors such as Nicholasa Mohr, Judith Ortiz Cofer, and Sandra María Esteves and a critical essay about Sandra María Esteves by Luz María Umpierre. Reprints a 1983 issue of Revista Chicano Riqueña.

Prose Fiction


These stories about el barrio, covering the decades of the 1940s through the 1990s, convey the daily struggles of the community, its achievements and its failures.


A young woman from the South Bronx breaks away from the ghetto and encounters the difficulties of living in two worlds.


A novel recounting the transformation of the narrator as she becomes involved with feminist struggles in the United States during the 1960s and 1970s.


In a small village in Mexico two sisters come to terms with their destiny.


The narrator recounts the story of her mother and grandmother and reveals the secrets that surrounded their lives.


This first novel deals with the consequences for the family, especially for women, of social change and revolution.


As a woman writes a novel about family life, she starts to liberate herself and at the same time brings her marriage into chaos. The first novel the author has written in English.


The transformation of the life of an upper-middle-class family that moves from the Puerto Rican countryside to Worcester, Massachusetts. Narrated by the family’s second child.


A novel written outside Puerto Rico, in Spanish, depicting life in the countryside where coffee is grown. Deals with the transformations that occurred between the 1940s and the 1960s, which paved the way for the massive immigration to the United States.

Twelve stories about teenagers growing up in New Jersey and their difficulties balancing their parents' demands and their urban milieu.


An autobiographical novel about a family in the Puerto Rican countryside (Salud) and the immigration of their son and daughter to the United States. Narrated by the daughter's oldest child.


A first book. Focuses on young city dwellers and their difficulties finding an alternative to drug abuse and despair.


A continuation of the short story “Happy Birthday.” Narrates a young drug dispatcher’s involvement with a girlfriend and his eventual withdrawal from the underworld.


A teenager tries to fulfill the American dream by selling drugs until he endangers himself.


A domestic worker from Vieques is abused by her companion and travels to the United States as a nanny.


A collection of short stories, some previously published, focusing on the Vietnam War and the Puerto Rican community.

Poetry

Agüeros, Jack. Correspondence between the Stonehaulers.


A first book, divided in four sections: “Sonnets from the Puerto Rican,” a collection of sonnets of everyday life in New York City; “Psalm for The Redeployment of Angels,” psalms and other compositions about injustice in New York City; “More Sonnets from the Puerto Rican,” poems about various city dwellers; and “Correspondence between the Stonehaulers,” in which two workers (an Egyptian and an Incan) discuss their miseries while working on grandiose projects.


A collection of seven books of poetry about the modern and postmodern urban experience of the immigrant.

Espada, Martín. City of Coughing and Dead Radiators.


The author’s fourth book of poetry. Explores topics such as the lives of tenants in Massachusetts and the experiences of a writer holding odd jobs.


Divided into two sections (“If Only History Were like Your Hands” and “To Skin the Hands of God”), the author’s third collection of poetry is deeply rooted in the Puerto Rican independentist movement and its literary production.

———. Trumpets from the Islands of Their Eviction.


A collection of poems influenced by the Spanish American conversational poetic tradition. Subjects include the struggles and achievements of Latinos and Latinas, as well as those of other working-class people and immigrants.

*Esteves, Sandra María. Bluestown Mockingbird Mambo.


A work in three sections: “Indian Solo,” about the communion with nature; “For Immediate Delivery,” about death and dying; and “Batarumba Autonomy,” about African traditions and rhythms.


According to Zimmerman, “Hernández presents poems filled with humor, sentiment and hope. Some social protest but now also much private sometimes amusing, musing meditation by a poet recently made aware of his own mortality.”


Includes poems about the author’s life in three metropolitan centers: New York, San Francisco, and San Juan.


A collection of poems, some previously published. Engages the reader in the musicality that the author believes poetry should provide.

*Laviera, Tato. Mainstream Ethics.


Focuses on the power of Hispanic tradition to survive total displacement but, recognizing that traditions change, avoids a fundamentalist stance.

Drama


———, ed. Recent Puerto Rican Theater: Five Plays from New York. Houston: Arte Público, 1991. Plays by contemporary Puerto Rican authors that have been produced. Includes Bodega, by Federico Fraguada; Family Scenes, by Ivette M. Ramírez; Midnight Blues, by Juan Shamsul Alam; Ariano, by Richard V. Irizarry; and First Class, by Cándido Tirado.


Autobiographies, Memoirs, and Biographies


Santiago, Esmeralda. When I Was Puerto Rican. Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1993. The autobiography of a young girl living in Macún who emigrates to San Juan and later to Brooklyn and who becomes the first university graduate in her family.

Criticism


———. “Literatura puertorriqueña en los Estados Unidos o cómo, con un poco de voluntad hasta Shakespeare puede llegar a ser boricua.” Brújula/Compass:
———. “Mira, mira, mira: Julio Sánchez, pintor neorri- 
Benmayor, Rina. “Getting Home Alive: The Politics of 
107–17.
Binder, Wolfgang. “‘A Midnight Reality’: Puerto Rican 
Poetry in New York, a Poetry of Dreams.” European 
Perspectives on Hispanic Literature of the United States. 
22–32.
Bruce Nova, Juan. “Judith Ortiz Cofer’s Ritual of Move-
Costa, Marithelma. “¿Y qué dicen los escritores neor-
rriqueños sobre el idioma, la literatura y la identidad 
nacional?” La revista del Centro de Estudios Avanzados 
Cruz-Malavé, Arnaldo. “Para virar el macho: La autobiogra-
fía como subversión en la cuentística de Manuel 
239–63.
———. “Towards an Art of Transvestism: Colonialism 
and Homosexuality in Puerto Rican Literature.” ¿En-
tiendes? Queer Readings, Hispanic Writings. Ed. Emilie 
Bergmann and Paul Julian Smith. Durham: Duke UP, 
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de Pedro Pietri.” Revista del Instituto de Cultura Puer-
McCracken, Ellen. “Latina Narrative and Politics of Sig-
nification: Articulation, Antagonism, and Populist 
Mohr, Nicholasa. “The Journey towards a Common 
Ground: Struggle and Identity of Hispanics in the 
———. “On Being Authentic.” Americas Review 24.3–4 
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Writers in Puerto Rico: A Separation beyond Lan-
guage: Testimonio.” Breaking Boundaries: Latina Writing 
and Critical Readings. Ed. Asunción Horno-
111–16.
Ortega, Eliana. “Sandra María Esteves’ Poetic Work: De-
mythizing Puerto Rican Poetry in the United States.” 
The Commuter Nation: Perspectives on Puerto Rican 
Migration. Ed. Carlos Antonio Torre, Hugo Rodríguez 
329–42.
Ortiz Cofer, Judith. “The Infinite Variety of the Puerto 
Rican Reality: An Interview with Judith Ortiz Cofer.” 
———. “A MELUS Interview: Judith Ortiz Cofer.” 
With Edna Acosta-Belén. MELUS 18.3 (1993): 
83–97.
AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY TO C.S. LEWIS: TILL WE HAVE FACES: a myth retold compiled by H. Lesfloris and I.C. Storey (Trent University) -.--This bibliography originated as a major paper submitted by HL for a fourth-year course in Classical Literature/English taught by ICS at Trent University in 1994/95. V. Bibliographical Studies of CSL: (i) Joe R. Christopher, and Joan K. Ostling, C. S. Lewis: An Annotated Checklist of Writings About Him and His Works, (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1974) 117-119, 290-295 [useful annotated bibliography of studies about Lewis and his works; secondary sources on TWHF (17-9); reviews (290-5); time-frame is. This annotated bibliography was originally written by Judy Gerjuoy ( ), and it was mainly oriented toward medieval heraldry. I have since then considerably modified it. Those of Judy's original annotations that remain are signed JG.