

Juárez, and Rascón Banda's play about Rita Patino Quintero, a Rarámuri woman who walked from Mexico to the United States and was wrongfully incarcerated in a Kansas mental institution for over a decade. These productions avoid catharsis and showcase not the "desert of the real," but the "reality of the desert," where women are trafficked and punished due in part to their vulnerability under neoliberalism (138, 147). It was a student who ultimately helped free Quintero (albeit under complex circumstances), and Day's conclusion takes up the work of student and faculty allies in academia, whose well-intentioned efforts and privilege often come into conflict with the communities that they seek to serve. Despite the ideological fissures that sometimes arise between student activists and community members, Day sees the benefits of getting students involved in activism, and he highlights the work of performance scholar-activists Debra Castillo and Ricardo Domínguez as examples of how theatre-making can change lives. Castillo's community-engaged Latina/o repertory theatre and Domínguez's virtual sit-ins and other digital activism form nodes of contact among diverse groups of allies, within and beyond academia. Throughout this fascinating book, Day weaves into his textual and production analyses copious references to works of Mexican art, scholarship, and popular culture – from the writings of Octavio Paz to Rodolfo Usigli's famous play *El gesticulador* (1938), to "Brozo el Payaso Tenebroso" and Sabina Berman's television show *Shalalá* and the #yosoy132 movement. These intertexts form a tapestry of Mexican cultural and social life, providing insights into the ways that everyday people make meaning and cope in a fractured public sphere. All told, *Outside Theater* provides rich and humane reflections on how theatre and performance can inculcate links among the arts, academia, and activism, both within and "outside" Mexico.

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HÉCTOR D. FERNÁNDEZ L'HOESTE. *Lalo Alcaraz: Political Cartooning in the Latino Community*. Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2017. 192 pp.

Comics scholarship has become well-established as a field of academic inquiry. Scholarship focused on Latino comic art in the U.S. is an area of this broader field of inquiry that is currently under construction. Héctor Fernández L'Hoeste's *Lalo Alcaraz: Political Cartooning in the Latino Community* represents a new addition, joining Frederick Louis Aldama's *Your Brain on Latino Comics: From Gus Arriola to Los Bros Hernandez*

(2009), and the volume, co-edited by Aldama and Christopher González, and to which Fernández L'Hoeste contributed, *Graphic Borders: Latino Comic Books, Past, Present, and Future* (2016). As Latino cultural production expands and develops in this area, so too must the curatorial work that recognizes and elaborates on its relevance.

This is, in the main, precisely Fernández L'Hoeste's argument: Lalo Alcaraz's cartooning is motivated by a seriousness of purpose – and possessed of a vital social and political relevance – that requires a similarly serious critical evaluation. Latinos constitute a growing national demographic in the U.S., but that growth coincides with the usual unevenness in the integration of non-whites to the U.S. economy and polity. Anti-immigrant vitriol and related “othering” of Latinos, maintaining and renewing generations-old cultural strategies for positioning U.S. citizens of Latin American heritage as “second-class,” have intensified in recent decades. At the same time, Latino cultural production has proliferated. One can be hopeful that eventually “media representation will have adjusted to new realities” (18), as Fernández L'Hoeste puts it, but there is a danger of complacency where Latino cultural work is concerned. “This is why,” the author asserts, “it is important to have an early balance of the work by Alcaraz, so that reception of his cartoons and comic strips does not go unchecked from a Latino perspective” (18).

Fernández L'Hoeste positions his study of Alcaraz in what he calls “a diachronic view, in which various Latino cartoonists figure as part of a continuous narrative of social achievement” (39). The author situates Alcaraz's cartooning as part of a Latino graphic narrative tradition that includes Gus Arriola, the Bros. Hernandez, Frank Espinosa, Rafael Navarro, Héctor Cantú, and Carlos Castellanos, with the idea that “each of these cartoonists incarnates a separate wave of migration” (39). Alcaraz's politically pointed cartooning, Fernández L'Hoeste argues, represents a significant advance in the engagement by Latino comics art with the politics of immigration. “Together, [these Latino cartoonists] inform and provide a context for any Latino/a cartoonist in the country, yet they do not zero in as markedly on the forthcoming changes in our population nor embrace attitudes as combative (and sometimes extreme) as does Alcaraz” (69).

The author moves in his discussion from context to text, and back again, as he argues for the social and political relevance of Alcaraz's work alongside a critical assessment of it. One consequence of this strategy is that Alcaraz's political cartooning at times fades out of focus as the author invests his energies in elaborating on the contradictions and complexities of immigration politics, the English-only movement, and the demographic future of the United States. Useful generalizations and broad insights are

thus sometimes more clearly drawn about the social and political context of the nation than about the cultural text in question. “The lack of a path to legalization for millions offers very little in the way of access to [social integration]” (128) the author concludes at the end of a long chapter on Alcaraz’s *Migra Mouse*. “In this context, Alcaraz’s editorial cartoons . . . serve well as a chronicle of perhaps the longest period in modern US history without significant immigration reform” (128). Another consequence of this is that the author’s assessment of Alcaraz’s work is principally rhetorical, concerned with the nature of Alcaraz’s public discourse. This is a valuable feature of the book, insofar as comics scholarship at times leans toward formalist analysis and away from politics.

The book is well organized, and this formal strength lends itself to the author’s objective. The argument is presented occasionally in overly lengthy paragraphs that wander when the author turns to context, but this is a minor stylistic flaw in a book that represents solid scholarship and useful reflection about the social and political contexts of Latino cartooning in the U.S. The book is usefully augmented with the transcript of a short interview by the author of Alcaraz, adding the cartoonist’s voice for the reader’s consideration. Fernández L’Hoeste has laid another brick in the edifice of comics scholarship centered on Latino cultural production. Subnational and transnational communities and their cultures are, it bears noting, vital to understanding the national and international contexts of graphic narrative. Latino comics scholarship is therefore integral to the continued development of comics scholarship generally.

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LORGIA GARCÍA-PEÑA. *The Borders of Dominicanidad: Race, Nation, and Archives of Contradiction*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2016. xiv + 274 pp.

El campo de los estudios dominicanos es, aunque reciente, amplio y variado en sus acercamientos. Al creciente corpus, escrito tanto en inglés como en español, se agrega ahora el libro de Lorgia García-Peña, *The Borders of Dominicanidad: Race, Nation, and Archives of Contradiction*.

En su acercamiento, García-Peña, aunque con un enfoque principal en los aspectos étnicos y raciales que marcan la definición y representación de la dominicanidad, hace aportes valiosos desde el punto de vista