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TITLE: *Teaching Late-Twentieth-Century Mexicana and Chicana Writers*

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This comprehensive edited volume provides educators and scholars with multiple approaches using culturally responsive pedagogy to teaching Mexicana and Chicana writers, some more well-known than others, who emerged in the late 1970s. It is a welcome and valuable addition to the fields of Mexican and Chicana cultural history, multicultural studies, gender studies, narratology, and borderland studies. It acknowledges the linkages that readers may make between and among writers like Sandra Cisneros and Laura Esquivel (often due to assumed similar cultural heritage and background). However, it takes great care to highlight the historical, cultural, and social differences in which the writers emerged and produced their work. As noted in the introduction, “when readers encounter women-centered plots and feminist discourse in creative narratives by notable authors working in a similar time period in different countries, they might feel invited to categorize these authors jointly, but doing so can erase separate sociopolitical and historical experiences” (2).

The extensive volume is thoughtfully divided into five sections. The first covers the seminal work of Mexican writers from different time periods, considered seminal predecessors for later generations of women writers. Authors like Rosario Castellanos and Elena Poniatowska may be familiar to many readers and in fact both authors are discussed in at least six different articles throughout
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the volume. While this may seem disproportionate, the articles approach specific texts by these authors from different perspectives, providing new insights, connections, comparisons, and pedagogical strategies. Indeed, the several essays highlight themes that may be of interest to students at both the graduate and undergraduate levels, such as social justice, living with physical disabilities, explorations of identities, and the search for self through the act of writing. The second section comprises ten chapters that focus on the seminal and innovative work of Chicana authors like Ana Castillo, Denise Chávez, and Gloria Anzaldúa, among others. These essays highlight their creative and groundbreaking works while also introducing ways the different texts can encourage critical thinking, assist in strategic writing, and engage in new ways of thinking. The following three sections are a bit shorter, engaging respectively with comparative analysis, digital technologies, and visual approaches to writers and different texts. These include topics and ways to prepare lessons, courses, and projects thoughtfully and from a critical pedagogical perspective.

As with any edited volume, some essays may be of more interest than others. There are some that are explicitly engaged with presenting activities and strategies—the use of PowerPoint slides and small group work—that may seem quaint in our post-Covid online teaching environment, but are still useful

to think through the impact on the interplay between teaching tools and literary texts. Instructors will appreciate the candor and real-world examples presented in some of the essays in terms of the challenges and successes encountered when teaching certain texts. For example, Rabi'a Hakima's essay "Navigating Unanswerable Questions in Carmen Buollosa's 'So Disappear'" makes a compelling argument for including the groundbreaking experimental short story by Mexican writer Buollosa—an author perhaps not well known to US audiences—in a world literature survey course. Hakima shares her experiences teaching this story to students at a four-year college and at a community college, presenting a clear and comprehensive four-step process that introduces students to the "poetic and painterly style" of the story. These details and examples are particularly valuable for anyone who may want to include the story in their own class, as they may help an instructor contextualize the text and provide students the necessary tools to engage with the text in a way that affirms their understanding.

Engaging and valuable on its own, the editor's introduction merits special mention. In it, Coonrod Martínez provides a comprehensive and engaging overview of the history, cultural production and criticism of Mexicana and Chicana writers. For example, the literary production of Mexicana writers that emerged

in the 1970s is framed within the context of international movements for gender equality, like the 1975 World Conference on Women, with Latin American and "Third World" communities often at the center of these crusades for civil rights. The introduction also presents biographical and literary sketches of the Mexicana and Chicana writers featured in the volume. These summaries will be of use to undergraduate and graduate students new to the field. Experts in the field familiar with some or all of the authors discussed in the volume will find a fascinating reframing of the literary and cultural trajectory of the authors; woven through the introduction is the spirit of solidarity and collective support among the different writers. For example, Elena Poniatowska's seemingly outsized presence in the chapters makes sense to the reader given that she established a writing workshop that helped support the work of Silvia Molina and many of the other authors examined in this volume. It weaves together these literary histories while engaging with methods and practices useful for an instructor. Moreover, this valuable essay recenters the work of these authors within a genealogy of resistance: it provides a comprehensive overview of their literary and creative production, the intersections and connections among the writers and the ways these writers create spaces in existing systems of knowledge.