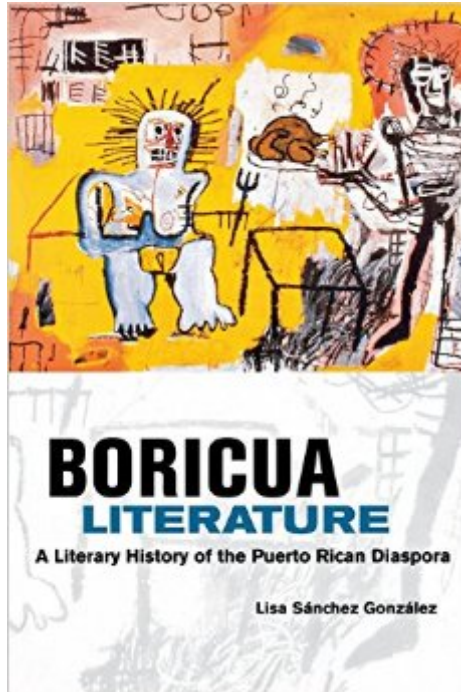


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Boricua Literature: A Literary History Of The Puerto Rican Diaspora



Synopsis

Since the invasion and colonization of Puerto Rico in 1898, all Puerto Ricans are both American citizens and colonial subjects by birth according to international law. Over a third of this population currently lives in the continental U.S. forming one of the nation's most significant "minority" communities. Yet no complete study of mainland Puerto Rican—or Boricua—literature has been written. Until now. *Boricua Literature* is the first literary history of the Puerto Rican colonial diaspora. The result of a decade of research in archives and special collections in the Caribbean and in the U.S., Lisa SÁnchez GonzÁlez argues that the writing of the Puerto Rican diaspora should be considered an integral field of study. Covering 100 years of Boricua literary history, each chapter looks at the single writer or group of writers who are most emblematic of their respective generation, from William Carlos Williams and Arturo Schomburg, to latina feminism and salsa music. The story of an American community of color, *Boricua Literature* is also about contemporary critical race and gender studies. Unlike virtually all studies concerning mainland Puerto Rican writing, Lisa SÁnchez GonzÁlez is less concerned with "cultural identity" than with unearthing a substantive cultural intellectual history. The first explicitly literary historical analysis of Boricua Literature, this definitive study proposes a new and discreet area of literary historical research in American studies.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Like its provocative cover --Basquiat's "Arroz con Pollo"-- this book is a rare combination of "the raw" and "the cooked." It navigates a treacherous and booby-trapped passage through the entire 20th century to the birth of a distinct Boricuan literary tradition!Boricua Literature highlights the literary creativity of Puerto Ricans living in the mainland United States. The author focuses on recuperating "minor literature" by Boricua writers who often fall and disappear into the cracks between disciplinary boundaries and too-rigidly defined cultural and political spaces. She offers useful insights into contemporary cultural studies, focusing especially on gender and race. Reading Boricua Literature introduced me to several remarkable literary figures, and the approach in the book was a colorful quilt of critical concepts. The way the author challenges political orthodoxies and literary canons without dismissing scholarly rigor is edifying. Sanchez-Gonzalez' style reminds one of Zora Neale Hurston's famous phrase "going a piece of the way with them," i.e. not "all the way" uncritically. Each chapter spends a good deal of time reframing and re-negotiating theories and identities with sharp feminist and critical race questions. The author bestows on Luisa Capetillo --a turn of the 20th Century anarcho-feminist writer-activist-- the position of The founder of Boricua Literary tradition. In another chapter, Sanchez-Gonzalez recuperates children's stories written by Pure Belpre, a librarian at the New York Public Library, whose work on behalf of children remains alive in libraries throughout the U.S. today.

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