US Latino/a Literatures: A Selective Bibliography

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This bibliography is selective not exhaustive. It is meant to serve as the foundation for the development of an undergraduate literature course, one that would satisfy General Education requirements and offer students a well-considered multi-cultural educational experience. Resting not far behind this statement of purpose is the humanistic (and humane) hope that this bibliography will help instructors within and outside the academic disciplines of English or Comparative Literatures to reflect consciously on the notable contributions of Latino/a writers to the intellectual life of the US and to our shared histories.

Bibliographies and Online Sources

There are a number of helpful bibliographies available on Latino/a literatures, cultures, and histories: U.S. Latino Literature: An Essay and Annotated Bibliography by Marc Zimmerman (1990); Latinos in English, edited by Harold Augenbraum (1992); The Handbook of Hispanic Cultures in the United States: Literature and Art, a collection of essays edited by Nicolás Kanellos, Francisco A. Lomelí, and Claudio Esteva Fabregat (1993); Latino and Latina Critical Theory: An Annotated Bibliography by Jean Stefancic (1997); the Oxford Bibliography of Latino Studies, edited by Ilan Stavans, (2005); and Bibliographic Essay on U.S. Latino/a History by José M. Alamillo (2008). Librarians involved in acquisitions and instructors developing a new course or rethinking a well-established one would find all of these sources helpful. However, the Oxford Bibliography of Latino Studies is the most comprehensive and expertly curated.

Similarly, there is a wealth of encyclopedias, dictionaries, and guides to Latino/a cultures, histories, and literature in the US. The best and most complete listing of these sources is available at ALZAR: Academic Latina/o Zone of Activism & Research, the newest group within the SALALM (Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials). According to the website, ALZAR was developed by SALALM librarians and academics interested in the intersection of two disciplines: Latina/o and Latin American Studies. Its stated goal is “to provide a link (virtual and real) to resources addressing Latina/o issues in the academic setting.” The focus of ALZAR is interdisciplinary academic research. The range of sources offered on its website is impressive and includes major databases, archival collections, Library of Congress sources, oral histories, advocacy groups, research centers, and writers’ websites.
The Poetry Foundation and the Poetry Society of America have two of the very best websites in terms of teaching resources and general knowledge. The editors at the Poetry Foundation have developed a number of interesting links on Latino poetry, including interviews with and readings by poets. Audio and video resources on the Poetry Foundation site include, for example, Nancy Mercado reflecting on 9/11; Richard Blanco reading at the Presidential Inauguration; Ben Saenz discussing Mexico’s Border Violence; and Ricardo Pau Llosa exploring Latin American art and poetry. Similarly, the Poetry Society of America has poems, interviews, and biographical information about Latino/a poets, as well as a Latino/a Roundtable of contemporary poets introduced by Francisco Aragón, Institute for Latino Studies, University of Notre Dame.

Scholarship Relevant to Institutions of Higher Education

This selection of scholarly essays and books is meant to address a need within institutions of higher education to serve a population that is too often invisible, despite the prevalence of quantifying demographics. The works selected address the way in which institutional cultures affect the experience of Latino/a students in the classroom. As the Brazilian pedagogue Paulo Freire insists, the classroom is not a rarefied space with little pragmatic value in the “real world.” The classroom and the world are “co-extensive.” Again, the selection is not exhaustive. It is meant to introduce readers and researchers at varying levels to important topics across a range of academic fields and pedagogical perspectives that include Linguistics, ESL, Composition, History, Anthropology, Sociology, Psychology, Law, and Political Science.


Mooney, Margarita, and Deborah Rivas-Drake. “Colleges Need to Recognize, and Serve, the 3 Kinds of Latino Student.” *Chronicles of Higher Education* 54:29 (March 2008).


**Literary Scholarship**

This selection of scholarly essays and books is meant to address the theoretical interests and concerns of instructors who teach or are preparing to teach Latino/a literatures at the undergraduate level. The selection is representative of the often award-winning scholarship being done in the field of Latino Studies from 1990 to the present. Another source of special interest is the journal published by Palgrave-MacMillan, *Latino Studies*, beginning with its first issue in 2003.


**Latino/a Literary Anthologies**

Literary anthologies serve a practical purpose, whether in an introductory course, or as a helpful tool for instructors and general audiences interested in familiarizing themselves with the formal and historical range of Latino/a writings. The anthologies listed here represent the formal range of literary texts (from performance art to prose fiction), as well as the historical range (from pre-Columbian to the present). While there is some overlap among these texts, each of these editors or group of editors offers us a constellation of readings, an opportunity to see and interpret a pattern of writing. Pablo Neruda is quoted as having said that art is indivisible from its context, historical and political. These anthologies help us understand, not only the literary contributions of Latino/a writers, but the historical and political forces too often and incorrectly rendered invisible. *The Norton Anthology of Latino Literature* and *El Coro: A Chorus of Latino and Latina Poetry* are both especially good: the former because of its range and the strength of its introductory and supporting materials; the latter because it reflects the insights and concerns of an important contemporary Latino poet, Martín Espada. For instructors and others especially interested in developing a sense of historical breadth, Nicolas Kanellos’ anthology, *Herencia*, which means “heritage” or “inheritance” in Spanish, is also very helpful.


U.S. Latino/a Writers

There are hundreds of well-known Latino/a poets, novelists, and playwrights contributing to the aesthetic and intellectual culture of the United States today. Their names are grouped here by genre and then listed alphabetically. In poetry, they range from the canonical (William Carlos Williams) to the well-recognized (Sandra Cisneros, Richard Blanco, Martín Espada) to the newly emerging (Eduardo C. Corral, who became in 2011 the first Latino to win Yale Younger Poets prize). In drama, they range from Pulitzer-prize winners (Nilo Cruz) to important but lesser known performance artists. Under the category of “prose,” the genres include novels, short stories, memoirs, and autobiographies. These prose writers range from Pulitzer-prize winners (Oscar Hijuelos) and New York Times best-sellers (Julia Alvarez) to newly emerging voices. Again, it bears repeating that this bibliography, regardless of the genres employed below, is selective and not exhaustive; that the works included here offer points of entry—ways of understanding the intersections of cultures and languages, as well as an opportunity for broadening the undergraduate curricula.

Poetry


**Drama**


**Prose (Novels, Short Stories, Memoirs, and Autobiographies)**


