



Sexual Futures, Queer Gestures, and Other Latina Longings

Juana María Rodríguez

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Contents Acknowledgments vii Introduction 1 1. Who's Your Daddy? Queer Kinship and Perverse Domesticity 29 2. Sodomy, Sovereignty, and Other Utopian Longings 69 3. Gesture in Mambo Time 99 4. Latina Sexual Fantasies, the Remix 139 The Afterglow 183 Notes 189 Bibliography 213 Index 229 About the Author 245

Sexual Futures, Queer Gestures, and Other Latina Longings Details

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From Reader Review Sexual Futures, Queer Gestures, and Other Latina Longings for online ebook

Quin Rich says

A compelling, interdisciplinary approach to queer sociality which centers the Latina femme as its subject of inquiry. Addressing themes of kinship, community, coloniality, activism, fantasy, art, and embodiment, this text is a powerful and thoroughly enjoyable read. Rodriguez offers an insightful account of the ways in which racial-gender sexual abjection can function as a site of resistance (or more aptly survival and endurance) for racialized feminized sexual subjects.

The book is divided into four main chapters addressing, in turn, kinship formations, queer activism in the face of colonial domination, dance and sex as metaphors/exemplars for new conceptions of queer sociality, and the role of abjection and fantasy for racialized feminized subjects.

As someone who is skeptical of the political potential of sex, I found many of the arguments made productively challenging, and I feel more open-minded and empathetic after having read this. Rodriguez makes some very cool points about not conflating fantasy with material forms of violence (especially when it is the fantasies of marginalized subjects); the power of friendship as a new model for queer sociality; and the productive constraints of social codes.

I did however have to refrain from giving this book a 5-star rating because at many point, Rodriguez makes claims that are, frankly, off-key and disturbing. For example, she decides to re-code butch/femme lesbian sexuality with heteronormative, "butch as he/femme as she" language, and writes an account that seems almost patriarchal at points. This is only for a few pages in the third chapter, but I was left wondering what exactly she was trying to argue here. She also doesn't seem to think sexual violence in prisons is serious concern, until she does, and then doesn't again. This however is a common theme in queer theory texts: bold, broad claims in the name of sexual freedom stuck in the middle of paragraphs and which are never explained or problematized.

I just read "Are the Lips a Grave?" by Lynne Huffer before this, and I recommend reading them in combination. They seem to be attempting similar projects from different perspectives, and they compliment each other well.

Nat says

An absolute game changer to queer theory and theories of embodiment, up there with Munoz's work. Rodriguez's theory of gesture and the way she lets it touch her readers is refreshing, titillating, and an entirely welcome change of framework and paradigm for understanding how these strange bodies of ours work. A must read.

Cathy says

Okay I found this to be SO full and maybe a little less accessible in that it took me a bit longer to read. BUT

I was engrossed in it. I only managed to pull off reading the Intro and the first and last chapters, but they were SO good, thought provoking, relevant, and needed. Took lots of notes and hope to go back soon. This is definitely a book to savor, share, and talk about!

Ai Miller says

GOSH this book was so good. It made me think so much about utopianism, and futurity, and the ways we could accomplish or even begin to imagine that. Any and all engagement with porn studies delights and fascinates me, and I appreciate the care Rodríguez takes in addressing each of her topics. She reaches across a number of different fields, which is really inspiring to see. It's also pretty accessible, as book like this go- I rarely felt like I struggled to understand the points she was making. This book just made me think a lot, and brought me so much intellectual joy. I strongly recommend it to everyone!

Mills College Library says

306.7601 R6966 2014

Ayanna Dozier says

Sexual Futures, Queer Gestures, and Other Latina Longings gives a queer studies cultural analysis on sexuality, embodiment, and affect in Latin@ (used expression in book) culture. The first two chapters of this book reads more like critical legal studies, which is odd because Rodríguez does not set this up for the reader in her introduction. The latter two chapters, 3 and 4, take a remarkably different tone, analysis than seen in chapters 1 and 2, which is much appreciated. Chapter 3 offers a lush analysis on embodiment, queerness, dance, and Latin@ culture and "excess." Drawing upon the rich work of the late José Esteban Muñoz, Rodríguez argues that sex, like dance, is a memory driven exercise that offers a queer potential to an "imagined elsewhere" where desires/different subjects roam free (118). Rodríguez's strongest argument, and one that could use room for expansion, is on shame and abjection. Specifically, Rodríguez is interested in examining how Latin@ femmes mine the painful and shameful history of colonization for queer pleasure. Utilizing Darieck Scott's *Extravagant Abjection: Blackness, Power, and Sexuality in the African American Literary Imagination*, Rodríguez is invested in discussing the occupation of Blackness and anti-Blackness identity that some Latin@ identities are formed around. For Rodríguez, abjection offers the potential to re-write the gestures of being (that is the movements, utterances, etc. that make up our identity) in the present to produce a new framework in which we can encounter our embodiments as desiring, sensing bodies (141).

Zach Irvin says

I loved this book. It took me a while to get through it, but I'm supremely glad I stuck with it.

First I would like to comment on the physical book copy that I have. The cover is strange. The thicker paper

of the cover is coated with a substance that is almost velvety. Soft and almost skin-like, the cover absorbs the oil from your hands and leaves imprints of your fingers and palms all over. Holding and interacting with the book changes it, just as reading it changes you. Leading you to think about the fleshy impact of our bodies on the world around us.

The author, Juana Maria Rodriguez, says at the beginning that the book is meant as an intimate gesture from the author to the reader. It is certainly that. Rodriguez talks about sex, queerness, emotion, desire and all the viscous experiences we carry with us through life. She turns a critical and analytical eye to gestures, both quotidian and grand, that structure our daily and political lives. Through her discussion of gesture and affect in queer interventions into politics she urges the reader to consider the possible futures that are opened up when we do politics with emotion. One of my favorite chapters discussed the campaign for LGBTQ rights in Puerto Rico, and considers what possibilities open up when queer activists turn acts of submission into acts of protest, and the considerable changes that can occur during these radical acts.

Rodriguez takes as her central subject the queer latina, but she also touches on a long list of racialized, queer bodies in order to express on critique experience at the margins of society, and the spectacular and mundane ways that these individuals live in, through and against the society around them that seeks to dominate and destroy their bodies. She talks about pride parades, porn, burlesque, protests, video art, gay marriage, respectability, assimilation. The scope of the book is wide, but it always feels like you are being engaged directly by someone who knows the dance well, and is interested in dancing with you.

I finish this review with a quote from the last paragraph of the book:

"Our sexual politics need to begin here, in the grip between public policies that touch the soiled surfaces of our lives and utopian longings that pull us toward other sexual futures. Despite our best intentions, we know that nothing will ever be enough to remedy the harms we also hold. So let us be tender with one another, let us foster a spirit of vulnerability that cultivates the willingness to risk imagining otherwise, that values the resilience needed to share the burden of our collective longings. this is the amorous gift, a gesture of friendship, a dedication of care that endures." (187)
