HUMORING RESISTANCE
Laughter and the Excessive Body in Latin American Women’s Fiction
DIANNA C. NIEBYLSKI

Analyses the explosive connections among strategic uses of humor, women’s bodies, and resistance in fiction by Latin American women writers.

Contextualizing theoretical debates about the political uses of gendered humor and female excess, this book explores bold new ways in which a number of contemporary Latin American women authors approach questions of identity and community. The author examines the connections among strategic uses of humor, women’s bodies, and resistance in works of fiction by Laura Esquivel, Ana Lydia Vega, Luisa Valenzuela, Armonía Somers, and Alicia Borinsky. She shows how the interarticulation of the comic and comic-grotesque vision with different types of excessive female bodies can result in new configurations of female subjectivity.

“Niebylski’s main thesis—that contemporary Latin American women writers resist ‘machista’-gendered impositions through the creation of ‘boundless bodies,’ ‘unruly voices,’ and ‘anarchic laughter’—is superbly original and has the potential to open new avenues in the fields of Latin American literary criticism, gender studies, and cultural studies. In addition, her treatment of bodily ‘humors’ makes us rethink the feminist theories of Irigaray and Cixous, as well as Bakhtin’s theories of humor. This is a solid contribution to the study of Latin American fiction.”
— María Rosa Olivera-Williams, University of Notre Dame

Dianna C. Niebylski is Associate Professor of Latin American Literature and Social Theory at the University of Kentucky and the author of The Poem on the Edge of the Word: The Limits of Language and the Uses of Silence in the Poetry of Mallarmé, Rilke, and Vallejo.

A volume in the SUNY series in Latin American and Iberian Thought and Culture
Jorge J. E. Gracia and Rosemary Geisdorfer Feal, editors

June ■ 240 pp.
$45.00 hc only ISBN 0-7914-6123-8

EMMA; OR, THE UNFORTUNATE ATTACHMENT
A Sentimental Novel
GEORGIANA, DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE
EDITED AND WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
JONATHAN DAVID GROSS

An early British novel, attributed to Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, which explores the problems of first impressions and arranged marriages from the perspective of a woman who would suffer the long-term consequences of both.

Published anonymously in 1773 and attributed to Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, this epistolary novel explores the “unfortunate attachment” of Emma Eggerton to William Walpole. Forbidden by her father to marry the man she loves, Emma resigns herself to marrying Walpole, her father’s autocratic choice of a husband. The novel’s other unfortunate attachment concerns Colonel Sutton, who falls prey to the “low” machinations of the confirmed flirt Harriet Courtney. Like Jane Austen’s Pride and Prejudice, Georgiana’s Emma explores the dangers of first impressions and arranged marriages, but does so from the vantage point of a woman who would suffer the long-term consequences of both.

Originally published when the author was only sixteen, and long out of print, Emma anticipates many of the major events of Georgiana’s own life, and taken together with her second novel, The Sylph, it offers significant insights into the outlook of aristocratic women in the late eighteenth century. An Introduction by Jonathan David Gross sets the novel in the context of its time and explores the questions surrounding its authorship.

Jonathan David Gross is Associate Professor of English at DePaul University. He is the author of Byron: The Erotic Liberal and editor of Byron’s “Corbeau Blanc”: The Life and Letters of Lady Melbourne.

July ■ 373 pp.
Illustrated: 4 figures
$65.50 hc ISBN 0-7914-6145-9
THE DEVIL’S POOL
AND OTHER STORIES

George Sand
E. H. Blackmore,
A. M. Blackmore, and
Francine Giguère, translators

A new translation of Sand’s most popular novella, known for its brevity, liveliness, and exemplary storytelling, together with two of Sand’s most admired short stories.

Newly translated into English, “The Devil’s Pool” is the most popular of George Sand’s novellas and her best-selling work in France today. Illustrating Sand’s brevity, liveliness, and exemplary storytelling, the tale deals with many of her characteristic themes—the relations between the sexes, the plight of the underprivileged, and the role of fantasy in human life—making it an ideal introduction to her work. Also included are translations of two of Sand’s most admired short stories, “Lavinia” and “The Unknown God,” as well as various relevant essays and documents.

“The choice of stories is particularly felicitous, as they illustrate different aspects of George Sand’s tremendous talent as a storyteller and writer. Sand has become recognized as one of the greatest literary figures of the nineteenth century and among the greatest women writers, yet there are no translations of these works in print.” — Gabrielle Verdier, University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee

“Sand has not achieved the canonical status in the United States that she enjoys in other countries, and the present translation will serve to rectify this situation.” — Kristine J. Anderson, cotranslator of The Story of My Life by George Sand

E. H. Blackmore, A. M. Blackmore, and Francine Giguère are freelance writers and translators. Their previous collaborative translations include Five Comedies by George Sand, also published by SUNY Press, and Twelve Plays by Alfred de Musset. The Blackmores have also coedited and cotranslated Selected Poems of Victor Hugo; The Major Epics of Victor Hugo; and (with James McGowan and Martin Sorrell) Six French Poets of the Nineteenth Century.

A volume in the SUNY series, Women Writers in Translation
Marilyn Gaddis Rose, editor

July ■ 192 pp.
Trim size: 5 ½ x 8 ½
Illustrated: 1 figure
$59.40 hc ISBN 0-7914-6149-1

FROM MOTHERHOOD
TO MOTHERING

The Legacy
of Adrienne Rich’s
Of Woman Born
Andrea O’Reilly, editor

Explores how Rich’s work has influenced feminist scholarship on motherhood.

In the years since the publication of Adrienne Rich’s Of Woman Born, the topic of motherhood has emerged as a central issue in feminist scholarship. Arguably still the best feminist book on mothering and motherhood, Of Woman Born is not only a wide-ranging, far-reaching meditation on the meaning and experience of motherhood that draws from the disciplines of anthropology, feminist theory, psychology, and literature, but it also narrates Rich’s personal reflections on her experiences of mothering. Andrea O’Reilly gathers feminist scholars from diverse disciplines such as literature, women’s studies, law, sociology, anthropology, creative writing, and critical theory and examines how Of Woman Born has informed and influenced the way feminist scholarship “thinks and talks” about motherhood. The contributors explore the many ways in which Rich provides the analytical tools to study and report upon the meaning and experience of motherhood.

“I can hardly imagine a more relevant or more universal subject. O’Reilly examines not only how Rich’s book changed scholars’ views of motherhood, but also how it changed their voices—adding a chorus of personal insight to their professional and academic research findings.” — Mary Kay Blakely, author of American Mom: Motherhood, Politics, and Humble Pie

Andrea O’Reilly is Associate Professor in the School of Women’s Studies at York University and President of the Association for Research on Mothering. She is the author and editor of several books on mothering, including Toni Morrison and Motherhood: A Politics of the Heart, also published by SUNY Press; Mothers and Daughters: Connection, Empowerment, and Transformation (with Sharon Abbey); and Mothers and Sons: Feminism, Masculinity, and the Struggle to Raise Our Sons.

October ■ 288 pp.
$25.95 pb ISBN 0-7914-6288-9
$75.50 hc ISBN 0-7914-6287-0

For a list of contributors, see page 62.
“Byron Caminero-Santangelo exposes the limitations of the hegemonic ‘writing back to the center’ model and offers an alternative approach that emphasizes the constitutive creativity of postcolonial cultural producers. The subtlety of his reasoning and the brilliance of his close readings will make it impossible for critics to reduce postcolonial texts to a unidimensional, reactive ‘writing back’ relationship to European literature. This stimulating, erudite, and wide-ranging book promises to become a benchmark in postcolonial literary studies.” — Laura Chrisman, author of Postcolonial Contraventions: Cultural Readings of Race, Imperialism, and Transnationalism

By exploring the relationships between African novels and Joseph Conrad’s fiction, this book examines the many discontinuous functions postcolonial revisions of “the canon” can serve. While contemporary literary studies too often represent such revisions merely as a means for postcolonial writers to challenge a colonial worldview, Caminero-Santangelo explores how African authors engage with a wide range of historically specific ideologies generated by particular histories of national independence and the development of postcolonial nations. The shift in focus away from a single colonial moment enables Caminero-Santangelo to detect a complex interweaving of convergence and divergence between Conrad and African writers such as Chinua Achebe, Ngugi wa Thiong’o, Nadine Gordimer, Tayeb Salih, and Ama Ata Aidoo, who use Conradian intertexts to intervene in repressive situations in late-twentieth-century Africa. By emphasizing the need to contextualize acts of writing and rewriting in precise historical terms, the author points to the limitations—even the dangers—of the standard cultural binary (Western-colonial/African-postcolonial) and the static dialectic of colonial domination and postcolonial resistance embraced by much recent cultural criticism.

Byron Caminero-Santangelo is Associate Professor of English at the University of Kansas.

Challenging the notion that Jewish American and Holocaust literature have exhausted their limits, this volume reexamines these closely linked traditions in light of recent postmodern theory. Composed against the tumultuous background of great cultural transition and unprecedented state-sponsored systematic murder, Jewish American and Holocaust literature both address the concerns of postmodern human existence in extremis. In addition to exploring how various mythic and literary themes are deconstructed in the lurid light of Auschwitz, this book provides critical reassessments of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud, and Philip Roth, as well as contemporary Jewish American writers who are extending this vibrant tradition into the new millennium. These essays deepen and enrich our understanding of the Jewish literary tradition and the implications of the Shoah.

“The intellectual importance of this work is unquestioned and the topic immensely important. The essays are gripping and revealing, opening up so much that has been hidden.” — Daniel Walden, editor of Conversations with Chaim Potok

Alan L. Berger is the Raddock Eminent Scholar Chair of Holocaust Studies and directs the Holocaust and Judaic Studies program and the Center for the Study of Values and Violence after Auschwitz at Florida Atlantic University. His previous books include Children of Job: American Second-Generation Witnesses to the Holocaust, also published by SUNY Press, and the Encyclopedia of Holocaust Literature (coedited with David Patterson and Sarita Cargas). Gloria L. Cronin is Professor of English at Brigham Young University and has written and edited numerous books, including A Room of His Own: In Search of the Feminine in the Novels of Saul Bellow.

A volume in the SUNY series in Modern Jewish Literature and Culture Sarah Blacher Cohen, editor

September  ■ 272 pp. 
$75.50 hc ISBN 0-7914-6209-9

For a list of contributors, see page 63.
LITERATURE

THE GARDENS OF DESIRE
Marcel Proust and the Fugitive Sublime
STEPHEN GILBERT BROWN

Offers a psychocritical reading of Proust’s À la recherche du temps perdu (Remembrance of Things Past).

The Gardens of Desire is at once a model of literary interpretation and a groundbreaking psychocritical reading of a literary masterpiece, Marcel Proust’s À la recherche du temps perdu (Remembrance of Things Past). Shedding new light on the origins of the creative impulse in general, and on the psychological origins of the Recherche in particular, the book illuminates the hidden associations between matricidal, suicidal, sadistic, masochistic, homoerotic, and creative impulses as manifested in Proust’s work. The book moves beyond traditional Freudian readings of Proust to consider the theories of Otto Rank, Jacques Derrida, and others, and provides provocative readings of the “privileged moments” that comprise many of the work’s “critical cruxes,” as well as a thought-provoking rereading of the novel’s ending. Both elegant and accessible, this book boldly explores the violence of desire as it relates not only to Proust’s narrator, but also to Proustian criticism itself, with its own violent desire to appropriate the essence of Proust’s masterpiece.

“This book is extremely well written and highly readable—free of jargon but subtle in its grasp of theories. What I like most is Brown’s bold use of the theories of Otto Rank to discover and articulate affinities between New Critical and postmodern readings of Proust.” — Jefferson Humphries, Louisiana State University

Stephen Gilbert Brown is Assistant Professor of English and Director of Composition at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas. He is the author of Words in the Wilderness: Critical Literacy in the Borderlands and the coeditor (with Sidney I. Dobrin) of Ethnography Unbound: From Theory Shock to Critical Praxis, both published by SUNY Press.

ETERNAL BONDS, TRUE CONTRACTS
Law and Nature in Shakespeare’s Problem Plays
A. G. HARMON

Uses legal and literary resources to explore Shakespeare’s use of the law and its instruments in the problem plays.

In Eternal Bonds, True Contracts, A. G. Harmon closely analyzes Shakespeare’s concentrated use of the law and its instruments in what have often been referred to as the problem plays: Measure for Measure, Troilus and Cressida, The Merchant of Venice, and All’s Well That Ends Well. Contracts, bonds, sureties, wills—all ensure a changed relationship between parties, and in Shakespeare the terms are nearly always reserved for use in the contexts of marriage and fellowship. Harmon explores the theory and practice of contractual obligations in Renaissance England, especially those involving marriage and property, in order to identify contractual elements and their formation, execution, and breach in the plays. Using both legal and literary resources, Harmon reveals the larger significance of these contractual concepts by illustrating how Shakespeare develops them both dramatically and thematically. Harmon’s study ultimately enables the reader to perceive not only these plays but also all of Shakespeare’s writing—including his poetry—as integral with, and implicated in, the proliferating legalism that was helping to define early modern English culture.

“By explicating not only the language but also the social and moral ramifications of these plays within a densely articulated legal culture, Harmon brings them to the center of Shakespearean studies. He illuminates what traditionally has seemed most problematic about these plays, thus transforming the experience of reading them from an ambiguous negotiation to an intellectual adventure. Harmon’s work also dispels any notion that Shakespeare’s use of legal language constituted mere dabbling. The plays are shown to be immersed in the legal culture rather than merely gesturing toward it. I feel certain that Shakespeare scholars at every level will be as gratified as I have been to discover this fascinating piece of interdisciplinary scholarship.” — Lana Cable, author of Carnal Rhetoric: Milton’s Iconoclasm and the Poetics of Desire

A. G. Harmon is Lecturer at the Columbus School of Law at The Catholic University of America and the author of the novel A House All Stilled.

www.sunypress.edu
This innovative contribution to understanding the promise and contradictions of contemporary postcolonial culture applies a wide array of theoretical tools to a large body of literature. The author compares the work of established Indian writers including Bharati Mukherjee, Meena Alexander, Sara Suleri, and Sunetra Gupta to new writings by such Afro-Italian immigrant women as Ermina dell’Oro, Maria Abbebu Viarengo, Ribka Sibhatu, and Sirad Hassan. Sandra Ponzanesi’s analysis highlights a set of dissymmetrical relationships that are set in the context of different imperial, linguistic, and market policies. By dealing with issues of representation linked to postcolonial literary genres, to gender and ethnicity questions, and to new cartographies of diaspora, this book imbues the postcolonial debate with a new élan.

“I like the author’s ambition, both in terms of her desire to rematerialize other colonial/postcolonial locations like Italy and in terms of her attempt to compare South Asian diasporic writings with another postcolonial literature.” — Antoinette Burton, author of Dwelling in the Archive: Women Writing House, Home, and History in Late Colonial India

Sandra Ponzanesi is Assistant Professor and Research Fellow of Gender and Postcolonial Studies at Utrecht University, The Netherlands.

A volume in the SUNY series, Explorations in Postcolonial Studies

August ■ 288 pp.
Illustrated: 7 b/w photographs, 1 map, 1 figure
$30.00 hc only ISBN 0-7914-6201-3

Paradoxes of Postcolonial Culture
Contemporary Women Writers of the Indian and Afro-Italian Diaspora
SANDRA PONZANESI

Explores postcolonial discourse from the standpoint of feminism and writers in minority languages.

The Face of Immortality
Physiognomy and Criticism
DAVIDE STIMILLI

Argues for a new kind of criticism, one that mediates between literal and allegorical modes of interpretation.

The literature on physiognomy—the art of studying a person’s outward appearance, especially the face, in order to determine character and intelligence—has flourished in recent years in the wake of renewed scholarly interest in the history and politics of the body. Virtually no attention, however, has been devoted to the vocabulary and rhetoric of physiognomy. The Face of Immortality addresses this gap, arguing that the trend in Western culture has been to obliterate the face, which is manifested in criticism as a disregard for the letter.

Denouncing this trend, Davide Stimilli draws on Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, English, and German sources in order to explore the terminology and historical development of physiognomy. Stimilli takes physiognomy to be the resistance to such an obliteration of the face, and argues that it offers a model for a theory of reading that does not discount the letter as inessential. Elaborating on the work of Walter Benjamin, he defines the task of physiognomical criticism as transliteration (which preserves the letter) rather than translation (which obliterates it). The Face of Immortality is meant to exemplify the method and test the reach of such a criticism, which aims at mediating between philology and philosophy, between literal and allegorical modes of interpretation.

“Stimilli develops new and stimulating interpretations of the once-influential discourse and imagery of physiognomy and the face in the Western tradition. Physiognomy has been a much-debated subject in cultural and literary studies in the past ten years; the ethical dimension in Levinas and Derrida is currently the subject of an intense debate. Bringing these two topics together is certainly of great interest for literary scholars as well as for those interested in philosophy.” — Rüdiger Campe, Johns Hopkins University

Davide Stimilli is Assistant Professor of Italian and Comparative Literary Studies at Northwestern University, and the author of Fisionomia di Kafka.

A volume in the SUNY series, Intersections: Philosophy and Critical Theory
Rodolphe Gasché, editor

November ■ 256 pp.
Illustrated: 21 b/w photographs, 4 figures
$35.00 hc only ISBN 0-7914-6263-3

Paradoxes of Postcolonial Culture

Contemporary Women Writers of the Indian and Afro-Italian Diaspora
SANDRA PONZANESI

Explores postcolonial discourse from the standpoint of feminism and writers in minority languages.

The Face of Immortality

Physiognomy and Criticism
DAVIDE STIMILLI

Argues for a new kind of criticism, one that mediates between literal and allegorical modes of interpretation.
LEAVING CHILDREN BEHIND
How “Texas-style” Accountability Fails Latino Youth
ANGELA VALENZUELA, EDITOR

Argues for a more valid and democratic approach to assessment and accountability.

The federal government has based much of its education policies on those adopted in Texas. This book examines how “Texas-style” accountability—the notion that decisions governing retention, promotion, and graduation should be based on a single test score—fails Latina/o youth and their communities. The contributors, many of them from Texas, scrutinize state policies concerning high-stakes testing and provide new data that demonstrate how Texas’s current system of testing results in a plethora of new inequalities. They argue that Texas policies exacerbate historic inequities, fail to accommodate the needs and abilities of English language learners, and that the dramatic educational improvement attributed to Texas’s system of accountability is itself questionable. The book proposes a more valid and democratic approach to assessment and accountability that would combine standardized examinations with multiple sources of information about a student’s academic performance.

“With all of the emphasis on accountability and testing in our schools, too many of us have forgotten to ask what the real effects of such movements actually are. Leaving Children Behind is a powerful analysis of why such questions must be asked by anyone who cares about the relationship between current school reforms and the production of inequalities.”
— Michael W. Apple

“U.S. schools have been engaged in a gigantic effort to impose Texas-style test-driven reform on all U.S. schools. This book reports things are very different than they seem in Texas and helps explain the major problems in implementing President Bush’s No Child Left Behind law. The richness of the contributions by major Latino scholars to this analysis should help us understand the tremendous need to diversify our faculties if we are to understand our changing society and its schools.”
— Gary Orfield

Angela Valenzuela is Associate Professor of Curriculum and Instruction and Mexican American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin.

A volume in the SUNY series, The Social Context of Education
Christine E. Sleeter, editor

October ■ 320 pp.
Illustrated: 16 tables, 6 figures
$24.95 pb ISBN 0-7914-6240-4
$73.50 hc ISBN 0-7914-6239-0

For a list of contributors, see page 63.