



Brown on Brown: Chicano/a Representations of Gender, Sexuality, and Ethnicity

Frederick Luis Aldama

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Common conceptions permeating U.S. ethnic queer theory tend to confuse aesthetics with real-world acts and politics. Often Chicano/a representations of gay and lesbian experiences in literature and film are analyzed simply as propaganda. The cognitive, emotional, and narrational ingredients (that is, the subject matter and the formal traits) of those representations are frequently reduced to a priori agendas that emphasize a politics of difference.

In this book, Frederick Luis Aldama follows an entirely different approach. He investigates the ways in which race and gay/lesbian sexuality intersect and operate in Chicano/a literature and film while taking into full account their imaginative nature and therefore the specific kind of work invested in them. Also, Aldama frames his analyses within today's larger (globalized) context of postcolonial literary and filmic canons that seek to normalize heterosexual identity and experience. Throughout the book, Aldama applies his innovative approach to throw new light on the work of authors Arturo Islas, Richard Rodriguez, John Rechy, Ana Castillo, and Sheila Ortiz Taylor, as well as that of film director Edward James Olmos. In doing so, Aldama aims to integrate and deepen Chicano literary and filmic studies within a comparative perspective. Aldama's unusual juxtapositions of narrative materials and cultural personae, and his premise that literature and film produce fictional examples of a social and historical reality concerned with ethnic and sexual issues largely unresolved, make this book relevant to a wide range of readers.

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