



From Bananas to Buttocks: The Latina Body in Popular Film and Culture

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From the exuberant excesses of Carmen Miranda in the "tutti frutti hat" to the curvaceous posterior of Jennifer Lopez, the Latina body has long been a signifier of Latina/o identity in U.S. popular culture. But how does this stereotype of the exotic, erotic Latina "bombshell" relate, if at all, to real Latina women who represent a wide spectrum of ethnicities, national origins, cultures, and physical appearances? How are ideas about "Latinidad" imagined, challenged, and inscribed on Latina bodies? What racial, class, and other markers of identity do representations of the Latina body signal or reject?

In this broadly interdisciplinary book, experts from the fields of Latina/o studies, media studies, communication, comparative literature, women's studies, and sociology come together to offer the first wide-ranging look at the construction and representation of Latina identity in U.S. popular culture. The authors consider such popular figures as actresses Lupe Vélez, Salma Hayek, and Jennifer Lopez; singers Shakira and Celia Cruz; and even the Hispanic Barbie doll in her many guises. They investigate the media discourses surrounding controversial Latinas such as Lorena Bobbitt and Marisleysis González. And they discuss Latina representations in Lupe Solano's series of mystery books and in the popular TV shows *El Show de Cristina* and *Laura en América*. This extensive treatment of Latina representation in popular culture not only sheds new light on how meaning is produced through images of the Latina body, but also on how these representations of Latinas are received, revised, and challenged.

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