



The Dialectics of Our America: Genealogy, Cultural Critique, and Literary History (Post-Contemporary Interventions)

José David Saldívar

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Joining the current debates in American literary history, José David Saldívar offers a challenging new perspective on what constitutes not only the canon in American literature, but also the notion of America itself. His aim is the articulation of a fresh, transgeographical conception of American culture, one more responsive to the geographical ties and political crosscurrents of the hemisphere than to narrow national ideologies.

Saldívar pursues this goal through an array of oppositional critical and creative practices. He analyzes a range of North American writers of color (Rolando Hinojosa, Gloria Anzaldúa, Arturo Islas, Ntozake Shange, and others) and Latin American authors (José Martí, Roberto Fernández Retamar, Gabriel García Márquez, and others), whose work forms a radical critique of the dominant culture, its politics, and its restrictive modes of expression. By doing so, Saldívar opens the traditional American canon to a dialog with other voices, not just the voices of national minorities, but those of regional cultures different from the prevalent anglocentric model.

The Dialectics of Our America, in its project to expand the “canon” and define a pan-American literary tradition, will make a critical difference in ongoing attempts to reconceptualize American literary history.

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