

Dr. Xiomara Verenice Cervantes-Gómez

Department of Spanish and Portuguese
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
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ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Assistant Professor, Department of Spanish and Portuguese (August 2018-)

Faculty Affiliate: Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, Gender and Women's Studies, Latina/Latino Studies, Religion, and the Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory

Harvard University

Predocctoral Research Fellow in Spanish, Department of Romance Languages and Literatures (August 2017-May 2018)

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

International Research Associate, Programa Universitario de los Estudios de Género
(September 2015-May 2016)

EDUCATION

University of Southern California

Comparative Studies in Literature and Culture Doctoral Program

Ph.D. Spanish and Latin American Studies, 2018

Dissertation: "México Necrótico: Queer Readings of the Politics of Death"

Winner of the 2019 Best Dissertation Prize, presented by the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) Mexico Section

M.A. Spanish and Latin American Studies, 2014

Harvard Divinity School

M.T.S. Religions of the Americas, 2012

University of California, Riverside

B.A. Religious Studies, with honors, 2010

AREAS OF RESEARCH AND SPECIALIZATION

Modern Latin American literary and visual cultures; 20th- and 21st-century Mexican and Mexican American literature and culture; U.S. Latinx and Chicanx cultural studies; performance studies; queer theory; transgender studies; continental philosophy; deconstruction; border studies; hemispheric studies; critical race theory; Black studies; Afro-Latinidades; systematic theology; postcolonial theologies; Latin American religious and theological histories; Latinx theologies

PUBLICATIONS

Books

Pasivo: Risks of Exposure in Bottom Mexicanness Performance (under contract review).

Articles in Peer-Reviewed Journals

“Where Blackness dies: The aesthetics of a massacre and the violence of remembering.” *Journal of Visual Culture* 20.1 (2021): 25-47.

“Lechedevirgen Trimegisto’s *Inferno Varieté*, Queer Mexicanness, and the Aesthetics of Risk.” *ASAP/Journal* 6.1 (2021): 95-122

“Paz’s *Pasivo*: Thinking Mexicanness from the Bottom.” *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies* 29.3 (2020): 333-347. **Winner of the 2021 Premio Sylvia Molloy for Best Article in the Humanities, presented by the LASA Sexualities Studies Section.**

“Drag Acts of Transitional Performance: Sex, Religion, and Memory in Pedro Almodóvar’s *La mala educación* and Ventura Pons’s *Ocaña, retrat intermitent.*” *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies* 15.4 (2014): 419-436.

“Traces of Transgressive Traditions: Shifting Liberation Theologies through Jotería Studies.” *Aztlán: Journal of Chicano Studies* 39.1 (2014): 195-206.

Invited Book Chapter in Edited Volume

“Mesoamerican Nightlife and the Queer Materialities of Religion.” *Routledge Handbook of Material Religion*, edited by S. Brent Rodriguez-Plate, Jennifer Scheper Hughes, and Pooyan Tamimi Arab (forthcoming).

Invited Encyclopedia Entry

“Queer Theory” in *Latino Literature Encyclopedia for Students*, edited by Lacie Rae Buckwalter and Christina Soto van der Plas (forthcoming, ABC-Clío).

Invited Book Reviews in Peer-Reviewed Journals

Precarious Forms: Performing Utopia in the Neoliberal Americas, by Candice Amich. In *Revista Hispánica Moderna* (forthcoming).

Performance in the Zócalo: Constructing History, Race, and Identity in Mexico's Central Square from the Colonial Era to the Present, by Ana Martínez. In *Hispanic Review* (forthcoming).

Queering the Chilean Way: Cultures of Exceptionalism and Sexual Dissidence, 1965-2015, by Carl Fischer. In *Chasqui: Revista de literatura latinoamericana* 48.1 (2019): R18-R19.

A Taste for Brown Bodies: Gay Modernity and Cosmopolitan Desire, by Hiram Pérez. In *Men and Masculinities*

20.2 (2017): 279-280.

Work in Progress – Books

Thinking for Trans of Color Negativity (in preparation)

Latin Remixed: A Mixtape for Queer Black and Brown Negativity (in preparation)

Work in Progress – Articles

“¡Déjalo! Reading for Detachment in Latina Feminisms, from Lorena Bobbitt to Cristina Rivera Garza” (in preparation)

“I’m the Trap Selena, Dame más gasolina, skrrrt!”: Cardi B’s Aberrant Latinidad,” Co-authored with Rodrigo Delgado (in preparation)

CREATIVE WORK

Visual Art

“Bed Death” (2021) Soft sculpture.

“The Door of Discussion” (2021) Acrylic and multimedia on wooden door.

“Trans Ceremony” (2019-ongoing) Acrylic on canvas. Long-term visual performance. Artistic collaboration with Edgar-Arturo Camacho-González.

Performance Art

“Hay muertos que no hacen ruido.” Virtual performance, streamed live. April 16, 2020, Sponsored by the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

“CHINGADERAS: Performance de los hijos de la Chingada.” Invited performance with Yanina Orellana. July 14, 2019, Foro Tecuicanime, Mexico City, Mexico.

CULTURAL JOURNALISM

Essay

“Sacred Geography: A Queer Latino Theological Response to Orlando.” *Religion Dispatches* (2016): <http://religiondispatches.org/sacred-geography-a-queer-latino-theological-response-to-orlando/>

Podcast

Me gusta la T. Co-hosted with Renée Lujan. A Spanish-language podcast about the Latina transwoman experience. Available on iTunes and Spotify.

FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

Institute for Citizens and Scholars, Andrew W. Mellon Career Enhancement Fellowship, 2021-2022
 LASA, Sexualities Studies, Premio Sylvia Molloy for Best Article in the Humanities, 2021
 Illinois, Provost Grant for Faculty Women of Color in the Academy National Conference, 2021
 Illinois, Humanities Release Time Award, 2020-2021
 Illinois, Lincoln Excellence for Assistant Professors (LEAP) Award, 2019-2021
 Illinois, Criticism and Interpretive Theory Junior Research Fellowship 2019-2021
 LASA, Mexico Section, Best Dissertation Award, 2019
 USC, Russell Endowed Fellowship, 2017-2018
 USC, Del Amo Foundation Summer Research Fellowship, 2012-2017
 USC, Graduate School Research Enhancement Fellowship, 2015-2016
 USC, Del Amo Foundation Endowed Fellowship, 2012-2013
 Harvard, Srinivasan Scholarship Fund, 2011-2012
 Harvard, William and Lucille Nickerson Scholarship, 2010-2011
 UCR, Edwin Gaustad Award for Religious Studies, 2010
 UCR, Religious Studies Encouragement Award, 2009

INVITED TALKS

- 2021 “Trans Negativities: A Black Hemispheric Latinx Americas.” Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (accepted)
- 2021 “Malinche’s Mija.” Latin American Student Organization. Milliken University.
- 2020 “From Derrida’s *nudité* to *l’autre passif* (therefore otherwise a Latinx *pasivo* deconstructive ethics).” Modern Critical Theory Lecture Series. Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. [**Cancelled**]
- 2020 “Remembrance in Afro-Latinoamérica: Queer Aesthetics and Other Pessimisms.” Transmedial Latin America Symposium. University of Southern California.
- 2019 “Violence *After* Queer Aesthetics in Mexican Performance Art.” Program in Critical Theory, Northwestern University.
- 2018 “Reading Queer Death in Mexico’s Historical Present.” Center for Ideas and Society, University of California, Riverside.
- 2018 “Lechedevirgen’s Risk: Queer Mexicanidad and Aesthetic Strategies.” Harvard Theater and Performance Colloquium. Harvard University.
- 2017 “Unbecoming Subjects: Rectum and Nation.” Department of Hispanic Languages and Literatures. Stony Brook University.
- 2016 “Laberintos riesgosos: la crisis sexual del nacionalismo mexicano en la obra de Octavio Paz.” Programa Universitario de los Estudios de Género. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

- 2012 “Jotos in the Margins: Mexican Maleness and Queer Identities.” Department of Chicana/o Studies, California State University, Fullerton.
- 2011 “Borders Trouble: Decolonizing Unity in Difference and Power.” Keynote lecture at the East Coast Chicana/o Student Forum. University of Pennsylvania.

CONFERENCES & SYMPOSIA PARTICIPATION

Selected Scholarly Presentations (including participation by invitation)

- 2022 “Entre Bruxas e Bixas: Black Power and Travesty Worship.” Modern Languages Association. Washington, DC (accepted).
- 2021 “La Muerte’s Afterlives.” American Academy of Religion. San Antonio, TX (accepted).
- 2021 Roundtable Chair on “Not Latin American Enough.” American Studies Association. San Juan, Puerto Rico (accepted).
- 2021 “‘Estoy lista para que me comas’: El dolor del placer heredado y las coreografías de crisis.” Latin American Studies Association. Virtual Congress.
- 2021 Invited Chair, “Generation, Mediation, Containment.” Women in Theory Virtual Symposium.
- 2020 “From Derrida’s *derrière* to a Latinx *pasivo* deconstructive ethics.” 7th Annual Derrida Today Conference. Aix-en-Provence, France (accepted) [**Rescheduled for 2021**].
- 2020 “Where Blackness Dies: An Aesthetics of Race in Narco-Landscapes.” American Comparative Literature Association. Chicago, IL [**Canceled due to COVID-19**]
- 2019 “Shameful Skin.” Latin American Studies Association. Boston, MA.
- 2019 Invited Respondent. Symposium on 21st Century Jewish Writing and the World. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- 2018 “Disposable Blackness: A Queer Reading Ethics of Race in Tamaulipas, 2010.” XXIV Annual Juan Bruce-Novoa Mexican Studies Conference. University of California, Irvine.
- 2017 “Passive Archives: Exposure and Queer Terrorism in the Performance of Lechedevirgen Trimegisto.” XXIII Annual Juan Bruce-Novoa Mexican Studies Conference. University of California, Irvine.
- 2016 Roundtable on Kate Jenckes’s *Witnessing beyond the Human: Addressing the Alterity of the Other in Post-coup Chile and Argentina* (2017). Symposium: “Latin America in Theory / Theory in Latin America: Aesthetics, Ethics, Politics.” University of Southern California.
- 2016 “Lemebel entre crítica e identidad.” Invited talk presented at Colloquium on “Arqueología de la pobreza”: Cuerpo, precariedad y posteridad en Pedro Lemebel. University of California, Riverside.

- 2016 “Sexual Aporias of Nihilistic Nationalisms.” American Comparative Literature Association. Harvard University.
- 2015 “Subjetividades nihilistas, necropolítica y las respuestas artísticas.” Invited talk presented at XXII Coloquio Internacional de Estudios de Género. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.
- 2015 Invited Discussant. “Precarious Affect in Latino America.” Latin American Studies Association. San Juan, Puerto Rico.
- 2015 “Disembodiment and Thinking Beside the Trans-Corporeality in Ana Clavel.” Latin American Studies Association. San Juan, Puerto Rico.
- 2014 “Castrating Desire: Mutilated and Sexual Memory in Cristina Rivera Garza’s *La muerte me da*.” Latin American Studies Association. Chicago, IL.
- 2014 Graduate Roundtable. Colloquium on “The Marrano Spirit: Derrida and Hispanism.” University of Southern California.
- 2014 “Perversions of the Letter: Dismembering Lacan, Bataille, and Elizondo.” American Comparative Literature Association. New York University.
- 2014 “Subalternidad, sexualidad y sujetos: críticas radicales de la representación y la traducción de lo queer.” 5^a Conferencia Internacional de Paradigmas Queer. Quito, Ecuador.
- 2013 “Decolonizing Grace and Incarnation.” Colloquium on “Pressing On: Legacy of Marcella Althaus-Reid.” Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- 2013 “Political Forces and Body Matters in Peri Rossi’s *La nave de los locos* and Zapata’s *El vampiro de la colonia Roma*.” Latin American Studies Association. Washington, D.C.

Conference Panels Organized

- 2021 Roundtable on “Not Latin American Enough.” American Studies Association. San Juan, Puerto Rico (accepted).
- 2021 “Performances of Crisis: The Aesthetics of Queer Dance, Music, and Race.” Latin American Studies Association. Virtual Congress.
- 2020 “Lingering in the Body Openings of the Hemispheric Américas: Sex and Deconstruction *After* Borders.” 7th Annual Derrida Today Conference. Aix-en-Provence, France (accepted) [**Conference rescheduled for 2021**].
- 2019 “Thinking with Blackness: Languages, Aesthetics, and Theories of Afro-Latin Americanism.” Latin American Studies Association. Boston, MA.
- 2018 “Queer Aesthetics and Politics of Race and Class in a Global Latin America: Nation, Citizenship, and Desire.” Latin American Studies Association. Barcelona, Spain.

- 2016 “Comparative Queer Studies in Hemispheric Latin(o) America and the Caribbean” Co-Organized with Adrián Emmanuel Hernández-Acosta. American Comparative Literature Association. Harvard University.
- 2015 “Escrituras, teorías y desafíos de lo trans.” Co-Organized with Juan Ariel Gómez. Latin American Studies Association. San Juan, Puerto Rico.
- 2014 “Body Pain, Sex, and Memory in Modern Latin America.” Latin American Studies Association. Chicago, IL.
- 2014 “Capital Perversions.” American Comparative Literature Association. New York University.
- 2013 “Sexual Dissidents and Deviants in Modern Latin America.” Latin American Studies Association. Washington, DC.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

At the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Graduate Courses:

SPAN 572: Theory Between Colonialism and Postcolonialism (Fall 2020)

SPAN 535: The Politics of Pleasure: Latin America Queered, Exposed, and Affected (Fall 2019)

SPAN 595 (Independent Study for Joseph Coyle): Queer Theologies in the Américas (Fall 2018)

Undergraduate Courses:

SPAN 324: Malinche’s México: Gender and Mesoamerican Religions (*Spring 2022*)

SPAN/LLS 246: Queer Latinx Feminisms (*Spring 2022*)

SPAN 324: Latin American Religion, Myths, and Rituals: Then & Now (Fall 2020)

SPAN/LLS 246: From Deviants to Divas in Latinx Popular Culture (Fall 2019)

SPAN 326: Sex and Power in the Latin American Aesthetic Imaginary (Spring 2019)

SPAN 254: Approaches to Culture (Fall 2018; Spring 2019)

Course Supervisor:

SPAN 254: Approaches to Culture (Fall 2018)

Ph.D. Advisor in Department of Spanish and Portuguese:

Gerson Morales Pérez (2021-)

Sergio Mora Moreno (2021-)

Daniel Pérez Astros (2019-)

Gisabel Leonardo, “*Melenas Malcriadas*: The Black Aesthetics of Hair and Dominicanidad” (2019-)

Ph.D. Dissertation Committees:

Miren Anton Lobato, Spanish and Portuguese (Fall 2019-)

Jessennya Hernández, Sociology (Spring 2019-)

Megan Gargiulo, Spanish and Portuguese (Fall 2018-)

Ph.D. Preliminary Exam Committees:

Ennio Nuila, Spanish and Portuguese (Fall 2020)

Miren Anton Lobato, Spanish and Portuguese (Fall 2019)

M.A. Paper Committee:

Beatriz Jiménez, Spanish and Portuguese (Spring 2020)

Amaia Álvarez Tamayo, Spanish and Portuguese (Spring 2019)

M.A. Exam Committee:

Sarah Chitwood, Comparative and World Literature (Fall 2020)

At the University of Southern California

Teaching Assistant:

SWMS 210: Social Issues in Gender (Spring 2015)

SWMS 215g: Gender Conflict in Cultural Contexts (Fall 2014)

Assistant Lecturer:

SPAN 140: Spanish II (Spring 2014)

SPAN 120: Spanish I (Fall 2013)

SERVICE TO THE INSTITUTION

At the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Service to the Department of Spanish and Portuguese

Diversity Advocate, Search Committee for Spanish Academic Advisor (Fall 2020)

Member, Website Committee (Fall 2020-Spring 2021)

Member, Graduate Recruitment and Admissions Committee (Fall 2020-Spring 2021)

Member, Search Committee for Assistant Professor of Spanish in the U.S. (Fall 2019-Spring 2020)

Member, Department Newsletter Committee (Fall 2019-Spring 2020)

Member, Capricious Grading Committee (Fall 2019-)

Co-Facilitator, Job Market Workshop for Graduate Students (Fall 2018, Fall 2019, Fall 2020)

Member, Graduate Awards Committee (Fall 2018-Spring 2019)

Member, Literature and Culture Area Committee (Fall 2018-)

Service to the Graduate College

Summer Advisor, Summer Research Opportunity Program, Graduate College (2021)

Advisor, Summer Predoctoral Institute, Graduate College (2021)

Service to the University of Illinois System

Lead for Recruiting in Mexico, I-MMÁS Illinois System for Mexican and Mexican American Students (2020-)

Interviewer, Fulbright Foundation and the University of Illinois (2019-2020)

Service to Campus Latinx Organizations

Invited Speaker for Cultural Awareness Week on “Existo porque resisto: How Latinx women and LGBTQ+ individuals push the boundaries of popular culture and Latinidad,” Kappa Delta Chi Sorority (Fall 2019)

Panel on Faculty and Student Relationships, “Conéctate” New Student Orientation, La Casa

Cultural Latina (Fall 2019)
 Faculty Lecture in the Humanities, “Conéctate” New Student Orientation, La Casa Cultural Latina (Fall 2019)

Other Service to the Campus

Invited Speaker for “Lunch on Us,” Women’s Resources Center (
 Invited Speaker on “Spanish in a Global World” for College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Alumni Week (Fall 2020)

At the University of Southern California

Organizer, Comparative Studies in Literature and Culture Graduate Reading Group on Derrida and Deconstruction (2013-2014)
 Co-Organizer, Sexuality and Spirituality Program Retreat (2012-2014)
 Member, Steering Committee for the Sexuality and Spirituality Initiative (2012-2014)
 Senator, Graduate Student Government (2012-2013)

At Harvard University

Member, Harvard Divinity School Graduate Admissions Committee (Spring 2012)
 President, Nuestra Voz: Latin American and Latinx Graduate Student Organization (2011-2012)
 Vice Executive Director, The Immigration Project (2011-2012)

SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION

Service to the Latin American Studies Association (LASA)

Co-Chair, LASA Sexualities Studies Section (2019-2021)
 Juror, LASA Mexico Section, Best Dissertation Award (2020)
 Juror, LASA Sexualities Section, Sylvia Molloy Prize for Best Peer-Reviewed Article in the Humanities (2016)

Other Service to the Profession

Invited Guest on *Queer Love* (accepted, recorded July 20, 2021)
 Invited Guest on *Global Media Cultures* (recorded June 16, 2021)
 Invited Speaker for Webinar on “Remembering Pulse, Surviving the Present and Honoring Them with Action,” Religious Institute (June 2019)
 Editorial Board Member, *Women & Language* (2018-2021)
 Steering Committee Member, Gay Men and Religion Unit, American Academy of Religion (2015-2019)

Peer Reviewer for Academic Journals

Bulletin of Hispanic Studies
GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies
Hispanic Review
Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies
Latin American Research Review
TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly
Women & Language

SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

Interview for WCIA-3 News' Hispanic Heritage Month Special (2020)

Expert witness for asylum cases involving LGBTQ+ individuals from Mexico (2018-)

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Afro/Latin American Research Association (ALARA)

American Academy of Religion (AAR)

American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA)

American Studies Association (ASA)

Latin American Studies Association (LASA)

Modern Language Association (MLA)

SUMMER INSTITUTE

Human Rights Campaign Summer Advanced Institute in Religious and Theological Study (2013)

LANGUAGES

English (native), Spanish (near-native), Portuguese (advanced), French (proficient reading)

Last updated: July 25, 2021