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Reseña de "Contrapunto de género y raza en Puerto Rico" de Ilda E. Alegría Ortega y Palmira N.

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numbers of women accepting sewing piecework and a rise in property-related crime, to increased labor and socialist activism and even support for the Nationalist Party (although Carolina never was a leading center for the latter). Another feature of the era was the development of "public" recreation spaces on former ranches, known as "country clubs" but restricted to the San Juan elite and some privileged members of the local middle class; by contrast, the poor majority had to be content with the riverbanks as recreational spaces, one more manifestation of Carolina's profoundly classist social relations (p. 143). Finally, during the Second World War, Puerto Rican government planners began considering San Juan and its municipal neighbors as a single regional urban entity. In 1950 Carolina became the third municipio to have a zoning plan, preceded only by San Juan and Río Piedras (p. 145). Construction of the international airport in the coastal wetlands of Isla Verde (once part of Cangrejos Arriba) heralded tremendous changes for Carolina's future.

Chapter Five recounts Carolina's transition to modern urban suburb from the 1950s to 1980. The new airport helped initiate Puerto Rico's conversion into a major tourist destination, while the creeping advance of high rise beachfront condominiums and luxury hotels eventually eliminated the nostalgic Isla Verde of deserted beaches and informal eating and dancing establishments so loved by the locals (p. 161). The rest of

lands under control of Puerto Rico's Land Authority; in Carolina the most famous was Villa Justicia, home to more than 1,300 families who the government never managed to dislodge (p. 173).

Chapter Six brings Carolina up to the present as the reinvented "Land of Giants." The 1980 Census revealed not only that Carolina had become the island's third largest city, but that most of its residents had been born elsewhere, thus illustrating the impact of urbanization on the city's development. Carolina had left its rural past, yet "it must be asked where it was going" (p. 180). Local leaders faced the dilemma of satisfying the need, for example, of easier access to jobs—often in San Juan—while at the same time creating a sense of identity among a population without historical ties to the place. The municipio's long-term plan for using historical figures, sports, and public works to encourage this Carolinian identity is noted but not fully analyzed. There are also brief references to women's and senior citizen's concerns, as well as the serious issue of crime and juvenile delinquency. The final chapter—more of an epilogue—enumerates some of the most recent statistics. Picó concludes by categorizing Carolina not as a "Land of Giants" but of "mills": a city of workers, whose daily milling supplies the energy upon which society is based.

Picó's previous histories of particular communities are known for emphasizing the common people: working class, marginalized, non-white. Although he

publications, particularly *Contrapunto de género y raza en Puerto Rico*, are not only shaking up the status quo, but they are also charting new paths in the study of racial and gender issues in Puerto Rican society. The new scholars are forthright and methodical in addressing the issues.

*Contrapunto de género y raza* is fresh, transparent, compelling, and overwhelmingly informative. Each one of the essays demonstrates how the fields of social sciences and humanities can be combined to address an overlooked and yet critical issue such as racism. It is not an easy task for a group of Puerto Rican intellectuals to produce a scholarly work on sensitive issues of race and gender. The scholars should be commended for addressing, defining, and analyzing the issues with care, insight, and thoroughness. How do gender and race intersect? This question is adequately answered in this volume.

In this anthology, the authors uncover different instances and patterns of racial and gender discrimination. The introduction provides a good review of the literature on the topic of race and gender and their impact in shaping the island's geopolitical and social space. For many years, particularly since the arrival of the Americans, the island of Puerto Rico has become a subject of various sociopolitical experiments, and the scholarship overlooks race and gender. With regard to the colonial structure of both the Spaniards and the Americans, two intrinsic elements can be identified in the book. First, we see

which, in turn provides voice to black Puerto Ricans in the island's history.

The educational background of the writers—social and political scientist, historians, civil rights activist, and educators—contributes to the diversity and richness of the work presented. For example, from a literary point of view, we see how Roy-Féquière, in the celebrated feminist narrative of María Cadilla's *Hitos de la raza*, demonstrates the silencing of the voices of African and indigenous women. According to Roy-Féquière, Cadilla's *criollo* discourse overshadows and replaces the African character (Tate) in the story. Similar silencing took place when Cadilla attributes submissive and passive qualities to Ivianoca, a Taino female character in another of her stories. In other words, we see in both Cadilla's stories how African and Taino women are stereotyped.

The subtitle of this book should have been "day to day forms of racism." Racism creates mental blockage and deliberate ignorance with regard to the achievements and contributions of Afro-Puerto Ricans on and off the island. In this context, Jiménez-Muñoz makes a good argument about Carmen María Colón Pelot who was censured by her peers for attempting to expose Afro-Puerto Rican contributions. Colón Pelot's writings make her a target of censorship among the intellectual circles, even though she was not perceived as an anti-racism activist. Jiménez Muñoz observes that regardless of the intellectual sophistication of Colón

alienate them from the society. Linked to their economic role is the social representation of black Puerto Ricans. Alegria Ortega's essay on the representation of blackness in Puerto Rican television reaffirms how the media becomes a vehicle perpetuating negative conceptions of black Puerto Ricans.

*Contrapunto de género y raza* opens and closes with a poem. Both poems, one by Rivera Lassén and the other by Santos Febres, remind us of how blessed the island of Puerto Rico is in relations to the presence of coherent communities of traditions and aspirations. The ideal

picture presented by the poets will remain a dream deferred in as long as the African factor is fully acknowledged. In general, the book calls for all Puerto Ricans both on the island and in the diaspora to unite and eradicate racial discrimination. It is imperative to continue the dialogue and exchange of ideas with regard to racial and gender issues for the good of the whole community. It is fair to conclude that *Contrapunto de género y raza* en Puerto Rico is providing a progressive and enlightening new approach in addressing critical social and cultural issues of the society.

## Women, Creole Identity, and Intellectual Life in Early Twentieth-Century Puerto Rico.

By Magali Roy-Féquière

Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004 • 328 pages; \$24.95 [paper]

REVIEWER: ROSA E. CARRASQUILLO, College of the Holy Cross

In this feminist critique, Magali Roy-Féquière scrutinizes a sample of intellectual work that has defined what is known as the Generación del Treinta (the 1930s Generation), writers like Antonio S. Pedreira, Luis Palés Matos, Emilio S. Belaval and Margot Arce, who invested in defining the Puerto Rican nation in service of their class interests. Their "cultural nationalism" prescribed a hierarchical order where the white elite maintained their privileges over the mulatto working classes, and claimed

intellectuals somewhat exaggerated the idea that Hispanophilia intended to resist US imperialism in the cultural realm—ironically, by worshiping another form of colonialism. The Generación del Treinta also envisioned a stiff gender order where white men commanded over white and mulatto women. Thus, the nation "imagined" by the Generación del Treinta mostly sought to contain both women and the racially mixed working classes.

Rather than a monolithic enterprise, Roy-Féquière studies the 1930s cultural