

# REFORMA CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS SERVICES COMMITTEE LATINO BIBLIOGRAPHY

This list was compiled from the REFORMA Listserv

Reviewed and edited by the members of CAYASC / January 2008

Alegria, Malin. *Estrella's Quinceañera*. Simon Pulse, 2007

Estrella struggles to find a balance between her home life in the barrio where her mother is getting carried away planning a gaudy quinceañera, and her school life in a private school where her friends drop designer names and money at the bat of an eye

\_\_\_\_\_. *Sofi Mendoza's guide to getting lost in Mexico*. Simon & Schuster, 2007

When Southern California high school senior Sofi Mendoza lies to her parents and crosses the border for a weekend party, she has no idea that she will get stuck in a Mexican village with family she has never met before, unable to return to the United States and the easy life she knew.

Alvarez, Julia. *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*. Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2004

The story of the Garcia family's adjustment to life in the United States. The Garcia girls tell their irrepressibly intimate stories about how they came to be at home -- and not at home -- in America.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Finding Miracles*. Laurel Leaf, 2006

Fifteen-year-old Milly Kaufman is an average American teenager until Pablo, a new student at her school, inspires her to search for her birth family in his native country.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Once upon a quinceañera: Coming of age in the U.S.A.* Viking, 2007

Alvarez weaves in interviews with quince girls, her own memories of coming of age as an immigrant, and the history of the custom itself—how it originated and what has changed as Latinas become accustomed to a super-size American culture. *Once Upon a Quinceañera* is an enlightening, accessible, and entertaining portrait of contemporary Latino culture as well as a critical look at the rituals of coming of age and the economic and social consequences of the quince parties.

Anaya, Rudolfo. *Bless me, Ultima*. Quinto Sol Publications, 1972

Set in a small New Mexican community during World War II, Antonio speaks of the dignity, traditions, and mythology of Chicano life.

Avery, Fiona. *Araña: The heart of the spider*. (A Graphic Novel series). Marvel Comics, 2005

Feisty teenager Anya Corazon is saved from death by a mysterious mage named Miguel. Now, Anya is pledged to fight alongside Miguel and the Spider Society. First, she must prove herself to the society—and go to school, and keep her father and her friends from discovering her new secrets.

Bernardo, Anilú. *Jumping Off to Freedom*. Arte Público Press, 1996

Courage and desperation lead fifteen-year-old David and his father to flee Cuba's repressive regime and seek freedom by taking to the sea on a raft headed for Miami.

Bertrand, Diane Gonzales. *Trino's Choice*. Pinata Books, 1999

Frustrated by his poor financial situation and hoping to impress a smart girl, seventh grader Trino falls in with a bad crowd led by an older teen with a vicious streak.

Canales, Viola. *The Tequila Worm*. Random House Children's Books, 2007

Sofia grows up in the close-knit community of the barrio in McAllen, Texas, then finds that her experience as a scholarship student at an Episcopal boarding school in Austin only strengthens her ties to family and her "comadres."

Carlson, Lori Marie. *Cool Salsa: Bilingual Poems on Growing Up Latino in the United States*. Henry Holt, 1994

This powerful collection of Spanish and English poems captures the experience of growing up Latino, bilingual, bicultural in the United States. The poems are presented both in the original and in translation. An appended glossary of Spanish terms provides easy access to poems making use of both languages to English-only readers.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Red Hot Salsa: Bilingual Poems on Being Young and Latino in the United States*. Henry Holt, 2005

This collection of bilingual poems speaks about the complex challenges of being bicultural. The book is divided into loose categories--language, identity, neighborhoods, amor, family moments, and others.

Charlton-Trujillo, e. E. *Prizefighter en mi casa*. Random House Children's Books, 2006

Following a car accident that left her with epilepsy, twelve-year-old Chula—with a little help from a visiting fearsome Mexican boxer—tries to deal with the repercussions her new condition has on her family, neighborhood, and school.

Cisneros, Sandra. *The House on Mango Street*. Knopf Publishing Group, 1984 Esperanza Cordero is a young girl growing up in the Hispanic quarter of Chicago with all its hard realities of life. She captures her thoughts and emotions in poems and stories in order to rise above the hopelessness and create a space for herself.

Cofer, Judith Ortiz. *Call Me María*. Scholastic, 2006

Fifteen year old Maria leaves Puerto Rico to live with her father in the barrio of New York City.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Riding low on the streets of gold: Latino literature for young adults*. Pinata Books, 2003

In this vibrant collection of 11 poems and 12 stories, Cofer collects memoir, poetry, and fiction by Latino writers who muse on *las luchas*, or struggles, of young people's daily lives: the universal coming-of-age experiences and the specific issues of Latino youth.

Engle, Margarita. *The Poet Slave of Cuba: A Biography of Juan Francisco Manzano*. Henry Holt, 2006

Told in verse, the story recounts the boyhood of the nineteenth-century Cuban slave Juan Francisco Manzano, who secretly learned to read and wrote poetry about beauty and courage in his world of unspeakable brutality.

Ferrer, Caridad. *Adios to my Old Life*. MTB Pocket Books, 2006

As a talented singer-guitarist with a dream of going pro, Alegria Montero is getting fed up with the endless, boring parade of quinceañeras and other family party gigs. She's longing for something bigger, and Oye Mi Canto -- a new reality TV show that's searching for the next Latin superstar -- is definitely that. Ali figures she'll never make the cut, but auditioning seems like a good way to get her overprotective father to take her ambitions seriously.

Flores-Galbis, Enrique. *Raining Sardines*. Roaring Book Press, 2007

The artistic Ernestina and the analytical Enrique use their ingenuity to save a herd of wild horses and stop an evil landowner from spoiling their Cuban village.

Garland, Sherry. *In the Shadow of the Alamo*. Harcourt Children's Books, 2001 Conscripted into the Mexican Army, fifteen-year-old Lorenzo Bonifacio makes some unexpected alliances and learns some harsh truths about General Santa Ana as the troops move toward the Battle of the Alamo.

Greene, Michelle Dominguez. *Chasing the Jaguar*. Harper Teen, 2006

Chasing the Jaguar, Michele Greene: After having unsettling dreams about the kidnapped daughter of her mother's employer, fifteen-year-old Martika learns that she is a descendant of a long line of curanderas—Mayan medicine women with special powers. Includes glossary of Spanish words.

Guzmán, Lila and Rick. *Lorenzo's Secret Mission*. Arte Público Press, 2001

Two historical figures, Bernardo de Gálvez and George Gibson, appear prominently in the book. In 1776, fifteen-year-old Lorenzo Bannister leaves Texas and his father's new grave to carry a letter to the Virginia grandfather he has never known, and becomes involved with the struggle of the American Continental Army and its Spanish supporters.

Hart, Elva Treviño. *Barefoot Heart: Stories of a Migrant Child*. Bilingual Press, 1999

Chronicles the life of a child growing up in a family of Mexican American migrant farm workers.

Hernández, Jo Ann Yolanda. *White Bread Competition*. Arte Público Press, 1997 When Luz, a ninth-grade Latina student in San Antonio, wins a spelling competition; her success triggers a variety of emotions among family, friends, and the broader community.

Herrera, Juan Felipe. *CrashBoomLove: A Novel in Verse*. University of New Mexico Press, October 1999  
Sixteen year old Cesar struggles through high school after his father leaves town. Cesar is the classic example of America's throwaway teen, a young man constantly in the wrong place at the wrong time who, because of his language and cultural differences, becomes more and more marginalized.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Cinnamon Girl: Letters found inside a cereal box*. Joanna Cotler Books, 2005  
Yolanda, a Puerto Rican girl, tries to come to terms with her painful past as she waits to see if her uncle recovers from injuries he suffered when the towers collapsed on September 11, 2001.

Jaramillo, Ann. *La Linea*. Roaring Book Press, 2006  
Miguel is set to leave his Mexican village to join his parents in California, but his little sister is determined to join him.

Jiménez, Francisco. *The Circuit: Stories from the life of a migrant child.* Houghton Mifflin, 1999  
A collection of interrelated autobiographical stories based on the author's experience as a child and his family's unending migration from one farm to another as they search for the next harvesting job as an illegal immigrant from Mexico in the late 1940s.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Breaking Through*. Houghton Mifflin, 2002  
A sequel to "*The Circuit: Stories from the life of a migrant child.*" Having come from Mexico to California ten years ago, fourteen-year-old Francisco is still working in the fields but fighting to improve his life and complete his education.

Krumgold, Joseph. *And Now Miguel*. Houghton Mifflin, 1993  
The young son of a New Mexico sheep rancher longs to go with the men when they take the sheep to the Sangre de Cristo.

Lachtman, Ofilia Dumas. *The Girl from Playa Blanca*. Piñata Books, 1995  
When Elena and her little brother, Carlos, leave their Mexican seaside village to search for their immigrant father in Los Angeles, they encounter intrigue, crime, mystery, friendship, and love.

López, Lorraine M. *Call Me Henri*. Curbstone Press, 2006  
Henri has big dreams for his future but first he's got to get his school to let him take French instead of ESL.

Lupita, Mike. *Heat*. Penguin Group, 2007  
Pitching prodigy Michael Arroyo is on the run from social services after being banned from playing Little League baseball because rival coaches doubt he is only twelve years old and he has no parents to offer them proof.

Martinez, Manuel Luis. *Drift*. Picador, 2003  
At sixteen, Robert Lomos has lost his family. His father, a Latin jazz musician, has left San Antonio for life on the road. His mother, shattered by a breakdown, has moved to Los Angeles and taken Robert's little brother with her. Only his iron-willed grandmother is left. But Robert's got a plan: Duck trouble, save his money, and head to California to put the family back together. Trouble is, no one believes a delinquent Mexican American kid has a chance—least of all, Robert himself.

Martinez, Victor. *Parrot in the Oven: Mi vida*. HarperCollins Children's Books, 1999  
Manny relates his coming of age experiences as a member of a poor Mexican American family.

Osa, Nancy. *Cuba 15*. Delacorte Books for Young Readers, 2005  
Violet Paz, a 10<sup>th</sup> grader, prepares for her upcoming "quinces", the celebration of her womanhood that her Cuban grandmother longs for her to experience.

Ostow, Micol. *Emily Goldberg Learns to Salsa*. Razorbill, 2007  
Forced to stay with her mother in Puerto Rico for weeks after her grandmother's funeral, half-Jewish Emily, who has just graduated from a Westchester, New York, high school, does not find it easy to connect with her Puerto Rican heritage and relatives she had never met.

Parra, Kelly. *Graffiti Girl*. MTV, 2007

Raised by her single mom (who's always dating the wrong kind of man) in a struggling California neighborhood, Angel Rodriguez is a headstrong, independent young woman who expresses herself through street art.

Paulsen, Gary. *Sisters: Hermanas*. Harcourt Children's Books, 1993

The lives of a fourteen-year-old Mexican prostitute, living in the United States illegally, and a wealthy American girl intersect in a dramatic way.

Rice, David Talbot. *Crazy Loco*. Puffin, 2003

This collection features nine stories about Mexican-American kids growing up in the Rio Grande Valley of south Texas.

Rodriguez, Luis. *Always Running: La vida loca, gang days in L.A.* Curbstone Press, 1993

In this memoir, Rodriguez describes his experiences as a former gang member in and around the South San Gabriel Valley during the late 1960s.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Republic of East L.A.* HarperCollins Publishers, 2002

Twelve gritty, hard-hitting snapshots taken from the lives of careworn characters struggling to survive amid crime, poverty and racism in the barrio of East Los Angeles.

Ryan, Pam Muñoz. *Esperanza Rising*. Scholastic/Blue Sky Press, 2002

Esperanza and her mother are forced to leave their life of wealth and privilege in Mexico to go work in the labor camps of Southern California, where they must adapt to the harsh circumstances facing Mexican farm workers on the eve of the Great Depression.

Saenz, Benjamin Alire. *Sammy and Juliana in Hollywood*. HarperCollins, 2006

Sammy faces the challenges of "gringo" racism in 1969.

Saldaña, Rene. *The Whole Sky Full of Stars*. Random House Children's Books, 2007

Eighteen-year-old Barry competes in a non-sanctioned boxing match in hopes of helping his recently-widowed mother, unaware that his best friend and manager, Alby, has his own desperate need for a share of the purse that may put their friendship on the line.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Finding Our Way*. Wendy Lamb Books, 2003

A collection of short stories featuring adolescents involved in dramas about family, first dates, going to the prom, and getting expelled from school.

Sanchez, Alex. *Getting It*. Simon & Schuster, 2006

Fifteen-year-old Carlos wants to get laid but doesn't know exactly how he should go about it. His friends aren't much help in the matter, leaving Carlos to do what any straight guy would – ask a gay guy for help. In exchange for having a fellow classmate give him a "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy" makeover, Carlos agrees to help form a Gay-Straight Alliance at his high school. Carlos gets much more than he bargained for but learns many life-lessons about integrity, self-respect, and friendship.

\_\_\_\_\_. *So Hard to Say*. Simon & Schuster, 2006

Thirteen-year-old Xio, a Mexican American girl, and Frederick, who has just moved to California from Wisconsin, quickly become close friends, but when Xio starts thinking of Frederick as her boyfriend, he must confront his feelings of confusion and face the fear that he might be gay.

Santiago, Esmeralda. *When I Was Puerto Rican*. Perseus Books, 1993

The author recounts her childhood in rural Puerto Rico and her teenage years in New York City.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Almost a Woman*. Perseus Books, 1998

After her family's arrival in New York City with her mother (Mami) and 10 siblings during the 1960s, Santiago faced the difficult process of assimilation. The author traces her personal growth through her teenage years; covers her life as an adolescent and young woman when she lived in Brooklyn, New York.

Serros, Michele M. *How to Be a Chicana Role Model*. Penguin Group, 2000

From the award-winning author of *Chicana Falsa* comes a humorous new novel about a young Chicana writer who is struggling to find a way to embrace two very different cultures, without losing touch with her own true identity.

Soto, Gary. *Accidental Love*. Harcourt, 2006

After unexpectedly falling in love with a “nerdy” boy, fourteen-year-old Marisa works to change her life by transferring to another school, altering some of her behavior, and losing weight.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Afterlife*. Harcourt, 2003

A senior at East Fresno High School lives on as a ghost after his brutal murder.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Buried Onions*. Harcourt Brace, 1997

Eddie leaves college to return to his violence infested home in Fresno.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Help Wanted: Stories*. Harcourt Children’s Books, 2007

This collection of short stories about young Mexican Americans in Central California is connected by the fundamental theme of “needing help.”

Stork, Francisco X. *Behind the Eyes*. Dutton Juvenile, June 2006

Sixteen-year-old Hector is the hope of his family, but when he seeks revenge after his brother’s gang-related death and is sent to a San Antonio reform school, it takes an odd assortment of characters to help him see that hope is still alive.

Temple, Frances. *Grab Hands and Run*. HarperTrophy, 1995

After his father disappears, twelve-year-old Felipe, his mother, and his younger sister set out on a difficult and dangerous journey, trying to make their way from their home in El Salvador to Canada

Triana, Gabby. *Cubanita*. Rayo, 2006

Seventeen-year-old Isabel, eager to leave Miami to attend the University of Michigan and escape her overprotective Cuban mother, learns some truths about her family’s past and makes important decisions about the type of person she wants to be.

Valdes-Rodriguez, Alisa. *Haters*. Little, Brown Young Readers, 2006

Having tried for years to deny her psychic abilities, high school sophomore Paski has disturbing visions about the popular girl at her new high school in Orange County, California

Velazquez, Gloria. *Tommy Stands Alone*. Arte Público Press, 1995

Action takes place at Roosevelt High, a predominantly Hispanic and African American school in Laguna, California, where Tommy’s so-called friends taunt him with degrading words until they learn to accept Tommy’s homosexuality.

Wittlinger, Ellen. *Hard Love*. Simon & Schuster Ltd., 2004

Sixteen year-old John Galardi Jr. falls in love for zine writer Marisol, a “rich spoiled lesbian private-school gifted-and talented writer virgin looking for love.” The author tackles the delicate issue of unrequited love between a straight and gay teen. The book features a feisty Cubana teen as a strong secondary character.