

Xiomara Verenice Cervantes-Gómez

Department of Spanish and Portuguese
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ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Assistant Professor of Spanish and Portuguese (2018-)

Department of Spanish and Portuguese

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

Harvard University

Predoctoral Research Fellow in Spanish (2017-2018)

Department of Romance Languages and Literatures

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

International Research Associate (2015- 2016)

Programa Universitario de los Estudios de Género

EDUCATION

University of Southern California

Ph.D. Comparative Studies in Literature and Culture, 2018

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

Winner of the 2019 LASA Mexico Section Best Dissertation Prize

M.A. Comparative Studies in Literature and Culture, 2014

Harvard University

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

University of California, Riverside

B.A. Religious Studies, with honors, 2010

AREAS OF RESEARCH AND SPECIALIZATION

20th and 21st century Latin American and U.S. Latinx literary and visual cultures; modern Mexican and Chicana literature and culture; Mesoamerican and Pre-Columbian studies; Afro-Latin Americanism; critical race theory; continental philosophy; deconstruction; performance studies; queer theory; transgender studies; political theology

FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

Institute for Citizens and Scholars, Andrew W. Mellon Career Enhancement Fellowship, 2021
 LASA, Sexualities Studies, Premio Sylvia Molloy for Best Article in the Humanities, 2021
 UIUC, Provost Grant for Faculty Women of Color in the Academy National Conference, 2021
 UIUC, Humanities Release Time Award, 2020-2021
 UIUC, Lincoln Excellence for Assistant Professors (LEAP) Award, 2019-2021
 UIUC, 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

PUBLICATIONS

Book

Bottoms Up: Queer Mexicanness and Latinx Performance (New York: NYU Press, forthcoming August 13, 2024). Sexual Cultures Series.

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 Special Dossier on *Jotería* Studies (2014): 195-206.

Invited Book Chapter in Edited Volume

“Mesoamerican Nightlife and the Queer Materialities of Religion.” *Routledge Handbook of Material Religion*, eds. S. Brent Rodriguez-Plate, Jennifer Scheper Hughes, Pooyan Tamimi Arab (2023).

Invited Encyclopedia Entry

“Queer Theory” in *Latino Literature Encyclopedia for Students*, edited by Lacie Rae Buckwalter and Christina Soto van der Plas (2023).

Invited Book Reviews in Peer-Reviewed Journals

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

Unsay It: Being Not Fully Human (monograph, in preparation to submit to Fordham University Press)

Trans México: Body Politics in Gendered Times (edited volume, in preparation. Interest expressed by the Critical Mexican Studies series at Vanderbilt University Press)

Work in Progress – Articles

“Trans Derrida” (in preparation)

“Entre Bruxas e Bixas: Linn da Quebrada and Trans Black Negativities” (in preparation)

“The Trap Selena’s Español Ratata: Aberrations of Cardi B,” Co-authored with Rodrigo Delgado (in preparation)

CREATIVE WORK

Performance and Visual Art

“Bendita sea la Xiomara” (2023) Acrylic and oil on canvas. Retablo (12”x12”) in collaboration with visual artist Ratero.

“~~Queer~~ Trans Ceremony” (ongoing since 2019) Acrylic on canvas. Long-term durational visual art performance. Collaboration with visual artist Edgar-Arturo Camacho-González.

“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 Todos somos los hijos de la Chingada.”

- July 14, 2019, Foro Tecuicanime, Mexico City, Mexico. Invited performance with artist and dancer Yanina Orellana.

“Live Altar for the Fallen Queer.”

- La Pocha Nostra Showcase. April 20, 2014, Highway Performance Space, Santa Monica.

“MTF Sor Juana,” multimedia performance art

- April 12, 2013, “Race and Sex in the Eighteenth-Century Spanish Atlantic World” Conference, University of Southern California.
- April 26, 2012, Harvard Divinity School.

CULTURAL JOURNALISM AND PODCASTS

“I Saw Her in Paradise.” *Free Your Mind*. Factory International, Manchester, U.K., October 2023

“Season 2 Finale with Trans Theorist Xiomara,” *Queer in Love* Podcast, March 13, 2022.

<http://www.queerinline.com/>

“Broadening the Bookshelves: Elements of Mexican literature” *The Writer*, January 5, 2022.

<https://www.writermag.com/writing-inspiration/essays-about-writing/broadening-the-bookshelves-mexican-literature/> .

“Digital Altars and Migrant Death in Mexico (with Xiomara Cervantes-Gómez)” on *Global Media*

Cultures Podcast, November 5, 2021. <https://globalmediacultures.org/2021/11/05/digital-altars-and-migrant-death-in-mexico-with-xiomara-cervantes-gomez/> .

“Sacred Geography: A Queer Latino Theological Response to Orlando.” *Religion Dispatches* (2016):

<http://religiondispatches.org/sacred-geography-a-queer-latino-theological-response-to-orlando/> .

INVITED TALKS

2023 “After Inclusion,” Keynote Address, Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association, General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Church, Pittsburgh.

2022 “Reading Queer Death in Mexico,” Radical Death Studies Collective, Virtual.

2022 “Negative Affect and Other Pedagogies: Thinking in Black, Latinx, Trans,” Department of Spanish and Portuguese, Northwestern University.

2022 “Lo *queer* por venir, o sea no,” Teoría Cuir en México: Disidencias, Diversidades y Diferencias Simposio. Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Mexico City.

2021 “Trans Aesthetics of Negative Performance: Black Hemispheric Latinx Americas.” Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

2021 “Malinche’s Mija.” Latin American Student Organization. Milliken University.

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 and Department of Spanish and Portuguese, 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

- 2024 “Chaos in the Minor Key,” American Comparative Literature Association, Montreal, Quebec, Canada (accepted).
- 2023 “Black Moves: The Sonic Blackness of Pachuco Dancehalls,” American Studies Association, Montreal, Quebec, Canada (canceled).
- 2022 “Negativity’s Passing, Deadnaming Other Trans of Color Affects.” American Studies Association. New Orleans.
- 2022 “The Gore of *Travesty* Chasers: Linn da Quebrada’s Negative Aesthetic.” ASAP/13: Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Arts of the Present. Los Angeles.
- 2022 “Trap Selena, Español Ratata, and Cardi B’s Black Latinidad.” Latinx Studies Association. University of Notre Dame, presented with Rodrigo Delgado.
- 2022 “Hey Pachuco! The Sonic Ecologies of the Dancehall.” Latin American Studies Association.
- 2022 Invited Roundtable Speaker, Cruising the Capacious: Virtual Dispatches & Thought Experiments International Symposium. Department of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, California State University, Long Beach.
- 2022 “Therefore I am Trans Latinx.” Sponsored by Society for Mexican American Philosophers, American Philosophical Association. Chicago.

- 2022 “Entre Bruxas e Bixas: Black Power and ‘Travesty Worship.’” Modern Languages Association. Washington, DC/Virtual.
- 2021 Roundtable Chair and Respondent for “Not Latin American Enough” with Erin Graff Zivin, Adrián Emmanuel Hernández-Acosta, Ralph Rodriguez, Gisabel Leonardo, and Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel. American Studies Association. Virtual.
- 2021 “‘Estoy lista para que me comas’: El dolor del placer heredado y las coreografías de crisis.” Latin American Studies Association. Virtual.
- 2021 Chair, “Generation, Mediation, Containment.” Women in Theory Virtual Symposium.
- 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.
- 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

- 2023 “Black + Music.” American Studies Association. Montreal, Quebec, Canada (canceled)
- 2022 “Hemispheric Listening: A Sonic Latinx America.” Latin American Studies Association. Virtual.
- 2021 Roundtable on “Not Latin American Enough.” American Studies Association. Virtual.
- 2021 “Performances of Crisis: The Aesthetics of Queer Dance, Music, and Race.” Latin American Studies Association. Virtual.
- 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

Bodies Experimentales (Spring 2023)

Trans^x (Fall 2022)

Theory and Literary Criticism (Fall 2020, Fall 2023)

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

Undergraduate Courses

Malinche's México: Mesoamerican and Colonial Womanhoods (Spring 2022)

Queer Latinx Feminisms (Spring 2022, Fall 2022)

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

Queer Latinx Divas (Fall 2019, Fall 2023)

Sexo y Poder (Spring 2019, Spring 2023)

Approaches to Culture (Fall 2018, Spring 2019)

Graduate Independent Studies

"Trans Latinx Young-Adult Fiction" with V Millen, English (Fall 2022)

"Lo *queer* en la filosofía continental," with Sergio Mora Moreno and Gerson Morales Pérez, Spanish and Portuguese (Spring 2022)

"Queer Theologies in the Américas," with Joseph Coyle, Anthropology (Fall 2018)

Course Supervisor

SPAN 326: Latin American Cultural Studies II (Fall 2022, Spring 2023)

SPAN 254: Approaches to Culture (Fall 2018, Fall 2023)

Ph.D. Advisor in Department of Spanish and Portuguese

Gerson Morales Pérez (Fall 2021-)

Sergio Mora Moreno (Fall 2021-)

Daniel Pérez Astros, "Testimonios de la nostalgia: El ahora de la postdictadura y el trauma en Brasil y Venezuela" (Fall 2019-, ABD)

Gisabel Leonardo, "Melenas Malcriadas: The Black Aesthetics of Hair and Dominicanidad" (Fall 2019-, ABD)

Ph.D. Dissertation Committees

Miren Anton Lobato, Spanish and Portuguese (Fall 2019-Spring 2023, graduated)

Megan Gargiulo, Spanish and Portuguese (Fall 2018-Spring 2022, graduated)

Ph.D. Preliminary Exam Committees

Beatriz Jiménez, Spanish and Portuguese (Spring 2023)

Ennio Nuila, Spanish and Portuguese (Fall 2020)

Jessennya Hernández, Sociology (Spring 2019)

Miren Anton Lobato, Spanish and Portuguese (Fall 2019)

Megan Gargiulo, Spanish and Portuguese (Fall 2018)

M.A. Paper Committees

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)

Undergraduate Honors

Ellie Chiganos, James Scholars Honors Research Project (Spring 2023)

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***

Member, Policy and Development Committee (Fall 2022-Spring 2024)

Member, Search Committee for Open Rank Professor in Latin American Literatures and Cultures (Fall 2022-Spring 2023)

Chair, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (Fall 2021-Spring 2022)

Chair, Capricious Grading Committee (Fall 2021-Spring 2022)

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

Member, Website Committee (Fall 2020-Spring 2023)

Member, Graduate Recruitment and Admissions Committee (Fall 2020-Spring 2022)

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-Spring 2021)

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 Campus Latinx Organizations

“Malinche’s Mijxs: The Gender of Greek Life in Latinidad.” Invited faculty speaker, Alpha Psi Lambda Fraternity (Fall 2022)

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

Other Service to the Campus

“I Think.” Invited Speaker for “Unapologetic” Speaker Series at the Women’s Resources Center (Fall 2021)
 Invited Speaker on “Spanish in a Global World” for College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Alumni Week (Fall 2020)

Service to the University of Illinois System

Lead for Recruiting in Mexico, I-MMÁS Illinois System for Mexican and Mexican American Students (2020-2022)
 Interviewer, Fulbright Foundation and the University of Illinois (2019-2020)

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 American Academy of Religion (AAR)

Member, Steering Committee of Gay Men and Religion Unit (2015-2019)

Service to the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA)

Chair, Presidential Master’s and Undergraduate Prize Committee (2023-2024)
 Member, Presidential Master’s and Undergraduate Prize Committee (2021-2023)

Service to the Latin American Studies Association (LASA)

Juror, Sexualities Section, Sylvia Molloy Prize for Best Peer-Reviewed Article in the Humanities (2016; 2022)
 Co-Chair, Sexualities Studies Section (2019-2021)
 Juror, Mexico Section, Best Dissertation Award (2020)

Service to the Modern Languages Association (MLA)

Member, Executive Committee of the Mexican LLC Forum (2023-2028)

Other Service to the Profession

Interdisciplinary Studies Reviewer, The Ford Foundation (2023)

Editorial Board Member, *Women & Language* (2018-2021)

Peer Reviewer for Academic Journals

ASAP/Journal

Bulletin of Hispanic Studies

Chasqui: Revista de literatura latinoamericana

Debate Feminista

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 ABC News, “Latinx, Latino and Hispanic: How this ethnic group’s label has sparked debate” (March 13, 2023)

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

Invited Speaker for Webinar on “Remembering Pulse, Surviving the Present and Honoring Them with Action,” Religious Institute (June 2019)

Expert witness for asylum cases involving transgender individuals from Mexico (2018-ongoing)

ACTIVE PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Academy of Religion (AAR)

American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA)

American Studies Association (ASA)

Association for the Study of Arts of the Present (ASAP)

Latina/o Studies Association (LSA)

Latin American Studies Association (LASA)

Modern Language Association (MLA)

National Women’s Studies Association (NWSA)

SUMMER INSTITUTES

La Pocha Nostra Master Performance Workshop, Los Angeles and Mexico City (2016)

Human Rights Campaign Summer Advanced Institute in New Directions in Queer Theology (2014)

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

LANGUAGES

English (native), Spanish (near-native), Portuguese (advanced fluency), French (good reading knowledge), Nahuatl (basic reading knowledge)