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# Tex[t]-Mex: Seductive Hallucinations Of The "Mexican" In America



## Synopsis

A rogues' gallery of Mexican bandits, bombshells, lotharios, and thieves saturates American popular culture. Remember Speedy Gonzalez? "Mexican Spitfire" Lupe V3f3lez? The Frito Bandito? Familiar and reassuring – at least to Anglos – these Mexican stereotypes are not a people but a text, a carefully woven, articulated, and consumer-ready commodity. In this original, provocative, and highly entertaining book, William Anthony Nericcio deconstructs Tex[t]-Mexicans in films, television, advertising, comic books, toys, literature, and even critical theory, revealing them to be less flesh-and-blood than "seductive hallucinations," less reality than consumer products, a kind of "digital crack." Nericcio engages in close readings of rogue/icons Rita Hayworth, Speedy Gonzalez, Lupe V3f3lez, and Frida Kahlo, as well as Orson Welles' film *Touch of Evil* and the comic artistry of Gilbert Hernandez. He playfully yet devastatingly discloses how American cultural creators have invented and used these and other Tex[t]-Mexicans since the Mexican Revolution of 1910, thereby exposing the stereotypes, agendas, phobias, and intellectual deceits that drive American popular culture. This sophisticated, innovative history of celebrity Latina/o mannequins in the American marketplace takes a quantum leap toward a constructive and deconstructive next-generation figuration/adoration of Latinos in America.

## Book Information

Paperback: 264 pages

Publisher: University of Texas Press; 1st edition (February 1, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0292714572

ISBN-13: 978-0292714571

Product Dimensions: 7 x 1 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars 14 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #104,884 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #7 in [Books > Literature &](#)

[Fiction > History & Criticism > Regional & Cultural > United States > Hispanic American](#) #90

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## Customer Reviews

"Marvels! Rompecabezas! And cartoons that bite into the mind appear throughout this long-awaited book that promises to reshape and refocus how we see Mexicans in the Americas and how we are

taught and seduced to mis/understand our human potentials for solidarity. This is the closest Latin@ studies has come to a revolutionary vision of how American culture works through its image machines, a vision that cuts through to the roots of the U.S. propaganda archive on Mexican, Tex-Mex, Latino, Chicano/a humanity. Nericcio exposes, deciphers, historicizes, and 'cuts-up' the postcards, movies, captions, poems, and adverts that plaster dehumanization (he calls them 'miscegenated semantic oddities') through our brains. For him, understanding the sweet and sour hallucinations is not enough. He wants the flashing waters of our critical education to become instruments of restoration. In this book, Walter Benjamin meets Italo Calvino and they morph into Nericcio. Orale!" (David Carrasco, Harvard University) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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No Tequila, Por Favor In Tex(t)- Mex: Seductive Hallucinations of the "Mexican" in America, William Anthony Nericcio defies the stereotype of a Mexican that does not speak English nor is willing to learn the language. Not only does he speak English, he has a great command of the language. He has been an English professor at a university for over twenty years. For this book, one might want to have a dictionary near by. However, having internet access like a lap top or Iphone would be better. He tends to use a lot of words found in the Oxford English Dictionary. In fact, one might say Nericcio is a little O.C.D. with the O.E.D. But one does not need to worry. Any word Nericcio wants you to know, he has an O.E.D. entry for the word in order for the reader to have a full grasp of the word. He speaks Spanish and French as well. He tends to flow between the three languages as he makes his point throughout the book. However, all French or Spanish words and phrases are either in

Italics or quotation marks if not both. He also weaves in his knowledge of literature and philosophy to illustrate his point throughout the text. *Text(t)- Mex* is a book about Mexican stereotypes and the history of the American media's perpetuation of them. His introduction can be an intellectual mine field, intended to shake and rattle the reader. The book is basically a 210 page scholarly paper. However unlike most scholarly papers, *Tex(t)-Mex* is full of pictures, anecdotes, and jokes. Just when the reader might find the book to be a little too scholarly for their taste, Nericcio wakes up the reader with a random joke. His wit and sense of humor is what makes his scholarly piece not only readable but really enjoyable. Anybody that has ever studied at a university knows how tedious and odious a scholarly journal can be. However, unlike the average scholar, Nericcio writes knowing someone will read this and he does care if they are bored or not. But this being a scholarly book, *Tex(t)-Mex* is not for the anti-intellectual. They would have better use of this book as a coaster for their Friday night keggers. For those that do actually enjoy reading for pleasure, learning a thing or two, and being intellectually challenged; *Tex(t) Mex* is a great book. There are ten sections in the book, and within those ten sections are five chapters. He goes into a lengthy introduction about his main agreement and point. Then he analyses the Orson Welles classic *Touch of Evil* and Rita Hayworth's career from not having a Mexican enough of a look, then looking too Mexican and her transformation in general. He also has chapters devoted to Speedy Gonzales and Lupe Velez. He goes from past to present to show the American media machine behind Mexican stereotypes. His 50 page film analysis on *Touch of Evil* was probably my favorite part of the book. Nericcio used humor to point out the racism, use of derogatory words, Charlton Heston's fractured Spanish, and his painted face. But the part I found the most hilarious about the chapter was Nericcio's fat jokes against Orson Welles. *Tex(t) Mex* needs to be read in it's entirety for the reader to get the full grasp of Nericcio's arguments and statements. There were chapters, where I found myself wanting to argue with the writer. I think that was his intent. He wants his reader to think and maybe even argue. I imagine many people have pointed out the transformation of Norma Jean Baker aka Marilyn Monroe to Nericcio to argue about his chapter on Rita Hayworth. Or that Speedy Gonzales is not the only racist cartoon during that time. Pepe le Pew is an insult against French people. Think about it, he stinks and he's a womanizer. The famous skunk has been romanticizing rape and sexual assault for many decades now. Pepe is so oversexed that he will try to hump anything that even remotely looks like a skunk. A poor little feline creature that somehow gets a white stripe painted on her back looks good to the little French horny skunk. But as I continued to read the book until its end, I found a lot of points were valid. I did not want to argue with him so much by the time I finished the book. It's a great book if you actually like to think. I just wouldn't advice anybody that barely

knows William Nericcio to buy him a bottle of tequila. Maybe Greygoose Vodka or even rum, but not tequila.

The irony of William Nericcio's psychoanalysis (schizoanalysis?) of apparitions of The Mexican in the dream life of American culture is that Nericcio himself embodies---even as he appropriates and subverts---the stereotype of the Spanglish-speekeeeng Trickster figure, tunneling under the heavily fortified borders between discursive zones. He's the Speedy Gonzales of zoot-suit Derrideanism. Better yet, he's the Mil Máscaras of critical theory, a masked semiotic wrestler pummeling multiple meanings out of the flotsam tossed up by our disposable culture. Drawing on post-colonial theory, Chicano/a studies, a deep knowledge of American history, a scary mastery of continental theory, and an undisguised delight in the retinal pleasures and greasy seductions of junk culture, Nericcio spins us around to face our image of The Mexican, and in so doing reveals it for the cultural mirror it really is, a funhouse reflection of Anglo America's anxieties and fantasies about the Other. Ask not for whom the Taco Bell tolls, Lou Dobbs; it tolls for ustedes. Text-Mex crackles with a manic energy and an antic wit that are rare in academic writing, most of which tends toward soul-crushing ponderousness. Like the French philosophers who've clearly influenced his work, Nericcio tosses off oracular pronouncements without op. cites or apology and rejoices in wordplay. At the same time, his willingness to open the throttle on the passions that animate his arguments and take his rhetoric to telenovela heights of soap-operatic excess, pushing the envelope of his tropes and intertextual riffs into the ultra baroque, seems (to this gabacho, at least) profoundly Mexican. Here he is decrypting a "startling gringo artifact"---packaging for a toy called the Sparkling Clay Factory, featuring a hysterically Anglo boy and girl: "Check out these cute gringo kids from my private collection of `ethnic' types (in particular, look closely at the boy on the right, who has been digitally processed so much that his `skin' takes on the texture of a Pixar-born(e) computer-generated-image offspring of a CGI wet dream by the in vitro-cloned hybrid child of Mengele, Geppetto, and John Lasseter)." He deadpans, "I am still trying to figure out what planet the depicted organisms on this torn box cover come from." If you're the sort of cultural border-jumper and theory-porn junkie who thinks Zizek would make the perfect guest host for Gustavo Arellano's hilarious, brilliant newspaper column "Ask a Mexican" 

Fabulous . . . Read in three sittings. I don't know where to place this in my tidy, categorized Pier 1 book shelf. Latino/Chicano Studies? Cultural studies? Post-poststructuralist critique? Hollywood, Media, Entertainment? This is probably due to the fact that the author is everywhere (film,

image/photography, literature/text, theory, criticism, etc. etc.) without for a second losing sight of the reader, or, more importantly: the mission. Nericcio skewers and sears, elucidates and enlightens with the charm, acuity, and elegance of a master writer. Gorgeously laid out, tons of photos (and lengthy captions). More, please!

This deals very well even in today's society. I'm reading it slowly as I many times have too many irons in the oven.

Smart writer here. In the vein of some wonderful social justice authors like Frantz Fanon, Nericcio seeks to unveil a variety of stereotypes on a structural level but does so in an artistic and lighthearted way. He explores how stereotypes of the 'Mexican' are both repeated and represented in popular culture, and how they are made problematic in certain texts- such as the film "Touch of Evil". With a section of color photos, illustrations, photos, and fun fonts on almost every page, a really unique writing style, and incredibly cool narratives interspersed, this important book is worth buying. I wish I could give a copy to every good reader I know, because then they might just see that Nericcio has joined the greats with his cultural study, Tex-Mex.

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