

of other "minorities," primarily African Americans.

Still another significant "minority" contribution to the genre of the short story is the "short story cycle" which Rocio Davis contends is characteristic of African American, Native American, and Asian American cultures, failing to acknowledge Latina innovations to the short story through the use of the "short story cycle" by Puertoriquenas Nicholasa Mohr, Rosario Ferre, and Judith Ortiz Cofer.

Even recent entries into the ethnic canon are included, such as Chris Wise's essay on Arab American ethnicity which deals with Ramzi M. Salti's use of the problem of coming to terms with homosexual identity in Arab culture. Laurie Leach analyzes the often tragic results of difference in relation to concepts of space and privacy in "Indo American" writers. However, she allocates too much space to a short story by an American writer married to an Indian that could have been shared with an Indo American writer.

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Karen Christian. *Show and Tell: Identity as Performance in U.S. Latino/a Fiction.* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997). 188 pp., \$19.95 paper.

Christian's crucial contribution to ethnic studies is her book's argument that ethnic identity is more performance than essence. Of course, this is an unresolved and essentialized issue, but Christian summarizes the debate well, situating her study in the performance camp as she relies on Judith Butler's theory of performativity to examine the inter-related performances of ethnicity and gender in Chicano/a, U.S. Cuban, Puerto Rican, and Dominican texts. As Christian explains, static U.S. Latino/a identity categories create "collective fictions" that "regulate performances of gender, sexuality, and cultural identity," but alternative performances of ethnicity and sexuality, Christian argues, subvert these "collective fictions" and show instead that identity is always in flux (21). Her study thus refreshingly challenges the practice of defining "U.S. Latino/a" at the expense of excluding alternative texts, subject matter, and even authors. This is the book's greatest strength, making it a key text for U.S. Latino/a literary critics and ethnic cultural studies in general.

The essence vs. performance debate is fuzzy, however, so at times, Christian's analysis balances tenuously between two positions of a circular argument. While rejecting essential ethnic identity, for example, her study essentializes "dominant culture" and, more problematically, Anglo American identity, as if "Anglo" and "American" are not

themselves constructed identities. She briefly notes this dilemma, but by leaving it unexamined, her study “naturalizes” Anglo American identity in contrast to performed ethnic identities. Moreover, although Christian convincingly explains that ethnic authors do not necessarily produce ethnic texts, the discussion of Sheila Ortiz-Taylor and John Rechy, with its emphasis on biographical information, basically re-circulates the very argument Christian rejects by assuming lesbian or gay authors naturally write subversive lesbian or gay texts.

The book also misses several categories of analysis that would develop its otherwise insightful discussion. Christian rightly questions the presumed homogeneity of the U.S. Latino/a “experience” but overlooks Spanish colonization, U.S. neo-colonization, and global capitalism as significant historical factors that shape contradictory U.S. Latino/a identities, making their performances historically contingent on shifts in colonial consciousness. The absence of class analysis likewise ignores the way class status determines the different kinds of performances lower-, middle-, and upper-class U.S. Latino/as enact. Finally, although she alludes to it, Christian’s study omits hybridity as a category of U.S. Latino/a identity. While performativity endlessly repeats prescribed identity categories, hybridity implies a level of agency and change: prescribed categories are not so much repeated as they are re-scripted. The concept of hybridity also bridges the difference between essence and performance more convincingly, since hybridity allows for a third identity category to emerge when two world views collide, in much the same way U.S. Latino/as perform, adapt, and indeed create hybrid identities in literature and life. These omissions aside, *Show and Tell* is a timely, bold, and indispensable study of U.S. Latino/a identity.

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Daniele Conversi. *The Basques, the Catalans and Spain: Alternative Routes to Nationalist Mobilisation*. (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1997). 338 pp., \$44.95 cloth.

In this book, Daniele Conversi compares and contrasts two widely known nationalist movements in Spain: the Basques in the northeast and the Catalans in the east. Working from both primary and secondary sources including documentary material such as political pamphlets, communiqués, periodicals, and nationalists’ declarations and writings, as well as sociolinguistic data and personal interviews, he constructs a detailed historical account of the emergence of both movements at the end of the nineteenth century through the 1980s. Included in his book are maps, glossary, extensive notes, index, and large bibli-