



Chica Lit: Popular Latina Fiction and Americanization in the Twenty-First Century (Latino and Latin American Profiles)

Tace Hedrick

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In *Chica Lit: Popular Latina Fiction and Americanization in the Twenty-First Century*, Tace Hedrick illuminates how discourses of Americanization, ethnicity, gender, class, and commodification shape the genre of “chica lit,” popular fiction written by Latina authors with Latina characters. She argues that chica lit is produced and marketed in the same ways as contemporary romance and chick lit fiction, and aimed at an audience of twenty- to thirty-something upwardly mobile Latina readers. Its stories about young women’s ethnic class mobility and gendered romantic success tend to celebrate twenty-first century neoliberal narratives about Americanization, hard work, and individual success. However, Hedrick emphasizes, its focus on Latina characters necessarily inflects this celebratory mode: the elusiveness of meaning in its use of the very term “Latina” empties out the differences among and between Latina/o and Chicano/a groups in the United States. Of necessity, chica lit also struggles with questions about the actual social and economic “place” of Latinas and Chicanas in this same neoliberal landscape; these questions unsettle its reliance on the tried-and-true formulas of chick lit and romance writing. Looking at chica lit’s market-driven representations of difference, poverty, and Americanization, Hedrick shows how this writing functions within the larger arena of struggles over popular representation of Latinas and Chicanas.

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