

OBRAS CITADAS

- Bajtín, M. M. "El héroe como totalidad de sentido". *Estética de la creación verbal*. 3 ed. Traducido por Tatiana Bubnova. México, DF: Siglo XXI, 1989.
- Baldick, Chris. *In Frankenstein's Shadow*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987.
- Blavatsky, H. P. *The Secret Doctrine*. London: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1928.
- Botting, Fred. *Making Monstrous: 'Frankenstein', Criticism, Theory*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1991.
- Darío, Rubén. *Azul*. Santiago de Chile: Ercilla, 1985.
- Fraser, Howard. "Apes and Ape Lore in Turn-of-the-Century Buenos Aires". *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture* 8 (1989): 61-79.
- Hamilton, Edith. *Mythology*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1942.
- Hewitt, Sandra y Nancy Abraham Hall. "Leopoldo Lugones and H. P. Blavatsky: Theosophy in the 'Ensayo de una cosmogonía en diez lecciones'". *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos* 18 (1984): 335-43.
- Huxley, Thomas Henry. "Evolution and Ethics". *Evolutionary Ethics*. Ed. Matthew H. Nitecki and Doris V. Nitecki. Albany: State University of New York, 1993.
- Lugones, Leopoldo. *Cuentos fantásticos*. Edición, introducción y notas de Pedro Luis Barcia. Madrid: Castalia, 1987.
- _____. *Cuentos fatales*. Buenos Aires: Huemul, 1967.
- _____. *Las fuerzas extrañas*. Buenos Aires: Centurión, 1926.
- Miller, Hillis J. "Introduction". *The Disappearance of God*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1963. 1-16.
- Palma, Clemente. *Cuentos malévolos*. París: Sociedad de Ediciones Literarias y Artísticas, 1944.
- Paz, Octavio. *Los hijos del limo*. 4 ed. Barcelona: Seix Barral, 1993.
- Quiroga, Horacio. "El mono ahorcado". *Cuentos Tomo IV (1905-1910)*. Prólogo de Angel Rama y notas de Jorge Ruffinelli. Montevideo: Arca, 1968. 52-54.
- _____. *El hombre artificial. Novelas cortas. Tomo I (1908-1910)*. Prólogo de Noé Jitric y notas de Jorge Ruffinelli. Montevideo: Arca, 1967.
- Rama, Angel. "Prólogo". Darío, Rubén. *El mundo de los sueños*. San Juan, PR: Editorial Universitaria U de Puerto Rico, 1973.
- Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein or the Modern Prometheus*. New York: Dodd, 1983.
- Todorov, Tzvetan. *Introducción a la literatura fantástica*. Traducción de Silvia Delpy. México, DF: Premiá, 1981.
- Valdelomar, Abraham. *Poesía y estética*. Lima: Universo, 1971.
- Vasbinder, Samuel Holmes. *Scientific Attitudes in Mary Shelley's 'Frankenstein'*. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1976.
- Wellek, René. *Concepts of Criticism*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1976.

POESIDA: Hispanic Writers Respond to AIDS

Jana F. Gutiérrez
Auburn University

These are the facts according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: 1) there have been more than 16 million AIDS-related deaths across the globe; 2) every day over 16,000 people test positive for HIV; 3) economically impoverished countries, especially those in Sub-Saharan Africa, exhibit the most alarming outbreaks; 4) close to one million people are HIV positive in the United States, and that number increases by 40,000 each year; 5) rates of infection among U.S. Hispanics are on the rise. Yale surgeon and professor of medical history Sherwin Nuland remarks, "There has never been a disease as devastating as AIDS [. . .]. Medical science has never before confronted a microbe that destroys the very cells of the immune system whose job it is to coordinate the body's resistance to it [. . .]" (172). These gloomy portends are not meant to discourage but rather to acknowledge the undeniable impact of AIDS on contemporary society. Literature is not immune to the disease; in fact, the AIDS canon serves as a testament to this very real human experience. In that sense, the disease has positively influenced contemporary culture. Many Hispanic writers have acknowledged the impact of AIDS on their community. In just a quarter of a century a united Hispanic voice/*voz* has made a substantial contribution to AIDS literature. A critical examination of this AIDS motif reveals a healthy response to the sickness. The disease has broadened the scope of the Hispanic cannon, the role of the Hispanic writer in a global society, and the place of literature, language, and even literary criticism at the turn of the millennium. One such example is the 1995 Hispanic poetry anthology entitled *POESIDA*, an admirable project which aims at documenting a collective response to the AIDS crisis. The book gives name to a new literary genre in a conscious effort to unify Hispanic writers' dispersed creative responses to the now familiar disease and urge readers to make a political commitment to its eradication. This paper examines the importance of AIDS as a key motivator for change in Hispanic lyrical expression and also as a depository of late-twentieth century canon questioning. *Poesida* (the syncretic genre born from the book *POESIDA*) exhibits two major innovations: one textual in the form of a combined linguistic-thematic revolution that takes place on word level, and the other cultural, as an artistic and a political movement expands beyond the groundbreaking anthology.

The AIDS virus spread freely and widely before the scientific community

could identify it or even attempt to manage it. Doctors first started to notice a cluster of strange, opportunistic infections cropping up among male homosexuals in 1981; the press unofficially deemed these unexplainable cases of Kaposi's sarcoma and Pneumocystis carinii as the gay plague, and soon gay flu and gay cancer also embedded themselves in the social discourse (Nuland 173). Homophobia was evident from the very start. It is not at all hyperbolic to say that mass hysteria about AIDS spread quicker than the disease itself. Maybe that explains writers' initial reluctance at embracing the topic. Sharon Oard Warner observes, "AIDS has been relatively unrepresented in mainstream fiction. Most early stories dealing with the disease did not even mention it by name and tended to focus on someone who knew someone with AIDS rather than the person with AIDS" (491). How could writers resist the amazing literary potential of the AIDS earthquake and its dramatic societal aftershocks? The answer is quite simple: writers too fell victim to fear, either their own or their readers'. Soon they could ignore the issue no longer. Some lost loved ones to the disease. Many battled for increased public awareness, government funding, and drug testing. A few were diagnosed and still others died. Slowly but surely their writing tested positive for AIDS. This prompts Edmund White to affirm just four years after Oard Warner's observation that "[a]n ocean of ink has been spilled since 1981 and the beginning of the AIDS epidemic" ("Journals of the Plague Years" 13).

The appearance of AIDS in literature has thus mirrored the public outbreak. The topic cropped up on the so-called fringe, mainly within gay, urban, underprivileged and minority circles, although no one pivotal work really stands out as the undisputable genesis of AIDS literature. It crept slowly into the public narrative. Oard Warner points to the 1986 appearance of Susan Sontag's "The Way We Live Now" in *The New Yorker* as a major breakthrough and credits Edmund White's *The Darker Proof: Stories from a Crisis* as the "first volume of stories on AIDS" (491-93). Once made the realization that AIDS was an equal opportunity killer, a Hispanic literary response took shape. Cuban authors Severo Sarduy and Reinaldo Arenas serve as the most recognizable examples. Sarduy begins toying with AIDS storylines in the early 1980's and exhausts the theme with his last novel *Pájaros de la playa* (1993), an entire novel centered on the illness. Arenas mainly addresses the topic in his 1992 memoir *Antes que anochezca*, although he also experimented if not with AIDS then at least with gay death motifs in some of his later, lesser-known works like "Final de un cuento" from *Adiós a mamá (De La Habana a Nueva York)* (1992) or even as early as Sarduy with poems like "Drácula Loses His Cold Blood" from 1983. Rafael Campo, a Cuban-American doctor specializing in AIDS research at Harvard Medical Center is among the most prominent living crusaders of the Hispanic AIDS movement in literature; however, Campos's pivotal collections (*What the Body Told* from 1996 and *The Desire to Heal: A Doctor's Education in Empathy, Identity and Poetry* from 1997) did not surface until ten years after Sontag and White. About that same time an enthusiastic

group of Latino authors pooled resources to bring about awareness of the Hispanic response to the AIDS crisis with the Ollantay Theater Project and collections like *POESIDA*. Since the late 1990's the AIDS fervor has diminished somewhat among mainstream writers, yet critical approaches to the topic remain constant.

There exists a curious disparity between the presence of the AIDS motif in creative literature and in literary criticism. This divide could result from the proximity of the epidemic, which does not allow for much historical objectivity. Given its relatively short existence on the planet, the illness has generated much controversy and concern. These public debates seep into the private mind, inspiring thinkers to resolve troublesome philosophical knots embedded within the fabric of a so-called plagued society. This process takes time, even in today's warp-speed world. The time has come, nevertheless, for the novelty of the AIDS subgenre in literary criticism to take a more cohesive shape.

Critics began early on to document the evolution of an AIDS subgenre. Their prompt recognition of this nascent trend is especially remarkable, considering the topic's immediacy, and therefore demonstrates the pertinence (rather than ivory tower detachment) of literary scholarship to real world issues. Critics first noticed AIDS texts in newspapers and magazine articles. Sontag continued along the same trajectory in 1988 with *AIDS and Its Metaphors* (itself an addendum to her previous book *Illness as Metaphor*); although she shifted her approach from fiction to literary criticism, the study fleshes out a theory for demystifying the euphemisms of sickness and is the axis on which all current and future literary AIDS studies turn.¹ As the library expanded, so too did researchers' understanding of its textual nuances. The separate yet related trends of AIDS awareness in literature and in literary criticism arced simultaneously. Late twentieth century surges in postcolonial, multicultural and queer studies, along with a mature how-to model for deconstructing postmodern discursive strategies, have provided a solid foundation on which to approach AIDS literature. Critics waded through semantics in the 1990's, trying to come up with a proper language for AIDS. Take Jan Zita's "AIDS: Keywords" (1990), Michael Callen's "AIDS: The Linguistic Battlefield" (1990) and Daniel Harris's "AIDS & Theory" (1991) as exhibits.² By 1992 Emmanuel Nelson came out with *AIDS: The Literary Response*. Nevertheless, the popularity allows for little distanced scrutiny. Even a precursory look at publication dates shows an overlap of the beginning, the revision, and the forecasted end of academic reflection on AIDS in literature. Scholars were still approximating the subject [1993's *Writing AIDS: Gay Literature, Language, and Analysis* (Murphy and Poirier) and 1994's "Reading AIDS" (Cummings) serve as examples] when others were hinting at its demise (i.e. Tim Oliver's 1993 article "After the Hype: Writing about AIDS in the 90's"). A decade later historical retrospectives like Paul Butler's "Embracing AIDS: History, Identity, and Post-AIDS Discourse" already made a debut. This listing by no means pretends to present an exhaustive bibliography of the AIDS library in literary criticism; however, the studies, while meritorious, exhibit a paradoxical juncture

for the field. How can thinkers attach a "post" prefix so as to signal the end of an era while at the same time relying on the active gerund terms that began it and suggest its ongoing development? That lack of historical objectivity can hinder the legitimacy of AIDS literary criticism.

Scholars in Hispanic literary studies have led the way in AIDS criticism despite the aforementioned difficulties involved in evaluating its development. It is interesting to see how specialists in Hispanic letters compare to the mainstream. Clearly the most prevalent source of thought on AIDS expression originates in Francophone studies; this is due to the disproportionate spread of AIDS through many African and Caribbean countries of French colonial descent. Most other Western approaches to AIDS literature cluster evenly with the topic representing only a sliver of international literary studies. Nonetheless, Hispanic scholars fare well as leading figures in the field. Leonor and Justo Ulloa follow Sarduy's AIDS thematic in numerous articles published throughout the 1990's.³ Rafael Ocasio has also pursued the importance of AIDS as a stimulus for accepting Hispanic homosexuality in the writing of Reinaldo Arenas and Gil Cuadros.⁴ A handful of other critics touch upon AIDS in Hispanic literature.⁵ Yet by far the most cohesive and consistent push comes from a core group of literary critics and creative writers, exploding in the mid-1990's and remaining present into the early 2000's. The anthology *POESIDA* stands out as not only an important progression in AIDS literature and literary studies but also as a symbolic cornerstone of the Hispanic contribution to that artistic movement. Almost all of the big names in Hispanic AIDS literary expression participated in some way in the anthology. Once risky vanguards, they now represent the leading experts in that field.⁶

POESIDA chronicles the evolution of AIDS within the Hispanic creative mind; hence, it furthers understanding of an illness, a people, and a number of literary traditions. Diverse influences strengthen the hybrid genre, which takes on the characteristics of a random but intelligible postmodern collage. It is important to consider the anthology as a whole for what it says and also for what it represents. The book presents a literary manifesto, or *arte poesidática* for a Global-Hispanic approach to writing. Language is the most glaring example of this revolution. In *POESIDA* the reader appreciates three distinct forms of communication: Spanish, English, and the fusion, Spanglish. Significantly, no one pulls rank. The cooperative lack of a hegemonic discourse suggests a waning in ongoing culture debates over linguistic propriety. Maria DiFrancesco regards shifting language borders as starting points for further boundary questioning:

A product of two linguistic realities, Spanish and English, and two cultural realities, [the poet] constantly bridges the socio-political and cultural divides that often separate people of different tongues, economic status, and ethnic origin. Transgressing these boundaries in [one's] personal and professional life, [the

poet] creates and celebrates an independence of being that transcends and defies classification.⁷ (137)

The fact that readers are simply expected to accept without question this trilingual anthology reflects the ever-increasing interconnectedness of today's global citizen and the consequent blurring of language boundaries. I call this phenomenon linguistic *mestizaje* because it occurs in an Hispanic text, and because the term pays homage to the ethnic milieu of that community.

POESIDA also settles an ongoing literary dispute regarding artistic compromise. By literally inserting AIDS into the genre, *POESIDA* calls for an impasse between the lyrical purists and literary anarchists. Edmund White explains the tension that has built up over the years and the absurd meaninglessness of that bickering:

It sometimes seems strange to me that now, at a moment when literary fiction is being challenged for its very right to exist, people are still squabbling over questions of artistic rank and precedence [. . .]. I have argued that the whole concept of the canon —of any canon, no matter how up-to-date and carefully revised and balanced— is unsuitable to our society. ("Journals" 14)

POESIDA reconciles the schism by synthesizing pure and impure lyrical elements. Essentially the tainted AIDS transfusion paradoxically cleanses the bad blood between the two camps. One can commit to a socio-political cause without sacrificing aesthetic quality or poetical innovation. *POESIDA* serves also as a mandate to Hispanic verse: inspire action and artistry. Lastly this collection attests to the vigor of a genre thought to be fading in recent decades. Hispanic poetry clearly is not dead; AIDS has resuscitated it, forcing writers and readers to reconsider the importance of the poetic word in contemporary society.

Seventy four poets, overwhelmingly male, encompass the *POESIDA* movement. Two major characteristics unite them: ethnicity and illness. Each writer has Hispanic roots in the broadest sense of the adjective. The use of that controversial cultural identifier necessitates an exploration of the term Hispanic, a polemic word in today's politically-correct environment. The writers present in the *POESIDA* anthology embrace the larger definition of this ethnic category, coming as they do from Spain, Spanish America, and the United States. Rather than divide a population already marginalized by illness, *POESIDA* succeeds in overcoming tribalism by uniting writers under the common, albeit unfortunate umbrella of AIDS. Heritage also joins these contributors. Illness does not debilitate their Latin pride. Instead, they draw strength from their community, their *gente*. Project creator Pedro Monge Rafauls comments on the contradictory feelings of pride and disappointment he experienced upon bringing his vision to fruition. On the one hand, Monge Rafauls believes the project triumphs over superficial cultural

divisions imposed on the Hispanic community; on the other hand, the inventive literary project was born of a tragic social circumstance:

[I]t is the first anthology of poetry on AIDS written by Latinos in the United States, and by writers from Spain and from several Spanish American countries. While because of the subject, we would have preferred that this anthology had never existed, we are proud of being the Press that commissioned it [. . .]. It has been hard work without financial support; but it had to be done to help create a literary space for the Latino voices of AIDS. (Rodríguez Matos xxii)

So the *POESIDA* contributors originate from different countries. The majority calls the United States home, and thus Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, and Cuban Americans (the three main U.S. Hispanic groups) predominate. Other voices present hail primarily from the Southern Cone, the Caribbean, and, of course, Spain. Their Hispanic roots provide comfort so as to endure AIDS.

The reader notes other instances of hybridism in the *POESIDA* anthology. Dual commitments abound in each writer's biographical blurbs. In addition to the many countries represented, the descriptions also provide a professional history of each author. An impressive diversity is appreciated. One expects to and does find poets, novelists, playwrights, translators, editors, and literary critics among the list of professions; naturally, they all work daily with words. But there are surprises, given the high literary quality of the projects. The collection also includes a sculptor, a graphic artist, a sociologist, a teacher, and a doctor. AIDS breaks through professional cliques. The poem weaves a thread of shared expression for these writers affected by the illness. Since each writer has obviously been touched by the disease, either personally or as a member of a society dealing with AIDS, it is not uncommon for them to attach another commitment to their professional discipline. Ten percent of the writers assert a radical identity, that of the poet-activist. Boasts Sandoval Sánchez of this type of ontological fusion:

En tanto gay latino, y en tanto investigador, de ninguna manera puedo trazar una divisoria entre mi cuerpo y mi investigación: mi cuerpo me empuja siempre hacia el límite, y mi escritura siempre me fuerza a poner en práctica la dependencia recíproca entre cuerpo y mente. No puedo privilegiar lo intelectual sobre el cuerpo. *Con el SIDA*, debo constantemente desafiar el dualismo cuerpo/mente predominante en Occidente. Soy un cuerpo, luego soy. (344)

Hence, the group emphasizes a sense of duality by use of the equalizing conjunction (poet and activist) or dash (poet-activist). Ana Castillo reminds that such

romanticism is not uncommon among Latino writers of her generation accustomed to the scrappy underdog role in a society that labels them minority and reduces their existence to a convenient stereotype:

In the mid-'70's, the idea was to work towards social change. The call of the day for young people everywhere of all colors and backgrounds was to contribute in some way to a more just society. Being of Mexican background, being Indian-looking, being a female, coming from a working-class background, and then becoming politicized in high school, that was my direction. I was going to be an artist, a poet. Never once did I think of it as a career. I certainly never thought I could possibly earn a dime writing protest poetry. So all those years I went around like a lot of young poets—a lot of old poets—going anywhere I could find an audience, getting on a soapbox and reading. I was a Chicana protest poet, a complete renegade—and I continue to write that way. (qtd. in Baker 59)

Castillo is not alone. AIDS forces many Hispanic writers to take yet another stand.

The reader must not jump hastily to the conclusion that each poet is HIV positive. Assumptions, generalizations, even educated guesses represent a dangerously prejudicial attitude on behalf of the critic. This tendency toward stereotypes can include the everyday reader, who may very well shy away from the book for fear of catching the disease. It is not too much of a stretch to imagine the topic of AIDS as a major deterrent for many readers. Unfortunately, this stigma can attach itself to writers as well. Readers, even scholarly ones, tend to make assumptions about an author based on the content of his or her text. While it is true that many *POESIDA* contributors live with or have already died of AIDS-related circumstances (Sarduy, for example), there are perhaps just as many names (Sandra Cisneros, to cite one instance) that pique interest simply by virtue of not having AIDS. Their testimony is no less important. After all, they are writers who make a living creating fictional universes. These *POESIDA* authors have witnessed the messy aftermath of the virus. They experience it vicariously by way of watching it consume a family member, a lover, a friend, an acquaintance, and even a society. The real question is why the perverse satisfaction in knowing the author's diagnosis? The *POESIDA* editors thankfully do not indulge the public's unhealthy appetite for gossip. To do so would only prejudice a reading populace that already jumps eagerly to stereotype, misjudge, and blame the victims not the plague. This conscious decision not to saturate the reader with juicy tidbits about the writers' sexual preferences, drug consumption, economic status, family, or medical history allows for greater textual purity. Any reader longing for lurid details about the poets will have to search elsewhere.

POESIDA represents a new lyrical vein in Hispanic letters. The selection of poetry as the creative language for recording AIDS is worth noting. The medium played an early part in psychological therapy for people touched by AIDS.⁸ And although fans of prosaic and dramatic genres (such as novels, theater, and mostly, films) eclipse poetry devotees these days, the elements of verse provide a perfect means of expressing AIDS. White highlights poetry's exquisite ability to combine "the intensity of feeling" with a "matter-of-factness to match the horror" and further extols its virtue for capturing the AIDS subject:

Poetry, with its shocking, playful and sudden shifts in registers, its abhorrence of cant and insistence on exactitude, is the most honest art form. For that reason it has perhaps resisted what can only be called AIDS kitsch, the often well-meaning but sentimental recourse to heart-tugging clichés [. . .]. AIDS poetry at its best benefits from almost imperceptible formal constraints and pushes right on through to the most rigorous sincerity. ("Journals" 13)

Campo adds that poetry's rhythms match those of a healthy body: "In [formal poetry] are the fundamental beating contents of the body at peace: the regularity of resting brain wave activity in contrast to the disorganized spiking of a seizure, the gentle ebb and flow of breathing, or sobbing, in contrast to the harsh spasmodic cough" (qtd. in Rendell, "A Very Troublesome Doctor" 213). Some of the most controversial Hispanic writers lend their voices to *POESIDA*, and many of them, although extremely talented lyricists, are not known for their poetry. Still, one cannot help but appreciate purification on text level, this in spite of the impure subject matter.⁹ That is to say that many of these writers abandon their showy tricks upon writing AIDS poetry. Rather than textual anarchy, they opt for a cleaner lyricism that could suggest a subconscious yearning for real corporal purification (a cure to the disease) or simply a reverential attitude toward the somber, existential theme. Thus the new genre succeeds on a number of levels. Formal elements in AIDS poetry can echo a desired outcome for a person stricken with the disease while also efficiently communicating an emotional and physical urgency in a compact package: the poem.

The term given Hispanic AIDS poetry also holds deep meaning. The disease inserts itself conceptually within the genre by way of a play on the Spanish words *poesía* and *SIDA*, the acronym that stands for *Síndrome de Inmunodeficiencia Adquirida*. AIDS symbolically invades the text, just as the virus infects the body. The disease literally alters the concept of poetry by penetrating the genre. It is equally significant to point out that the semantic insertion of one word into another only works in Spanish. The English counterparts (poetry and AIDS) just cannot mesh together in the same playful fashion. *POETRAIDS* does not have the same ring, so the English language is stuck with the less

creative term, AIDS poetry. English also loses the all important letter *d*, the single letter that transforms *poesía* into *POESIDA*. That letter not only heralds the invention of a new genre but also is laden with symbolism. Editor Carlos Rodríguez Matos explains the significance in his introductory essay:

The term "POESIDA" is more than a combination of the words *poesía* and *SIDA*; it is one word: *poesía*, with a *d* representing the difference in this poetry of AIDS. It re-presents the presence of the Human Immune-deficiency Virus, but also the uses of poetry in the Age of AIDS, and the socioeconomic, political, cultural, and historic contexts particular to Latino, Latin American and Spanish poets [. . .]. The *d* also represents other marginalizations marked by gender, race, class, sexuality, and the use of illegal drugs. (xxv)

A single consonant shatters a multitude of perceptions. That paradigm shift cannot occur in English. AIDS poetry consists of two separate words; symbolically one would say that the English language is not ready at this time to fully accept AIDS into its poetry. Semantically one falls short whereas the other rises to the challenge. The other English-language option (*POETRAIDS*) fails even more miserably because it relies on omission, not inclusion, of a consonant (in this case the letter *y* rather than *d*). That word would symbolize a loss rather than a gain to poetry. Furthermore, the word would lose the representative power of the letter *d*. This foray into semantic differences between English and Spanish is key in that *POESIDA*, though written in both languages, succeeds as a whole only for a bilingual audience. The poems do not all appear in translation. In fact, only Francisco Alarcón chooses to translate his poem. Or at least it first seems. Further examination of "Mis muertos" and "My Dead" suggests that Alarcón has split one poem bilingually down the center so that one side is Spanish and the other is English. The poem's reflective form visually recreates the idea presented in the poem of two entities, a plural group known as "mis muertos" or "my dead" and the first-person-singular speaker. The translation reflects the inseparability of the two poetic figures, as is demonstrated in the following lines of Alarcón's "Mis muertos" and "My Dead" in which Spanish verses mimic English translations:

mis muertos y yo	me and my dead
somos inseparables	are inseparable
[.]	
hay uno simpático	the good-natured one
que al hablarme	when speaking to me
me agarra las manos	grabs hold of my hands
el pobre insiste:	that poor guy insists
"mírame bien porque	"take a good look

éste que ves eres tú”

this one you see is you”
(Rodríguez Matos 7)

The two languages refer symbolically back to the two entities in the poem. A monolingual reader would not catch the relation between form and function. Only bilingual speakers familiar with both Spanish and English come fully equipped to appreciate the language of this anthology, as reader Cheryl Clarke notes by adding a disclaimer to the book's back jacket: “I regret only my lack of fluency in Spanish. [B]ilingual readers will find a treasure even more precious here [. . .].” Clearly the texts call out for a bilingual approach, and that is due to the synchronic cultures from which they come.

Whereas many of the poets write entirely in Spanish or English, a large portion of the contributors demonstrate linguistic *mestizaje*. Some authors flip-flop between Spanish and English with seeming ease. William Mena writes “Absolutamente” in Spanish and follows it with “Golden Rule” and “unedited life” both in English (Rodríguez Matos 109-10). Carlos David Schroder begins with the English poem “dear departed” and ends with a Spanish trio “in extremis,” “en los espejos,” and “nueva fe” (Rodríguez Matos 155-57). And then there is Ana Castillo who attaches the Spanish title “Mi volador” to a poem composed entirely in English (Rodríguez Matos 54). Still other poets write neither in one language nor the other, preferring instead a dialect still unacceptable to purists: Spanglish. Víctor Hernández’s “Recuerdos a mi Comadre Rudy” exemplifies this creative bilingualism:

She was muy tough!
With a pinch of canela and honey
AY!

Mi Comadre
Was a Texano/Mexicano
y bien Joto!
and lived in New York City
[.]
Remember?
Yo recuerdo.

She had Oídos for listening
Ojos y Corazón
to See and Feel
y una boca. . .
¡Ay!
to advise
como la muy Fine
Comadre
She was [. . .] (Rodríguez Matos 95-96)

Obviously, *POESIDA* requires dexterity in both English and Spanish.

Culturally the anthology speaks to a well-read Hispanic audience. Intertextual references to famous and martyred Spanish-language writers suffice as examples. Jesús Barquet establishes a relationship between Spanish mystic San Juan de la Cruz and an ailing AIDS patient in “Mística interrumpida” (Rodríguez Matos 24-25). The speaker in an elegy by Ana Castillo conjures up the spirit of Spain’s Generation of 1927 spokesman Federico García Lorca:

i once went to a costume ball
as “García Lorca
After the Assassination” –
suitably bullet ridden
blood drenched: A macabre
and ironic vision
of poetic justice (Rodríguez Matos 56-57)

Iván Silén devotes a morbid yet peaceful sonnet to “Severo Sarduy” on the occasion of the Cuban’s passing:

Te fuiste con la transfusión a mitad,
con el cielo a mitad. Un cansancio,
un póstumo de paredes blancas contra

la palidez de tu nombre: Severo, eurítmico,
te pusiste la camisa de la paz, o
la extrañeza de la lengua de Dios. La

transfusión del tiempo fue inútil. Te fuiste contra
la palidez de tu nombre: Severo, etílico,
te bebiste la transfusión de los santos.

(Rodríguez Matos 160)

Valentín Cózar glosses Spanish poets Fray Luis de León, Vicente Aleixandre, and again García Lorca in “Eros letal” (Rodríguez Matos 66-68). The reader undoubtedly must have an adequate knowledge of the Hispanic canon in order to appreciate the intertextual nuances of these references. Similarly, a *POESIDA* reader observes the presence of Hispanic religions and folklore. In addition to Catholic imagery, there are evocations of indigenous and Afro-Hispanic deities such as Sarduy’s poem “Yemayá” and Ana Castillo’s “Mi volador” (which mentions Mexico’s Ehecatl) (Rodríguez Matos 152; 54). Additionally, Rafael Campo in “El Día de los Muertos,” Ramón García in “Day of the Dead,” and Juan Carlos Bautista in “Pan de muerto, pan de enfermos” all draw a parallel between the AIDS epidemic and the Mexican Day of the Dead holiday

(Rodríguez Matos 42; 92; 26-27). To reiterate, language and literature indicate the writers' desire to communicate with a decidedly Hispanic target audience.

Attention to the spoken word permeates many of these texts. One cannot forget that much of this poetry stems from live performances or slams such as those at the famous Nuyorican Poets Café. Miguel Algarín, co-founder of that establishment and *POESIDA* poet, accentuates this nagging need to express oneself aloud in the aptly titled poem "Language:"

To tell,
to talk,
to tongue into sounds
how could I cleanse you with urine, how my tasting
tongue would wash
your body,
how my saliva and sperm would bloat you,
to touch you in our lovemaking
and not tell you
would amount to murder,
to talk about how to language this
so that you would still languish
in my unsafe arms and die,
seems beyond me,
I would rather lie
but my tongue muscle moves involuntarily
to tell of the danger in me. (Rodríguez Matos 13)

Sonorous alliteration, syntactic repetition, and selective adherence to the rules of punctuation and capitalization indicative of the written word make evident the intended orality of Algarín's poem. Similarly, the aforementioned "Recuerdos de mi Comadre Rudy" by Hernández requires a note by the editor that clearly indicates the text's origin as a spoken-word poem: "Al leer en público el título, el autor ("la Comadre Vic") echa un grito a lo mexicano: ¡Ay ay ay!, en honor a Rudy Leal, activista cultural que nació en Tejas y murió en Nueva York en 1993" (Rodríguez Matos 96). The desire to verbalize aloud functions metaphorically in that it relates to the need to break through societal taboos against talking openly and honestly about a marginal and unpleasant disease. Doctor and *POESIDA* contributor Campo meditates upon this confessional and testimonial impulse in his essay "AIDS and the Poetry of Healing:" "AIDS, in the process of rendering people almost unable to talk, filling lungs with secretions and opportunistic infections, has at the same time brought the same people to an opportunity for an unmatched eloquence, to retell their lives, to write the poems that will last forever in the troubled minds of future generations who will look back on the epidemic" (97).

The silence motif runs in apposition to speech. Sarduy writes about muteness in one selection (which is appropriately untitled): "Que no se nombre ni evoque / este mal, o este castigo, / que disfrazado de amigo / se infiltra aún más" (Rodríguez Matos 150). The Ulloas explain the author's subversive irony in no-naming the sickness:

Los síntomas del SIDA se esparcen por el texto sin mencionar abierta o directamente el término que identifica la condición. Sabemos, no obstante, que toda esta proliferación de signos de enfermedad que se repiten no es fortuita sino que forma parte de un plan definido para crear una decisiva metáfora de esta plaga.¹⁰ ("Manifestaciones" 18)

The editor of *POESIDA* also recognizes silence and thus devotes a blank page to the "Ausentes: Los poetas que por voluntad propia no aparecen en *POESIDA*" (Rodríguez Matos 23). He further explains in his preface:

A silence due to the absence of poems has to be signaled: the voices of the children with SIDA, the voices of teenagers with SIDA, the voices of the adult male and female heterosexuals with SIDA; and also the lost poems [. . .]. [S]everal poets, writers, and visual artists [. . .] chose not to respond to my telephone calls, letters and faxes. Some never answered; a few never sent promised material. (Rodríguez Matos xxv-xxvii)

The ironic presence of absent language indicates loss of life, the shame still associated with AIDS and the degeneration of the body's ability to speak already mentioned by Campo. Silence also refers to the loneliness of an HIV positive diagnosis. The poem "Tantrum de la muerte I" by Alberto Sandoval Sánchez paints a lonesome and quiet portrait:

El día
que empezó
a morir
nadie, ni yo, ni ellos se dieron cuenta:
sólo él solo en el espejo de media luna
rastreado huellas en la playa de su piel.
SILENCIO:
ni llamadas telefónicas
ni consultas
SILENCIO:
(de haberlo alguien sabido
alguna lágrima color de compasión)

habría caído en la arena del dolor
 SILENCIO
 SILENCIO
 Y MÁS SILENCIO:
 sólo la Muerte sabía las fotos eróticas
 en el álbum comprometedor del espejo.
 (Y se lo callaba.) (Rodríguez Matos 144-47)

The capitalization of the "silencio" chorus intensifies the hushed sadness that AIDS wreaks on its sufferers. Parentheses surround that last verse as if to emphasize the trapped feeling of imprisonment—the doom of the AIDS death sentence. Lady Death awaits her lover patiently and silently. This poem makes excellent use of graphic elements, pertinent only in a written composition. Hence, the quiet, printed text contrasts with the loud, performance pieces already mentioned.

In her introduction to *Writing AIDS: Gay Literature, Language, and Analysis*, Poirier declares, "In a very real sense, all writing today is AIDS writing in that it must consciously choose how to respond to the epidemic, whether by direct involvement or evasion" (7). Her statement, no matter how logically sound, does not always make practical sense. Two extremely well known *POESIDA* authors, Sarduy and Arenas, stand out as prime examples. Their inclusion within the collection brings up a troubling aspect of the movement. Closer examination of the Sarduy and Arenas *POESIDA* poems reveals a flaw inherent to every anthology. It becomes clear upon further analysis of the texts included within *POESIDA* that the book only presents a tiny portion of their AIDS writing and, even worse, that it may have erred in judging them AIDS poems. Upon evaluating the root sources of the poems included and comparing those texts to the AIDS poems omitted, a cautious reader cannot help but question the disparity.

POESIDA chooses "Última luna" and "Autoepitafio" from Arenas (Rodríguez Matos 16-17). These poems date to 1985 and 1989 respectively. AIDS obviously was on the mind of homosexual men like Arenas in the late 1980's, but only by the time he composed the later poem did Arenas have confirmation of his HIV positive status. Moreover, neither poem explicitly deals with AIDS. The "Última luna" speaker admits, "[. . .] estoy herido / (y de muerte) / porque ya el futuro lo he vivido" (Rodríguez Matos 16). One could see a subconscious preoccupation with death in those lines, but the text alone does not provide enough evidence to warrant an AIDS reading. Arenas's "Autoepitafio" lends itself more to an AIDS interpretation due to the underlying somatic/sexual discourse in which the speaker waxes lyrically about his doomed fate:

Mal poeta enamorado de la luna
 no tuvo más fortuna que el espanto;
 sabía que la vida es riesgo o abstinencia,

que toda gran ambición es gran demencia
 y que el más sórdido horror tiene su encanto.

Vivió para vivir que es la muerte
 como algo cotidiano a la que apostamos
 un cuerpo espléndido o toda nuestra suerte.
 [.]
 Y cuando ya se bamboleaba surgía una ventana
 por la cual se lanzaba al infinito.
 No quiso ceremonia, discurso, duelo o grito,
 ni un túmulo de arena donde reposase el esqueleto
 (ni después de muerto quiso vivir quieto).
 Ordenó que sus cenizas fueran lanzadas al mar
 donde habrán de fluir constantemente.
 No ha perdido la costumbre de soñar:
 espera que en sus aguas se zambulla algún adolescente.
 (Rodríguez Matos 17)

The author colors his self-portrait with a darkly humorous tinge that is entrenched in the Hispanic literary tradition but has not yet been explained by Anglo AIDS literary critics, and therein lies much of its originality—the satirical front with which Hispanics face death. Yet once again the poem eschews AIDS. It is not that there is an obvious no-naming; quite simply the focus is more on a life/death than a sick/healthy duality. Each of these texts links death with sex, but any reader familiar with Arenas's would hardly call that a rarity or even a reaction to AIDS fears. Such is not the case with "Drácula Loses His Cold Blood," a poem Arenas wrote in 1983, long before his diagnosis but early in the stages of AIDS paranoia (*Inferno: Poesía completa* 262-63). That composition tells the story of the vampire hero's demise in modern society. Drácula readily emanates an enchanting triangle of eroticism, decadence and blood—characteristics of the AIDS virus as well. Moreover, the poem refers directly to the illness when an omniscient poetic narrator intuitively grasps the vampire's worst fear: "De noche —él mismo lo confiesa— me estremezco / en el féretro, pensando si habré contraído el SIDA o el herpes genital" (Arenas, "Drácula Loses His Cold Blood" 16-18). One can indeed make a case for the *POESIDA* selections, yet an AIDS diagnosis for these poems requires intertextual leaps of faith. First one must know the author's timeline; the second jump does not go so smoothly, as it involves tying his lunar metaphor to death and then to AIDS. Arenas lays the groundwork for that relationship throughout his autobiography *Antes que anochezca*. For example, the picture of a personified moon overcoming him concludes his life story: "¡Oh Luna! Siempre estuve a mi lado, alumbrándome en los momentos más terribles [. . .]. Y ahora, súbitamente, Luna, estallas en pedazos delante de mi cama. Ya estoy solo. Es de noche" (Arenas, *Antes que anochezca* 340). Certainly both "Última luna" and

"Autoepitafio" include mention of the moon, and "Drácula," being a nocturnal monster, is associated with the moon; nonetheless, there is not one line in any of these poems that firmly marks the shortest distance between those two figurative points. The only possible conclusion is that moon commonly equals death in Arenas's poetry but not necessarily because of AIDS.

A dark yet funny tone also marks the *POESIDA* entries of Severo Sarduy, yet the anthology slips again into wishful classification of the texts as AIDS poems. Sarduy turns up the sarcasm (as seen previously with Arenas) in the following untitled epitaph:

Yace aquí, sordo y severo
quien suelas tantas usó
y de caderas abusó
por delantero y postrero.
Parco adagio —y agorero—
para inscribir en su tumba
—la osamenta se derrumba,
oro de joyas desechas—:
su nombre, y entre dos fechas,
"el muerto se fue de rumba." (Rodríguez Matos 153).

The ironic obituary, just like Arenas's, demonstrates Hispanic wit (and especially the Cuban *choteo*) at its very best. Sarduy faces the disease with humor; laughter helps disguise the pain and also stresses the absurdity of AIDS, an illness still so misunderstood. Nonetheless, not one of the nine Sarduy poems included in the collection evidence an AIDS subtext. The poem already cited as well as another ten line *décima* epitaph date to 1992, when Sarduy, already dying from AIDS, wrote some of his last poems; however, both of them rely totally on a death motif, not even toying with a sexual connection like Arenas does. Other Sarduy poems in *POESIDA* predate his own diagnosis and/or maintain only a dialogue with death, not AIDS. Sarduy's *décima* entitled "Piña" provides an example:

Puse una piña pelona
sobre tres naranjas chinas,
y le añadí en las esquinas
la guayaba sabrosona.
Así, en exilio, corona
la reina insular, barroca,
la naturaleza —poca—
y muerte que le he ofrecido.
Y el emblema que la evoca:
"No habrá más penas ni olvido". (Rodríguez Matos 154)

The reader observes a negotiation with death in terms of a Cuban *santería* offering, but there is no AIDS. The complete opposite occurs in Sarduy's absolutely last dying poems, which appear at the end of his last novel *Pájaros de la playa* (1993) but are absent from *POESIDA*. A morbid obsession with documenting AIDS explicitly marks those poems. Consider the following example of a dead patient's cadaver from *Pájaros de la playa*:

Con las vísceras sacadas,
con la lengua afuera,
con la boca pintada
de salmuera.

Con los párpados heridos,
con el sexo claveteado,
un coágulo sobre el rostro
pintarrajeado.
[.]
Con una palabra grabada
en la boca herida;
con la tiza oscura.

Con el semen negro,
con el ojo en blanco,
la osamenta en llama:
locura.¹¹ (Sarduy 1001)

The Ulloas remind in their landmark study of *Pájaros de la playa* that "Sarduy conceives the novel during the years that precede his demise as a last written testimony to his agony and to his desire to reach a state of diaphaneity more powerful than death" ("*Pájaros de la playa* and Sarduy's Hidden Metaphor" 123). The critics acknowledge Sarduy's refusal to name the disease but highlight his exaggerated use of AIDS euphemisms and his scientific/artistic descriptions of the ravages of the virus on the human body (Ulloa, "*Pájaros de la playa* and Sarduy's Hidden Metaphor" 123). The anaphoric repetition of "con" in the cosmologist's poem underscores the accumulative effects of the illness; every additional conjunction attaches yet another ugly insult to a once beautiful work of art, and like sutures securing the cadaver for burial, they also close the human form, literally sewing up the body and silencing the word. Even so, the speaker laments that the AIDS deaths will go unnoticed: "Alguien tose en la plegaria, / pasa un pájaro: / inconcebible silencio" (Sarduy, "Diario," *Pájaros* 1002).¹² It appears that only Sarduy's darker and more blatant AIDS poems have slipped into obscurity.

What does the future hold for AIDS in literature and literary criticism? One suspects a development parallel to the epidemic. Populations most affected by

the disease will wrestle with it in their imagination. Thus one can expect a rise in the realm of African and Hispanic and women's literatures, as the virus gains ground in the aforementioned communities. Although AIDS infection has diminished among the gay male community, it will probably remain in their expression as more "hidden" AIDS voices come out of the proverbial closet. No longer is there a need for shameful silence. People now live with AIDS. So the text will too. Critics, therefore, must persevere in the daunting task of meticulous documentation. They will ask questions and probe for evidence, uncovering new narratives and dismantling old fictions. Though still sensitive, AIDS has printed itself indelibly onto the page. Perhaps, then, Sontag first glimpsed the future. She explains that AIDS metaphors hyperbolize previous figurative language used to represent leprosy, Bubonic plague, syphilis, and cancer. Sontag's metaphorical categories are present in *POESIDA*. Military references, for example, underscore the war on AIDS and the idea of the body under siege by an enemy invader. Rane Arroyo's lines from "Los Angeles: Two Chapters from the *Book of Lamentations*" serve as a clear-cut example: "AIDS is a war inside the body, / and outside in the streets" (Rodríguez Matos 21-22). Of course here death does not always mean defeat, as the "Poema para Víctor" by Luz María Umpierre Herrera shows:

Yo escribo tu nombre en la arena
 —VICTOR—
 en recuerdo y espero la
 resaca que cargará en sus hombros al vencedor a su sitio de triunfo—
 fuera del frío, lejos ahora de toda contienda
 al lugar donde el sol habrá de coronarle con amapolas amarillas
 y rojas—
 [.....]
 a la isla que ahora lleva tu nombre VICTORIOSO [..].
 (Rodríguez Matos 166)

Biblical, often apocalyptic, images also filter through these texts, in accordance with Sontag's reading of illness in literature. "Tu imagen y semejanza" by Roberto Valero compares God to the Christ-like AIDS sufferer:

Es bueno recordarlo, somos divinos.
 [.....]
 También tú, Señor, tienes SIDA
 y lo compartes con nosotros
 [.....]
 No olvido, sin embargo
 que no descendió el ángel a desclavarte
 no hubo descrucifixión (Rodríguez Matos 167-68)

In the end, it is that messianic crusade to which Sontag alludes that salvages *POESIDA*. The entries reveal their faith in language as a remedy for AIDS. They eschew those self-indulgent, meta-referential, postmodern tricks that have come to define twentieth century verse. *POESIDA*, in contrast, is honest and for the most part straightforward. A sense of urgency runs through the collection. The capital letters that spell out *POESIDA* (all except for the tell-tale *d* for difference, slanted on the side, italicized so as to represent the marginalized voices) emphasize the crisis. Yet problems arise with the anthology. For one there is the omission of major AIDS poems and the misappropriation of others by celebrity authors such as Sarduy and Arenas, perhaps due to careless oversight or maybe to a more troubling exploitation of a gay stereotype. But overall *POESIDA* does succeed in delivering its campaign. The individual speaker morph together into a stronger and collective first person: I and just as equally YO. They invent a new genre and elaborate it with a conglomerate of linguistic *mestizaje*. Their cathartic testimony increases exposure of a socio-political cause and an ethno-artistic community screaming for recognition in hopes that an epic, sometimes quixotic, AIDS hero can with the poem survive the plague. Medical historian Nuland questions:

How can one begin to make sense out of this affliction? No wisdom has yet been discovered, no lesson revealed, AIDS as metaphor, AIDS as allegory, AIDS as symbolism, AIDS as jeremiad, AIDS as a test of mankind's humanity, AIDS as an epitome of universal suffering—it is these kinds of lucubrations that consume the intellectual energies of moralists and litterateurs nowadays, as though something good must at any cost be salvaged from this foul scourge. (172)

The *POESIDA* writers answer the quandaries posited by Nuland. They look past the superficial symptoms of a collective body ravaged by AIDS. But mostly they give the disease a Hispanic face, a lyrical tongue, and a human soul. Lottie Almonte writes about shared vulnerability and morality in "SIDA:"

Acquired in a lab
 Immune —no one
 Deficiency for the colored
 the crooked, the strait
 the squint, the wool haired
 the big nosed, the plagued
 the poor, the rich
 the pretty, the ugly
 Syndrome of chaos
 madness, tears, fears

STRUGGLE
human, real human
always
HUMAN.¹³ (Rodríguez Matos 15)

It is that humanity with the ability of the poets to express universal and existential themes through the vehicle of language that most stands out in *POESIDA*.

NOTES

¹ Beret E. Strong's "Metaphors in Poems About AIDS" represents a popular critical approximation that relies primarily on Sontag's theories for interpreting AIDS texts.

² Both Zita and Callen appear in *The State of Language*, edited by Christopher Ricks and Leonard Michaels (142-62; 171-81).

³ See the following joint publications by the Ulloas: "La manipulación del fragmento en *Colibrí* de Sarduy," "Manifestaciones de la escritura somática en la narrativa de Severo Sarduy," "*Pájaros de la playa* de Severo Sarduy: Final del juego," and "*Pájaros de la playa* and Sarduy's Hidden Metaphor of Illness and Decay."

⁴ Ocasio focuses on both authors in "Autobiographical Writing and 'Out of the Closet' Literature by Gay Latino Writers." AIDS also figures prominently in Ocasio's book *Cuba's Political and Sexual Outlaw: Reinaldo Arenas*.

⁵ Luis A. Jiménez, María V. Ruiz, and Joanne Rendell have also published articles on Hispanic AIDS cultural and literary narratives.

⁶ The most recognizable figures include the book's editor Carlos Antonio Rodríguez Matos in addition to the following writers/critics whose poems appear in the anthology and who continue their commitment to Latino, queer, and/or AIDS literature: Rafael Campo, Ana Castillo, Pedro Monge-Rafauls, Alberto Sandoval Sánchez, and Luz María Umpierre.

⁷ DiFrancesco makes this observation upon interviewing Luz María Umpierre, a noted Hispanic literary scholar and *POESIDA* contributor; her remark not only holds true for Latino writing but also for the synthesis I term linguistic *mestizaje*.

⁸ Nancy Pate explores this process in detail in her 1989 article "Poems on AIDS Express a Patchwork of Emotions."

⁹ The impurity can describe two levels: on one, the poems are thematically impure because of their socio-political tone, whereas on the other, they exhibit a metaphorical impurity that mimics an infected body.

¹⁰ The Ulloas refer to Sarduy's *Colibrí* novel in that quote, but their statement can apply to numerous AIDS texts whose authors, for one reason or another, opt for a more figurative description, or for some, eradication achieved through verbal negation of the disease. Poirier explains this silence in terms of homophobia: "[T]he word itself can make it impossible to communicate the human tragedy of AIDS to a denying, uncomfortable, or hostile audience. Refusing to name the syndrome not only allows writers 'to

particularize and to universalize' gay love and joy as well as suffering and grief, but disallows any credence to 'efforts to marginalize gays'" (4).

¹¹ A short footnote explains the entire last chapter of the novel: "Poemas encontrados en otro cuaderno, junto al *Diario del cosmólogo*" (*Pájaros de la playa* 1000). have thus chosen to reference the page numbers rather than the individual poem line because they form part of the larger prose work.

¹² Jacobo Machover views *Pájaros de la playa* as a somber elegy but as a polar opposite to playful epithets included in *POESIDA* (101); his further specification that *pájaros* is a derogatory term in Cuban slang meaning homosexuals uncovers the meaning of that last poem which reveals an underlying fear of AIDS obliterating the gay population (98).

¹³ In their article "La función del fragmento en *Colibrí* de Sarduy," the Ulloas decode an earlier and very similar use of a bilingual AIDS/SIDA acrostic.

WORKS CITED

- Arenas, Reinaldo. *Antes que anochezca*. Barcelona: Fábula, 1998.
- _____. "Drácula Loses His Cold Blood." *Inferno: Poesía completa*. Barcelona: Lumen, 2001. 262-63.
- _____. "Final de un cuento" *Adiós a mamá (De La Habana a Nueva York)*. Barcelona: Altera, 1992. 149-73.
- Baker, Samuel. "Ana Castillo: The Protest Poet Goes Mainstream." *Publishers Weekly* 243.33 (1996): 59-60.
- Butler, Paul. "Embracing AIDS: History, Identity, and Post-AIDS Discourse." *JAC: A Journal of Composition Theory* 24.1 (2004): 93-111.
- Campo, Rafael. "AIDS and the Poetry of Healing." *Kenyon Review* 15.4 (1993): 93-100.
- _____. *The Desire to Heal: A Doctor's Education in Empathy, Identity and Poetry*. NY: Newton, 1997.
- _____. *What the Body Told*. Durham: Duke UP, 1996.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 7 Oct. 2004 <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchstp/od/gap/philosophy.htm>>.
- Cummings, Kate. "Reading AIDS." *College Literature* 21.1 (1994): 157-63.
- DiFrancesco, María. "Poetic Dissidence: An Interview with Luz María Umpierre." *MELUS: The Journal of the Society for the Study of Multiethnic Literature of the United States* 27.4 (2002): 137-56.
- Harris, Daniel. "AIDS and Theory." *Lingua Franca* 1.5 (1991): 16-19.
- Jiménez, Luis A. "La autobiografía en la novela: En torno a una estética del SIDA en *Pájaros de la playa* de Severo Sarduy." *VII Congreso Costarricense de Filología Lingüística y Literatura*. Eds. Jack Wilson and Jorge Chen Sham. San José: Universidad de Costa Rica, 2000. 215-19.

- Machover, Jacobo. *La memoria frente al poder: Escritores cubanos del exilio: Guillermo Cabrera Infante, Severo Sarduy, Reinaldo Arenas*. Zaragoza: U de Valencia, 2001.
- Murphy, Timothy and Suzanne Poirier, eds. *Writing AIDS: Gay Literature, Language, and Analysis*. NY: Columbia UP, 1993.
- Nelson, Emmanuel, ed. *AIDS: The Literary Response*. New York: Twayne, 1992.
- Nuland, Sherwin. *How We Die: Reflections on Life's Final Chapter*. NY: Knopf, 1994.
- Oard Warner, Sharon. "The Way We Write Now: The Reality of AIDS in Contemporary Short Fiction." (1993): *Studies in Short Fiction* 30.4 (1993): 491-500.
- Ocasio, Rafael. "Autobiographical Writing and 'Out of the Closet' Literature by Gay Latino Writers." *Antipodas: Journal of Hispanic and Galician Studies* 11-12 (1999-2000): 273-82.
- _____. *Cuba's Political and Sexual Outlaw: Reinaldo Arenas*. Gainesville: UP of Florida, 2003.
- Oliver, Tim. "After the Hype: Writing about AIDS in the 90's." *Minnesota Review: A Journal of Committed Writing* 40 (Spring-Summer 1993): 113-20.
- Pate, Nancy. "Poems on AIDS Express a Patchwork of Emotions." *Journal of Poetry Therapy* 3.2 (1989): 107-09.
- Rendell, Joanne. "Drag Acts: Performativity, Subversion and the AIDS Poetry of Rafael Campo and Mark Doty." *Critical Survey* 14.2 (2002): 89-100.
- _____. "A Very Troublesome Doctor: Biomedical Binaries, Worldmaking, and the Poetry of Rafael Campo." *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 9.1-2 (2003): 205-31.
- Ricks, Christopher and Leonard Michaels, eds. *The State of Language*. Berkeley: U of Calif. P, 1990.
- Rodríguez Matos, Carlos A., ed. *POESIDA: An Anthology of AIDS Poetry from the United States, Latin America and Spain*. NY: Ollantay, 1995.
- Ruiz, María V. "Border Narratives: HIV/AIDS and Latina/o Health in the United States: A Cultural Analysis." *Feminist Media Studies* 2.1 (2002): 37-62.
- Sandoval Sánchez, Alberto. "Reescribiendo lo abyecto desde el inmigrante: SIDA y mariconería latina en el imaginario cultural." *Heterotropías: Narrativas de identidad y alteridad latinoamericana*. Ed. Carlos A. Jáuregui and Juan Pablo Dabove. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh, 2003: 343-50.
- Sarduy, Severo. *Pájaros de la playa*. In *Obras Completas*. Eds. Gustavo Guerrero and François Wahl. Madrid: Allca XX, 1999. 917-1005.
- Sontag, Susan. *AIDS and Its Metaphors*. NY: Farrar, 1988.
- _____. *Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and Its Metaphors*. NY: Anchor-Doubleday, 1990.
- _____. "The Way We Live Now." *The Best American Short Stories of the Eighties* Ed. Shannon Ravenel. NY: Houghton, 1988. 1-19.
- Strong, Beret E. "Metaphors in Poems about AIDS." *Cimarron Review* 112 (July 1995): 127-37.
- Ulloa, Leonor A. and Justo C. "La función del fragmento en *Colibrí* de Sarduy." *Modern Language Notes* 109.2 (1994): 268-80.
- _____. "La manipulación del fragmento en *Colibrí* de Sarduy." *Critical Essays on the Literatures of Spain and Spanish America*. Ed. Luis T. González del Valle and Julio Baena. Boulder: Society of Spanish and Spanish American Studies, 1991. 215-23.
- _____. "Manifestaciones de la escritura somática en la narrativa de Severo Sarduy." *Southeastern Latin Americanist* 44.1 (2000): 15-27.

- _____. "Pájaros de la playa and Sarduy's Hidden Metaphor of Illness and Decay Between the Self and the Void: Essays in Honor of Severo Sarduy." Ed. Alicia Rivero-Potter. Boulder: Society of Spanish and Spanish American Studies, 1998. 121-32.
- _____. "Pájaros de la playa de Severo Sarduy: Final del juego." *Hispanoamérica: Revista de Literatura* 26.78 (1997): 17-27.
- White, Edmund and Adam Mars Jones, eds. *The Darker Proof: Stories from a Crisis*. NY: New American Library, 1988.
- _____. "Journals of the Plague Years: Literature of AIDS." *The Nation* 264.18 (1997): 13-18.