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Foreword by
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VIOLENCE AND THE BODY



**RACE, GENDER,
AND THE STATE**

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Chapter 14

When Electrolysis Proxies for the Existential

*A Somewhat Sordid Meditation on What Might Occur if
Frantz Fanon, Rosario Castellanos, Jacques Derrida,
Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, and Sandra Cisneros
Asked Rita Hayworth Her Name*

WILLIAM ANTHONY NERICCIO /
GUILLERMO NERICCIO GARCÍA¹

ELECTROLYSIS PRIMER

No art can possibly comfort HER then, even though art is credited with many things, especially an ability to offer solace. Sometimes, of course, art creates the suffering in the first place.

—Elfriede Jelinek, *The Piano Teacher*

Ever since Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's English-language edition of Jacques Derrida's *Of Grammatology* appeared in 1976, critical inquiry in philosophy, literature, and the arts has been in a tizzy about the category of the name. All right, perhaps names have never been that out of vogue among the so-called intelligentsia, but Derrida via Spivak certainly did hand us a novel rhetorical armature we have yet to trade in or throw out. In this vein, the pages that follow can be read as a donation to a hermeneutic vault called "name theory," examining how different writers deploy the category of the name in their writing while also, and not incidentally, touching on the nature of stereotypes. What are "stereotypes" but the ready *names* we apply to S/subjects with differences somehow beyond the scope of our understanding or our experience?

One might be moved at the utterance of Derrida's overalluded-to name to remark at this point, "So what?"; I agree.

For that reason, our discussion moves rather quickly from the theoretic-

cal to the particular, scrutinizing two particular names, one particular person: Rita Hayworth—born into this world as Margarita Carmen Cansino (or “Marguerita,” depending on your sources). In the process of reviewing “Hayworth’s” evolution, we will begin to attune ourselves to the particular and peculiar phenomena that are engaged when we consider the relationship of names to people and words to subjects. One important phenomenon is “violence,” to the psyche, *por supuesto*, and to the body as well. Without giving too much away here at the outset, I do think it obvious enough to note and important enough to underscore that a simple inquiry into the history of names shows an undeniable connection to those histories that concern themselves with violence. And we need not trot in Siggy Freud here in our endnotes to submit that the psychic repercussions of name changes can have an uncanny effect on the psyche at the level of the unconscious. The story of Rita Hayworth will teach us this and more. That her literal body changed (hair follicles are, after all, a noteworthy feature of our lovely corpus) alongside her name makes her case all the more curious. But I am getting ahead of myself, and I need to introduce our other guests and guides.

To retell the story of Rita Hayworth, I have brought together extracts from Frantz Fanon’s *Black Skin, White Masks*, Rosario Castellanos’s “Woman and Her Image,” Jacques Derrida’s *Limited Inc.*, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak’s “Who Claims Alterity?”, and Sandra Cisneros’s *The House on Mango Street* so as to provide points of entry (some mutually exclusive) for our reexamination of the life of Rita Hayworth. Our psychiatrist from Martinique, word-wizard diva from México, philosophical deity from France, postcolonial theorist from India, and Chicana eccentric from Chicago (although of late, Cisneros has been cross-dressing as a *Tejana*) all have generously agreed, through the magic of citation, to assist us on our quest.

With friends like these, one might imagine that the success of our exegetic enterprise is a given, but I wouldn’t be too sure about that! Allow me to confess that the last thing I want to do is to restore dignity, personhood, and wholeness to Margarita Carmen Cansino. My theoretical pointwoman, the late Mexican dramatist/novelist/poet/theorist/ambassador (!) Rosario Castellanos cured me of that urge in “Woman and Her Image.” Here one finds a disturbing, if sobering, warning to critics seduced by the romantic *jouissance* of their own righteousness: “Let us not allow ourselves to fall into the old trap of trying to change by a syllogism or magic spell, the mutilated man—who according to St. Thomas is a woman—into a whole man” (243). Justly chided, firmly repositioned, we are freed: establishing the *whole woman* must not be our object. Moving from the theoretical delicacies of México to a perhaps more familiar offering from France, we find Castellanos’s censure echoed years later in the words of cyberquotable French maven Jean Baudrillard in *Simulations*, where the prince of simulacra urges us to avoid “retrospective hallucinations.” Baudrillard: “It is al-

ways the aim of ideological analysis to restore the objective process; it is always a false problem to want to restore the truth beneath the simulacrum" ("Precession," 22, 48). As "TRUTH" is not our issue, nor *my* specialty, I will leave "truth," or its absence, the aporia of the indeterminate, for Paul de Man's acolytes to debate.²

In any event, to restore the objective woman Margarita Carmen Cansino would not heal the body of a dead woman—healing Rita Hayworth is beyond the scope of a piece of critical film theory, no matter the verbosity and good intentions of this or that theoretical pundit. In the end, a monomaniacal focus on alienation (the retrieval of the tortured star's alienated body) would merely reproduce the most annoying academic fetish, that we can via prose recuperate and restore alienated Subjects—Spivak, quite rightly, calls them "subject-effects." It is at moments such as these that Fanon's declaration that "intellectual alienation is a creation of middle class society" (224) cautions those hoping to effect change from the ivory tower. We "institutionally placed cultural workers"—the long if accurate names the eccentric Bengali intellectual Spivak conjured (280) for us—should not overestimate the effect of our textual labor.

After all, can a commentary on a movie ever hope to affect with the force of the movie itself? Of course not. Many of you reading these words would just as soon plunk down \$100 for drinks and dinner with Madonna, Bernardo Bertolucci, Spike Lee, or Robert de Niro than a free twenty minutes with Cynthia Chase or Jürgen Habermas, no offense intended. So this is no time for hubris. Especially when even our best-intended actions (such as, say, multiculturalism's embrace of all things diasporic or even recent Chicana/o paeans to the transnational) may be, as Spivak suggests, in and of themselves suspect: "Heterogeneity is an elusive and ambivalent resource (except in Metropolitan 'parliamentary' or academic space) as the recent past . . . [has] shown" (Spivak, 280). So we will show some caution and continually attempt to underestimate the importance of these proceedings as we, *estilo* Michael Taussig, run away from High Theory, while preserving its haughty suspicion of the obvious (Taussig, 7).

None of this means that I will avoid passing judgment on the weave of texts, of media (film, film fanzines, film reviews, and film theory) informing "Rita Hayworth." I have noted that some forays in critical theory have led to erudite if disappointing intrigue where critical caginess devolves willy-nilly into borderline wishy-washiness. Sample, for example, a *position* statement by the redoubtable and usually quite excellent Richard Dyer in his gyno-noir piece on Charles Vidor's Hayworth vehicle, *Gilda*: "I am not aiming to produce a definitive reading, nor yet a 'counter-reading' in the spirit of [citing Eco] 'semiotic guerrilla warfare.' Rather, *I am interested in indicating some of the readings that the film makes possible*" (93, emphasis added). Now, I am a big fan of Dyer, and yet even I can't stomach this kind of hedging, although I will certainly try to get away with murder, as would

any theory-pocked writer. In a sense, this is my way of warning you that your time in these pages will be a bit more *vulgar*—in the best, most Gramscidoused sense of the term. For ultimately, each frame in the *text* of a given piece of cinema can be subjected to an infinite number of readings—recorded images are the epitome of what our aforementioned nineteenth-century Viennese cigar-smoking entrepreneur Freud called *overdeterminacy* in his dissection of the *dreamwork*.

Seeking to avoid this attractive, if only momentarily satisfying, open-endedness, this reading of the life and times of Rita “Hayworth” aspires to a somewhat less cagey statement of position: *Rita Cansino got screwed both figuratively and literally, and the way this screwing “functions” speaks eloquently to ethnicity and gender as lived and living categories*; further, it sheds light on the way these categories have been utterly tainted by motion picture technologies in the twentieth century.³

Other Rita chroniclers have taken a somewhat different tack than Dyer with regard to the late Hollywood legend, and they are anything but inconsistent. Pity us readers and visual aficionados of Rita Hayworth as we endure the repeated droning of her commentators and biographers. Like some drugged-out chorus chained to a merry-go-round, they speak time and again to the tragedy of Hayworth’s “love goddess” life, the tragedy of the fallen princess. All this schmaltzy shedding of tears masks all the while more crucial, less tasteful issues. For instance, I find it more profitable to see Rita Hayworth as a proto-Richard Rodriguez, a proto-Michael Jackson (*dig that new cara, damn!*), or as a proto-Clarence Thomas—that is, as tortured and homogenized ethnic-esque types, endlessly prowling the hallways of celebrity in search of solace for their wounded souls—souls scarred by ethnic, gender, and sexual warfare.

Although many (Kobal; Ringgold; Morella and Epstein; Leaming; et al.) have documented Rita Cansino’s transformation into femme fatale, love goddess, alcoholic, senile, Alzheimer’s victim Rita Hayworth, few have probed the cultural artifacts that remain from this grand *metastrophe*, few have poked through the traces in order to understand the significance of this deevolution in the cultural legacy of the United States.

A STAR IS FORM[ED]

So we don’t have another dame with big boobs on the [studio] lot. So what? . . . We’ll make one.

—Harry Cohn, Columbia Pictures studio chief⁴

Of all stars, why Rita Hayworth?

For at least two reasons. While many think they know about this Hollywood “glamour girl,” few have inquired into the sordid processes that

brought about her metamorphosis from an incestuously violated Latina vaudevillian by the name of Margarita Carmen Cansino to Tinseltown celebrity, Rita Hayworth. Her name change, at Columbia Pictures mogul Harry Cohn's suggestion ("Cansino was too . . . well . . . Spanish-sounding" [Morella and Epstein, 36]), was only the start of her material translation from one mode of being to another, her *delatinization*—an event that makes concrete and "brown" Fanon's lament that "what is often called the black soul is a white man's *artifact*" (14, emphasis added). Latino/a souls are just as susceptible to this *artifecture*. For it was not *just* a name change Ms. Cansino endured. As we will shortly witness, Hayworth/Cansino suffered months of painful electrolysis on her hairline so as to assure her "attractiveness"—to ensure she would not look like a "Spanish dancer" ([sic]; Southern Californian gringo patois for "damned Messican").

The second reason for discussing Rita Hayworth is to bring various interlocutors of critical theory back down to earth. What is more basic to *estadounidenses*⁵ than cinema? Too often, theory languishes in the airy heights of reverie and pretension—this especially in the hands of secondary commentators seduced into replicating jargon they neither relish nor understand. You only have to call to mind the watered-down, mutated versions of Derrida's deconstruction stalking the halls of academe in the United States. Pity poor Derrida as his slippery anticoncepts (deconstruction, *différance*, *pharmakon*, hymen, *marge*, supplement, etc.) enter the commodifying context of corporate culture USA, the academy included. Urban African American and Latino/a rap artists from the metropolises must have shared Jacques's sentiments when they saw the pudgy ultrawhite Pillsbury Dough Boy rapping in prime-time television commercials. Something has definitely been lost (silenced?) in the translation.

So as to avoid diluting any of the theoretical sophistication we have come to expect of our cultural commentators while at the same time opening up the field of play to a greater range of players, I have assembled an unlikely grouping of commentators—unwitting agents, really—and will bring their voices to bear on Rita Hayworth's name change.

As we consider the violence perpetrated on the body and the psyche of Margarita Carmen Cansino, we are reminded how the dynamics of cinema and the dynamics of self increasingly overlap in twentieth-century Western mass culture. We see again how the legendary silver screen *disseminates* particular versions of ethnicity and gender to its passive spectators, to *la cultura estadounidense*.⁶ Before we congratulate ourselves on the New World Order, or guzzle champagne as we triumph the success (aesthetic?) of Multiculturalism, we ought to bother to recall along with my much-cited theory diva/docent that when "we 'remake history' only through [the] limited notion of power as collective validation, we might allow ourselves to become instruments of the crisis-management of the old institutions, the old politics"

(Spivak, 270)—in other words, status quo conservative flunkies in the guise of intellectual progressives. We will have to be diligent about this, and even then the outcome is uncertain.

What can be forwarded for the moment is the following: this comparative analysis, linking avatars of cultural critique with a manufactured Hollywood goddess, reveals a bitter, alienating matrix where Cansino becomes Hayworth, where Latina becomes *latinesque*, and where, curiously enough, victim becomes both worshipped deity and commodified fetish object.

Daddy Dearest

Two citations prepare us for the story of Rita Hayworth, the story of how a fractured self goes on to become a superstar. They are recent revelations and come from the pen of Rita's (that's what I'll call her for now) latest biographer, Barbara Leaming, a good writer with a penchant for armchair psychiatry. The revelation concerns young Rita Cansino's introduction to the world and to the world of sex. We begin with Leaming quoting Eduardo Cansino, Rita's father, and a statement attributed him on the birth of his child: "I had wanted a boy . . . what could I do with a girl?" (8). Unfortunately for Rita, Eduardo came up with a startling answer to his own question some fifteen years later, an answer Rita only revealed to "her second husband Orson Welles." Save for Leaming, no other biographer or commentator has even hinted at it. "*What could I do with a girl?*" Leaming answers the father's question directly: "during this period her father . . . repeatedly engaged in sexual relations with her" (17). This is the key (shades of Freud's "Dora" and Nabokov's *Lolita*/Dolores) to the puzzle of Hayworth's emotional volatility for Leaming—and her greatest contribution, if accurate, to Hayworth archaeology. The urge to read Rita as victim may well overwhelm us before we reach the end of the story, but there is much more left to see and tell.

HAIRCUTS

"Screwed" (the verbal keynote I used above to characterize actions taken at Rita's expense deployed) is a "saturated" term with references to tools, sexual practices, and acts of injustice bouncing about its semantic domain. We shall have to look about for better, more precise terms.

Again, and especially with regard to Rita Hayworth, Rosario Castellanos's words come to mind.⁷ Listing a gaggle of male philosophers, scientists, and know-it-alls from centuries previous, Castellanos relents and allows the terms of one Moebius to serve as emblem for Western intellectual attitudes toward women: "Moebius found women physiologically retarded" (242). Castellanos's essay establishes that this *retardation* is not a "natural" state but the work of dominant cultural elements on what we can call quite literally the woman's *body politic*. When we need further illus-

FIGURE 14.1.
Portrait of Rita Hayworth in the
1930s. Taken at Columbia
Pictures, the studio that
groomed her and launched her
to stardom. *Used with the permission
of Underwood & Underwood/CORBIS.*
© 1939 Underwood & Underwood/
CORBIS.



tration of this retardation (manipulation, amputation, decapitation—call it what you will), the life of Rita Hayworth provides painfully eloquent testimony.

Take the problem of Rita Hayworth's hairline.
Yes, hairline.

It boggles the imagination the degree to which the placement of hair-bearing follicles on the forehead of a young actress affected the course of film history in the United States. As we will see in the next section, the bloodline and cultural lineage of Rita Cansino led to quite a debate early in her career: was she Mexican, was she Spanish, or was she (Orson Welles's favorite designation for her) a Gypsy?

But it was her hairline that initially drew the most attention and labor. This was no small issue for Rita's early handlers (Ed Judson, her first husband; Winfield Sheehan, the man who *discovered* her [shades of Cortez, Colón et al.] in a Tijuana nightclub; and Harry Cohn, the studio boss at Columbia), and it was resolved with the electrically charged pincers of a Hollywood electrologist. These digitized reproductions of Cansino/Hayworth publicity glossies capture the dimensions of Rita's *offensive-for-some* hairline for posterity and her transformation into a more semiotically palatable Hollywood commodity (Figures 14.1 and 14.2).

As our eyes drift from the photo and back to the page, we might want to recall how Rita began her show business career as her father's dance partner in nightclubs (some posh, some not) in northern México and



FIGURE 14.2.
Portrait of Rita Hayworth. 1952. *Used with the permission of Bettmann/CORBIS. © 1952 Bettman/CORBIS.*

southern California. There, apparently, her father had accentuated her “Latina” looks—too much so, it appears, for her future boss, the formidable Mr. Cohn at Columbia Pictures. For that reason, it was suggested, then decided, by the studio that Rita needed a haircut and tint.

Now there is nothing particularly objectifying, “amputating,” or alienating about getting a haircut, but Rita’s was of a special nature. Ed Judson, Rita’s aforementioned first husband, and Helen Hunt, Rita’s *hairmaster* at Columbia, conspired to “Americanize” Rita by arranging to have electrolysis performed on her forehead—this apparently would serve to *demexicanize* the *mestiza* features of Rita Cansino (Kobal, 76). John Kobal, citing extensively from a letter by hair-*commandante* Hunt, details the particulars of the process: “I worked with the electrologist, drawing lines on a still picture showing the line we wanted . . . *this lasted another year until the work was finished*” (emphasis added). Hunt continues her narrative with great energy and excitement (somewhere Pygmalion and Gepetto share a martini, grinning as one wonders whether it is a woman or the raw materials of a

taxidermist being discussed): "achieving a new design for Rita's foreneau entailed a long and very painful process. Each hair had to be removed individually, then the follicle deadened with a charge of electricity" (77). In the creation of the movie star, in the transformation of Margarita Carmen Cansino to Rita Hayworth, we witness an example, in the flesh, of Baudrillard's speculation on simulation, where "simulation is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal . . . the product of an irradiating synthesis of combinatory models in a hyperspace without atmosphere" (23). In this instance, the "real without origin" may well be the "American" implicit in Kobal's term "Americanize." Post-*Happy Days* Ron Howard notwithstanding, What, after all, is particularly "American" about a large forehead? One would be hard pressed to discover the origin of this aesthetic/cosmetic ideal, though I am sure SS clinical archives would provide a host of ever-so-useful guides.

Needless to say, Rita wasn't thrilled with the year-long ordeal, and according to Leaming, she "desperately wanted to avoid the agonizing treatments" (41). But she needed this electricity-charged regime as part of her transmutation from *Mexicanesque* dancing girl/incest victim to American Hollywood Star—so "American" her image graced the first atomic bomb (she wasn't too thrilled about this *honor* either).

Curiously or predictably (your pick), Cansino/Hayworth's biographers often reenact the roles of her hair-plucking handlers. Kobal, writing on critical disregard of her early films, notes that in "these little known films . . . her work is usually written off because of her hairline" (65)—critics as well as studio bosses, husbands, and hairstylists seem to find something wrong with the young actress's hairdo. Pity the "pure" Mexican starlet looking for jobs in Lalaland with the wrong acreage of forehead. Some years after Cansino's *erasive* encounters with these hairkeepers from hell, Frantz Fanon chronicled the psychological fractures accompanying similar processes in *Black Skin, White Masks*, where, describing the "inferiority complex of the black man," he notes the "internalization—or, better, the epidermalization—of . . . inferiority" (11). Altering the terms but not the spirit of Fanon's findings so as to better understand the trials of Rita Hayworth, we might speak of a "defollicization," a dehairing, of difference that blanches perceived defects. The physical operation is different; the psychological result is the same.

Rita's hairline, her hair in general, was not just an issue of taste with regard to fashionable and unfashionable ethnic traits; it was, of course, a matter of money—Capital and ethnicity have always shared structurally significant positions in that transparent matrix called ideology. Rita, after all, was an investment of great consequence for Columbia Pictures—as Leaming so pithily puts it, "it wasn't just hair, it was a studio asset, a valuable piece of property" (135). No shock, then, to read of Columbia Pictures president Harry Cohn's howling reaction to Orson Welles's cutting

and tinting of Rita's hair for her role in *The Lady from Shanghai* some years later. Cohn: "Oh my God! What has that bastard done" (Ringgold, 171).

The studio was to make much of Rita's transformation, and many were led to believe that "like some latter day Athena, Rita had sprung fully formed from the head of a Zeus-like Harry Cohn" (Kobal, 59). This is objectification in its vulgar form, and it is good for spectators and critical theorists alike to see it as such. Cohn, Hunt, Judson, and others are players in a horrific drama: "the antithesis of Pygmalion, man does not aspire, by means of beauty, to convert a statue into a living being, but rather a living being into a statue" (Castellanos, 239)—a mass-reproducible statue, moreover, consumed with no little profit accruing to the sculptor. These are not, let me repeat, hard-to-understand concepts of high theory. Rita's ne'er-do-well first husband, the inimitable "pimp" (as Welles called the dastardly Ed Judson), appreciated the investment his "sculpting" of Rita represented. When confronted with Rita's reasonable request for separation, he threatened to "toss acid in her face," and in doing so, he hoped to destroy the product he felt he had helped fabricate (Leaming, 64).

Watching Rita's films again recently in preparation for this investigation, I was brought back time and again to Castellanos's excellent description of the way patriarchy retards collectively and individually the psyches and the bodies of figures named woman: "In the course of history . . . woman has been a myth . . . and the cumulative mythmaking process manages to conceal its inventions with such opaque density, insert them so deep in the recesses of consciousness and at such remote strata of the past, that it obstructs straightforward observation of the object, or a direct knowledge of the being that has been replaced and usurped" (236). Castellanos's words here provide a spur of sorts, for if woman is myth and cinema is the site extraordinaire of twentieth-century Western myth production, then the body of events shaping the intriguing story of Rita Cansino Welles Hayworth Judson et al. may well provide us with a working model so as to better define a late twentieth-century paradigm shift: a move from the inwardly introspective (the existential) to the outwardly spectatorial (the ocular)—an ocular economy of the self by and large determined by advances in image technology. An elaboration of this odd mestizo semio(n)tics, where the semiotic and the ontologic frolic beneath the sheets, will have to await a later venue, as we have but touched the surface of Rita Hayworth.

The result of Hayworth's hairline renewal, her "subject-effect" manipulation, was that she began to internalize the divide between her living and her cinematic self. So it is that Leaming speaks of "the familiar 'Rita Hayworth' mask Rita was apt to wear" (100). Shifra Haran, Welles's secretary and later Hayworth's assistant, confides that "Miss Hayworth herself said she was two people . . . the star on the screen and the person" (122). Here, we might with some benefit imagine ourselves on a terrain much like that Argentine seer Jorge Luis Borges surveyed in the oft-cited poem "Borges

and I." Borges writing on "Borges" describes how "it's to the other man, to Borges, that things happen" (278). Rita's saucy paraphrase? "Men go to bed with Gilda, but wake up with me" (122).⁸

Borges and Hayworth share an analogous space, and an unhappy one at that. Somehow, involvement with the production of narrative and the mass distribution of the same creates a special sort of alienation as *celebrity* (outside recognition/adoration) barges its way onto the scene. Rita's longtime friend, the *make-up artist* (almost *too* appropriate!) Bob Schiffer, describes the degree to which she internalized the desires of her artist/keepers: "[Rita] reflected what the men wanted. Unfortunately, that's the way she thought it should be" (Leaming, 39). In short, as Madonna sings in "Vogue,"⁹ she "gave good face," but which one it was, and whose it was to give, remain items ripe for additional inquiry.

¿Spic?

We began with the apparently inessential—haircuts. We learned quite shortly that hair was a central issue with Rita Hayworth. Now we move to a more obviously charged arena. Anyone the least bit politically erect understands that *ethnicity* in cultural studies is a category with few peers, and given the politico/cultural history of this country, this ought not come as a surprise.

It goes without saying, but I'll say it anyway, that the question of Rita's hairline was really a question of ethnicity. Having danced in México and thus being Mexican-identified, Rita Hayworth was too Latina for her investor/handler Harry Cohn—how could he pour money when, in his own words, "Latin [*sic*] types are out" (Leaming, 34)? It was not only the general public, apparently, that feared the specter of Cansino's "Latin[a]" visage gracing the contours of the silver screen; critics (surprised at Hayworth's meteoric rise) also harbored latent Latina-phobic tendencies. In this regard, Gene Ringgold speaks condescendingly of "the creation of Rita Hayworth from *the unlikely foundation* of one Marguerita [*sic*] Carmen Cansino" (11, emphasis added). Not only critics are to blame. Fanzines and popular rags contemporary with the *electrolyzed statuette* did their bit to play up the unlikely rise of Rita Hayworth-born-Cansino. These sources depict her as the *pièce de résistance* of a "Hollywood know-how that could transform just another dirty-faced Mexican kid into an all-American dream" (Kobal, 50).

And before electrolysis, "she certainly looked Mexican," with most maintaining that "the Mexican look was good for the [Tijuana dance] act" with her father (Morella and Epstein, 21). The critics and biographers all make some mention of her apparent *Mexicanity*, with even Leaming chiming in that Cansino "passed for a Mexican" (26).

Rita's breeding becomes a topic for extended discussion and conjecture in many of these biographies—Joe Morella and Edward Z. Epstein are par-

ticularly scrupulous, evincing a dedication that would have made Joseph Mengele proud. Readers of *Rita: The Life of Rita Hayworth* know from the first sentence of the book that Cansino's parents were "well-bred": Volga Haworth, the mother, had stalwart, upstanding Pilgrims and Irish-born luminaries *stocking* her lineal closet, whereas Eduardo, equally "well-bred," was the son of entertainers from Madrid (13-14). Other biographers are not quite so sure of this purity of lineage, with Leaming casting doubts on Eduardo's claim to a gloried bloodline: "Although in America Eduardo liked to claim his father was descended from the Moorish kings of Granada, in Spain, others called [his father Antonio Cansino, nicknamed Padre] a Gypsy" (2).¹⁰

I'll conclude these notes on Rita Hayworth's ethnicity by following up on this last piece of Leamingian speculation: not everyone was sure that Cansino was indeed Latina—or even Spanish, for that matter. Conjecture abounds that she was, in fact, part or all Gypsy. So it is that Hermes Pan, Rita's choreographer, whispers to Leaming that "she always reminded me of a Gypsy" (55); Jack Cole, yet another choreographer, echoes these sentiments, concluding, "she was just a dancing Gypsy girl who would have been very happy working in a chorus happily married" (Kobal, 183). Biographer Leaming herself seems moved by the testimony attributing a "dark Gypsy pessimism" to the young star (81). Leaming's views seem particularly informed by her close friendship with Hayworth's second husband, Orson Welles, and it is worth noting that she came to Rita via Welles, having first written a biography of the "mighty Orson." Welles, never short of words on any topic, speaks endlessly of Rita's "Gypsy blood" (80). When moved to describe Rita's growing neuroses during the course of their marriage, Welles moves to familiar ground, offering up the following confession: "I wasn't smart enough to know [she] was neurotic. I just thought it was Gypsy and I said, 'This is that Gypsy kick and I've got to cure her of that'" (85). I'll end this catalogue of Gypsy-centered commentaries with friend Ann Miller's description of an older, more volatile Rita Hayworth, a woman who reflects the psychological impact *statuification* (to adapt Castellanos's statement above) had on the star. Miller: "[Rita] was really . . . a dual personality . . . [she] was a very shy person. But when she drank, *out came this spittin' Gypsy*" (Leaming, 334; emphasis added). In the end, husbands, lovers, secretaries, hairdressers, fans, and critics alike all seem to have focused their energies ferreting out the ethnicity of this particular star.

NAME[S]

But where do we go from here? To what use can we put this mildly entertaining, certainly disturbing, information about a star from yesteryear? What is our context? Our aim? One of the things I want to do is unravel the fabric binding ethnicity, celebrity, and show business, and I want to

do this in that rarified, well-armored quadrant called *theory*, with specific emphasis on what more and more people call cultural studies.

This is serious business, but the last thing I want to be is too serious. So many self-proclaimed theoryheads (those comfortable using the word "deconstruction" in mixed company) are all too serious. This is somewhat puzzling. All one has to do is read Derrida's *Limited Inc.* to understand the very real seriousness of taking yourself too seriously.

This is why my focus, while ostensibly that of ethnicity and manipulated bodies politic, also uses materials with which the reprehensibly conservative Mary Hart of *Entertainment Tonight* fame would herself be comfortable. For while the masses are not comfortable with the verbose, *highfalutin* armaments of poststructural critical theory, they are for the most part at home with movies. VCR and DVD sales and video rental receipts provide material testimony in support of this position.

So how will we now use Rita Hayworth? We will begin by talking about her name—and, perhaps, using the history of her particular manipulation so as to found the lexicon that would unpack the political and existential issues at stake in her renaming. This is not a simple task, but also, it is not at all hopeless, as, returning to the pages of Derrida's *Limited Inc.*, I have found a statement which prepares us for the job at hand: "The structure of the area in which we are operating here calls for a strategy that is complex and tortuous, involuted and *full of artifice*: For example, *exploiting the target against itself by discovering it at times to be the 'basis' of an operation directed against it; or even 'discovering in it' the cryptic reserve of something utterly different*" (55, emphasis added). If we allow a figurative gloss of these words and apply it to what has preceded, we find a summary or echo here of "Rita." Derrida describes Hayworth's body, her psyche, and yes, her utility—for in the end, even cultural commentators are mercenary, wedded to a class Spivak calls "functionary-intelligentsia" (Spivak, who claims alterity, 274). For in Cansino's story, in the play enacted on her body, one does find a "cryptic reserve of something utterly *different*," a semantic residue with which to mildly assault the culture industry which did her damage even as it profited gloriously from its actions.

Given that we are about to discuss the renaming of Margarita Carmen Cansino, it is no little accident that I have prefaced these proceedings with Derrida's *Limited Inc.*—a delicious diatribe that shows just how *real* a Subject's investment in his or her signature really can be. In this instructive text, Jacques, the European/North African guru mestizo, the Algerian Jew living the dialectic Memmi captured in *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, plays Virgil to our Dante: "no signature is possible without recourse at least implicitly to the law, the test of authentication is part of the very structure of the signature" (133). That is, we can discover in the various events surrounding the renaming of Rita Cansino and the alteration of her signature/self laws governing the manufacture of the relative value of various

individuals and communities in the United States of America (circa 1940–1950)—especially with regard to the relative value of Latina and Latino citizen/Subjects. These processes continue into the present, as the postscript appended below succinctly attests.

So what is the history of Rita's name? At birth, October 17, 1918, she was named Margarita Carmen Cansino. Later, when she *passed for/served as* father Eduardo's wife in Tijuana nightclubs, she was billed as "Marguerite Cansino," perhaps so as to add an "exotic" Frenchness to the name—anyone publishing in critical theory knows the value of a Gallic accent. Later, Twentieth Century Fox production chief Winfield Sheehan discovered Rita in one of those aforementioned nightspots and shortened her name.

Morella and Epstein recreate this scene: "the next step [for Rita] was a new identity. Margarita Cansino is too long a name for the marquees, decreed Sheehan . . . [so] *Rita Cansino was born*" (25, emphasis added).

But they were not done with her yet. Despite the fact Rita's new name fit on the marquees of film houses across the country, there was still room for improvement. Enter Columbia bossman Harry Cohn. Cohn had a ready eye on the bottom line (not to mention the marshaled desires of his Columbia motion picture consumers) and was not at all content with Rita's new name. Leaming provides a somewhat timid play-by-play in these lines glossed above: "Cohn declared that she really ought to change her name. Cansino was too . . . well . . . Spanish-sounding" (36).

Morella and Epstein's version of the event seems more representative of Cohn's *wit*—Cohn: "She sounds too Mexican" (25). It is at this very moment that soon-to-be-ex-husband (he of the tossed acid) Ed Judson pipes in something to the effect of "how about her mother's maiden name, Haworth." Cohn grumbles, says add the "y" so the spelling will match the pronunciation—don't want to confuse the ticket-buyer—and the now-familiar refrain appears, again slightly altered: "*Rita Hayworth was born*" (34, emphasis added).

Having reviewed the history, it is useful to return now to the theoretical informant who penned *Limited Inc.* Derrida's skewering of John Searle is one of the more eloquent public spankings of an intellectual colleague to be seen since the Encyclopaedists drew quill-and-ink swords. Throughout the piece, Derrida defends himself from Searle's would-be assaults on the French philosopher's reading of J. L. Austin. One of Derrida's wittier moves, critically devastating at the same time, is to rename Searle as Sarl, an acronym for *Société à responsabilité limitée*. When Derrida intones at one point how he "hope[s] that the bearers of proper names will not be wounded by this technical or scientific device" (36), he is only too well aware of the rhetorical, personal, and intellectual violence he is perpetrating, calling into question not only the unity of his adversary's attack, but

also the stability of the person masquerading under the copyright "© John R. Searle."

This is a terrain not circumscribed to brilliant French innovators or to theorists in general—not for nothing have novelists labored in the past and in the present to expose the intersect of identity, ethnicity, and names. Chicana/o artists, living within the borderline of culturally diverse origins, are among those contemporary artists who most eloquently speak to the problem of names—as such, they add texture to our tour of all things "RITA."

Sandra Cisneros is only the most recent, and perhaps most eloquent, chronicler of this connection. So it is that *The House on Mango Street* monumentalizes, in an apparently minor incident, the hit-and-run death of "Geraldito no last name" (65), an undocumented worker killed after a night of dancing—the lack of a proper name underscores the pathos of this unidentified, unacknowledged victim who perishes between territories, between cultures. Cisneros's narrator, Esperanza, a gifted young writer guiding us through her development as a young artist in urban Chicago, captures the kind of traps, the kind of limitations figured by an imposed name—especially when that name is "Latina"-laced. I will cite Cisneros's prose at length from the chapter tellingly entitled "My Name":

In English, my name means hope. In Spanish, it means too many letters. It means sadness, it means waiting. . . . *I would like to baptize myself under a new name, a name more like the real me, the one nobody sees.* Esperanza as Lisandra or Maritza or Zeze the X. Yes. Something like Zeze the X will do. (11, emphasis added)

Here, Esperanza dreams of changing her own name—it is not shortened for a marquee by an other. Note, in addition, that Esperanza has not diminished her Latina identity; she has, if anything, accentuated its exotic eccentricity as she tries to reimagine herself as "Zeze the X."¹¹

Hayworth, too, learned in her lifetime to overcome the manipulations to which she had been subject early in her career. Sensitive to the significance of names in christening corporations, and taking advantage of recent film successes such as *Gilda*, Hayworth began (late in 1946) to renegotiate her contract with Cohn at Columbia, demanding from then on a share of the studio's profits. The name of the corporation she founded was "Beckworth," an amalgam of her daughter's name "Becky Welles" with that of her proper name, "Margarita Cansino Haworth" (Leaming, 127). As was alluded to above, Haworth (without the "y" but pronounced the same) was Rita's mother Volga's family name.

Co-escritores

Cisneros, Derrida, Fanon, Spivak, Castellanos, and Hayworth have shown the degree to which one's everyday life, one's everyday self-perception, and

one's ethnic community may be affected by the intrigues of something we still naively call "show business" or the "entertainment industry"—Adorno, following on the findings of Benjamin, knew what he was talking about when he called it a "culture industry." In his meditation on the signature, Derrida, especially, shows the way to link the efforts of those of us who work in cultural studies with the "objects" under our observation. For in a very real sense, any of us who work to reveal the traces of Cansino's legacy are cosigners on Rita's odyssey. Derrida had uncovered a similar conspiracy in his tête-à-tête with Searle/Sarl. "What a complicated signature" (*Limited Inc.*, 31) Derrida says, as he determines the identities of the "investors" silenced and masked by the apparent unity of the corporately endorsed signature "© 1977 John R. Searle." Derrida cleverly suggests, however, that this signature includes those individuals Searle thanks for prior consultations on the merits of his writing in the first footnote of his "Reply to Derrida"—a footnote which is appended, curiously enough, to the title, the "head" of his article: these include one "D. Searle, and H. Dreyfus." Things really get tricky when Derrida confesses his own close personal and intellectual association with H. Dreyfus—meaning, implicitly at least, that Derrida is a coinvestor of sorts in Searle's (Sarl's) critical piece which allegedly attacks Jacques Derrida—talk about a "complicated signature."¹² In the same way, we (those of us with some investment in all things Rita) may be seen to cosign the textual space, the textual artifacts—cinematic or otherwise—bequeathed by her person. I have wagered the consequences and taken the somewhat precious move of illicitly appending her signature to this essay.

Short Subjects

Before I bring this extended not-so-sordid meditation (several, actually) to a close, I would like to share some brief tidbits à la Siskel (R.I.P.) and Ebert about a few of Rita's films; also included are suggestions for future critical inquiries. It being in the nature of journals produced by professor types to share topics for further inquiry, and with fatigue of this project rapidly settling in, I thought it best to open *Ritarchaeology* to the scholarly and not-so-scholarly masses. Unless otherwise attributed, factual information is culled from sources cited above (Ringgold; Morella and Epstein; Leaming; Kobal); I bear responsibility for any unattributed interpretations.

Dante's Inferno

1935, Twentieth Century Fox

Harry Lachman directed this collage of a film that marries old footage (mostly sensational nude writhings and tortuous gyrations in a splendid, sensual hell) from the first version of the film (Fox 1924) to a new storyline featuring Spencer Tracy and Claire Trevor. Tracy called it "one of the worst pictures ever made." Rita's father, the aforementioned incestuously bent

Eduardo, was the choreographer for the feature, and thus 17-year-old Rita Cansino (still Cansino) made her attributed screen debut¹³ as a dancer on the doomed cruise ship/"inferno" named *Paradise*. Noteworthy are the representations of duplicity, of masking, which wind their way through the film—in retrospect, these augur Cansino's own lifelong problems with her own masks, literal and figural. The most memorable image of the film? Spencer Tracy as Jim Carter (carny *cum* venture capitalist *cum* swindler) shadowed by a leering, grotesque gargoyle. The juxtaposition of the evil Carter and his statuesque twin is remarkable. The hell sequences are kind of hot also—tumescent screen aficionados will have a ball voyeuristically touring the body-strewn landscapes from the 1920s—a terrain at least as dense as the one Peter Greenaway rendered in *Prospero's Books* (1991; Channel Four Films, Cámara One, et al.), his version of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, with fewer penises, of course.

Human Cargo

Twentieth Century Fox, 1936

Allan Dwan is on board this time as director of this B movie about the United States and its borders. Rita Cansino plays an illicit border crosser by the name of Carmen Zoro—talk about an *overdetermined* name; unfortunately, she does not stay on the screen too long: "Rita dies before the climax, an illegal alien blackmailed by a smuggling ring" (Ringgold, 68). I have not been able to track down a print of this film (reader *ayuda me*), but given its storyline, I believe it might be read to some advantage with Orson Welles's bordertown classic *Touch of Evil* (Universal Pictures, 1958).

Gilda

Columbia Pictures, 1946

It all comes together here, a movie if there ever was one that symbolizes Hayworth as statue, as cinematic simulacrum. All that Gilda presents is fake (or apparently so) in this masterpiece of film noir: her name, her looks, her hairline, and, last, in her grand would-be striptease musical number "Put the Blame on Mame," her voice—Hayworth's voice was dubbed. Directed by Charles Vidor and produced by Virginia Van Upp, *Gilda* was the 1946 postwar megahit—before there were J-Lo and Britney Spears, before there was Madonna, before there was Bardot, before there was Monroe, there was Hayworth. Rita is Gilda, Glenn Ford is Johnny Farrell, and George Macready is Ballin Mundson. Set in postwar Buenos Aires, the film traces a homo/heteroerotic ménage à quatre between Ballin, Johnny, Gilda, and, in a touch that would have made Sigmund Freud bulge, Jacques Lacan fidget, and Jane Gallop smile, a concealed sword hidden in a cane. Johnny, commenting on the gender of this remarkable protagonist/cane, waxes eloquently: "it's a her . . . because it looks like one thing and right

in front of your eyes it becomes another thing," which paraphrases Rita's life quite nicely, albeit with an ironic twist.

Other memorable lines of note from the film:

- Johnny to his bossman/savior Ballin: "I belong to the boss."
- Ballin on Gilda: "She was born the night she met me."
- Gilda to Johnny: "Good evening, Mr. Farrell, you're looking very beautiful."
- Last, Gilda, on the arm of recent pick-up, to Johnny: "If I had been a ranch . . . they would have named me the bar nothing."

The Lady from Shanghai

Columbia Pictures, 1947

Rita Hayworth plays Elsa Bannister in this film directed by Orson Welles. The most useful scene with regard to our ongoing inquest appears at the film's climax where Elsa, her husband (Everett Sloane as inert and deliciously lascivious Arthur Bannister), and Welles (as Michael O'Hara) square off in a mirrored room at an amusement park. This gallery of images, reflections, and distortions figurally reinforces the plot of the film, filled as it is with deception, infidelity, and noirish intrigue. The scene concludes with a ménage à shoot-out with Arthur, Elsa, and a score of mirrors ending up shattered on the floor—Welles as O'Hara lives to close the movie. This stunning conclusion can be read with great effect alongside Castellanos's challenge to women, that "the feat of *becoming what one is* . . . demands . . . above all the rejection of those false images that false mirrors offer woman in the enclosed gallery where her life takes place" (244). Unfortunately, Welles's film would seem to suggest that potentially self-validating moves like these (destroying false mirrors) lead to destruction for strong, singular women who dare to buck the system. *Fin.*

Follicular Denouement

"Can you even dye my eyes to match my gown?"¹⁴

This review of the life and times of Rita Hayworth reminds us of a lesson Fanon taught with regard to Afro-Caribbean subjects and that I have appropriated here for what I have been calling the Latina body politic. Writing in *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon tells of the need "to teach the negro not to be the slave of their archetypes" (34). Rita's corpus teaches us to do much the same thing, and in many ways, her offering up of wisdom was at the price of her own happiness; the same may be said to a certain extent in the case of Fanon.

"I came into the world imbued with the will to find a meaning in things, my spirit filled with the desire to attain to the source of the world, and then I found I was an object in the midst of other objects" (109), Fanon writes, and his words capture the pain—the real pain—that ethnic manipulation,

ethnic obfuscation perpetrates on collectivities and individual bodies, individual selves. Castellanos chronicles the risks of resisting this process as she speaks in a related fashion of women in relation to men: "the victor—who plants his heel on the cervix of the vanquished enemy—feels in each heartbeat a threat . . . in every move, an attempt to revolt" (237). The threat of an ethnically indeterminate woman or (worse) an ethnically determined "Mexican" woman was observed to clearly endanger the profit potential of various studios, bosses, and handlers. This perceived threat, this subtle knowledge of and reinforcement of mainstream U.S. attitudes vis-à-vis Latinas/as, led directly to the transformation of the Brooklyn, New York-born Margarita Carmen Cansino into the tempestuous West Coast simulacrum, Rita Hayworth.¹⁵

In her later years, Hayworth, a victim of alcoholism and Alzheimer's disease, became more and more detached from the world around her, although she continued to make occasional, often scandalous and outrageous, public appearances. Even these finally stopped as Cansino's waking world became less and less tethered to material, concrete realities.

Hayworth's life ends with the kind of irony humanists and poststructuralists alike love and cherish: the sculpted simulacrum ends her life in a fictional space. Timothy Carlson, writing Rita's obituary for the *Los Angeles Herald Exam*, described this simulated living space to his readership on May 16, 1987, the day after Hayworth died: "In 1981 [Hayworth's daughter] Princess Yasmin Khan was given permanent control of her mother's estate and was provided round the clock nurses. Yasmin duplicated [Rita's] Manhattan apartment with the furnishings of Hayworth's Hollywood home so she would not realize she had been moved from the city where she had reigned" ("'Love Goddess' Rita Hayworth Dead at 68," *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, May 16, 1987, n.p.). Carlson describes here a simulated space with a surprisingly sensual, reassuringly spiritual and altruistic aura.

For Hayworth (née Cansino), all is not as it was when it began. This time, a simulacrum was created to give her soul some peace, to give her tortured personage a break—some needed, loving distraction before the film on the reel broke off for the last time and the lights went up in the house.

1991 POSTSCRIPT: RITA'S STORY HAS NOT ENDED

A few days before I missed the original deadline for the first incarnation of this essay, I ran across the following item in the San Diego County edition of the *Los Angeles Times*. The byline was by Robert Epstein under the title "Latino Actor writes Open Letter to Hollywood—Is It All in a Name?" (July 25, 1991, F4, F9). Epstein tells the story of one Gary Cervantes who "paid \$1200 for a full-page advertisement in . . . *Daily Variety* to tell casting agents, directors, producers and story editors that the person known as

Carlos Cervantes for the past nine years and one hundred roles was no more. It will be Gary Cervantes again. Carlos is no more." There are some memorable lines in the piece, especially resonant in the wake of our Rita revelations. "I was," "Gary" confesses, "a Mexican *Leave It to Beaver*." Epstein finishes the clause for the chameleon/actor, "but there were few roles for Beaver Cleaver Cervantes and when he tried for Latino roles, he was told he didn't look 'Mexican enough.'"

Gary/Carlos ends his ad with the following sign-off: "I am reminded daily by Hollywood that I am Latino, and I am labeled Hispanic out of convenience. But I am an American." [signed] Gary Cervantes.

1995 POSTSCRIPT TO THE POSTSCRIPT

Like anyone these days, I rent motion pictures at the corner video outlet. And there I chanced on "American" Gary Cervantes's latest motion picture role—Gary, formerly Carlos, plays the swarthy Latino Rolex thief who obliterates pale Steve Martin's leg with a gunshot in Lawrence Kasden's otherwise moving *Grand Canyon* (Twentieth Century Fox, 1991).

At least they let him grow his hair out for the role.

2002 POSTGRAPHIC TO THE POSTSCRIPT TO THE POSTSCRIPT

I am at the heralded and boisterous *House of Blues* at Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas with a friend on the guest list for a Cinco de Mayo celebration and I am introduced by a mutual friend to Brooke, a former Oakland Raiderette cheerleader, current Miller Lite Girl, and would-be celebrity. After food and drinks, I am privy to the sad tale of Olga Morales, now Brooke of Brooke.com and SimplyBrooke.com. Brooke (aka Olga) tells of young teenager Olga Morales growing up in Agoura Hills, California, who had fallen hard for a cute Anglo teenager in the neighborhood. Upon hearing the name "Olga," said SoCal hunk broke into laughter—the why of this reaction is left to students of Henri Bergson's *Laughter*, readers of Freud's *Wit and Its Relation to the Unconscious*, and patient researchers of Southern California anti-Mexican sentiments. The short of it was that this sensitive and beautiful young model, winner of the Miss Hawaiian Tropic Pageant at the age of 17, changed her name to Brooke, forever.

Somewhere in her celluloid Alzheimer's-fed simulacrum, Rita Cansino laughs, cries, or screams.

NOTES

1. Had I been born a mile or so south of the old Mercy Hospital (Laredo, Texas) in Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, my name would be different: not "William,"



FIGURE 14.3.

The Existential Guillotine. Guillermo Nericcio García, © 2002 digital mixed media.
Used by permission of the artist.

but “Guillermo”; not “Nericcio,” but “Nericcio García,” following the practice in most Latin American families where the family name of the mother follows the last name of the father. (The next time you are in a bookstore, check where they stock Gabriel García Márquez; I am not saying the proprietors are barbarians if you find his oeuvre listed under Márquez, but they do need some cultural retooling—then again, said stocking practice may also be viewed positively as a bit of gyno-driven resistance to *the name of the father*, *chapeau Irigaray*.) But to return, the peculiarities of my Laredo/Nuevo Laredo border space suggest the degree to which naming, geography, and bicultural *territorialization* mark the self that lives within that border, supplementing somewhat Deleuze and Guattari’s overcited, mouthful of a concept. Postscript (March 2002): When *Romance Language Annual* (Purdue Monographs, winter 1992) published an earlier version of this essay, they removed my second name, written in Spanish. And while I am forever in debt to those generous *gente* at Purdue, especially Anthony Tamburri, that decision, that matronymic “scalping,” is not without significance, given the discussion that now follows.

2. One ought not allow my saucy tone to throw them here. Alleged Nazi fetishism notwithstanding, I was as moved as any other theorist of my generation by the theoretical contributions of Paul de Man. But as I argue below with regard to Derrida and the Pillsbury Dough Boy, something definitely happens as ideas move from the mouth of the "priest" to the soul of the writing "acolyte." On another topic, fans of de Man mournful of his current leperlike infamy should patiently wait a decade or so. The 1990s recuperation of Richard Nixon ("Nixon" logo T-shirts were all the rage in Southern California) and Henry Kissinger (the noted Nobel Prize-winning genocidist) shows just how forgetful and forgiving the collective unconscious of a given Western state can be.

3. I have grappled elsewhere more extensively with the effect of technology on discursive and semiotic media in "Artif(r)ecture."

4. As quoted in a moving reminiscence by John Lahr, son of Burt "The Cowardly Lion" Lahr ("The Voodoo of Glamour," *New Yorker* 70, no. 5, March 21, 1994, p. 113).

5. *Estadounidenses*: Unitedstatesians. I have discussed the problem of the term "American" in more detail in "Autobiographies at *la frontera*" and again more recently in "Of Mestizos and Half-Breeds."

6. For more, much more on this, see William Anthony Nericcio, "Autopsy of a Rat."

7. Had she remained alive and writing, it's frightening to think (exhilarating may be the better term) how the course of American (in the best sense said *palabra* can be used) intellectual history might have been changed. Castellanos is every bit as theoretically adept as Irigaray and Kristeva, surveying in the 1960s terrain similar to that of the French dynamic duo. She also had an eccentric and delicious wit. The irony of her death (she was electrocuted while turning on a lamp after taking a shower) is just one of those ugly events you have to get used to on this damned chaotic planet.

8. With her penchant for self-portrait, Frida Kahlo represents a similar if distinct case; I wrestle with this in "A Decidedly 'Mexican' and 'American' Semi[er]otic Transference."

9. From *Songs Inspired by the Film "Dick Tracy"* (Epic, 1990).

10. I do not have space here to pursue a discussion of Spanish attitudes with regard to ethnic bodies named Moor, North African, Jewish, and the like, although the topic relates directly to the foregoing discussion. Needless to say, Leaming's statement is ripe for forensic inquiry. Some works which do address these issues, both recent and dated, include Syed Ameer Ali's *A Short History of the Saracens*; Lee Anne Durham Seminario's *The History of the Blacks, the Jews, and the Moors in Spain*; and E. William Monter's *Frontiers of Heresy*. Also of use is Perry and Cruz, eds., *Cultural Encounters*.

11. Renato Rosaldo pursues a comparable line of argument in *Culture and Truth*, 161-67.

12. In a bit of gossip *chisme*-queen Liz Smith might have passed over, Searle was so annoyed by Derrida's critical response to his writings that he refused Northwestern University permission to reprint his essay, "Reiterating the Differences: A Reply to Derrida," in their book collecting the pertinent documents of the debate. Searle, darling apparently of some editor at the *New York Times Book Review*, where his bitter anti-Derridian darts often appear, continues to harass Derrida to this day.

13. Cansino had already appeared in U.S. short features and Mexican films.

14. Judy Garland as Dorothy in Victor Fleming's *The Wizard of Oz* (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1939) sings these lines while in a salon being dolled up in anticipation of meeting Oz in the Emerald City.

15. Given my efforts in this essay, it seems prudent to add that Hayworth was not always already a victim; indeed, she profited personally if only temporarily from these transactions. She also had a Hell of a life.

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