

William Paterson University Tinker Foundation - Latin American and Latino Studies Lecture Series FALL 2016

Occupying Spanish:

Combating the racialization of Latin@s and their languages with anthro-political linguistics



What if we “occupied Spanish”--on the model of those who demand that we occupy and liberate the centers of economic power--by calling attention to ways in which language ideologies in Spain, Latin America, and the USA perpetuate discrimination and exacerbate inequality? In particular, we must challenge the damaging control exerted by an elite on the ways of speaking of the masses, *el habla del pueblo*. This control involves a remapping of race from biology onto language, which shifts racialization lodged in the body to racialization lodged in language and culture. Anthro-political linguistics encourages us to take concrete steps to intervene when La Real Academia, the US Census Bureau, schools, courts, employers, politicians, and media reproduce linguistic prejudice by disparaging some Spanish and English dialects, and Spanglish, and/or insisting on English only.

Library Auditorium

Tuesday, October 4, 2016 — 2:00-3:30pm

Dr. Ana Celia Zentella

Dr. Zentella is one of the foremost researchers in what she has named “anthro-political linguistics”. A central figure in the study of U.S. Latin@ varieties of Spanish and English, Spanglish, and language socialization in Latin@ families, Zentella is a respected critic of the linguistic profiling facilitated by English-only laws and anti-bilingual education legislation. Her book, *Growing up Bilingual: Puerto Rican children in New York* (Blackwell, 1997) has won national and international awards. Edited collections include *Building on Strength: Language and Literacy in Latino Families and Communities* (Columbia TC Press, 2005), and two volumes with undergraduates, *Multilingual San Diego: Portraits of Language Loss and Revitalization* (2008), and *Multilingual Philadelphia: Portraits of Language and Social Change* (2010). A major sociolinguistic study, *Spanish in New York: Language Contact, Dialectal Leveling, and Structural Continuity* (Oxford University Press, 2011), was co-authored with Ricardo Otheguy. Recent projects include a study of the remapping of language, identity, and the border by high school and college students who live on the San Diego/Tijuana border, and research on Puerto Rican assimilation to Mexican Spanish in California. Manhattan's Borough President Ruth Messinger declared October 30, 1997 "Doctor Ana Celia Zentella Day", for "her leading role in building appreciation for language diversity and respect for language rights". Zentella chaired the Task Force on Language and Social Justice in 2011-2013. In 2015, the Latino Studies section of the Latin American Studies Association honored Zentella as Public Intellectual of the Year.

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Lectures are free and open to the public. For more information contact Dr. Judy Bernstein (bernsteinj@wpunj.edu) or Dr. Franco Rodriguez (rodriguezf1@wpunj.edu).