



The Republic of East L.A.

Luis J. Rodríguez

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From the award-winning author of *Always Running* comes a brilliant collection of short stories about life in East Los Angeles. Whether hilariously capturing the voice of a philosophizing limo driver whose dream is to make the most of his rap-metal garage band in "My Ride, My Revolution," or the monologue-styled rant of a tes-ti-fy-ing! tent revivalist named Ysela in "Oiga," Rodríguez squeezes humor from the lives of people who are not ready to sacrifice their dreams due to circumstance.

In these stories, Luis J. Rodríguez gives eloquent voice to the neighborhood where he spent many years as a resident, a father, an organizer, and, finally, a writer: a neighborhood that offers more to the world than its appearance allows.

The Republic of East L.A. Details

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Author : Luis J. Rodríguez

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From Reader Review The Republic of East L.A. for online ebook

Oswaldo says

It was ok. I am always interested in reading things by Latino-American writers and with Latino-American characters, and while my usual focus is the Hispanophone Caribbean, Mexican and Chicano identity and experience interest me because I think the long-time transnational relationship between Mexico and the U.S. helps to shape the contours of the broader Latino-American imaginary. Unfortunately, however, these stories fail to engage at any level and they are hampered by clunky prose and maudlin content leading to unsophisticated simplistic endings. I appreciate the use of Spanish in English-language stories, but I am not sure they added much to the stories - at the very least I think the use of Spanish should de-familiarize the context and setting for Anglos and invite and enrich the experience for bilingual Spanish-speakers/readers. . .

I only read the first three or four stories, after that I could not bring myself to go any further, so maybe they get better, but unless someone makes a direct recommendation I will probably never know.

Heather Colon says

- 1.) This book has 12 short stories, all of them take place in east L.A. They all are from different people and their stories.
 - 2.) I gave the book 4 stars because it was really good except for a couple of the stories. A couple just did not interest me.
 - 3.) "Although they had long stopped being intimate, she was connected to him like a canary to song." (76, Rodriguez) I chose this quote because it was from one of the stories that i liked and the lady was still in love with the man even though he was not actually there. And i liked that, i thought it was adorable.
 - 4.) In a few of the stories there was a little humor which connected to something we did in class
 - 5.) I would recommend this book to anyone who enjoys short stories and life in l.a.
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Denisse says

I expected much more. Yes East L.A. has poverty and crime etc. etc. but there are also people going to college people with good jobs and just plain people making it even though they live in the ghetto. Unfortunately all of these stories but one are typical (as in already written/ similarly written) ghetto stories. I expected much more from Luis Rodriguez. Like the rating says: it was ok.

Carly says

This is a book of short stories with amazing imagery of East L.A., Los Feliz, Boyle Heights, Echo Park areas. I bought it a revolutionary bookstore filled w/ Che Guevarra memorabilia. The book is very graphic,

yet realistic. The underlying theme is hope...even though these characters seemingly have nothing to hope for...they just keep on going.

Meghan Fidler says

I've just become a Rodriguez fan. This book contains twelve of his short stories. The descriptions in these stories are fresh- I'll demonstrate a couple of examples of his technique:

From "Finger Dance," page 76:

“Although they had long stopped being intimate, she was connected to him like a canary to a song.”

From the intro to "Boom Boom Bot," page 91:

“There was nothing around for miles but buildings rife with graffiti, sun-starved streets, and bone-gray cement walkways—an exasperating sameness that sometimes drives people who live in L.A. nuts.”

And later in the same story, on page 104:

“He had her story down—a single mother, on welfare, most of the time horny, tired, perfumed to make up for the lack of perfume in her life.”

The grit of the city, of life documented and undocumented (i.e. government paper) in the Barrios shines brilliantly through in Rodriguez's stories. In "Miss East L.A." is an example of this exquisitely captured way of life. Pardon my extensive quote, but I would like more readers for this book, so I'm trying to tantalize...

“My place is too small and cramped to even light up a cigarette. It's a single room on the first floor of a two story house in a place called th Gully, on Bernal Street just below the Fourth Street bridge. This is the White Fence neighborhood, one of the original barrios of East L.A. There are a lot of longtime residents here—I'm talking four or five generations. I've seen grandmothers with old pachuco tattoos up and down their arms, screaming after their grandkids to come home on time.

A lot of the men here work construction. They've built skyscrapers, freeways, roads, and houses all over Los Angeles—with not much to show for it. So, with all the skill they've gathered over time, they stucco their wood-fram homes or dry wall an extra room or whatever—most of the time without permits or inspectors. That's how parts of East L.A. got built in the first place. The Mexicans moved into the most undesirable areas like the ravines and hills and set up their own housing, sometimes without plumbing or sewage. Eventually, the city and county provided basic services. So its not unusual for small, dilapidated homes to be torn down, added on to, undergo a metamorphosis—like butterflies. If ther's anything Mexicans are known for, it's hard work and creativeness.

I've lived here all my life. Not far from downtown is General Hospital—now it's the University of Southern California—Los Angeles County Medical Center. A lot of Chicanos inhaled their very first breath there—and exhaled their last. It's the cheapest and most overworked hospital in the city. Our hospital. East L.A.'s.

I was born there.”

I teach Anthropology, and I can't wait to pair some of Rodriguez's work with articles on trans-nationalism, diaspora, and nationalism. It will be a great way for students to put faces and people into the circumstances so oft discussed in academic circles.

Diana Jou says

i love short stories. vivid, touching, and funny. because it is set in LA, i recognized street names and places, and got a tiny taste of LA's cultural richness.

Kenneth Martinez says

I guess one of the reasons i enjoyed this book more than i should have is because of the settings the author uses... It's all over the neighborhood i grew up around!... Loved it!

Alessandra Santamaria says

If you are interested in reading about the life of mexican americans or just mexicans in the USA, this is a great start. Some of the stories are truly fascinating and very well written. I enjoyed them and it was refreshing to see the sacrifices and problems that my fellow mexicans have to endure while fighting for a better life in a different country.

monica says

although fiction, it features many stories that one would find having grown up in east la

Jeff Tucker says

This is a collection of short stories about the Mexican immigrants in East L.A.. The stories are interesting but for the most part not too happy. They're about poverty, hunger, unemployment, despair and violence. I finished the book just feeling sorry for all the poor people that have to live under these terrible circumstances.

Lynn says

aunque escrito en ingles, lo he leído este libro en español y me encanta.

susan says

I love this book. It's a bunch of short stories that all take place in East LA. It opened my eyes a lot to immigrant communities and hispanic communities- people just trying to get by in unincorporated East LA in the barrios.

Marc says

Some enjoyable and insightful stories ("The Mechanics" especially), but more than a few repetitive themes.

Ervin Vice says

In The Republic of East L.A., those with spirit survive while those with no heart are crushed, but of course there is much more going on here. There's humor (My Ride, My Revolution; Pigeons: Chain-Link Lover), tragedy (Shadows; Boom, Bot, Boom) and a bit of both (Miss East L.A.). There's also desperation (Mechanics), hope (Oiga) and a crushing sense of loss (La Operacion). But at the very least the symbolism in the finale of the final story will bring a smile to your face.

Elizabeth says

A young boy name Cruz that is in his teen area he lives in Boyle Heights. Cruz is mixed with Mexican and Indian. Cruz is in a rap-and-rock band called LA Cruz Negra. In the band, he has long hair not because of his culture he has it long because of his band. There are 4 people in his group they practice every day in his garage. He stopped the band because they all started to go there different ways. Cruz started to work as of being a limo driver. He was doing that for awhile. They fired him from the job because when he started to go back to school his friends found out where he was working, his friends turned their backs on him and trashed his limo. He then left the job and just put his main focus on school. He was doing good in all of his classes and met this girl in one of his classes. They both started to talk and get close. Her name was Bernarda. She was tall for her age 5'8 and he was 5'6. The whole book is just about a couple kids going through drama and living the teen life and also experiencing new things in East La. The book has agency because of what Cruz is going through with his friends and family. My advice I would give is that the book is really good can probably relate to you or other people reading this.
