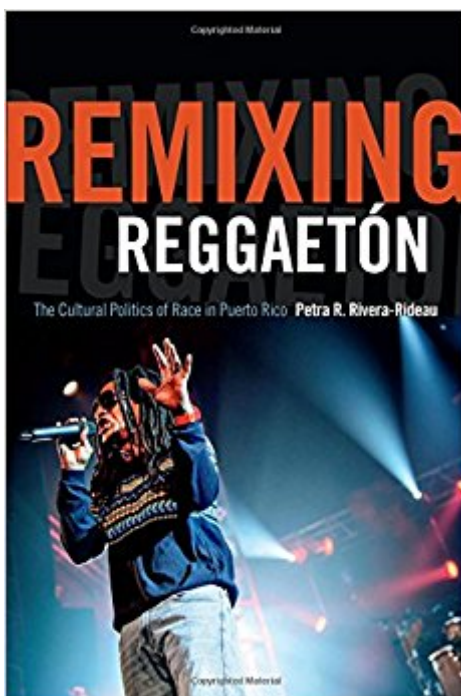


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# Remixing Reggaetón: The Cultural Politics Of Race In Puerto Rico



## Synopsis

Puerto Rico is often depicted as a "racial democracy" in which a history of race mixture has produced a racially harmonious society. In *Remixing Reggaetón*, Petra R. Rivera-Rideau shows how reggaetón musicians critique racial democracy's privileging of whiteness and concealment of racism by expressing identities that center blackness and African diasporic belonging. Stars such as Tego Calder criticize the Puerto Rican mainstream's tendency to praise black culture but neglecting and marginalizing the island's black population, while Ivy Queen, the genre's most visible woman, disrupts the associations between whiteness and respectability that support official discourses of racial democracy. From censorship campaigns on the island that sought to devalue reggaetón, to its subsequent mass marketing to U.S. Latino listeners, Rivera-Rideau traces reggaetón's origins and its transformation from the music of San Juan's slums into a global pop phenomenon. *Remixing Reggaetón*, she demonstrates, provides a language to speak about the black presence in Puerto Rico and a way to build links between the island and the African diaspora.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Petra R. Rivera-Rideau does an outstanding job explaining the contradictory power dynamics behind the representations of blackness in Puerto Rico. In exploring the ways in which racial identities get restructured, reorganized, and even elided through the music industry, Rivera-Rideau provides a significant contribution and a brilliant intervention into studies on race, blackness, and

popular music in Puerto Rico." (Frances R. Aparicio, author of *Listening to Salsa: Gender, Latin Popular Music, and Puerto Rican Cultures*) "An engaging intersectional exploration of reggaetón in the context of Puerto Rican racial politics, with a focus on how Afro-diasporic resources are deployed to counter the insidiousness of racial democracy discourses. Building upon ethnography, musical and performance analysis, and an expansive bibliography focused on racial politics, diasporic blackness, and popular culture, *Remixing Reggaetón* features a provocative exploration of Puerto Rican blackness(es) and the multiple ways they can be embodied, performed, perceived, and explained." (Raquel Z. Rivera, coeditor of *Reggaetón*) "Remixing Reggaetón adroitly accomplishes the twin tasks of providing readers with a comprehensive chronological account of reggaetón's development until the present, while at the same time placing its trajectory within the context of changing race relations and contested racial identities in Puerto Rico and beyond." (Deborah Pacini Hernandez *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* 2016-05-06) "In *Remixing Reggaetón: The Cultural Politics of Race in Puerto Rico*, Petra R. Rivera-Rideau has created an insightful and engaging work of music scholarship that forms an important contribution to the literature on Caribbean and Latin American music." (Gregory J. Robinson *Music Reference Services Quarterly* 2016-12-22) "Petra R. Rivera-Rideau's *Remixing Reggaetón* presents an insightful reading of reggaetón as a discursive cultural practice inextricably linked to the experience of blackness in the African diaspora.... Well written and organized, and convincingly argued, her timely study resonates with and contributes significantly to current academic understandings of music, race, gender, sexuality, and nation, and their intersections within the context of the African diaspora." (Francisco D. Lara *Notes* 2017-09-01)

Petra R. Rivera-Rideau is Assistant Professor of Africana Studies at Virginia Tech.

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