

AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF FOUR NOVELS BY ISABEL ALLENDE, 1982-2007:  
THE HOUSE OF THE SPIRITS, OF LOVE AND SHADOW,  
EVA LUNA, AND THE STORIES OF EVA LUNA

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## ABSTRACT

This annotated bibliography catalogues scholarly criticism published between 1982 and 2007 of four works by Isabel Allende: The House of the Spirits (1982), Of Love and Shadow (1987), Eva Luna (1987), and The Stories of Eva Luna (1989). The goals of this research are to examine major areas of critical focus and to uncover topics that have been unaddressed by critics. My hope is that this work will serve as a tool to help forward further scholarly inquiry into the work of Isabel Allende.

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Without the Interlibrary Loan staff of UNCW's Randall library, a project such as this would have been impossible, and I owe them a debt of gratitude.

Special thanks to my husband and parents, who gave me financial support and plenty of motivation to complete this task.

## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my husband, Jeff Davidson, who encouraged and supported my decision to pursue a Master's degree, and who endured many hours of forced paper readings on my account.

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### A. THESIS STATEMENT

This annotated bibliography catalogues scholarly criticism published between 1982 and 2007 of four works by Isabel Allende: The House of the Spirits (1982), Of Love and Shadow (1987), Eva Luna (1987), and The Stories of Eva Luna (1989). The goals of this research are to examine major areas of critical focus and to uncover topics that have not been addressed by critics. My hope is that this work will serve as a tool to help forward further scholarly inquiry into the work of Isabel Allende.

### B. OVERVIEW

I first read Gabriel Garcia Marquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude when I was in high school. I had always been a voracious reader, and enjoyed all kinds of fiction, but after I closed that book, I felt that I had had a glimpse into a different reality altogether. This was something much different from Jane Austen's world of manners and nannies, and even from (my favorite) science fiction novels, in which anything was possible. This world of Marquez's, where mysterious and unexplainable things happened almost without notice, and where commonplace situations could be imbued with curiosity, was fascinating beyond anything I had yet experienced in my literary pursuits. In college, I explored that world further, searching for other authors who could so effortlessly create this

juxtaposition between the ordinary and the extraordinary. I found a name for this phenomenon—magical realism.<sup>1</sup> In a short time, I also found Isabel Allende.

Within Allende's fiction, I located what I had been missing in Marquez's—a strong feminist perspective.<sup>2</sup> Her stories were told through the eyes of the women who lived them, and those women took control of their destinies. In addition, Allende made no attempt to disguise her political intent. After some research, the historical context of her novels and their connection to the major players and events of the 1973 overthrow of the Salvador Allende administration to the fictional events of The House of the Spirits and her later works became clear. Her ability to blend the effervescent magic of femininity and South America with an outright statement of political outrage, to recount and recuperate a version of history that had been suppressed, intensified my interest in her work and in this genre.<sup>3</sup>

### C. BACKGROUND

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this bibliography, I will be using Lois Parkinson Zamora and Wendy B. Faris's definition of magical realism as a subversive mode of writing that forces the reader to question traditionally privileged ways of viewing historical events and social norms (Zamora and Faris, 3-6). In magical realist texts, supernatural events are juxtaposed with factual and documented historical events, causing the reader to view the two similarly. This creates questions within the reader's mind about the accuracy of traditional historical documentation and its tendency to disregard or ignore aspects of history.

<sup>2</sup> Feminism in regards to literary theory will be defined in this work as "concerned with the woman as writer—with woman as the producer of textual meaning, with the history, themes, genres, and structures of literature by women." (Showalter 1377). This term applies to Allende both because of her position as a woman writer and because of the issues of women's roles in society that she addresses in her fiction. In addition, Allende writes about women as writers: she concerns herself with the representation of women in fiction and in society, and the ability of woman to change that perception through writing, speaking, and storytelling.

<sup>3</sup> In this bibliography, "femininity" will be defined by Wendy B. Faris in her work connecting the feminine to the magical. The "marginal" position of women allows them to effectively "transmit the ineffable," or to address truths that go beyond logical evidence. Because women largely operate outside the traditionally empowered group—the patriarchy—women's view of events is often disregarded or ignored. The use of magic addresses this discrepancy in the historical record metaphorically and allegorically, which is why much of the magic of magical realism revolves around female characters or is "domesticized." Also, magic realism as a mode allows for a dual interpretation of events, privileging neither: this gives equal weight to women's perspective of society and documented historical events (Faris).

Isabel Allende was born in Peru on August 2, 1942. Her father was a Chilean resident living in Lima as a diplomat and a cousin of Salvador Allende (who was to become president of Chile). When Isabel was three years old, her mother and father divorced, and she and her mother returned to Chile to live with her maternal grandparents. These grandparents were the later inspiration for Clara and Esteban Trueba of The House of the Spirits; as Allende says, “I based the character on the stories I heard about my grandmother, who was a funny, wonderful, clairvoyant character” (Writers Dreaming 15). Isabel lived with her grandparents until she was ten years old, when her mother remarried and they moved with her new stepfather, also a diplomat, to Bolivia and, then, Lebanon. Isabel returned to Chile to finish high school and, at twenty, married her high school sweetheart. The next year, the first of two children was born. Isabel and her husband lived abroad briefly, and upon their return to Chile, Isabel began writing for magazines and publishing children’s stories. She achieved “modest celebrity” (Rodden 4) through her work with Chilean television. In 1970, the man Isabel thought of as an uncle, Salvador Allende, was elected to the Chilean presidency. Three years later, he was overthrown and killed in a bloody coup by Augusto Pinochet, who installed martial law. In the following years, Pinochet’s regime attempted to quash political dissidents, although covert resistance groups still functioned within the country. Isabel secretly aided these groups until she was threatened with death. She moved with her family to Venezuela and lived in exile there for twelve years. During this time, she became homesick for her family and country and began to write a goodbye letter to her dying grandfather in Chile. This letter became a story, and the story became The House of the Spirits, an international success. The novel told the story of a multigenerational Chilean family and its involvement in the evolving political



situation of the country. Allende followed this novel with Of Love and Shadow, also set in Chile and dealing with the effects of military rule, and then with Eva Luna and The Stories of Eva Luna, set in her adopted country of Venezuela.

Allende's work deals with the political upheavals of a nation and tells the story through the eyes of those whose voices have been ignored or silenced—the women of the country. She defies category: "...she feasts eclectically upon such diverse literary models as the family saga, the picaresque novel, testimonial literature, the historical novel, the bildungsroman and the memoir, creating in the process hybrid texts that resist easy categorization" (Gould, "Weaving" 13). Her novels comment upon the emerging class struggle of the early twentieth century, the blossoming feminist ideology of Latin America, the ties that bind a family, and the magic inherent in the landscape of Latin American countries.

This distinctively Latin American magic that Allende depicts has been identified by numerous writers, including Alejo Carpentier: "The marvelous real that I defend and that is our own marvelous real is encountered in its raw state, latent and omnipresent, in all that is Latin American.<sup>4</sup> Here the strange is commonplace, and always was commonplace" (Carpentier 104). Allende's work has alternately been defined as a part of the Latin-American literary "Boom" period, encompassing the traits and values that works of this

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<sup>4</sup> The term "marvelous real" was coined by Carpentier to describe the literature, defined by others as magical realist, that came from Latin America and contained elements of magic used in a specific way. Both terms, and the requirements for the literature described by them, have been debated by critics since the appearance of these literatures (Zamora and Faris 7-8).

period possess, and as representing a new age of Latin American writing—a post-“Boom,” which questions and subverts those values.<sup>5</sup>

The question of the appropriate categorization for Allende’s work and the ideals that it portrays has led many readers to consider the novels as representative of postmodern fiction--a backlash against the ideals, themes, and structures of modernist literature, namely the idealization of truth and the idea of an essential human nature (Linn 15-17).<sup>6</sup> Similarly, Allende seems to fall within the category of “postcolonial.”<sup>7</sup> Allende has been criticized as a pirate (Antoni) and lauded as a “magical feminist” (Hart). Her work has sparked the interest of many critics, and there is a need to document and categorize this critical response. This annotated bibliography seeks to provide this comprehensive documentation.

#### D. METHODOLOGY

This annotated bibliography contains all available criticism on The House of the Spirits, Of Love and Shadow, Eva Luna, and The Stories of Eva Luna published in English

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<sup>5</sup> The “Boom” period of Latin American literature took place in the 1960s and 1970s. It was precipitated by an exodus, of sorts, of Latin authors from their home countries. In many cases, these authors were either expelled by or running from oppressive political regimes. An increase in the translation of texts from Spanish to English and other languages aided this “Boom” (Laguardia and Chevigny).

<sup>6</sup> The introduction to Postmodern America Fiction: A Norton Anthology identifies postmodernist characteristics as those that leave the interpretation of a work to the audience, giving readers “the power to assemble a work and determine its meaning.” Most postmodernist work also concerns itself with the nature of reality: “the problematic relationship between the real and the unreal; the constructedness of meaning, truth, and history; and the complexities of subjectivity and identity” (Geyh, Leebron, and Levy x). Allende’s work incorporates many of these concerns, particularly with regard to the question of truth and history, as well as with the perception of reality. Allende’s extensive use of the mode of magical realism poses questions within her fiction about what might be considered real or unreal, possible or impossible.

<sup>7</sup> “The term post-colonial studies is applied primarily to analyses of the relations of power and knowledge, politics and aesthetics, in countries that in the nineteenth and earlier twentieth centuries were administered by England, France, and the United States, particularly the Indian subcontinent, northern and central Africa, and southeast Asia” (Richter 1216). There is an obvious connection that this term has to South American nations that were once colonized by Spain, such as Chile and Venezuela, that Allende alludes to in her fiction.

between 1982 and 2007. I have utilized all of the resources available to me through the Randall Library at UNCW, the Interlibrary Loan Service, and the Davis Library at UNC Chapel Hill. In order to form a coherent overview of the issues addressed by scholars of Allende's work, I have focused only on scholarly criticism and excluded biographical material, interviews, and reviews. I have also limited my focus to published material, thereby eliminating unpublished theses and dissertations. Each article or book is cited in MLA style and concisely annotated.

In addition, I have introduced each of the four novels with a brief summary and a thematic outline of the criticism addressing it. The bibliography contains seven sections: a general introduction to the bibliography, detailing the format; a separate section on each of the four novels, with introductory information and thematic synopsis, followed by an annotated bibliography of each book; a section containing criticism of any of the four books in combination; and a conclusion.

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## THE HOUSE OF THE SPIRITS

### A. INTRODUCTION

The House of the Spirits is a fictionalized account of the events in the life of a twentieth-century Chilean family. It incorporates magical realist and postmodernist techniques to tell the story of Pinochet's 1973 coup through the eyes of several generations of the fictional Trueba family.

The House of the Spirits begins with the first-person narration of an unidentified source. It is not until the end of the novel that the reader learns that this narrator is Alba Trueba, the last generation of the Trueba family. The narrative "I" is quickly dropped and forgotten, and the story begins to unfold in third-person narration. We are introduced first to Clara del Valle, the preternaturally bright youngest child of Severo and Nivea del Valle, who together with Esteban Trueba (who becomes her husband) is to be the focus of the first half of the novel. Clara is gifted with a degree of clairvoyance and an ability to communicate with spirits. She spends a large portion of her life inhabiting an other-worldly state, disconnected from her family and the realities of life. Esteban Trueba is a conservative man's man and landowner who believes in possessions and in the status quo. This unlikely couple and their offspring suffer some political and personal calamities, such as an earthquake, an uprising of farm workers, and their daughter Blanca's affair with a peasant, Pedro Segundo Garcia, which enrages Esteban. The product of this affair is Alba, the last in the line of Trueba women and the narrative "I" in the beginning and end of the story. During her lifetime, the conservative government is defeated by a leftist one—a fictionalized version of the Salvador Allende government elected to lead Chile in 1970.

Through Alba, Clara's magic is replaced by political activism, as she helps fight to win this election. Shortly thereafter, Pinochet's rebels overthrow this government (with the help of Esteban Trueba and other conservatives) and install a militaristic dictatorship. Alba is taken prisoner by this regime and is raped and tortured. After her release, Alba finds Clara's notebooks and begins, with the assistance of a repentant Esteban, to write the story of the family's history.

The facts surrounding the 1973 overthrow of Salvador Allende's government, and the relationship of those facts to Isabel Allende's fictionalized version of them, has been a subject of interest to many critics. Scott McDonald Frame (item 020) traces the actual events that unfolded on the fateful September day of the coup and compares them to Allende's version. He finds many similarities and analyzes the possible reasons behind the differences. Carrie Sheffield (item 058) focuses on America's involvement in the coup and Allende's attempt in The House of the Spirits to recuperate the real story that has been suppressed from history and replaced by "the ruling ideological history." Sheffield claims that the work reflects Allende's effort to "represent and preserve all possible histories, memories, and identities" in the face of an official history that precludes those possibilities.

Sheffield is not the only critic to read the work in this way. Many critics, including Ruth Jenkins (item 029) and P. Gabrielle Foreman (item 019), see the novel as revealing a feminine conception of history—a history that was not officially recorded because it was not thought to be important. Sharon Magnarelli (item 033) contends that these feminine "trivialities" recorded by Clara in her notebooks can be seen as catalysts for the larger changes in Chilean history. As Jenkins aptly sums up, "[T]hese narratives record stories of

female experience neither sufficiently nor authentically articulated by histories constructed from patriarchal perspectives.”

The method used to recount this feminine version of history, according to several critics, is magical realism. It is through this mode, according to P. Gabrielle Foreman, that Allende “codes” the text—she uses magic as a guise through which her political intentions can be interpreted, but cannot be identified as overtly subversive. Foreman also notes the replacement of magic with realism throughout the text, as the political implications become more apparent. In fact, the transition from a text replete with magical images to one almost devoid of them has been the subject of much criticism of the novel. Patricia Hart (item 025) notes this change as well and identifies the increasing political and social activism in the women as the cause for their abandonment of magic, suggesting that Allende sees magic as a resort of the disempowered, as a result of which she ultimately values political realism over magic. Caroline Bennet (item 004) debates this viewpoint, agreeing that magic is a means of empowerment for the disenfranchised, but contending that Allende uses magic in the novel to reveal her political leanings. Molly Monet-Viera (item 043) suggests that Allende believes that magical realism does not convey with any accuracy the lives of the people about which she writes, stating that The House of the Spirits “instead pronounces magic’s destruction and its impotence, its inability to be a narrative mode that represents Latin American reality.”

Allende’s reflection of a feminine view of history in The House of the Spirits is unquestionable, but the overall feminist impact of her work has been a point of contention. While Allende undoubtedly shows the reader history through the eyes of women who lived it, there is some question as to whether her overall depiction of women serves to improve



the perception of women and their position within society. Catherine Boyle (item 006) does not see the novel as feminist, because men and women of the novel are never posited as equals, and the ending of the novel (Alba's forgiveness of Esteban Trueba's intolerance and the disappearance of Ferula's curse) denies a sense of feminist justice for Esteban's transgressions. Susan de Carvalho (item 009) questions Allende's use of female stereotypes in the novel, claiming that the women "find their fulfillment through motherhood," as opposed to more non-traditional, "masculine" means, and that it is the men of the story who actually reject the patriarchal structure of society, not the women: for example, Esteban Trueba, in the end, concedes that his male-centered political perspective has been damaging, while Alba and Blanca continue to cling to the men in their lives for emotional support. These arguments are opposed by Philip Swanson (item 061) and Susan Frick (item 021). Frick sees the struggle of the women to free themselves of patriarchal shackles as a mirror of Julia Kristeva's three phases of feminism, and Swanson finds that the struggle of women for gender equality and the struggle for class equality in the novel are tied together in a significant way. He dismisses the argument that The House of the Spirits is not a feminist novel as "irrelevant and unjustified."

A similar debate between critics rages regarding the meaning of the novel's circular structure. Lloyd Davies (item 014) claims that Alba ends the novel with feminine transcendence—she rises above the transgressions made against her and forgives her transgressors, out of hope for the future and for her unborn child—and not a capitulation to destiny, as some have claimed. Elizabeth Espadas (item 017) agrees, stating that the ending provides hope. Meanwhile, Laurie Clancy (item 010) denies that the ending is circular at all; she believes that Alba's acceptance of her fate and re-writing of Clara's words

suggests a completion. Pamela Moore (item 045) finds a similarity between Allende's work and that of Gabriel Garcia Marquez in the structure of time as cyclical for women, but linear for men.

Perhaps the most overarching debate about The House of the Spirits regards these very similarities. Critics have extensively examined the novel's relationship to Gabriel Garcia Marquez's famous work of magical realism, One Hundred Years of Solitude. Robert Antoni (item 001) focuses on this debate, and finds (like many other critics) that the feminist voice of Allende's work and its elaborate use of historical factuality are significantly different from Marquez's. Antoni says it is a novel that "may begin as an attempt to rewrite One Hundred Years of Solitude, but which discovers itself as a unique statement." Laurie Clancy (item 010) elaborates upon this, stating that through the use of similar methods, Allende "sets herself firmly against what she sees as his [Marquez's] prevailing beliefs." Other critics, including Patricia Hart (item 025) and Pamela Moore (item 045), engage in this discussion of what differentiates the two novels; Moore discusses the differing representations of women, while Hart goes as far as to suggest that Allende's work may have had an influence on Marquez's later novels. Philip Swanson (item 061) finds Allende's work to be rooted more firmly in history than that of Marquez. Beth Jorgenson (item 030) believes that critics who are supportive of Allende fail to give Marquez credit for his own political intentions.

Of the differences discussed between the two novels, one of the most often noted is the narrative structure of the novel and the feminine narrator who tells most of the story. However, Susan de Carvalho (item 009) notes that Allende's use of a male narrator does more to promote feminism in the novel, as the male narrator is "forced to drop [his]

masculine façade of confidence and power” in order to tell his story. Mary Lusky Friedman (item 022) discusses Alba’s omniscient narration, noting that it creates problems within the text of Alba relating events about which she had no knowledge. Bakhtin’s theory of polyvocality is found useful by many critics, including Doris Meyer (item 042) in her oft-cited essay, “Parenting the Text.” She discusses Allende’s use of two narrators to suggest a metaphor for a new community of many voices. Maria Rippon (item 053) and Sharon Magnarelli (item 033) elaborate on this, implying that although Esteban Trueba’s voice is heard, it (along with his ideology) is rejected by the other, more trustworthy, narrators, and ultimately by the reader, as well. In direct opposition, Thomson Shields, Jr. (item 059) praises this “irreconcilable plurality” because he claims that all voices are heard without any being privileged.

Another scholar, in addition to Mikhail Bakhtin, whose work was extensively utilized by critics to examine The House of the Spirits is Elaine Showalter. Her work on the feminine “wild zone” is used by Caroline Bennet (item 004), who sees magic in the novel as the “wild zone”: a method of escape from repression. Z. Nelly Martinez (item 037) uses the concept of the “wild zone” to explain the way in which Clara takes over the Trueba mansion, altering it to meet her needs and filling it with extraordinary people and events. This concept of the mansion as a distinctively feminine space, and its meaning as such, has generated attention. Gloria Duran (item 016) suggests that the house is symbolic of a person, as it has two creators (Clara and Esteban), and at one point “becomes schizophrenic” as it is caught in transition between these two personalities. Both Susan Frick (item 021) and Ronie-Richele Garcia Johnson (item 023) discuss the house as a metaphor; Frick reads Clara’s invasion of it as a symbol of women’s invasion of politics, and

Garcia Johnson sees the battle for the house as symbolic of the battle between the sexes. Indeed, Garcia Johnson writes that the house itself represents the female body, and Clara's refusal to allow Esteban to enter her room is the equivalent of her refusal to allow him access to her mind and body.

In addition to the question of what it is that the house signifies, readers have also pondered the question of what the names of the novel symbolize. Two critics devote entire articles to this pursuit; it is mentioned in quite a few more. Richard McCallister (item 040) and Kathryn Bartholomew (item 002) study the etymology of the names of characters in The House of the Spirits, analyzing the ways in which characters' personalities are revealed through naming. Both critics focus particularly on the women of the novel and the relationship of their names to light. McCallister finds comparisons between the fictional characters of the story and the real characters of Isabel Allende's life and describes the ways in which these fictional names symbolize real people.

Allende's utilization of aspects of her own life in her fiction has led many critics to question the genre into which The House of the Spirits falls. In particular, Flora H. Schiminovich (item 055) examines the autobiographical elements of the novel and suggests that this fictionalized version of Allende's actual life represents a new way of reading autobiography. Elizabeth Espadas (item 017) terms the novel "difficult to categorize neatly," as it represents three genres: chronicle, testimonial, and love story. Michael Moody (item 044) analyzes the real-life events of the coup, focusing on Allende's experience as a journalist during that time to define The House of the Spirits as a testimonial novel. Michelle Masse (item 039) defines The House of the Spirits as a work of gothic literature;

Masse focuses on gothic elements of the novel to analyze ideas about subordination and dominance.

Some critics have made a connection between Allende's representation of women on the margins of Chilean society and some authors' representations of African Americans on the margins of American society. Deborah Cohn (item 011) compares Allende's experience with that of Ralph Ellison as revealed in Invisible Man, stating that "both authors explore shared situations of injustice and exploitation and set out to validate different realities, or differing experiences of reality." Isabel Dulfano (item 015) sees Allende's compulsion to retell the stories of her ancestors as similar to that same compulsion of African American women writers such as Alice Walker, Toni Morrison, and Toni Cade Bambara.

This idea of an ancestral bond between women is further explored by Mary Gomez Parham (item 024), who defines The House of the Spirits as "literature of matrilineage." Cherie Meacham (item 041) examines the link in the novel between mother and daughter by comparing the story to the myth of Persephone and Demeter. The claim that Allende's work creates new positions for women within the idea of the family is put forth by Maria Roof (item 052) and elaborated upon by Margarita Saona (item 054). Norma Helsper (item 027) further claims that Allende reveals the traditional representation of the family to be a patriarchal fraud.

## B. ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

001 Antoni, Robert. "Parody or Piracy: The Relationship of The House of the Spirits to One Hundred Years of Solitude." Latin American Literary Review 16.32 (July 1988): 16-28.

Deals with the controversy surrounding the similarities between Gabriel Garcia Marquez's landmark work of Latin American magical realism and Allende's debut novel. Notes the similarities: characters, narrative technique, use of flashbacks and foreshadowing, and language. Points out that The House of the Spirits, particularly early in the novel, uses Marquez's voice, but not in a conscious, Bakhtinian "double-voiced" way. Judges Allende's work to contain a significantly different message and to develop its own voice as the novel progresses. Highlights Allende's elaborate use of historical factuality and feminist perspective as primary among the differences that make the work unique.

002 Bartholomew, Kathryn. "Name and Character in Allende's La casa de los espíritus." Selecta: Journal of the Pacific Northwest Council on Foreign Languages 14 (1993): 83-87.

Analyzes Allende's use of names to show characters' relationships with each other and to suggest personality traits. Takes into account the historical and mythical background of names, as well as their etymology. Focuses on the four women (Nivea, Clara, Blanca, and Alba); the relationship of their names to light; and the subtle differences among them. Points out the repetition of the names "Esteban" and "Pedro" and contemplates their significance.

003 Bassnett, Susan. "Coming Out of the Labyrinth: Women Writers in Contemporary Latin

America." On Modern Latin American Fiction. Ed. John King. New York: Hill and Wang, 1987. 247-267.

Traces the emergence of a feminine mode in Latin American literature and presents The House of the Spirits as a prime example. Reads the events of the novel as "the story of women's emergence in contemporary Latin American society." Identifies three character types in the novel: Nivea's descendants, Pancha Garcia's descendants, and Transito Soto. Compares Allende's device of using women's oppression to speak to social oppression to that of other writers, namely Rosario Castellanos, Alejandra Pizarnik, and Clarice Lispector. Posits that these women writers open the feminine experience up to more than the patriarchal interpretation of it.

004 Bennet, Caroline. "The Other and the Other-Worldly: The Function of Magic in Isabel Allende's La casa de los espíritus." Bulletin of Hispanic Studies 75.3 (July 1998): 357-365. Rpt. in Isabel Allende. Ed. Harold Bloom. Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2003. 171-182.

Suggests that Allende's underlying message is that women are less closely tied to rationality than men and that Clara's clairvoyance is an example of this. Debates P. Gabrielle Foreman and Patricia Hart's claims that Allende ultimately chooses politics over magic, claiming that it is through magic that Allende's politics become most clear. Discusses magic as Showalter's "wild zone." Concludes that female characters of the novel become less magical as they become more socially empowered; therefore, magic is a means of empowerment for the marginalized.

005 Boschetto, Sandra M. "Threads, Connections, and the Fairy Tale: Reading the Writing in

Isabel Allende's La casa de los espiritus." Continental, Latin-American and Francophone Women Writers: Vol. II. Ed. Ginette Adamson and Eunice Myers. New York: U P of America, 1990. 51-63.

Compares elements of The House of the Spirits to those found in fairy tales. Finds connections in the characters: Rosa and Clara have childhoods like those of fairy tale characters and both are archetypically passive. Also finds Esteban to be similar to the archetypal patriarch of fairy tales in his appearance, personality, and his deliverance from himself through his love for a woman (Clara). Ties the story of A Thousand and One Nights to The House of the Spirits by comparing the king to Esteban and analyzing the function of language in both.

006 Boyle, Catherine. "Frameworks and Contexts in La casa de los espiritus: A Chronicle of Teaching." Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies 4.1 (1995): 105-112.

Examines the use of The House of the Spirits in undergraduate courses. Focuses on the various frameworks for teaching the novel: the transition of the novel from magical realist to testimonial, the framework of the feminist narrator, and the historical/cultural Chilean framework. Challenges a feminist reading of the novel, as the men and women of the novel inhabit differing realities and are not equalized. Denigrates Esteban Trueba's change of heart at the end of the novel, as it denies the reader "the possibility of contemplating the ways in which a deeply authoritarian culture is the basis for the creation of an authoritarian state." Proposes that the only legitimate reading of the text is that of a love story, but maintains that it provides students with "a kind of vehicle which can lead us into a specific cultural context."

007 Brown, Meg. "The Allende/Mastretta Phenomenon in West Germany: When Opposite



Cultures Attract." Confluencia: Revista Hispanica de Cultura y Literatura 10.1 (Fall 1994): 89-97.

Studies the reasons behind Allende's success in West Germany. Claims that there are six primary factors that contribute to The House of the Spirits's presence on best seller lists for over four years: (1) Germans recognized her name because of her relation to Salvador Allende, whom they viewed favorably; (2) her German publisher was prestigious and academic; (3) she made several appearances in West Germany; (4) she was widely read by German feminists; (5) she had an easily readable style; and (6) Germans could relate to the political struggles of her stories, and she represented the exotic in an easily discernable form.

008 Bustamante-Marre, Cecelia. "Isabel Allende's House of Spirits." Censored Books II: Critical Viewpoints, 1985-2000. Ed. Nicholas J. Karolides. Maryland: The Scarecrow P, 2002. 225-233.

Defends the use of The House of the Spirits in public school classrooms. Points to the novel's value as a negative representation of violence, dictatorship, colonialism, and classism. Argues that the violence and sexuality in the novel, two common sources of complaints received from parents in schools, are tools the author uses to subvert traditional ideas about patriarchal and governmental dominance. Denies claims that the novel is anti-Catholic. Maintains that Allende's easily readable writing style and supernatural details make the book engaging for young readers, and her message of nonviolence and hope for the future make it a good choice for classrooms.

009 Carvalho, Susan de. "The Male Narrative Perspective in the Fiction of Isabel Allende." Journal of Hispanic Research 2 (1993-1994): 269-278.

Compares the male narration of Esteban Trueba in The House of the Spirits to the narration of the male character Gregory Reeves in The Infinite Plan. Points out similarities in that both men were “forced to drop their masculine façade of confidence and power” and acknowledge their reliance upon female characters in order to truthfully tell their stories and become complete people. Both narrators identify strongly with patriarchal roles, and both realize too late the damage that their conformity to these roles has done to their lives and the lives of those they love. Contrasts Allende’s male characters and their inability to fully express themselves without emasculating themselves to Allende’s female characters, exemplified by Alba, who stereotypically “find their fundamental fulfillment through motherhood.” Concludes that Allende’s men ultimately reject the patriarchal structure of their society.

010 Clancy, Laurie. “Isabel Allende’s Dialogue with Garcia Marquez: A Study in Literary

Debt.” Antipodas: Journal of Hispanic and Galician Studies 6-7 (1994-1995): 29-43.

Examines the similarities and differences in The House of the Spirits and One Hundred Years of Solitude. Engages with and elaborates upon Robert Antoni’s criticism. Points out such similarities as the unspecified, but hinted-at, country; the use of magical realism; the similarities between characters; and the use of similar motifs. Describes the divergences of the novels, through which Allende reveals her basic disagreement with the philosophies of Marquez. Includes among these differences Allende’s use of the Del Valle/Trueba women to show the progression of feminist thought, Allende’s use of comedy to undermine Marquez’s “pretensions,” and the use of a less than omniscient narrator. Insists that many of these differences lie in Allende’s Marxist perspective. Highlights the tension that Allende creates between magic and rationalism, with the latter slowly replacing the former throughout the

novel. Denies that the ending supports a circular view of history; counters that the ending suggests a completion.

011 Cohn, Deborah. "To See or Not to See: Invisibility, Clairvoyance, and Re-visions of History in Invisible Man and La casa de los espíritus." Comparative Literature Studies 33.4 (1996): 372-395.

Compares Ellison's use of magical realism to represent the situation of oppressed blacks in America to Allende's use of magical realism to represent the plight of women in repressive patriarchal Latin America. Points to the main characters' "shared problematic of marginalization." Argues that realism does not accurately represent the voice of the marginalized, since it is a construct of an unjust society and simply "affirms and perpetuates its own norms." Claims that both authors use magical realism to authorize alternate perceptions of history.

012 Cox, Karen Castelucci. "The House of the Spirits." Isabel Allende: A Critical Companion. Westport, CT: Greenwood P, 2003. 29-47.

Summarizes the plot. Analyzes all characters and their relationship to each other. Discusses the themes of life affirmation, forgiveness, abuse of power, family importance, and women's roles in political and social change. Situates the fictional events of the novel within Chile's historical context. Interprets the novel as a feminist critique of Chile's dominating patriarchal structure.

013 Cruz, Jhoanna. "Living On and the Women of Isabel Allende's The House of the Spirits." Likha 12.2 (1990-1991): 1-9.

Examines the concept of immortality in the novel and the differing ways in which the male characters (primarily Esteban Trueba) and the female characters (Clara, Blanca, and Alba)

seek to achieve it. Highlights the binaries that Allende creates between men and women through their accompanying characteristics. Posits that Allende situates women as passive, calm, and sensible, while men are violent and aggressive. Defines the ways in which these characteristics affect male and female paths to immortality: the women achieve this goal through their writing and storytelling, and Esteban attempts to achieve this through paternity. Posits that the women are successful because, as opposed to Esteban's, their attempts are fueled by love.

014 Davies, Lloyd. Isabel Allende: La casa de los espíritus. London: Grant & Cutler, 2000.

Traces the history of the novel's publication and critical reception, and provides a brief biography of Allende. Pinpoints the various genres in which The House of the Spirits is categorized--feminist, magical realist, and postmodernist—then outlines the ways in which the novel conforms to and deviates from these genres. Provides a detailed historical context for the novel. Analyzes the novel's social and political implications. Examines the mythical and carnivalesque aspects of the work and focuses on the cyclical time patterns. Highlights the testimonial and documentary aspects and praises Allende's ability to blend this with an engaging and easily readable style. Defends the novel's conclusion, claiming that it offers a feminist transcendence, not a capitulation to destiny and patriarchal forces.

015 Dulfano, Isabel. "Polyphonous Narrators and Kaleidoscopic Procedures in Isabel Allende's Casa de los espíritus." Chasqui: Revista de Literatura Latinoamericana 23.1 (May 1994): 3-9.

Uses the kaleidoscope as a metaphor for the structure of the text (seeing the same events through many perspectives). Dissects each narrative voice and analyzes its effect upon the

reader. Compares Alba's retelling of Clara and Nivea's stories to the impulse of black women writers to tell the stories of their matrilineage. Implies that Allende's use of many voices to recall the same events defines women as disparate individuals rather than a homogeneous group. Concludes that the text "vindicates a feminist perspective" of the political events of 1970s Chile.

016 Duran, Gloria. "Women and Houses – From Poe to Allende." Confluencia: Revista Hispanica de Cultura y Literatura 6.2 (Spring 1991): 9-15.

Examines the symbolic meaning of houses in literature, focusing on The House of the Spirits and the characteristics that distinguish its use of houses from other literature. Claims that Allende's use of "house" is not archetypal because within the house, men and women do not follow archetypal patterns. Suggests that Allende personifies the house, giving it two creators (Clara and Esteban) and states that throughout the novel the house "becomes schizophrenic." Compares male authors' perspectives on the house with Allende's, positing that within Allende's work the house never serves as a prison. Concludes that the house is a symbol of the self, as exemplified by Esteban becoming a complete person at the end of the novel when he chooses to live in the entire structure, rather than just his partition.

017 Espadas, Elizabeth. "Isabel Allende's La casa de los espíritus: Between the Chronicle, the Testimonial, and the Love Story." MACLAS: Latin American Essays 3 (1989): 133-140.

Interprets the novel as a blend of genres and discusses the identifying aspects of three of these. First, finds The House of the Spirits to be a chronicle of Chilean history as it traces the political and social developments of the country (although unnamed) through an

important period of time. Points out a major difference in this novel and others like it, namely One Hundred Years of Solitude, in the use of the female-centered narrative. Then explains the ways in which the novel fits the mold of a testimonial by recalling a (fictionalized) personal account of events that actually took place. Finally, views the novel as a love story, tracing the three major relationships that the book chronicles and how those relationships culminate in the conciliatory ending. Counters critics' claims that the ending exhibits a "fatalistic acceptance of the inevitability of the emergence of authoritarian and repressive regimes" by proposing that the ending suggests hope for the future.

018 Earle, Peter G. "Literature as Survival: Allende's The House of the Spirits."

Contemporary Literature 28.4 (Winter 1987): 543-554.

Summarizes the events of the story. Discusses the magical realism and political activism in the novel. Compares the views of characters of The House of the Spirits to politicians (namely Esteban Trueba to Henry Kissinger.) Equates Trueba with an aggressive and paternalistic view of history. Claims that Trueba ultimately suffers from his aggressive and regressive views through his children and grandchildren. Contrasts the viewpoint of Trueba with that of Clara, Blanca, and Alba. Suggests that each character is symbolic and that Clara is symbolic of the narrative writer. Interprets Allende's message to be that "the true heart of literature is neither pleasure nor knowledge, but survival."

019 Foreman, P. Gabrielle. "Past-On Stories: History and the Magically Real, Morrison and Allende On Call." Magical Realism: Theory, History, Community. Ed. Lois Parkinson Zamora and Wendy B. Faris. Durham: Duke U P (2000). 285-303.

Examines the relationships among factuality, memory, and magic, and women's role in mediating them, as exemplified by The House of the Spirits and Morrison's Song of Solomon. Proposes that Allende's revision of history fills in gaps left by traditional historical narratives that ignore women's experience. Points to the effect of Clara's "naming" of her children and her relationship with magic as proof of her reclamation of social and historical experience within the family. Posits that Allende uses magic within Chile's historical framework to "code" the text in an environment that is hostile to the truth of her work.

020 Frame, Scott McDonald. "The Literal and the Literary: A Note on the Historical References in Isabel Allende's La casa de espíritus." Studies in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Literature 27.2 (Summer 2003): 279-289.

Traces Pinochet's overthrow of Salvador Allende's government on September 11, 1973 and relates those documented facts to the fictionalized version of The House of the Spirits. Focuses on the characterization of Jaime as the doctor who attended to the President on the day he was killed; finds Jaime to be a possible composite of several actual doctors on the scene. Concludes that this close relation to historical fact, while problematic in terms of an actual historical account, provides ample material to differentiate The House of the Spirits from One Hundred Years of Solitude to silence critics who continue to argue that Allende's novel is merely a parody.

021 Frick, Susan R. "Memory and Retelling: The Role of Women in La casa de los espíritus." Journal of Iberian and Latin American Studies 7.1 (June 2001): 27-41.

Examines linear/cyclical patterns of time in The House of the Spirits, utilizing Julia Kristeva's work on the feminist conception of time. Compares the progression of the

women's movement to that of the del Valle/Trueba women. Focuses on the Trueba house as a metaphor for women's eventual invasion of the formerly male domain of politics. Observes the progress of each generation of Trueba women towards political and social equality. Concludes that the arrangement of The House of the Spirits mirrors Kristeva's three phases of feminism.

022 Friedman, Mary Lusk. "Isabel Allende and the More than Reliable Narrator."

Explicacion de Textos Literarios 24.1/2 (1995-96): 57-63.

Challenges Marcelo Couddou's (Spanish language) critique of The House of the Spirits. Explains Couddou's theory of extradiegetic and intradiegetic narrative modes: Allende mixes within the narration a sense that the narrator is participating/has participated in the events described (intradiegetic) and a sense that the narrator is an omniscient non-participant (extradiegetic). Gives examples of each in the text. Describes Couddou's judgment of these techniques as necessary to enable the reader to identify the narrators as those who experienced the political tragedies of the novel. Disagrees with Couddou on the effectiveness of this technique, as it requires the reader to believe that Alba, as narrator, is omniscient. Cites examples within the text of events and scenes that Alba could not have known about, yet which she relates.

023 Garcia Johnson, Ronie-Richele. "The Struggle for Space: Feminism and Freedom in The House of the Spirits." Revista Hispanica Moderna 47.1 (June 1994): 184-193. Rpt. in Isabel Allende. Ed. Harold Bloom. Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2003. 171-182.

Draws a comparison between the battle between the men and women of the novel over control of the Trueba house and the battle between men and women in the early part of the twentieth century. Claims that Esteban Trueba's aim in building the house is to "possess"



Clara; elaborates that his possessive tendencies toward women extend to all of those with whom he comes in contact. Juxtaposes the actual space of the house with the metaphorical “space” of the female body and mind. Insinuates that Clara triumphs over Esteban’s attempted domination by refusing to allow him access to those metaphorical spaces. Extends this concept to the ways in which the other Trueba women manipulated both actual and figurative spaces throughout the novel to overcome patriarchal domination.

024 Gomez Parham, Mary. “Isabel Allende’s La casa de los espíritus and the Literature of Matrilineage.” Discurso Literario: Revista de Temas Hispánicos 6.1 (Fall 1988): 193-201.

Defines “literature of matrilineage” as any literature that discusses bonds between generations of related women. Examines relationships between mothers and daughters throughout The House of the Spirits, discussing the closeness of the women and the inheritance of characteristics from generation to generation.

025 Hart, Patricia. Narrative Magic in the Fiction of Isabel Allende. Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1989.

Offers several definitions of magical realism and feminism, and then proffers her own term to describe Allende’s work: magical feminism. Questions the connections between The House of the Spirits and One Hundred Years of Solitude and seeks to determine whether Allende’s use of magic is unique. Analyzes Clara’s clairvoyance and her passivity, determining the former to be ineffective and the latter to be detrimental. Suggests that Allende ties the two elements together to expose the harmfulness of conforming to feminine norms and implies that the women of the novel progressively lose this clairvoyance as they become less passive. Traces other characters’ instances of foresight

throughout the novel and evaluates this as an effective device. Examines the function of books and storytelling in general, finding that the children who were privileged to read and hear idealistic tales became progressive adults and that the act of creating “good” narratives is liberating. Discusses the use of spirits in The House of the Spirits, and concludes that they are used much differently than in One Hundred Years of Solitude. Observes Allende’s inclusion of real-life folk singer Victor Jara in the character of Pedro Tercero, but debates her decision to change many of the details of Jara’s life. Analyzes the function of Rosa and Alba’s green hair and of color in general in the novel. Examines the possible readings of Esteban’s shrinking. Asserts the possibility that Allende’s work may have influenced Gabriel Garcia Marquez’s later work.

026 Hart, Stephen M. “Magical Realism in the Americas: Politicised Ghosts in One Hundred Years of Solitude, The House of the Spirits, and Beloved.” Journal of Iberian and Latin American Studies 9.2 (Dec. 2003): 115-123.

Describes the use of ghosts in the three texts as embodiments of politically, racially, or sexually oppressed members of society, created by the authors as a means of remarking on the injustice of that oppression. Points to Clara’s ghost as an embodiment of both sexual and political oppression, as she comes to Alba to bring feminine solidarity during her political imprisonment.

027 Helsper, Norma. “Binding the Wounds of the Body Politic: Nation as Family in la casa de los espíritus.” Critical Approaches to Isabel Allende’s Novels. Ed. Sonia Riquelme Rojas and Edna Aguirre Rehbein. New York: Peter Lang, 1991. 49-58. Rpt. in Isabel Allende. Ed. Harold Bloom. Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2003. 171-182.

Discusses Allende's representation of the traditional family as a façade. Compares the positive and negative aspects of traditional, patriarchal family structures through the progression of the Garcia family and the Trueba family. Implies that the Garcia family and the ultimate destruction and violence caused by Esteban Garcia at the novel's close represent the negative side of traditional patriarchy, as these events were set in motion by Esteban Trueba's dominating, cruel, patriarchally-sanctioned actions at the beginning of the novel. Cites the Trueba women and their class-blind, all-encompassing love as the positive side of these actions, all of which ultimately destroy the traditional family establishment.

028 Jackson, Mary-Garland. "A Psychological Portrait of Three Female Characters in La casa los espíritus." Letras Femininas 20.1-2 (Spring-Fall 1994): 59-70.

Examines the psychology of Clara, Blanca, and Alba and their withdrawal into a spiritual realm for sanctuary. Points to Clara's prediction of Rosa's death and her subsequent withdrawal into silence as an example of this. Elaborates with examples of the three women's other withdrawals from reality throughout the novel. Uses the Trueba house as a metaphor for the differences between Clara and Esteban and for her tendency to turn inward, as the exterior symbolizes Esteban's need to contain her, and the inside of the house symbolizes her retreat into herself. Concludes that the women of the novel use the house as a sanctuary, just as they use their own ability to depart from reality to bolster themselves spiritually.

029 Jenkins, Ruth Y. "Authorizing Female Voice and Experience: Ghosts and Spirits in Kingston's The Woman Warrior and Allende's The House of the Spirits." MELUS 19.3 (Fall 1994): 61.

Examines the effect of supernatural elements within a text on the perception of that text both within the culture of the writer who produced it and in the academic world. Suggests that both authors use silence to subvert the dominant social structure. Posits that Allende and Kingston use specters, magic, and (ironically) silence to re-appropriate the female voice, and though these unrealistic modes conflict with Western values, they re-vision feminine experience that is ignored by traditional history.

030 Jorgensen, Beth E. "Un punado de criticos': Navigating the Critical Readings of Isabel Allende's Work." Latin American Literary Review 30.60 (July 2002): 128. Rpt. in Isabel Allende Today. Ed. Rosemary G. Feal and Yvette E. Miller. Pittsburgh: Latin American Literary Review Press, 2002. 128-146.

Examines critical readings of Allende's writings. Expostulates upon the controversial issue of similarity between The House of the Spirits and Marquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude. Berates critics for ignoring Marquez's important historical and political contributions in an effort to support Allende's text. Explicates discussions of the novel as a feminist and magical realist text. Laments the lack of scholarship that questions Allende's approach to social and political justice.

031 Kovach: Claudia Marie. "Mask and Mirror: Isabel Allende's Mechanism for Justice in The House of the Spirits." Postcolonial Literature and the Biblical Call for Justice. Ed. Susan VanZanten Gallagher. Jackson: U P of Mississippi, 1994. 74-90. Rpt. in Isabel Allende. Ed. Harold Bloom. Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2003. 171-182.

Interprets The House of the Spirits as Allende's attempt to reconcile herself and her personal integrity with an unjust society. Compares the magical realism in the novel to the use of "masks" and "mirrors": the mirror being the representation of the real and the mask

the representation of the magical. Claims that through the use of masks and mirrors, this reconciliation and redemption is achieved. Elaborates upon the many metaphoric manifestations of the mirror and mask within the text.

032 Levine, Linda Gould. "A Passage to Androgyny: Isabel Allende's La casa de espíritus." In the Feminine Mode: Essays on Hispanic Women Writers. Ed. Noel Valis and Carol Maier. Cranbury, NJ: Bucknell U P, 1990. 164-173.

Draws a comparison between the novel's mix of magic and reality and Allende's approach to gender, mixing patriarchy with feminism. Cites as symbols of this amalgamation Alba's pen and womb at the end of the novel, as well as the dual narration of Alba and Esteban. Examines the role of literature in the novel in creating the characters' personalities: Clara's stories influence Alba, Pancha's stories influence Esteban Garcia. Links male characters to female through the situational similarities: For example, Pedro Tercero's mutilated fingers are the same as Blanca's, and Esteban's ambition mirrors Transito's.

033 Levine, Linda Gould. "The House of the Spirits." Isabel Allende. New York: Twayne, 2002. 18-37.

Traces the history of the publication of The House of the Spirits and its subsequent success. Details the novel's characters and summarizes the plot. Situates the novel within its historical framework and ties the fictional events to nonfictional Chilean struggles. Discusses Allende's use of magical realism in the text. Analyzes power relationships between men and women and between a patriarchal, classist, public society and a feminine, equalized, private sphere. Contrasts the circular nature of the story with the linear nature of man-made history. Concludes that the novel's ability to capture a large audience and to deliver a historically important message is at the heart of its success.

034 Magnarelli, Sharon. "Framing Power in Luisa Valenzuela's Cola de Lagartija (The Lizard's Tail) and Isabel Allende's Casa de los Espiritus (The House of the Spirits)." Splintering Darkness: Latin American Women Writers in Search of Themselves. Ed. Lucia Guerra Cunningham. Pittsburgh: Latin American Literary Review Press, 1990. 43-62.

Postulates that Valenzuela and Allende's novels question the validity of male-authored historical discourse. Contends that the "trivial" events recorded in Clara's notebooks ultimately change the course of Chilean history, proving that the patriarchal perspective of what is and is not significant is questionable. Draws comparisons between the two novels: both present a male, patriarchal narrator, both set off the male narration with white space within the text, both male narrators have inaccurate visions of themselves, both use repetition and a "bidirectional structure." Concludes that although female narrators in each novel at times are marginalized, both possess subtle power.

035 Magnarelli, Sharon. "Luisa Valenzuela and Isabel Allende: Latin American Politics from the Female Perspective." Discurso: Revista de Estudios Iberoamericanos 11.2 (Jan. 1994): 79-90.

Compares the ways in which The House of the Spirits and The Lizard's Tail represent women's infiltration into the political domain in 1970s Latin America. Traces similarities between the two authors' approaches: interesting readers in the personal aspects of the story in order to distract them from the political aspects, undermining a patriarchal male narrator by providing a more trustworthy female narrator, and creating a meta-narrative, as one character refers to the text she is writing as readers read it.

036 Mandrell, James. "The Prophetic Voice in Garro, Morante, and Allende." Comparative

Literature 42.3 (Summer 1990): 227.

Examines the ways in which contemporary historical novels written by women differ from those written by men. Argues against the theories of Alessandro Manzoni, who opposed the conflation of history and fiction in the historical novel. Proposes that women's historical novels employ a "prophetic voice," which has the capacity to explore a disruption in the social fabric of the setting. Asserts that of the three novelists and novels examined, Allende's prophetic voice, with its suggestion of future societal change in The House of the Spirits, is loudest. Cites Clara's ability to divine future events as proof. Concludes that a fictional interpretation of history provides groundwork for a possible re-invention of the future.

037 Martinez, Z. Nelly. "Isabel Allende's The House of the Spirits: The Emergence of a Feminine Space." Tiger Lily Magazine (1990): 49-57.

Examines the creation of a feminine space in The House of the Spirits through the trope of the "wild zone." Explores the concept of the witch/goddess archetypes and the expression of these through Allende's characters. Posits that Clara creates a wild zone/feminine space in the Trueba household. Elaborates that women's "procreative power" and ability to function as the "other" are central to the characters' construction in terms of the witch/goddess trope. Further explores womb symbolism throughout the novel.

038 Martinez, Z. Nelly. "The Politics of the Woman Artist in Isabel Allende's House of Spirits." Writing the Woman Artist: Essays on Poetics, Politics, and Portraiture. Ed. Suzanne W. Jones. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1991. 287-306.

Explores Alba's development as a writer as a result of her imprisonment. Contends that the torture she endured and overcame empowered her creatively. Ties the idea of the "witch"

in its three phases (maiden, mother, and crone) directly to the Trueba women, whom Kelly claims possess an ability to overcome the male dominated social order through their subversive magic and connection with an erotic life spirit. Explores power of patriarchy throughout the novel, positing that Alba's survival and ability to speak her story at the end ultimately shift this power balance towards traditionally feminine modes of thinking.

039 Masse, Michelle. "The Gothic's Vile Bodies." Gothic Studies 2.1 (Apr. 2000): 157-172.

Argues that subordination and dominance, primary indicators of a Gothic text, are not intrinsic to the society in which they are observed, but are constructs of that society, and that the dominated is defined by his or her sex, race, and class. Points to instances in The House of the Spirits as examples of this, primarily the relationship between Colonel Garcia and Alba Trueba. Traces the development of Colonel Garcia's character, defining the moments that transformed his personality into that of a cruel dominator. Observes Alba's reluctance to continue the dominator/dominated relationship by refusing to seek revenge for her mistreatment and insisting on continuing to see herself as human despite her circumstances.

040 McCallister, Richard. "Nomenclatura in La casa de los espíritus." Critical Approaches to

Isabel Allende's Novels. Ed. Sonia Riquelme Rojas and Edna Aguirre Rehbein. New

York: Peter Lang, 1991. 21-35.

Discusses the social, political, and historical importance of names in The House of the Spirits, beginning with the surnames "del Valle" and "Trueba." Ties the definitions associated with these names and their various connotations to the characteristics exhibited by the two families. Highlights the similarity of meaning in the names of the Trueba women and traces the progression of these names throughout the natures of the women.



Compares the fictional characters to Allende's own relations and points out the ways in which the names are meant to symbolize various aspects of their personalities. Shows the repetition of characteristics throughout the family's lineage through the similarities and repetitions in names.

041 Meacham, Cherie. "The Metaphysics of Mother/Daughter Renewal in La casa de los espíritus and Paula." Hispanofila 131 (Jan. 2001) 93-108.

Applies the myth of Persephone and Demeter to two of Allende's novels. Analyzes the ways in which the two works use the myth, pinpointing similarities and differences. Variousy describes Rosa, Clara, Blanca, and Alba as the "maiden" of the myth. Posits Clara as both maiden and mother because of her unwillingness to give up her personal pursuits to selflessly care for her husband and children. Suggests that the cyclical nature of The House of the Spirits reflects the never-ending cycle of the Persephone/Demeter myth. Concludes that through the two novels, Allende succeeds in overturning the patriarchal idea that women must separate themselves from their mothers and daughters and focus their attention on the men in their lives.

042 Meyer, Doris. "'Parenting the Text': Female Creativity and Dialogic Relationships in Isabel Allende's La casa de espíritus." Hispania 73.2 (May 1990): 360-365. Rpt. in Isabel Allende. Ed. Harold Bloom. Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2003. 171-182.

Interprets The House of the Spirits through the theories of Helene Cixous and Mikhail Bakhtin, focusing on the duality of narrators (Alba and Esteban). Claims that Allende's aims of establishing a new society with feminine values are similar to those of Cixous. Postulates that Alba's eventual narrative control subverts the power of male dominance, mirroring the

male/female power balance throughout the novel. Adds that the “polyvocality” of the text serves as a metaphor for a new, many-voiced community.

043 Monet-Viera, Molly. “Post-Boom Magical Realism: Appropriations and Transformations of a Genre.” Revista de Estudios Hispánicos 38.1 (Jan. 2004): 95-117.

Distinguishes between the traditional magical realism of “the boom” and newer modes of the “post-boom.” Elaborates on Robert Antoni’s defense of The House of the Spirits as distinctive from One Hundred Years of Solitude, claiming that Allende not only subverts the use of magical realism but abandons it altogether. Utilizes Amaryll Chanady’s definition of magical realism to make the point that Allende’s use of magic places her text outside the traditional magical realist mode. Cites as an example the townspeople’s negative attitude toward Clara’s supernatural gifts; in a magical realist text, the supernatural would be accepted by the society around her. Elaborates that Clara gives up on her spiritualism after experiencing tragedies; claims that this shows Allende’s view that magic is a “frivolous and futile mode.” Concludes that Allende suggests through her novel that magical realism is not truly representative of Latin American culture.

044 Moody, Michael. “Isabel Allende and the Testimonial Novel.” Confluencia: Revista Hispanica de Cultura y Literatura 2.1 (Fall 1986): 39-43.

Identifies The House of the Spirits and Of Love and Shadow as testimonial novels.

Explicates Allende’s experiences as a journalist in Chile before and after the overthrow of Salvador Allende’s government. Ties actual events of 1970’s Chile to fictionalized events in Allende’s novels. Posits that Allende’s philosophies about the power of love and forgiveness to overcome extreme tragedy and effect permanent change permeate her work.

045 Moore, Pamela L. “Testing the Terms: ‘Woman’ in The House of the Spirits and One

Hundred Years of Solitude.” The Comparatist 18 (May 1994): 90-100.

Compares the role of women in Marquez’s seminal work to that in The House of the Spirits. Points out that a similarity between the two works is that time is cyclical for women and linear for men. Establishes both that women are “relegated to private and mythic spheres while men dominate the masculine worlds of the public and historical” and that women have no identity without men in Marquez’s novel. Contrasts this with Allende’s work by situating the fictional female characters of The House of the Spirits within Pinochet’s ideological government and describes documented acts of torture upon women during this time. Connects magic and silence with femininity, claiming that the Trueba women are saved by clinging to these feminine elements. Concludes that the cyclical nature of women’s time in Allende’s novel ultimately enables the women to grow personally and enables them to change their society as a whole.

046 Navarro Tejero, Antonia and Manuel Cabello Pino. “Magical Realism in Arundhati Roy and Isabel Allende: The Experience of Dislocation.” Figures of Belatedness: Postmodern Fiction in English. Cordoba, Spain: Universidad de Cordoba, 2006. 225-237.

Compares The House of the Spirits to Roy’s The God of Small Things, analyzing both novels’ use of magical realism to represent the reality of postcolonial marginalization and dislocation. Focuses on sexual repression based on class (Allende’s Blanca/Pedro Tercero and Roy’s Ammu/ Valutha relationships), corruption of characters resistant to social change (Allende’s Esteban Trueba and Roy’s Baby Kochamma), and silence as a “a symbolic way of expressing the trauma of the colonized.” Implies that both authors use the personal

narratives of their characters as “microcosms” of their national situation. Defines magical realism as a tool with which to critique society and provide a “rewriting of historical past.”

047 Palaversich, Diana. “Skeletons in the Closet: Reading Sexuality in Allende’s La casa de los espíritus.” Revista de Estudios Hispánicos 23.2 (1996): 211-227.

Observes that critics have largely ignored a homosexual reading of The House of the Spirits.

Analyzes the characters Count Satigny and Ferula and their positions as sexual “others.”

Interprets Allende’s portrayal of the Count, Blanca’s rejection and fear of his difference, the

Gothic nature of the setting in which he is portrayed as most comfortable, and his final

interment away from the family in a pauper’s grave as proof of Allende’s non-

progressiveness with regard to sexuality. Interprets Alba’s narration of Ferula’s love for

Clara, in which she implies that she is a lesbian but refuses to fully acknowledge it, as

“lesbian panic” on Alba’s part. Suggests that Ferula’s “unnaturalness” is a threat to the

hegemonic relationship of Clara and Esteban and therefore “requires [her] violent removal

from the plot.” Contends that this treatment of homosexual characters in a text which is

meant to critique the hegemony marks the novel as ultimately non-progressive.

048 Panjabi, Kavita. “The House of the Spirits, Transito Soto: From Periphery to Power.”

Critical Approaches to Isabel Allende’s Novels. Ed. Sonia Riquelme Rojas and Edna

Aguirre Rehbein. New York: Peter Lang, 1991. 11-20.

Argues that the character of Transito Soto is the only woman of the novel to break away

from patriarchal strictures entirely. Claims Transito uses her occupation as a prostitute to

seize sexual power, freedom, and equal footing with the dominating male figures of the

novel. Maintains that because of her position on the margins of society, Transito is not

subject to the same patriarchal rules as the other women and therefore gains financial and

personal freedoms that are systematically denied to the Trueba women. Suggests that Transito's rescue of Alba reveals that she is necessary to the survival of the privileged and shows her power to manipulate political figures.

049 Pinet, Carolyn. "Choosing Barrabas: Dog as Text and Text as Dog in Isabel Allende's La casa de los espiritus." Hispanofila 123 (May 1998): 55-65. Rpt. in Isabel Allende. Ed. Harold Bloom. Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2003. 171-182.

Focuses on the competing narratives of The House of the Spirits, analyzing the idea of what is "trivial" to history and how those trivialities reveal differing experiences of history by women and others on the margins. Uses Barrabas as a "cypher" in the text, tracing the way his appearance, death, and reappearance coincide with and overshadow historical happenings. Discusses the act of female "poaching" and its impact on the text; cites Clara's re-appropriation of Latin American narratives as an example. Decides that Barrabas's position at the beginning and at the end of the story defines its circularity and symbolizes the circularity of history.

050 Robinett, Janet. "The Power of Technology and the Limits of Magic: Allende's The House of the Spirits." This Rough Magic: Technology in Latin American Fiction. New York: Peter Lang, 1994. 101-152.

Distinguishes between Marquez's use of magic in One Hundred Years of Solitude and Allende's, pointing out that each author's conception of the function of magic is quite different. Interprets Clara's gift of clairvoyance as an example of the limitation of magic in Allende's text, as evidenced by her family's refusal to accept many of her warnings and Clara's imprecise predictions. Underscores the relationship of magic to technology by relating Pedro Garcia's method of ant removal with that of the city-dwelling "expert,"

revealing that technology and urban environments remove the possibility of magic, as it is connected with the earth and living things. Remarks on Esteban Trueba's conception of magic (associated with women and the indigenous) as inferior to "foreign" technology and suggests that Ferula's curse and science's failure to alter it prove this incorrect. Compares magic to justice and technology to charity, implying that the latter elements are pretensions to the former. Favors a return to a natural, magical state of being and suggests that Allende and Marquez's novels recommend this, as well.

051 Robinett, Janet. "'Military Technology as Political Authority: Allende's The House of the Spirits.'" This Rough Magic: Technology in Latin American Fiction. New York: Peter Lang, 1994. 215-250.

Analyzes the military's use of technology to dominate in The House of the Spirits. Traces the militarization of technology throughout the timeframe of the novel, beginning with the first elections whose results were guaranteed by the force of the military. Discusses the use of the radio as a technological tool of both the government and the revolution. Examines the creation of the soldier as a machine, finding examples in the de-humanization of the soldier through uniform and conformity and through the process of turning his own body into a weapon. Proposes that technology is used as torture in Allende's text. Notes that the novel serves as a warning to the future about the conflation of civil and militaristic goals.

052 Roof, Maria. "Maryse Conde and Isabel Allende: Family Saga Novels." World Literature Today 70.2 (Spring 1996): 283.

Compares Allende's work to that of Conde, citing both authors' use of "multigenerational family sagas using autobiographical elements." Proposes that Allende and Conde create new positions within the family for women and nontraditional (formerly excluded)

members. Contends that Allende redefines the family as matrilineal and inclusionary of all classes and races.

053 Rippon, Maria R. "Ideas of Hope and Fatality in Allende's La casa de los espíritus."

Postscript: Publication of the Philological Association of the Carolinas 15 (1998): 33-41.

Challenges the idea that a political novel cannot be considered as a literary work, because all works are written and read within the framework of some ideology. Utilizes the Bakhtinian concept of polyphony to analyze the "many voices" of The House of the Spirits. Characterizes Esteban Trueba's voice as that of a paternalist, an ideology which is rejected by the other voices, Clara and Alba. Identifies Clara's voice as "leftist" and Alba's as the culmination of progressive thought. Posits that while Allende creates the assumption of fate and the circularity of history through her repetition of events and family characteristics, this repetition is interrupted by Blanca and Alba's move toward independence from men.

054 Saona, Margarita. "Do We Still Need the Family to Imagine the Nation? National Family

Romances by Latin American Women Writers." Disciplines on the Line: Feminist Research on Spanish, Latin American, and U.S. Latina Women. Ed. Anne J. Cruz, Rosilie Hernandez-Pecoraro, and Joyce Tolliver. Newark, DE: Juan de la Cuesta, 2003. 207-231.

Debates the formulation of the family in The House of the Spirits and three other novels. Cites Allende's emphasis on matrilineal heritage, mother-daughter bonding, female narration, and the feminine re-articulation of the nation's history as changes to the script of "family," differentiating its family construction significantly from One Hundred Years of

Solitude. Contends that Allende fails to challenge ideas of class structure and gender stereotyping. Concludes that a new formulation of family and nation is still in progress.

055 Schiminovich, Flora H. "Two Modes of Writing the Female Self: Isabel Allende's House of Spirits and Clarice Lispector's The Stream of Life." Gender and Genre in Literature: Redefining Autobiography in Twentieth-Century Women's Fiction. Ed. Janice Morgan and Colette T. Hall. New York: Garland, 1991. 103-116.

Examines the autobiographical elements of The House of the Spirits. Posits that the novel requires the reader to re-examine traditional definitions of autobiography. Points to the use of journals as a site for the vocalization of feminine experience and the nonfictional historical background of the novel as examples of autobiographical elements. Compares Allende's strategy for writing her "self" into the text of history with Clarice Lispector's strategy for writing her "self" into artistic presence.

056 Schwalm, Tanja. "'Relax and Enjoy the Show': Circensian Animal Spaces in Australian and Latin American Magical Realist Fiction." Journal of Commonwealth Literature 41.3 (Sep. 2006): 83-102.

Analyzes the influence of circus traditions in The House of the Spirits and three other novels, utilizing Mikhail Bakhtin's work on the carnivalesque. Draws a distinction between Bakhtin's carnival and the circus. Posits that there is a separation of performer and audience in the circus that does not exist in the carnival. Compares the circus to magical realism by revealing that both conflate magic with everyday life. Cites as examples of Allende's use of "circensian space" her depiction of animals as human-esque and of humans as not quite human (Barrabas, Uncle Marco's parrot, and Rosa's green hair are all noted).



Posits that these animal-human “hybrid” characters’ major roles in the novel draw attention to the power of marginalized/oppressed factions.

057 Shea, Maureen. “A Growing Awareness of Sexual Oppression in the Novels of Contemporary Latin American Women Writers.” Confluencia: Revista Hispanica de Cultura y Literatura 4.1 (Fall 1988): 53-59.

Observes patterns in four novels by Latin American women, including The House of the Spirits. Notes that such patterns involve as the use of a female narrator, the female body as the site of patriarchal abuse, and women’s unity in defending themselves against such abuses. Cites Alba as an example of the female narrator who exposes the injustice and damage inflicted by the patriarchy. Also explains Alba’s role in revealing the abuses suffered by women at the hands of patriarchal oppressors by citing Alba’s torture and rape by Esteban Garcia, as sanctioned by the dictatorial government. Points out Alba’s rescue and rehabilitation by the women of the prison and by the woman of the shanty-town where she is dumped as an example of “solidarity among women to oppose patriarchal repression.”

058 Sheffield, Carrie. “Voices from the Political Abyss: Isabel Allende’s The House of the Spirits and Preservation of History and Memory in 1970s Chile and Beyond.” Proteus: A Journal of Ideas 19.2 (Fall 2002): 33-38.

Posits The House of the Spirits as Allende’s attempt to combat the disappearance of the actual history of Chile. Quotes Roland Barthes’s idea of the naturalized myth to explain the prevailing story of the military coup of 1973: the real history has been erased and replaced by a myth that serves as “a tool for the obfuscation of truth and oppression of dominated people.” Claims that Allende’s focus on “trivia” details is subversive because it allows for

the possibility of all details as important and further allows for more than one version of events. Focuses on the United States' involvement in the coup, and the subsequent denial of this involvement. Points to Allende's novel as a way of bringing this truth to light.

059 Shields, E. Thomson, Jr. "Ink, Blood, and Kisses: La casa de los Espiritus and the Myth of Disunity." Hispanofila 33.3 (May 1990): 360-365. Rpt. in Isabel Allende. Ed. Harold Bloom. Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2003. 171-182.

Uses the words "ink, blood, and kisses" from a speech by Allende as metaphors for the ways in which The House of the Spirits combines divergent perspectives without privileging any. Cites as examples Blanca and Pedro Tercero's differing reactions to the "fox and hens" tale, the vastly differing perspectives on the rapes of Pancha Garcia and Alba, and the multiple voices of multiple narrators. Posits that all the viewpoints are valid, with none being pinpointed as "correct." Claims that Allende thus creates an "irreconcilable plurality" in the novel.

060 Shinn, Thelma J. "Magic Realism: Isabel Allende." Women's Shapeshifters: Transforming the Contemporary Novel. Westport, CT: Greenwood P, 1996. 87-99.

Observes the roles of language and naming in The House of the Spirits and examines the use of animal characters and imagery. Discusses the patterns and images of houses within the story and explains the significance of each. Explores the idea of the subjugated female body and the female characters' final triumph over this subjugation. Contends that the narrative is cyclical, as opposed to linear, and therefore ultimately feminine.

061 Swanson, Philip. "Isabel Allende and La casa de los espíritus: Tyrants and Trash." The

New Novel in Latin America: Politics and Popular Culture After the Boom.

Manchester: Manchester U P, 1985. 145-170. Rpt. in Isabel Allende. Ed. Harold Bloom. Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2003. 171-182.

Considers criticisms levelled by Gabriela Mora (in Spanish) and others who claim that the novel is anti-feminist. Finds them to be “irrelevant and unjustified.” Points out a connection between women’s struggle for equality and the class struggle present within the novel.

Compares elements and characters of The House of the Spirits with those in the work of Jose Donoso. Discusses the character of Esteban Trueba as an exemplar of the ideology that was pervasive in colonial Latin America. Compares the shift in accessibility from Clara’s writing to Alba’s writing to the shift in accessibility “from Boom to post-Boom.” Addresses the question of the novel’s relationship to One Hundred Years of Solitude and finds The House of the Spirits to be more firmly grounded in history and more politically viable.

Criticizes the ending of the novel as “utopian,” but reads it as an attempt at reconciliation between all opposing groups in the novel. Also finds the ending to be progressive rather than circular. Concludes that although many academics find the commerciality of the novel to be a marker of its non-value as a literary work, the opposite may actually be true, as it brings the aesthetics of the Boom to a wider audience while retaining its political import.

062 Yousaf, Nahem. “Explorations of Latin American ‘Realities’: One Hundred Years of Solitude and The House of the Spirits.” Wasafiri: Journal of Caribbean, African, Asian, and Associated Literatures and Film 24 (Autumn 1996): 10-16.

Berates critics Marguerite Alexander and Raymond Williams for their assessments of Latin American literature. Maintains that the representation of reality by these Latin American authors cannot be measured against that of Western writers; to try to assess them in that

way is to “attempt to assimilate Latin America into a Eurocentric worldview.” Claims that both Allende and Marquez use their vision of reality to expose the political and social inequities of their respective countries and to contradict the “official” record of history, which often ignores and obscures the truth. Finds The House of the Spirits to be not a re-writing of Marquez’s novel, but a sending of a message that is hopeful and conciliatory.

063 Zamora, Lois Parkinson. “The Magical Tables of Isabel Allende and Remedios Varo.”

Comparative Literature 44.2 (Spring 1992): 113.

Compares the magical elements of The House of the Spirits with the magical elements found in the paintings of Remedios Varo. Points to a feminine magical energy depicted in both works and the dual worlds of reality and magic in which the women of the paintings and of Allende’s novel exist. Examines the use of anthropomorphic elements of the occult as common facets of both works. Links Clara’s “spinning table” in The House of the Spirits to an actual Varo painting depicting a similar scene. Invokes Alejo Carpentier’s explanation of magical realism to define both the novel and the paintings.



## OF LOVE AND SHADOW

### A. INTRODUCTION

Of Love and Shadow, Isabel Allende's second novel, continues many of the themes of The House of the Spirits. This novel, too, is set in an unnamed country that bears a striking resemblance to Chile under the rule of Pinochet. Again, we have a young female protagonist who struggles against a corrupt government, and her struggle reveals both the deception of that government and the plight of the poor and lower classes within that country. Irene Beltran is this novel's protagonist, and she was born into an upper-class family which has since fallen on hard times. Her mother has turned the family home into a retirement home, and Irene makes extra money by reporting for a magazine. One journalistic endeavor that her magazine arranges for her is to tell the story of Evangelina Ranquileo, a young girl from a remote village who has been having seizures during which she is said to perform miracles. During this expedition, Irene becomes aware, along with her photographer Francisco Leal, that the government has intervened in the life of Evangelina, and that she is missing. Irene and Francisco attempt to locate the girl and discover proof of the military's corruption when they stumble upon the body of Evangelina and then five others, all tortured and mutilated. Amidst this intrigue, Irene and Francisco fall in love. Irene is shot by the military in an effort to silence her, but she survives and is recovering from her wounds. Irene exposes the cover-up to the media, and she and Francisco flee from the country to escape further retaliation by the government.

Compared with The House of the Spirits, many readers find Of Love and Shadow to be a lesser work. Patricia Hart (item 065) finds the book to be lacking in suspense and plot: "...in La casa de los espíritus [Allende] proved her ability to narrate a tale that keeps the reader anxious to know what will happen next. But as much as one wishes to avoid the odious, invidious comparison, somehow one feels obliged to point out that this basic narrative suspense is to a large extent missing from De

amor y de sombra.”Hart cites believability problems in the love story as well as in the novel’s political intrigue.

There are several autobiographical elements of this novel, as pointed out by Marita Wentzel (item 069): Allende herself acted as a journalist during the Pinochet regime’s rule and fled the country to escape the brutality she uncovered there. Readers also see Allende’s political leanings in the novel. Karen Castelucci Cox (item 064) gives the text a Marxist reading, and categorizes the bourgeois characters and the proletariat, concluding that the reader is encouraged to identify strongly with the socialist figures in the novel.

A point of contention among critics is whether Of Love and Shadow reflects a feminist viewpoint. Patricia Hart (item 065) sees the work as ultimately exhibiting her term “magical feminism,” although, as mentioned above, she believes the work fails as a novel: “this novel, though undoubtedly well-intentioned, fails at times as an entertainment and as fiction.” In addition to the problems of plot and plausibility, Hart cites as part of her reasoning the superficiality of the characters, particularly Irene Beltran, who shows her persona primarily through the clothes that she wears, rather than through her actions and thought processes. Catherine Perricone (item 068) also comments on the use of dress as a signifier of personality among the characters, but does not leave us with a judgment of the novel on this basis. Doris Meyer (item 066) finds that the women of Of Love and Shadow all capitulate in some way to the patriarchal order and fail to resist those imposed strictures of behavior and thought. However, Meyer concludes that Irene’s ultimate realization of the damage that this patriarchal order (personified by the Pinochet regime) has done to her country reveals Allende’s stance that “women must turn silent complicity into outspoken activism.”

Berta Lopez Morales (item 67) sees Allende’s use of language and “linguistic codes” as subversive of the patriarchal order in the book, as Allende uses language about rape and abortion to

reveal the violence implicit in these acts and to subvert traditional modes of thought about the issues.

There are several issues presented in Of Love and Shadow that scholarship has, at the time of this writing, failed to address. The issue of politics is broached by Karen Castelluci Cox (item 064), as she gives the work a Marxist treatment, but questions about nationalism and women's role in the political landscape are left unaddressed. Similarly, the postcolonial aspects of this novel have been ignored. Unlike The House of the Spirits, little work has been done to question the genre into which this novel falls. The Boom/post-Boom question that so plagued critics of The House of the Spirits has not been asked of Of Love and Shadow, and the novel's magical realist aspects and their significance have been mentioned only by Patricia Hart (item 065) as she explains why the work fits within her definition of "magical feminism." Where this novel fits within the canon of Latin American fiction is undecided and largely undebated.



## B. ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

064 Cox, Karen Castelluci. "Of Love and Shadows." Isabel Allende: A Critical Companion. Westport, CT: Greenwood P, 2003. 49-70.

Summarizes the plot, characters, and historical context of Of Love and Shadow. Applies a Marxist perspective to the reading, finding the novel to be a "political treatise deriding dictatorial rule and embracing socialist reform." Finds bourgeois characteristics in the maligned characters of Beatriz and Eusebio Beltran and proletariat characteristics in the Leal family and concludes that the novel "gives the working poor of Chile a voice with which to tell the world their stories, and perhaps overturn the injustices to which they have been subjected."

065 Hart, Patricia. "De amor y de sombra: Magic Abjured?" Narrative Magic in the Fiction of Isabel Allende. Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1989. 136-158.

Examines the problems within the narrative of Of Love and Shadow, including the novel's lack of suspense and the protagonist's lack of personality. Contends that Irene Beltran's character and her metamorphosis into a political dissident are superficial, and the sex scenes and romantic interludes in the story are lackluster and trite. Finds most of the plot, and the actions of the two main characters, unbelievable and the "similarity of the narrative voices" a failure. Concludes that "in this novel Allende's 'magical feminism' seems to have derailed," although there are some passages, "especially in regard to the magic of the unfortunate Evangelina," which bear it out.

066 Meyer, Doris. "Exile and the Female Condition in Isabel Allende's De amor y de sombra." The International Fiction Review 15.2 (Summer 1988): 151-157.

Analyzes Of Love and Shadow's female characters and the way that they function within their male-dominated world. Finds that they "are resourceful and often independent, but unquestioning of the world as it is," meaning that they do not attempt to challenge the patriarchal dominance under which they live. Points to the ways in which the characters Beatriz Beltran, Hilda Leal, Evangelina Ranquileo, Rosa the servant, and Irene Beltran all conform to social order, but contends that Irene's realization of the horrors perpetrated by the dictatorship and her subsequent outspoken resistance to the government are signs of Allende's belief "that women must turn silent complicity into outspoken activism."

067 Morales, Berta Lopez. "Language of the Body in Women's Texts." Splintering Darkness: Latin American Women Writers in Search of Themselves. Ed. Lucia Guerra

Cunningham. Pittsburgh: Latin American Literary Review Press, 1990. 123-129.

Analyzes women's writing and use of linguistic codes to subvert "the structure of power within society." Cites the work of Allende in Of Love and Shadow as one example of this. Points to Allende's transformation of the concepts of menstruation, old age, rape, and abortion in the novel as subversive uses of language. Concludes that further inquiry needs to be made into women writers' use of "the discourse of the body" to subvert traditional power structures.

068 Perricone, Catherine R. "Iconic/Metaphoric Dress and Other Nonverbal Signifiers in De amor y de sombra." Isabel Allende. Ed. Harold Bloom. Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2003. 43-54.

Utilizes psycholinguistic concepts to analyze the way dress and nonverbal communicative techniques function within the narrative of Of Love and Shadow. Cites numerous examples of the way dress conveys impressions of personality in the novel and the way changing

attire reveals a shift in thinking. Provides examples from the text of the ways in which symbolic acts by the characters become metaphorical. Concludes that the use of these signifiers “immediately arouses and sustains the reader’s interest throughout the novel.”

069 Wenzel, Marita. “The ‘Other’ Side of History as Depicted in Isabel Allende’s Of Love and Shadow.” Literator 17.3 (Nov. 1996): 1-13.

Claims that Allende’s purpose for writing Of Love and Shadow is to vent her own rage at the oppressive Pinochet dictatorship that caused so much tumult in her life, as well as to record a personal version of history that recuperates women’s testimony of events. Contends that Allende “conflates fiction and history, the personal and the political” and exposes the problems of a postcolonial, patriarchal society.

## EVA LUNA

### A. INTRODUCTION

Eva Luna, set in Venezuela, is the life story of a young girl by that name who is born to a servant mother and an Indian father—the product of a chance sexual encounter. The story follows Eva’s life as it progresses through the death of her mother and her time in several foster homes. As Eva becomes a young woman, she begins to find her gifts as a storyteller and takes advantage of these gifts to help herself and others around her. She becomes entangled with a young rebel, Huberto Naranjo, and is befriended by the local “women of the night,” with whom she lives (but does not work). After a government shutdown of the ladies’ business operations, Eva is homeless again, until she meets Riad Halabi, who offers her a home in exchange for light housekeeping duties. She spends several years with him, until circumstances in the town make it impossible for her to stay, and she returns to the city. She is quickly reunited with the transvestite Mimi, whose career progresses into stardom, and Eva’s fate is uplifted along with it. Eva begins to write storylines for the soap opera that stars Mimi. She also meets Lukas Carle, a photographer of German descent who hails from the small German enclave of La Colonia. Eva becomes involved with Carle, and together they help Naranjo’s rebel band outwit the powerful and corrupt government that has taken control of the country.

Critics of this work find that the overriding themes of Allende’s past work are also present here. One of these is her use of magical realism. Lynne Diamond Nigh (item 072), Amanda Neetleback (item 076), and Patricia Hart (item 074) all comment on the magical realism pervasive in the book. Hart sees the work as another example of

Allende's "magical feminist" perspective. Peter G. Earle (item 073) harks back to a question that Allende has inspired since House of the Spirits: is this work representative of the Latin American "Boom" period, or is it a harbinger of the post-Boom era? Earle finds that Eva Luna represents the latter, as the values presented (for example, a focus on love as a corrective force in a corrupt society) correspond with the response to Boom fiction and a move away from the values present in Boom literature. Wolfgang Karrer (item 075) finds the novel to be postmodern because of its use of metafictional devices, and Edna Aguirre Rehbein (item 077) defines the novel as a traditional picaresque one.

Eva Luna's evolution as a storyteller is discussed by Edna Aguirre Rehbein (item 077) and Eliana S. Rivero (item 078). Both critics find different significance in Eva Luna's storytelling: Rehbein finds that Eva's stories serve as a defense against and a retreat from her hostile environment, while Rivero believes that the stories offer salvation for Eva, the other women of the story, and women in general.

B. ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

070 Cox, Karen Castelucci. "Eva Luna." Isabel Allende: A Critical Companion. Westport, CT: Greenwood P, 2003. 71-92.

Summarizes the plot, the characters and their development, and the themes of Eva Luna. Analyzes the novel's feminist perspective, noting the sexual freedom and autonomy of the majority of the female characters, Allende's exploration of male and female roles through Melecio, and Eva's ultimate rejection of Huberto Naranjo as a sexist guerrilla.

071 Craig, Herbert E. "The Search for an Equal Mate in Two Novels about Venezuela:

Ifigenia (1924) by Teresa de la Perra and Eva Luna (1987) by Isabel Allende." The Platte Valley Review 20.1 (1992): 66-74.

Compares the work of an earlier Latin American woman with that of Allende in Eva Luna with regard to each author's differing representations of women and their plight in the societies of their time. Contrasts Maria, the protagonist of Ifigenia, with Eva, finding that Maria's place in time did not allow her to marry for love and find true fulfillment with a partner she considered to be an equal, whereas Eva's era allowed her to reject suitors who did not allow her equality within the relationship. Finds that both protagonists share a society filled with "the same notions of male superiority," but that Eva, as a modern woman, overcomes this and chooses a partner "based upon love and cosmic attraction." Concludes that Allende's portrait of life for the Latin American woman is hopeful.

072 Diamond-Nigh, Lynne. "Eva Luna: Writing as History." Studies in 20<sup>th</sup> Century

Literature 19.1 (Winter 1995): 29-42. Rpt. in Isabel Allende. Ed. Harold Bloom. Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2003. 133-144.

Traces the mythological element of Eva Luna by examining Eva's "births" throughout the novel; finds that components of her personality are born and integrated in stages. Analyzes the use of naming as a mythological element, as well as the circularity of time and the merging of dichotomies (male/female, for example). Finds the villages of La Colonia and Agua Santa to be magically real. Points out all of the literary references within the text, from Garcia Marquez to A Thousand and One Nights.

073 Earle, Peter G. "Back to the Center: Hispanic American Fiction Today." Hispanic Review 58.1 (Winter 1990): 19-35.

Reflects upon the progression and divergences of Latin American literature since the "Boom" of the late 1960s. Points to an increasing representation of love as one of the key attributes of post-Boom fiction. Cites Eva Luna as one of the novels containing such an attribute, as well as most of the three other signs of return to traditional (pre-Boom) Latin American literature characteristics.

074 Hart, Patricia. "Eva Luna." Narrative Magic in the Fiction of Isabelle Allende. Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1989.

Objects to claims made by critics (in Spanish) that Eva Luna is another example of Allende's mimicking of Gabriel Garcia Marquez's style by pointing out that magical realism has been used by many writers both before and after Marquez and that Allende's particular brand, "magical feminism," has many differences, as are evidenced by this novel.

075 Karrer, Wolfgang. "Transformation and Transvestism in Eva Luna." Critical Approaches to Isabel Allende's Novels. Eds. Sonia Riquelme Rojas and Edna Aguirre Rehbein. New York: Peter Lang, 1991. 151-164.

Interprets Eva Luna as a postmodern, metafictional novel based on its “structure of desire, inherent in traditional forms of narration.” Claims that this embedded desire within Eva’s stories is the salvation of the characters for whom the stories are told and for Eva herself. Points to the use of clothing to symbolize the gratification of desire and gender transformation for Mimi and, to a certain extent, for Eva. Finds fault with Allende’s failure to question male superiority and power.

076 Neettleback, Amanda. “Revising the ‘Oppositional’: A Reading of Isabel Allende’s Eva Luna.” Span 36 (Oct. 1993): 241-250.

Discusses the idea of the “oppositional” in postcolonial theory and literature. Suggests that no culture is truly postcolonial, as all are in a state of flux and plurality. Suggests that Eva Luna is representative of this idea because it “is a novel of ambivalent positions” and its oppositional ideas and characters are not fixed. Challenges the categorization of Allende’s work as simply magical realist because that term overly generalizes, and so the work is thus “deprived of its particular relevance to cultural and political history.” Concludes that Eva Luna is an “irresolvable text” for the critic.

077 Rehbein, Edna Aguirre. “Isabel Allende’s Eva Luna and the Act/Art of Narrating.”

Critical Approaches to Isabel Allende’s Novels. Ed. Sonia Riquelme Rojas and Edna Aguirre Rehbein. New York: Peter Lang, 1991. 179-190. Rpt. in Isabel Allende. Ed. Harold Bloom. Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2003. 55-66.

Proposes that through the act of narrating, Allende (and Eva) can construct reality “according to their liking.” Traces Eva’s evolution as a storyteller and writer, citing the instances in which Eva’s constructed reality serves as a retreat and means of defense against a hostile environment. Notes the change in the novel from past tense to present,



and ponders the significance of this change. Suggests that Eva's ability to alter reality through her narration of it forces the reader to "question the reliability and chronology of the narrative."

078 Rivero, Eliana S. "Scheherazade Liberated: Eva Luna and Women Storytellers."

Splintering Darkness: Latin American Women Writers in Search of Themselves. Ed. Lucia Guerra Cunningham. Pittsburgh: Latin American Literary Review Press, 1990. 143-156.

Traces the ties between Eva Luna and A Thousand and One Nights, finding connections through Allende's childhood experience with the stories and her later life experiences. Compares Eva to Scheherazade, citing both women's ability to use words for their own salvation and that of others. Also compares the frame structure of the two tales. Concludes that through her stories, Eva "break[s] a silence that has lasted centuries" for women, liberating them from male-centered discourse and allowing them to write themselves.

079 Rotella, Pilar V. "Allende's Eva Luna and the Picaresque Tradition." Critical Approaches to Isabel Allende's Novels. Ed. Sonia Riquelme Rojas and Edna Aguirre Rehbein. New York: Peter Lang, 1991. 125-138.

Defines Eva Luna as a picaresque novel in the Spanish tradition: "an unheroic protagonist caught up in a chaotic world, enduring a series of adventures and encounters that make him both a victim of that world and its exploiter." Provides historical background of picaresque tales and their evolution. Positions Eva Luna within this picaresque tradition, showing how Eva represents the picaresque character. Traces ways in which Eva's personality differs from the traditional picaresque, such as her reliance upon male rescuers and the ways in which aspects of her personality exemplify the genre, such as her "inventiveness." Implies that

while the romantic aspects of the novel's ending may seem to "contradict, to some extent, everything that went before," Eva Luna ultimately fits within the picaresque tradition.

## THE STORIES OF EVA LUNA

### A. INTRODUCTION

Isabel Allende's The Stories of Eva Luna is a collection of twenty-three short stories within a frame. The frame story is constructed by the protagonist of Allende's previous novel, *Eva Luna*, as she tells stories, in bed, to her lover, Rolf Carle.

The structure of the book has invited numerous comparisons to A Thousand and One Nights; Allende herself encourages this comparison by including a passage from that book in her introductory material. Many critics feel we are to assume that Eva is a version of Scheherazade. Mel Boland (item 081) uses the intertextual relationship to explicate the stories' orientalist characteristics: Eva identifies herself with the "oriental" Scheherazade, and Allende utilizes both quotes from the "oriental" text Thousand and One Nights and the book's structure.. Likewise, Samuel Amago (item 080) uses this intertextual relationship to explicate the stories' folk tale characteristics: they are repetitive, plot-centered, oblivious of historical context, and utilize contrasting stereotypical characters. Amago also claims that the structure gives the book a clear postmodernist bent: "This narrative self-awareness and recurrent use of both deliberate anachronism...and a popular, often parodic use of traditional literary devices—exemplified by the author's use of Thousand and One Nights—places Allende's work solidly within a literary postmodern context," thus placing it within the category of "Boom" literature, and not "post-Boom," as some may suggest.

In theme, these stories share much with Allende's previous work. The most pervasive argument in the criticism of this story collection revolves around the question of whether the stories represent a feminist perspective. David Buehrer (item 82) vehemently contends that this work is not at all feminist: "It cheapens feminism, a still much-needed corrective

movement in literary and cultural studies, to call Allende and others like her feminist when the evidence of their prose itself suggests something quite different: that is, female characters who long for a chivalric, romantic, mythical, and finally phallogentric past divorced from the realities of women's conflicts and struggles in the present." Buehrer also berates Patricia Hart for her "nebulous" defense of Allende. Hart (item 084) defends the work's feminism, claiming that in the very stories in which Buehrer sees submission, Allende is actually "explode[ing] male stereotypes." Helene Weldt-Basson (item 85) also defends Allende's position as a feminist writer and The Stories of Eva Luna as a feminist text, arguing that Allende's use of irony creates a subversive text, and that those who claim that the novel is anti-feminist have failed to perceive this irony.

B. ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

080 Amago, Samuel. "Isabel Allende and the Postmodern Literary Tradition: A

Reconsideration of Cuentos de Eva Luna." Latin American Literary Review 28.56

(July-Dec 2000): 43-60.

Analyzes Allende's "evolving narrative strategies" represented by The Stories of Eva Luna.

Suggests that the novel does not fall into the category of "post-Boom," as many have suggested of all of Allende's work, but instead is more similar to work of the "Boom" itself.

Focuses on the narrative construction of the work; ascribes many of the characteristics of the stories to the folk tale genre, particularly A Thousand and One Nights. Concludes that the work is decidedly postmodern in its "preoccupation with technical innovation and form," all of which bears a direct relationship with the work of the Boom.

081 Boland, Mel. "'Orienting' the Text: Eastern Influences in the Fiction of Isabel Allende."

Cross-Cultural Travel: Papers from the Royal Irish Academy Symposium on

Literature and Travel. New York: Peter Lang, 2003. 477-483.

Traces Allende's use of Eastern images and characters in her later works. Cites The Stories

of Eva Luna as Allende's first use of oriental influences, as it is inspired by the "oriental" tale A Thousand and One Nights in its use of the frame and the beguiling female narrator.

Compares Eva Luna's strong personality and ability to use storytelling to the advantage of herself and others to that of Scheherazade.

082 Buehrer, David. "From Magical Realism to Fairy Tale: Isabel Allende's The Stories of

Eva Luna." West Virginia University Philological Papers 42-43 (1997-1998): 103-

107.

Denigrates The Stories of Eva Luna, claiming that, from a feminist standpoint, they are more regressive than progressive, and describes the work as “stereotypical,” “saccharine,” and “cliche-ridden.” Takes issue with Patricia Hart’s praise of the novel, stating that Allende’s version of feminism and female behavior is neither accurate nor beneficial for Latin American women. Cites multiple instances in the stories of female protagonists who “only have authentic experiences and/or discover their true selves through the services of heterosexual intercourse” with a “macho” man. Challenges Allende’s title as a feminist writer, stating that claims that she is such are “overstated at best, and irresponsible posturing at worst.”

083 Carullo, Sylvia G. “Fetishism, Love-Magic, and Erotic Love in Two Stories by Isabel Allende.” Readerly/Writerly Texts: Essays on Literature, Literary/Textual Criticism, and Pedagogy 3.1 (Fall/Winter 1995): 193-200.

Analyzes the stories “Two Words” and “Wicked Girl.” Cites examples of allusions within both stories to fetishism, “love-magic” (the use of enchantment to attract or attain a desired person), and love as psychosis. Finds persuasive evidence of eroticism at work in Allende’s writing.

084 Hart, Patricia. “Magic Feminism in Isabel Allende’s The Stories of Eva Luna.” Multicultural Literatures through Feminist/Poststructuralist Lenses. Ed. Barbara Frey Waxman. Knoxville: U of Tennessee P, 1993. 103-136.

Analyzes the issues of prostitution and rape in The Stories of Eva Luna to reveal the ways in which Allende exposes the reality of these problems. Points to the elements of the stories that parody the male view of prostitution to reveal its true degradation, as well as to the elements of stories that uncover the hypocrisy of bourgeois values. Denies readings of

Allende's prostitutes as accepting of their subordinate and demeaning role and claims that the prostitutes' ability to avoid overt anguish (or, at least, to overcome it in the end) is Allende's way of using improbability to "explode male-supported stereotypes." Implies that Allende's depiction of rape also borders on the "unreal," as the rapists in two stories are both put to death for their crimes, an occurrence that is exceedingly rare in the society in which the stories are set. Analyzes the issue of consent in rape and concludes that Allende's use of improbable plot twists and character decisions identifies these stories as unreal and thereby forces the reader to see the crime through the eyes of the victim.

085 Spanos, Tony. "Isabel Allende's 'The Judge's Wife': Heroine or Stereotype?" Encyelia 67 (1990): 163-172.

Examines Casilda, the protagonist of "The Judge's Wife," and her status as a heroine based on the level of moral struggle she endures in the story. Cites examples within the text in which she confirms patriarchal social norms about the role and demeanor of women, but also finds the turning point at which Casilda's own moral values begin to emerge.

Questions Casilda's decision to willingly have sex with her captor as a "product of her sexual instinct, her dependence on her husband, or thoughtful, reasoned convictions resulting from responsible and serious meditation." Concludes that Allende leaves this motivation purposefully ambiguous.

086 Umpierre, Luz Marie. "Unscrambling Allende's 'Dos Palabras': The Self, the Immigrant/Writer, and Social Justice." MELUS 27.4 (Winter 2002): 129-136.

Examines the story "Two Words" from the Stories of Eva Luna within the context of Chile's history and current political state, as it coincides with events in Allende's life, and as it relates to Umpierre's personal life. Ties the actions and motives of the main character

Belisa to those of Allende herself, citing Belisa's discovery of and use of words as an escape from her difficult past and as a liberating force that she can give to others.

087 Weldt-Basson, Helene C. "Irony as Silent Subversive Strategy in Isabel Allende's Cuentos de Eva Luna." Revista de Estudios Hispánicos 31.1 (2004): 183-198.

Traces the ways in which Allende uses irony in The Stories of Eva Luna to create a coded feminist text and to reveal women's silence as subversive. Indicates that some readings of the book as anti-feminist are the result of critics' inability to perceive this irony and that the irony is signaled by the use of hyperbole. Cites examples of this in each of the stories. Examines the use of silence in the stories, stating that Allende's point is to show "how both speech and silence are forms of communication and power that can and should be employed by women," implying that women's silence should not be assumed to be a sign of submission.



## FOUR NOVELS BY ISABEL ALLENDE

### A. INTRODUCTION

Isabel Allende's first four novels generated critical questions about the nature of her work in general and its relationship to the evolution of Latin American literature. This section examines critical works that take into account any of these four novels—The House of the Spirits, Of Love and Shadow, Eva Luna, and The Stories of Eva Luna--in combination.

One of the primary topics concerning critics of Latin American literature is the "Boom." Much work has been done that identifies the characteristics inherent in the Latin American and magical realist works that appeared in the 1960's and 70s, and the topic is still of interest. Within the last three decades, critics have begun to question whether literature that comes from Latin America is still conforming to these characteristics, or whether we are in the midst of a "post-Boom" period, replete with reactions to and subversions of the traditions of the Boom. Some critics see Isabel Allende's work as just this—a post-Boom reaction to the values, ideals, and conventions of her magical realist predecessors. Some see her work as conforming to the ideals and conventions of her predecessors.

Donald Shaw (item 103) is ambivalent about the question of Allende's relationship to Boom literature. He sees Allende's first two novels, The House of the Spirits and Of Love and Shadow as clinging to the conventions of Boom-era literature, particularly in the "notion of determinism" present in both, which suggests a futility reminiscent of One Hundred Years of Solitude. However, Shaw recognizes that there are elements of both

novels that speak to the new attitudes of Latin American writers. He cites Allende's use of feminism, her optimistic attitude toward the future, and the reliance on love as a vehicle for personal and social redemption. He also sees a progression in Allende's novels toward the post-Boom style, stating that "Eva Luna is an illustrative Post-Boom novel." Meanwhile, Ambrose Gordon (item 093) seems to find that Allende is part of the boom, and not a particularly important part. He states that "unlike certain other novels of the Boom [...] Isabel Allende[']s work] has left the novel genre about where she found it."

Among the suggested differences between Boom and post-Boom is the feminist perspective present in more recent works. Without question, Allende subscribes to this facet of post-Boom literature. Susan Frenk (item 092), Marketta Laurila (item 096), and many others see the struggles of Allende's protagonists as a metaphor for the Chilean women's movements of the 1980s. Marita Wenzel (item 105) sees Allende's writing as revealing a women's history that has been ignored by male-dominated revisions. Barbara Loach (items 097-099), who writes about the power of Chilean women's writing, also reads the texts as a way of preserving the feminine view of the events leading up to and following the 1973 overthrow of Salvador Allende by Augustus Pinochet. She sees Allende's texts as undoubtedly feminist, as her female protagonists and other marginalized characters "triumph over abusive power." Not all critics see Allende's work in this light. Maria Roof (item 102), while agreeing that the novels have some positive impact on feminism, also suggests that "Allende's works recede from a full commitment to the empowerment of women for change." Roof feels that Allende's work remains mired in a longing for a chivalric past, and that her characters remain dependent on and indifferent about the patriarchal society in which they live.

Allende's representation of woman's role as mother is one of these feminist considerations. Maureen Shea (item 104) finds Allende's texts replete with maternal bonds—and when natural mother/daughter relationships are not present, she claims that Allende creates them through other characters, and they always contribute to the protagonist's salvation. Susan Frenk (item 092) agrees that motherhood is a positive force in Allende's novels, and provides a historical context by reviewing the significant role of mothers in Chile's history.

Among those who wish to classify Allende's work into a specific genre is Lucie Armitt (item 088), who finds that The House of the Spirits and Eva Luna both contain striking elements of the gothic: they both contain ghosts, unfamiliar and eerie societies and families, and are connected to the “uncanny” Latin American landscape. Armitt explicates Sigmund Freud's essay on the uncanny to help make this connection.

More than one critic has pointed to Allende's narrative technique. S. E. de Carvalho (item 090) finds that the narrative technique Allende uses in her first three novels is quite different from that which she uses in The Stories of Eva Luna. Barbara Loach (item 098) discusses the ways in which Allende shifts between first- and third-person narration and the way in which these shifts result in a subversion of the traditional “masculine” mode of storytelling, and therefore also subvert the patriarchy.

As with The House of the Spirits, critics have much to say on the subject of Allende's view of history as circular—both positive and negative. Maria Roof (item 102) finds that this view is limiting, as it does not suggest a capacity for change. Marketta Laurila (item 096) sees The House of the Spirits as a circular depiction of history, but believes that

Allende shifts this view in Of Love and Shadow to a more linear view of history—although both novels have a reconciliatory ending.

## B. ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

088 Armit, Lucie. "Magic Realism Meets the Contemporary Gothic: Isabel Allende and Angela Carter." Contemporary Women's Fiction and the Fantastic. New York: St. Martin's P, 2000. 161-190.

Examines the darker aspects of magic in The House of the Spirits and in Eva Luna that give the novels a gothic twist. Cites Sigmund Freud's essay on the uncanny to explain the happenings of the Latin American setting that are disturbingly strange to the uninitiated. Discusses the houses and ghosts of The House of the Spirits and the bizarre happenings and societies of Eva Luna as examples of gothic imagery.

089 Buedel, Barbara Foley. "Magical Places in Isabel Allende's Eva Luna and Cuentos de Eva Luna." West Virginia University Philological Papers 53 (2006): 108-117.

Counters arguments that Allende's work is simply "melodrama" by analyzing her use of magical places to reveal ambiguous readings. Finds the magical places symbolic of the question of reality in fiction, the plight of "marginalized indigenous people" with respect to their land, and the necessity of women's refuge to fulfill themselves. Concludes that within these magical places, Allende has the ability to "blur the polarization between good and evil" and that her characters and plots are far too complex to be considered merely melodrama.

090 Carvalho, S.E. de. "Narration and Distance in Isabel Allende's Novels and in Cuentos de Eva Luna." Antipodas: Journal of Hispanic and Galician Studies 6-7 (1994-1995): 55-62.

Analyzes narrative techniques in The House of the Spirits and Of Love and Shadow and the way that they relate to those in The Stories of Eva Luna. Identifies similarities in the

narrators, most notably that the characters are all female and all “come of age as a woman, as a writer, as an independent adult forging her own path, and as a socially responsible and politically aware Latin American.” Reveals that the narrators in The House of the Spirits and Of Love and Shadow reveal the story from a distance, after reflection upon the significance of the events, but that this is not the case in The Stories of Eva Luna.

091 Carvalho, Susan de. “Escrituras y Escritoras: The Artist-Protagonists of Isabel Allende.”

Discurso: Revista de Estudios Iberoamericanos 10.1 (1992): 59-67. Rpt. in Isabel Allende. Ed. Harold Bloom. Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2003.75-82.

Explores the development of Alba as an artist in The House of the Spirits and Eva as an artist in Eva Luna. Traces Alba’s early inspirations and mentors. Claims that like Eva, Alba becomes a fully realized artist only after she experiences severely traumatic events. Implies that the two protagonists, Eva and Alba, mirror Allende’s own artistic progression.

092 Frenk, Susan. “The Wandering Text: Situating the Narratives of Isabel Allende.” Latin

American Women’s Writing: Feminist Readings in Theory and Crisis. Ed. Anny Brooksbank Jones and Catherine Davies. Oxford: Clarendon P, 1996. 66-84.

Reads The House of the Spirits and Eva Luna as metaphors for the struggle of the Chilean women’s movements of the 1980s. Defends the positive view of motherhood in the novels against other theorists’ claims, citing motherhood’s role in organizing female resistance groups in Chile. Discusses the re-appropriation of the female body by the women of the texts and debates claims of the novels’ heterosexual focus.

093 Gordon, Ambrose. “Isabel Allende on Love and Shadow.” Contemporary Literature 28.4

(Winter 1987): 530-542.

Compares Of Love and Shadow to The House of the Spirits, critiquing the two works. Analyzes the use of magic and the fantastic in the latter and finds it to be a confusing component. Also finds Clara's character to be "spooky and offputting." Debates whether the high praise the novel has received from critics is merited. Prefers Of Love and Shadow, but suggests that neither book is particularly revelatory in comparison with other novels of "the Boom."

094 Gough, Elizabeth. "Vision and Division: Voyeurism in the Works of Isabel Allende."

Journal of Modern Literature 27.4 (Summer 2004): 93-120.

Expounds upon the ways in which voyeurism is used in Allende's texts. Discovers three major functions of the many instances of voyeurism. Cites examples within The House of the Spirits, Eva Luna, and Portrait in Sepia. Posits that marginalized or powerless characters are motivated to spy because knowledge that may affect them both politically and personally is kept from them, hence the "illuminating" function of voyeurism. Postulates that voyeurism is used to move the plot forward. Contends that the final function of voyeurism is comedic, sensationalist, or erotic. Concludes that the study of voyeurism in Allende's works is beneficial because it reveals hidden symbolism and analysis of the voyeuristic passages "helps us to understand where feminism, social commentary, irony, comedy, and eroticism artistically converge."

095 Gregory, Stephen. "Scheherazade and Eva Luna: Problems in Isabel Allende's

Storytelling." Bulletin of Spanish Studies 80.1 (2003): 81-101.

Traces the parallels of Eva Luna and The Stories of Eva Luna to A Thousand and One Nights. Perceives that Allende writes the character of the storyteller as herself in both novels and views herself as "a romanticized version" of Scheherazade. Determines that Allende's

writing reveals that she is in a quandary between writing realistically to tell the truth and writing fantastically to tell a good story. Finds that Allende's emphasis on the pleasure of writing hinders her communication of her political intentions. Remarks that Allende's writing is filled with "cliched rhetorical ploys" and that her interpretation of the feminine is that which is "irrational, emotional and the intuitive," as opposed to her less-valued view of the masculine "intellect."

096 Laurila, Marketta. "Isabel Allende and the Discourse of Exile." International Women's Writing: New Landscapes of Identity. Ed. Anne E. Brown and Marjanne E. Gooze. Westport, CT: Greenwood P, 1995. 177-186.

Draws a distinction between the "androcentric" (patriarchal) aspects of The House of the Spirits and the "gynocentric" (feminine) aspects. Utilizes Elaine Showalter's work on the "wild zone" of women's space to define the gynocentric and separate it from the androcentric. Interprets the physical appearance of the Trueba mansion as a metaphor for the changing roles of the women of the family, as they eventually take control of it. Suggests that through Alba's book, the androcentric and the gynocentric merge, and thus Allende's need for exile is abolished and replaced with reconciliation. Contrasts the circularity of The House of the Spirits with the linearity of Of Love and Shadow, but finds a similarity in the reconciliatory ending, as it is achieved, once again, "through the power of love." Also notes that the reconciliatory ending does not "assuage the pain" of the exile in which the main characters find themselves. Finds the need for exile negated in Eva Luna.

097 Loach, Barbara. "Power and the Literary Text." Power and Women's Writing in Chile. Madrid: Editorial Pliegos, 1994. 69-110.



Analyzes the ways in which female characters achieve power in novels by Chilean women, including Allende's The House of the Spirits, Of Love and Shadow, and Eva Luna. Claims that of the four novelists discussed, Allende posits women as most evolved, as they achieve and utilize "moral" power that ultimately prevails. Compares the moral power of Clara, Alba, and Transito Soto (who uses her power to save Alba) to the immoral, "abusive" power wielded by the patriarchal men of the novel. Identifies the powerless characters of the novel as Blanca, Ferula, and Pedro Segundo. Finds similar powerful and powerless characters in Of Love and Shadow and Eva Luna. Claims that Allende's most significant donation to the genre is "the inclusion of empowered characters who triumph over abusive power," as exemplified by Alba, Eva Luna, and Irene Beltran.

098 Loach, Barbara. "The Discourse of Resistance." Power and Women's Writing in Chile.

Madrid: Editorial Pliegos, 1994. 141-180.

Points out similarities among the writing of Chilean women writers: historically-based plots, representation of the authors' personal lives, and polyvocality. Finds examples of these in The House of the Spirits, Of Love and Shadow, and Eva Luna. Discusses Allende's use of first- and third-person narration and the effects of the shift between these points of view, focusing on Allende's "attempt to subvert masculine discourse." Finds that Allende's use of magical realism and humor are unique to her as a Chilean writer.

099 Loach, Barbara. "The Themes and Spaces of Resistance." Power and Women's Writing in Chile. Madrid: Editorial Pliegos, 1994. 111-140.

Traces the history of Chilean literature in its function of preserving historical events and providing witness to alternate versions of history. Discusses the contribution of Chilean women writers in exile and in residence to the conception of late 20<sup>th</sup>-century Chilean

history. Identifies primary themes and tropes evident among these narratives: house as nation and journey as search for identity. Finds that Allende uses these themes to focus primarily on feminist and Marxist ideology. Finds the theme of “house as nation” consistent with Allende’s use of the Trueba mansion and Tres Marias and the theme of “journey as search for identity” consistent with the exile of Blanca and Pedro Tercero as well as Eva Luna’s journey in search of herself. Cites additionally a theme of active resistance in Allende’s work.

100 Perricone, Catherine R. “Allende and Valenzuela: Dissecting the Patriarchy.” South Atlantic Review 67.4 (Autumn 2002): 80-105.

Contrasts the work of Allende and Valenzuela, emphasizing the ways in which each author portrays male characters. Points out biographical and ideological similarities between the two. Synthesizes the roles of each author’s male characters within the framework of patriarchal society. Distinguishes Allende’s characterization of the Church (the backbone of the patriarchy), the “macho” type, fathers, military/governmental figures, and nonconformists from Valenzuela’s, implying that Allende is less critical of the two and more likely to provide explanations for her characters’ behavior. Posits that although Allende criticizes many aspects of the patriarchy, her conception of it is not wholly negative, as evidenced by the wholeness of her male characters.

101 Reis, Susana. “A Spanish American Scheherazade? On Isabel Allende and Eva Luna.” Contemporary Women Writing in the Other Americas. Vol I. Ed. Georgiana M. M. Colvile. Wales, UK: Edwin Mellen P, 1996. 3-25.

Discusses the precarious position of the Latin American woman writer attempting to accurately portray feminine vision within the framework of a patriarchal discourse that

negates the value of the vision. Suggests that Allende uses “tricks” to “appropriate the language and artistic formats imposed” by the accepted male-dominated audience, including irony, polyvocality, and mimeticism. Postulates that through these “tricks” Allende raises questions about accepted norms and values. Criticizes Allende’s penchant for cliché and her tendency to overly romanticize the text, particularly in Of Love and Shadow and Eva Luna.

102 Roof, Maria. “W. E. B. Du Bois, Isabel Allende, and the Empowerment of Third World Women.” CLA Journal 39.4 (June 1996): 401-416.

Explains W.E.B. Du Bois’s theory of the “double consciousness” of African Americans and uses it to investigate the double consciousness of the protagonists of The House of the Spirits, Eva Luna, and Of Love and Shadow. Reads Nivea’s fight for suffrage and her simultaneous notions of women’s dependence as an example of Du Bois’s concept of “The Eye of the Other.” Elaborates that Allende negates this view by positioning Alba, Clara, and Eva Luna as writers, who, in effect, re-write woman’s place in society. Challenges feminist readings of Allende’s texts by positing that she places severe limitations on the protagonists. Claims that the women do not fully defy stereotypes. Agrees with Gabriela Mora that the characters cannot fully relate to the political and social struggles within their nations because they are too “locked inside their individual egoisms.” Blames this shortcoming on Allende’s professed view of history as circular and thereby ultimately unchanging.

103 Shaw, Donald. “Isabel Allende.” The Post-Boom in Spanish American Fiction. Saratoga Springs: State University of New York P, 1998. 53-72.

Discusses the magical realist elements of The House of the Spirits and debates Patricia Hart's claims that the novel's magic undermines reality. Discusses the circularity and, hence, the "determinism" of the novel, claiming that Allende's work is not truly representative of post-Boom fiction, as it remains mired in the pessimism of the Boom. Reads Allende's representation of empowered women as "genuinely inaugural." Illustrates the progression of Allende's feminist ideals by citing the break of Of Love and Shadow's protagonist Irene Beltran from the need to rely on members of the patriarchy for her survival, as the Trueba women in Allende's previous novel had done. Criticizes Of Love and Shadow as "archetypically neoromantic." Finds Eva Luna to be "an illustrative Post-Boom novel."

104 Shea, Maureen E. "Love, Eroticism, and Pornography in the Works of Isabel Allende."

Women's Studies 18 (1990): 223-231.

Examines the dichotomy in Allende's novels of a feminine life force, Eros, and a masculine death force, Thanatos, and concludes that Allende's novels reveal the power of and necessity for Eros to overcome Thanatos. Analyzes the maternal connection between the characters of The House of the Spirits and each character's use of that connection to overcome an encounter with destructive pornographic elements. Implies through the example of Alba's interment and torture that women's solidarity is a serious threat to male domination. Finds this relationship again prevalent in Of Love and Shadow; suggests that Francisco becomes Irene's maternal connection in order for her to recover at the end of the novel. Finds maternal connections that help to fulfill Eva, the protagonist of Eva Luna, throughout the text. Finds that throughout Allende's work, the force of Eros consistently overcomes that of Thanatos.

105 Wenzel, Marita. "The Latin American Connection: History, Memory, and Stories in Novels by Isabel Allende and Andre Brink." Storyscapes: South African Perspectives on Literature, Space and Identity. Ed. Hein Viljoen and Chris N. van de Merwe. New York: Peter Lang, 2004. 71-88.

Compares the feminist, post-colonial perspective of Latin American authors Allende and Brink with that of African authors. Posits that women's history has been ignored and that a common theme of contemporary African and Latin American fiction is giving voice to that history through use of subversive techniques such as magical realism. Contends that these fictions lead readers to question the validity of traditional male-authored historical discourse. Discusses the three Trueba women of The House of the Spirits, their story, and their "evolution of political consciousness" as examples.

## CONCLUSION

Allende's work has held many meanings for many readers. Critics have examined the four novels discussed in this bibliography to analyze important issues present in the work: women's representation in fiction and in society, class struggle, political injustice, the nature of time and reality, the presence of the unnatural in the world, literary ownership and value, and the evolution of Latin American literature in general. Through Allende's work and the scholarship of the critics represented here, we as readers and as an academic community have a better appreciation of these issues, as well as motivation to continue the discourse that was born of these novels.

As of this writing, critics have left many questions about Allende's work unanswered and have raised some issues that are still being debated. For instance, does Allende borrow too much from her Latin American literary ancestors? Some critics have made the case that Allende represents a feminist answer to Gabriel Garcia Marquez's machismo-laden magical realism, and not a pirated version of it, but the similarities are unquestionable. This also raises questions of when a work becomes the author's own, and how much literary borrowing is too much. One could question whether The House of the Spirits would have been written had A Hundred Years of Solitude not been.

Another question raised is whether Allende subverts traditional ideas about the role of women in society, or conforms to them. Particularly in her later works, some readers have sharply criticized Allende for overly romanticizing her female characters, for making them helpless victims in need of salvation by a strong and chivalrous "Prince Charming" of

some sort. Yet several books have been written that praise Allende's strong feminist perspective, and defend even the later works. This contentious issue has not been resolved.

Allende's work has caused many readers to ask where the line should be drawn between history and fiction, and what part fiction plays in creating and recreating that history. Indeed, what is the fiction writer's role in retelling factual events? There are several sides to this argument, one being the theory that writers are responsible, as are journalists, for getting the facts straight when history is involved. What, then, is the role of fiction, and should writers be granted room for invention amidst that history? This allows for possible perspectives that could have existed and been ignored by documented history, such as that of the marginalized. Allende's incorporation of history into fiction and her insertion of supernatural events into it certainly make this question relevant to her work.

Academic readers of Allende's work have asked about the genre to which Allende's work belongs—or if the question of genre should apply to this work at all. Is it literature, and who gets to decide? The novels have been derided for their mass popularity and their readability, and this raises questions of the academic and social worth of fiction. If there is a canon of Latin American fiction, should Allende be allowed in? Should her books be reserved solely for the Latin American Women Writers list? How is her worth as a writer to be measured—by book sales, or by the amount of academic interest created (and can the two coincide)? Each of these questions is important and merits further inquiry.

In addition to the topics that have been broached but not yet fully explored, there are some issues and ways of reading Allende's fiction that have been thus far overlooked. Scholarship on the postcolonial perspectives in Allende's work is much needed and could provide new ways of viewing the issues that are present in her novels. Postcolonial theory

has grown of late, and postcolonial readings of Allende would be valuable additions to existing scholarship.

While there is a wealth of academic scholarship available on The House of the Spirits, Allende's remaining novels and her nonfiction remain relatively untouched by criticism. In addition, there is much material printed in Spanish that has not been covered in this bibliography, which would prove useful to any Allende researcher. Translations for English-speaking researchers would be greatly appreciated, as this researcher can attest. There are many paths for further study of Isabel Allende's work, and it is my hope that this bibliography can provide some assistance for future scholars whose interests coincide with my own.