

Acknowledgments

The ideas developed in this book originated in an undergraduate Mexican and Central American culture and literature course I taught in fall 2014. Since it was my second time teaching SPAN 3464, I wanted to expose my students to something beyond the canon, and spent hours poring over YouTube and other streaming sites to find original and grass-roots content. I stumbled upon the webisodes of *Capitán Centroamérica*, and was encouraged by my students' response to the character and his antics; I was particularly taken by the connections we were able to make with other themes and texts covered in the semester.

A year later I was granted tenure at Virginia Tech, and received an email from the Provost's Office stating that they would purchase a book for the library to celebrate my accomplishments: "You might wish to designate something in your field of research, or, because we know that our faculty read widely, you might want to select something in another field of science, art, literature, or technology." I picked Liam Burke's edited collection *Batman*. Going over the essays in this anthology, and many others afterwards, I slowly carved out a space for connecting superhero studies with my own research interests. This led to an article, which then was developed into the broader ideas present in *Capitán Latinoamérica*.

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Many thanks are also in order to my family. My love for superheroes is shared and nourished through conversations and trips to the cinema with my siblings, Sabitha and Vishnu. As kids, Vish and I would dress up as Spiderman while brandishing our Thundercats swords, fighting off imaginary villains as a dynamic fraternal-twin duo in Bangkok, lending credence to the notion that superheroes are malleable and “culturally and contextually dependent” (Denison and Mizsei-Ward 4). Watching the latest superhero blockbuster during Thanksgiving has now become a tradition with Sabitha. In Melilla, many, many thanks to Joaquín, Mari Carmen, Kiny, Chica, Alberto, Luis, Yaya, Julia, Blanca, and Clara. Most importantly, I am thankful for having wonderful parents, Narayini and Venkatesh. They have been role models and pillars supporting all I do. As cliché as it is (especially in a book about superheroes), they are my true superheroes.

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An early version of chapter 3, “Capitán Latinoamérica: Affect, Bodies, and Circulations in the Superhero Genre,” originally appeared in a special dossier I edited with María del Carmen Caña Jiménez titled “Affect, Bodies, and Circulations in Contemporary Latin American Film” in *Arizona Journal of Hispanic Cultural Studies* 20 (2016). I am grateful to the editors for giving me permission to use a version of that essay here.