

11-19-2012

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Recommended Citation

"Family, Faith and Identity" (2012). *News Releases*. 536.
https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls/536

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Family, Faith and Identity

11.19.2012 | Culture and Society, Hot Topics, Students, Campus and Community

Celebrated poet, novelist and essayist Ana Castillo, who followed the lives of Mexican immigrants who illegally crossed the border into the United States in her 2008 novel *The Guardians*, will explore the controversial issue of immigration in a free talk at the University of Dayton on Thursday, Nov. 29.

Castillo will address "The Dream Act and Other Hopes" at 7:30 p.m. in the Kennedy Union ballroom as part of the University of Dayton Speaker Series. It's free and open to the public, and a book signing will follow the talk. Parking is available in lots C and P.

Castillo, a Chicana feminist activist, has written or edited more than a dozen books. Her work has won numerous awards, including the American Book Award for her collection of essays, *The Mixquiahuala Letters*. She is a visiting writer-in-residence at Westminster College in Salt Lake City.

"Castillo is committed to working against the marginalization of Mexican-Americans within the U.S. and of women within Latino cultures and within the broader U.S. society more generally," said Sheila Hassell Hughes, chair of the University of Dayton's English department, who directs the series. "Her novel, *The Guardians*, is a compelling and beautifully written exploration of family, faith and identity on the U.S.-Mexico border."

Born and raised in Chicago, Castillo credits the rich storytelling tradition of her Mexican heritage as the foundation for her writing. When she was nine years old, she wrote her first poems following the death of her grandmother. In high school and college Castillo was active in the Chicano movement, using her poetry to express her political sentiments.

Besides *The Guardians* and *The Mixquiahuala Letters*, her works include *Peel My Love Like an Onion*, *So Far from God* and *Sapogonia*. She has written a story collection, *Loverboys*; a critical study of feminist concerns in *Massacre of the Dreamers*; the poetry collection *My Father Was a Toltec and Selected Poems*; and the children's book *My Daughter, My Son, The Eagle, The Dove*. She is the editor of the anthology *Goddess of the Americas: Writings on the Virgin of Guadalupe*. She also has been a contributor to many anthologies, including *The Third Woman: Minority Woman Writers of the United States*, *Cuentos Chicanos* and *Goddess of the Americas*. Her writings have been published in *Frontiers*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Nation*, *The San Francisco Chronicle* and *The Washington Post*, among many others. She has taught at Northwestern University, the University of California at Santa Barbara, the University of New Mexico and Mount Holyoke College.

Co-sponsors for the University of Dayton Speaker Series include the *Dayton Daily News*, WDAO-Radio, YWCA Dayton, the Bob Ross Auto Group and Markey's Audio Visual.

For more on the University of Dayton Speaker Series, see go.udayton.edu/speakerseries. For more on Ana Castillo, see anacastillo.com.

For media interviews about the series, contact Sheila Hassell Hughes at 937-229-3434 or Andrea Wade, communication and events coordinator for the office of the provost, at 937-229-1723.