

Latin/Tejano Document Set (High School/College)

Document 1 - Selena Bio



Selena Quintanilla-Pérez was born in Lake Jackson, Texas on April 16, 1971. She began performing at a young age in her family's restaurant with her older brother and sister. Despite being unable to speak the language fluently, Selena sang in Spanish by learning the songs phonetically. The family group soon became called Selena y Los Dinos, and after a move to Corpus Christi, they started regularly performing at weddings, school events, quinceaneras, and fairs. Soon, they were signed to a local record company and between 1986 and 1988, they released five albums.

As the lead singer, Selena became a main figure in Tejano music, which was traditionally a male dominated genre. After winning Female Entertainer of the Year at the Tejano Music Awards, she began releasing music simply as Selena. Her self-titled album was released in 1989, and peaked on the *Billboard* Mexican Regional charts at #7. Her subsequent albums were equally successful: the second album *Ven Conmigo* was the first Tejano album by a woman to go gold with 500,000 sales, her third album *Entre a Mi Mundo* produced her signature song "Como La Flor" and her fourth album *Amor Prohibido* charted on *Billboard* 200 charts. In 1993, she released *Live!* which earned a Grammy for Best Mexican/American Album. Outside of music, Selena served as a spokesperson for Coca Cola from 1987 and into the 90s, and ventured into fashion by establishing her clothing line and fashion boutique, Selena Etc. which featured locations in Texas, and engaged in philanthropy work.

With her popularity after the success of *Live!* and *Entre a Mi Mundo*, Selena had plans to release an English crossover album. However it was never completed. Selena was murdered by the president of her fan club on March 31, 1995. Her legacy still persists through a 1997 feature length film starring Jennifer Lopez, tribute concerts, a commemorative postal stamp, festivals, and a museum run by her family.

Document 2 - Murals



Dallas, Texas



Fresno, California



Houston, Texas



Los Angeles, California



San Antonio, Texas

Document 3 - Fashion



Document 5 - Song Lyrics

Selena, "Si Una Vez"

Yo, te di todo mi amor y más
Y tú, no reconoces ni lo que es amar
Yo, me puse dispuesta a tus pies
Y tan solo con desprecio me has pagado pero
ahora ve

Si una vez dije que te amaba, hoy me arrepien-
to
Si una vez dije que te amaba
No sé lo que pensé, estaba loca
Si una vez dije que te amaba y que por ti la vida
daba
Si una vez dije que te amaba no lo vuelvo a
hacer
Ese error es cosa de ayer

Yo, se que un día tu volverás
Y tú, de todo te arrepentirás
Yo, me puse dispuesta a tus pies
Y tan solo con desprecio me has pagado pero
ahora ve

Si una vez dije que te amaba, hoy me arrepien-
to
Si una vez dije que te amaba
No sé lo que pensé, estaba loca
Si una vez dije que te amaba y que por ti la vida
daba
Si una vez dije que te amaba no lo vuelvo a
hacer
Ese error es cosa de ayer

Si una vez dije que te amaba y que por ti la vida
daba
Si una vez dije que te amaba no lo vuelvo a
hacer
Ese error es cosa de ayer

I gave you all my love and more
And you, do not even recognize what it is to love
I, put myself at your feet
And only with contempt have you paid me but
now look

If I once said I loved you, today I regret it
If I once said that I loved you
I don't know what I thought, I was crazy
If I once said that I loved you and that for you I
would give my life
If I once said that I loved you I won't do it again
That mistake is something of yesterday

I, know that one day you'll return
And you, will be sorry for everything
I, put myself at your feet
And only with contempt have you paid me but
now you see

If I once said that I loved you, today I regret it

If I once said that I loved you
I don't know what I thought, I was crazy
If I once said that I loved you and that for you I
would give my life
If I once said that I loved you I won't do it again
That mistake is something of yesterday

If I once said that I loved you and that for you I
would give my life
If I once said that I loved you I won't do it again
That mistake is something of yesterday



Document 5 - Academic Account

“Selena: Sexuality, Performance & Hegemony” by José E. Limón

Selena’s unique expressive stance in her time consisted of her willingness to join together, with her superb voice and dancing, different musical traditions in a way that no one had quite done before. But she also fully expressed her bodily sexuality as no other such singer-dancer had ever quite done before for a mass public audience—an expression, as I have suggested, always done at great risk, the risk of the stigma of illicit, prostitutional sexuality from either cultural side. [. . .]

I propose that Selena’s display of her sheer sexuality provides a sanctioned realm of culturally deeply needed freedom for the people of Greater Mexico. First, she draws on the already sexualized tradition of the Greater Mexican *rancheras* singers and nightclub *chanteuses* such as Chelo Silva, a tradition previously largely confined to the enclosed ethnic cabarets and dance salons. Drawing on newly acquired knowledge of the postmodern pop star system in the United States and the world, Selena transposes this tradition into the larger contested realm of public culture and asserts it there for and on behalf of the large masses of Mexicans as an important tradition. [. . .]

Borrowing from the Madonna and Paula Abdul influence in American pop music culture, she openly sexualizes this tradition in the most eroticized of ways. I suggest that for Catholic working-class Mexicans. . . Selena’s public sexuality permits a much-needed site of discharge and expression for a still too repressed sexuality in this culture as true for women as for men. [But] this sexualized construction also occurs at great peril, as Mexican woman always teeters on the precipice of harlotry either as constructed by Mexicans, both female and male, and Anglos, a dilemma also faced by African Americans today.

Selena controlled this dark possibility in two ways. The first was through the production of what I shall call a “good girl narrative” evident in public statements about her and in the recent film. Her brazen sexuality on stage is bracketed, rendered acceptable, and sanctioned by her well-noted activities offstage. We learn that her favorite food is pizza; she contributes time and money to charities; she is wholly devoted to her family and her community. . . Like so many other Mexican working-class young women, she wants to have babies. And there is yet another part of the narrative that is even more effective. Her media coverage and film tell us much of her wonderful childhood of love, innocence, and dreams of becoming a singer. . . Through this entire bracketing “counternarrative,” Selena is able to achieve her full sexuality for herself and for the psychological benefit of her fellow Mexicans even as she defeats, or at least controls, the possibility of its racist and sexist appropriation.