

AML4685, Sect. 2280

Testimonios : Race, Gender, and Sexuality in US Latina and Latino Popular Culture
Fall '15

Gabriel Mayora

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Course Description

This course is designed to explore the many ways in which US Latina and Latino identity has been constructed and shaped through popular culture. Rather than looking at US Latina/Latino identity as a monolithic construct, we will focus on the effects caused by the interactions among gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, nationality, class, and other social forces influencing modes of representation of US Latina/Latino subjects. Furthermore, the course seeks to reach an understanding of the role that genre, medium, author, and intended audience play in this dynamic. Therefore, we will study canonical literature, "genre" literature (such as "chica lit"), musical theatre, film /TV, blogs, and critical theory produced by US Latina and Latino authors as well as Anglo authors, mostly focusing on east-coast Latino/as, save for a few exceptions. This range of texts will open up possibilities to interrogate the concept of US Latina/Latino identity.

Required Texts

The Agüero Sisters, Christina Garcia (1997)

Becoming Latina in 10 Easy Steps, Lara Rios (2006)

Chica Lit: Popular Latina Fiction and Americanization in the Twenty-First Century (2015)

Dirty Girls Social Club, Alisa Valdes-Rodriguez (2003)

Drown, Junot Diaz (1996)

In the Heights: The Complete Book and Lyrics of the Broadway Musical, Book: Quiara Alegria Hudes, Lyrics: Lin-Manuel Miranda

Queer Latino Testimonios, Keith Haring, *Juanito Xtravaganza: Hard Tails*, Arnaldo Cruz-Malavé (2007)

Secondary Readings

Note: The following readings will be available through the UF Library Course Reserve system or on Canvas.

Connell, R.W. "Hegemonic Masculinity and Emphasized Femininity." *Gender and Power: Societal, the Person, and Sexual Politics*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford UP, 1987.

Current, Cheris Brewer. "Normalizing Cuban Refugees: Representations of Whiteness and Anti-Communism in the USA during the Cold War." *Ethnicities*. 8.1: 42-67.
<http://etn.sagepub.com/egi/reprint/8/1/42>

Deutsch, Barry. "The Male Privilege Checklist." <http://www.amptoons.com/blog/the-male-privilege-checklist/>

LeoGrande, William M. "Stop Punishing Cuba's People: Lift the Embargo." *The Huffington Post*. 8/15/15

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/william-m-leo-grande/stop-punishing-cubas-peop b 7993120.html>

Lichtenberg, Judith. "Racism in the Head, Racism in the World." *Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality: The Big Questions* ed. Naomi Zack, Laurie Shrage, and Crispin Sartwell. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 1998.

McIntosh, Peggy. "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack."
<http://www.amptoons.com/blog/files/mcintosh.html>

Muñoz, José Esteban. "Introduction: Performing Disidentifications." *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics* (1999).

Negrón-Muntaner, Frances.

"Weighing in Theory: Puerto Ricans and American Culture." *Boricua Pop: Puerto Ricans and the Latin Ration of American Culture* (2004).

"Feeling Pretty: West Side Story and U.S. Puerto Rican Identity." *Boricua Pop: Puerto Ricans and the Latin Ration of American Culture* (2004).

Olson, Steve. "The Genetic Archeology of Race." *The Atlantic Monthly*. 287.4 (2001).

Wixon, Lisa Wixon. "Cuba for Dummies." *WashingtonPost.com*. Sunday, August 6, 2006; Page B07

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/08/04/AR2006080401373.html>

Screenings:

Note: Throughout the semester, we will view some films and/ or TV shows in class, others you will watch on your own. These will include:

Jane, the Virgin, Created by: Jennie Snyder (2014)

Quinceañera, Dir: Richard Glatzer, Wash Westmoreland (2006)

West Side Story, Dir: Robert Wise, Jerome Robbins (1961)

Assignment Descriptions

Participation (50pts)

This is a seminar style course, which means you will often be required to carry the discussion. Participation points will be awarded to those students who consistently come to class prepared to discuss the texts and who actively take advantage of opportunities to contribute to the discussion. While attendance will be considered when awarding participation points, it is the student's classroom behavior and willingness to participate that will be recognized when assigning a grade for participation.

Reading Quizzes (100pts)

You will have a reading quiz for every assigned reading. Reading quizzes are designed to check whether you are keeping up with the reading. Therefore, questions for the reading quiz will only test whether you did the reading. Questions will ask you about plot points, character names, and other details from the text. Note that consistently poor performance on reading quizzes will negatively affect your participation grade.

Discussion Questions (2 x 25pts = 50pts)

Each week, a group of students will be responsible for writing **two** discussion questions. Discussion questions must display a thorough understanding of the reading and provide significant context for the class. Discussion questions are **due the Monday before class from 4-7pm (approximately 24 hours before class) via e-mail**. The best discussion questions create connections to other texts and open up original ideas for discussion. Refer to 'Discussion Questions' assignment sheet for further details and rubric.

Class-Led Discussion (100pts)

The last day of class you will be conducting discussion on a text chosen by the instructor as a way to display your ability to discuss US Latina and Latino issues at an academic level without the aid of an instructor.

Midterm Exam (350pts)

The midterm exam will consist of a long-essay response, short-response questions, and/or multiple-choice questions. Unlike the reading quizzes, the midterm exam will ask you to interpret the readings using the knowledge you have acquired throughout class discussions. The midterm exam is open book; however, no tablets, laptops or e-book readers are allowed during testing.

Final Exam (350pts)

The final exam will follow the same format as the midterm exam. While it will mostly focus on the material from the second half of the semester, you will be expected to draw connections to the material from the first half of the semester.

Grading Scale

A 930-1000

A- 900-929

B+ 870-899

B 840-869

B- 800-839

C+ 770-799

C 740-769

C- 700-739

D+ 670-699

D 630-669

D- 600-629

E 0-599

Grade Breakdown

Assignments	Points	Percentage
Participation	50pts	5%
Reading Quizzes	100pts	10%
Discussion Questions	50pts	5%
Class-Led Discussion	100pts	10%

Midterm Exam	350pts	35%
Final Exam	350pts	35%
Total	1000pts	100%

Course Policies

Attendance

Discussions cannot be replicated so if you miss a day of class, you will have missed the lesson for that day. Therefore, I take attendance very seriously and expect you to come to class every day on time. Since we only meet once a week, you are allowed **ONE** unexcused absence (or three hours); your grade will automatically drop a grade after each following absence (excused or unexcused). **If you reach two unexcused absences you will automatically fail the course and should withdraw from the class (or you will receive an "E" for the semester).** No Incompletes are given for this course.

Unfortunately, given the nature of the course, if you miss three or more weeks of classes in a row—unless you can provide documents to confirm the absences qualify as excused according to the University of Florida Undergraduate Catalog—you will automatically fail and receive an E for the course.

An excused absence involves: university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays, as well as documented sickness (e.g., doctor's notes). Illnesses and family emergencies will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The best way to guarantee that your grade is not affected by attendance issues is to communicate with your instructor. NOTE: If students are absent, it is their responsibility to make themselves aware of all due dates. If absent due to a scheduled event, students are still responsible for turning assignments in on time. Even if you are absent (regardless of whether the absences are excused or unexcused), you are responsible for contacting your instructors to receive information regarding any class announcements, in-class work, homework, and other assignments.

See <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx> for questions concerning excused/ unexcused absences and correct procedure to document your absences this semester.

Reading and Class Discussions

You should have read the pages assigned before coming to class on that day; **all** reading is required, that means both the fiction and the academic articles assigned. Make sure you bring the reading material to class and that you highlight, mark, or underline sections you wish to discuss. Be respectful and polite to your classmates, wait for your turn to talk and avoid being offensive to others. A lot of the material we read in class will include heavy levels of profanity, explicit sexual imagery, drug use, and other material you might not be comfortable with. **If you are uncomfortable reading and talking about any of these in a professional manner, you should drop the course right away.**

Cell Phone Use

Few things are as disrespectful as students texting or using their phones in class. Please refrain from using your phone during class, unless it is an emergency (in which case, you should communicate with your instructor). If I catch you texting once, I will give you a verbal warning and you will lose all participations points for that day; if I catch you texting a second time, you will be marked as absent for that day and will be asked to leave for the remaining of the period.

NOTE: Facebooking or doing other disruptive activities in the classroom either on your phone, tablets, or laptops will be addressed in a similar manner as texting. Simply put, if you come to class, you are expected and required to pay attention.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits plagiarism and defines it as follows:

Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

1. Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
2. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.

(University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 8 July 2011)

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code.

DO NOT PLAGIARIZE! As written above, plagiarism consists of presenting someone else's work as your own without acknowledging the original source. This can happen intentionally or unintentionally; however, regardless of intention, plagiarism is illegal and will be penalized accordingly. When you plagiarize you risk failing the course, and the infraction will become part of your permanent record.

Evaluations:

Students are required to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <http://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

University Policies

Disability Services

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides students and faculty with information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities in the classroom.

It is your responsibility to contact the school administration regarding any disability you may have, and to inform me so we can make any necessary arrangements.

For more information, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/dre/>

Academic Honesty

All students are required to abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>

Harassment

UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentconductcode.php#s4041>

Tentative Schedule

Tues 8/25: Week One

Principios

Introduction to the Course
What is US Latina and Latino Culture?

Tues 9/1: Week Two

Unpacking Contemporary Race and Racism in the United States

Olson, Steve. "The Genetic Archeology of Race." *The Atlantic Monthly*. 287.4 (2001).
Judith Lichtenberg "Racism in the Head, Racism in the World." *Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality: The Big Questions* ed. Naomi Zack, Laurie Shrage, and Crispin Sartwell. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 1998.
McIntosh, Peggy. "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack." <http://www.amptoons.com/blog/files/mcintosh.html>

Tues 9/8: Week Three

Drowned: Race, Masculinity and Dominican National Identity in the United States

Background on Dominican Republic
Drown, Junot Diaz

Tues 9/15: Week Four

From Bay of Pigs to Elian Gonzales to Barack Obama: The Sticky, Messy Affairs between Cuba and the United States

LeoGrande, William M. "Stop Punishing Cuba's People: Lift the Embargo." *The Huffington Post*. 8/15/15
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/william-m-leo_grande/stop-punishing-cubas-peop_b_7993120.html
Current, Cheris Brewer. "Normalizing Cuban Refugees: Representations of Whiteness and Anti-Communism in the USA during the Cold War." *Ethnicities*. 8.1: 42-67.
<http://etn.sagepub.com/egi/reprint/8/1/42>
Wixon, Lisa. "Cuba for Dummies." *WashingtonPost.com*
Sunday, August 6, 2006; Page B07
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/08/04/AR2006080401373.html>

Tues 9/22: Week Five

"Dreaming in Cuban": Sisterhood and Santería in Cuban Relationships with the United States

The Agüero Sisters, Christina Garcia
"Orishas," Wikipedia.org

Tues 9/29: Week Six

"Paciencia y Fe": The American Dream and Latina/o Immigrants in the United States

In the Heights, Quiara Alegria-Hudes and Lin-Manuel Miranda

Tues 10/6: Week Seven

Screening Chicanos

Quinceañera, Dir: Richard Glatzer & Wash Westmoreland

Tues 10/13: Week Eight

Midterm Exam

Tues 10/20: Week Nine

Conecciones: White Feminism and US Latina Identity

Connell, R.W. "Hegemonic Masculinity and Emphasized Femininity." *Gender and Power: Society, the Person, and Sexual Politics*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford UP, 1987.

Deutsch, Barry. "The Male Privilege Checklist."

<http://www.amptoons.com/blog/the-male-privilege-checklist/>.

Jane, the Virgin, Created by: Jennie Snyder

Tues 10/27: Week Ten

Chica Lit: the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

Dirty Girls Social Club, Alisa Valdés-Rodríguez
Chica Lit, Tace Hedrick (pp. TBA)

Tues 11/3: Week Eleven

Shopping Latinidad: Chica Lit, Capitalism, and the Making of a Latina Identity

Becoming Latina in 10 Easy Steps, Lara Rios
Chica Lit, Tace Hedrick (pp. TBA)

Tues 11/10: Week Twelve

No Class, Happy Veteran's Day!

Tues 11/17: Week Thirteen

Queering Latinidades: Nuyorican Queerness

"Introduction," *Disidentifications*, José Esteban Muñoz
Queer Latino Testimonios, Arnaldo Cruz-Malavé

Tues 11/24: Week Fourteen

Catch Up Day

Tues 12/1: Week Fifteen

"I Like to Live in America": *West Side Story's* Legacy

Selections from *Boricua Pop*
West Side Story, Dir: Robert Wise & Jerome Robbins

Tues 12/8: Week Sixteen

Class-Led Discussion

Tues 12/15: Week Seventeen

Final Exam