

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-IRVINE
FMS130/C-LS129: "Latinas/os in the Media"
Fall, 2009

Lecture/Discussion: M, W 6-7:20 HH254

Studio: M 7:30-9 p.m. HH254

Office Hours: T, W 3-5 p.m.

Taught in English; some media in Spanish & Portuguese

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DESCRIPTION: The aim of this course is to familiarize students with the history and current cultural politics of Latina/o access to, and representation in, U.S. film, television, radio and print media. Significant contributions made by Latinas/os to U.S. media and film culture – whether in the capacity of producer, performer, director, screenwriter, audience member, or activist – will be considered in active tension with the prevailing sociocultural frames and business practices that have favored discriminatory portrayals and the relatively low visibility of Latinas/os in mainstream English-language media, as compared with other ethnic groups. Special attention will be given to the impact of language difference, the “engendering” of U.S.-Latina/o stereotypes, the role of foreign and immigration policy in shaping mainstream media practices, recent directions taken by Spanish language television and print media, and meaningful political interventions made on and off-screen by independent Latina/o media makers and community organizations. Featured filmmakers include: Isaac Artenstein, Tânia Cypriano, León Ichaso, Gregory Nava, Severo Pérez, Lourdes Portillo, Alex Rivera, Jesús Salvador Treviño, Ela Troyano, Luis Valdez, and others. The scope will be pan-Latino/a, from New York to Los Angeles, Texas to Miami, and a range of genres and technical formats will be analyzed, including documentaries and experimental film, video, and digital art. Students will have the opportunity to engage in individual and collaborative research and analysis, and will learn to critique media practices utilizing a range of methodologies.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING: Class participation (includes group collaborations): 20%; media watch 15%; publicity critique: 10%; midterm: 20%; response paper: 15%; final research report: 20%. Written assignments may be submitted in Spanish or Portuguese, if preferred.

REQUIRED TEXTS: Charles Ramírez Berg, Latino Images in Film: Stereotypes, Subversion, Resistance (University of Texas Press, 2002)

Mary C. Beltrán, Latina/o Stars in U.S. Eyes: The Making and Meanings of Film and TV Stardom (University of Illinois Press, 2009)

Both required books are available at **the UCI Bookstore** and Langson Library. Additional required readings will be posted on the *EEE website*:

10/7: Discussion of cultural politics and poetic symbolism in *The Blue Diner*; the exoticization of Latina/o identity

Reading: Ramírez-Berg, Introduction and Chapters 1 and 2

- ❖ Camila Fojas, "The NARC in All of Us" (recommended) *EEE*

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**WEEK 3: (DE) CONSTRUCTING LATINIDAD ACCORDING TO
 HOLLYWOOD**

10/12: Lecture: Latina/o Specific Stereotypes in Historical Perspective; Review of Guiding Concepts; the Career of Lupe Vélez

Screening: *PALOOKA*, dir. Benjamin Stoloff (Reliance Pictures, 1934)

10/14: Discussion of Ethnicities-in-Relation, Latina Stereotyping, and Performer Agency in *Palooka*; Media Watch Assignment Explained; Close Analysis of Stereotyping Process in Film; Demonstration of Publicity Critique

Reading: Ramírez-Berg, Chapters 2 -4

- ❖ Beltrán, Chapter 1 (recommended)
- ❖ Clara E. Rodríguez, "Visual Retrospective: Latino Film Stars" *EEE*

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WEEK 4: REVISIONING CHICANA/O HISTORY THROUGH FILM

10/19: **QUIZ 1 in Class**

Lecture: The "Bordering" of Latino Masculine Identity in U.S. Film & TV; Introduction to Realism & Re-Focalization as Counter-Strategies

Screening: *The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez*, dir. Robert Young (Embassy Pictures/The National Endowment for the Humanities, 1982)

10/21 Discussion: Realism & Re-Focalization, continued **Publicity Critique Presentations in Class**

Reading: Ramírez Berg, Chapter 5

- ❖ Rosa Linda Fregoso, "Film Il(l)egal to Legal Subject" *EEE*
- ❖ Américo Paredes, "With His Pistol in His Hand" (excerpts) recommended *EEE*

EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITY: COSECHA LATINA AT FVC - HIB 100

10/22: BREAK OF DAWN, dir. Isaac Arstenstein (CineWest Productions, 1988)
RECEPTION: 6:30 p.m. SCREENING: 7 p.m., followed by Q&A with Director

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**WEEK 5: (DE) CONSTRUCTING LATINIDAD, ACCORDING TO
 HOLLYWOOD II**

10/26 Lecture: The "Good Neighbor" Policy & the "Gendering" of Inter-American Relations

Screening: WEEKEND IN HAVANA, dir. Walter Lang (20th Century Fox, 1941)

10/28: **Media Watch Checkpoint: Use Dropbox Online**

Discussion of "Good Neighbor" Tropes in *Weekend in Havana*

Bonus Screening: CARMEN MIRANDA: BANANAS IS MY BUSINESS, dir. Helena Solberg (Channel Four Films/Rio Filmes, 1995)

Reading: Ana M. López, "Are All Latins from Manhattan?" *EEE*

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WEEK 6: POST-WAR INTERVENTIONS & IDENTIFICATIONS

11/2: **Final Research Project Topics Distributed in Class**

Lecture: Narratives of Resistance "Outside the System"

Screening: SALT OF THE EARTH, dir. Herbert Biberman (Independent Productions/International Union of Mine, Mill, & Smelter Workers, 1954)

11/4: Discussion of filmmaking strategies & realism in *Salt of the Earth*; introduction of bonus screening.

Bonus Screening: "I LOVE LUCY" (CBS Television)

Reading: Ellen R. Baker, *On Strike and On Film* (excerpts) *EEE*

❖ Beltrán, Chapters 2 and 3

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WEEK 7: CHICANISMO REACHES THE SCREEN

11/9: **QUIZ #2 IN CLASS**

Lecture: Cine-Aztlán: Political Momentum and Cultural Continuum

Screening: YO SOY JOAQUÍN, dir. Luis Valdez (El Teatro Campesino, Mexico/U.S.A., 1970)

YO SOY CHICANO, dir. Jesús Salvador Treviño (Mexico/U.S.A., 1972)

11/11: Discussion of Latina/o grassroots movement cinema, West v. East Coast;

Bonus Screening: THE CASE AGAINST LINCOLN CENTER (Newsreel, 1968)

CHICANA, dir. Silvia Morales (KCET, 1979)

Reading: Ramírez Berg, "Backstory"

- ❖ Cine-Aztlán, "Ya Basta con Yankee Imperialist Documentaries!" *EEE*
- ❖ Rosa Linda Fregoso, "Chicana Film Practices: Confronting the Many-Headed Demon of Oppression" *EEE*
- ❖ Lillian Jiménez, "Moving from the Margin to the Center: Puerto Rican Cinema in New York" *EEE*
- ❖ Chon Noriega, "Training the Activists to Shoot Straight" *EEE*
- ❖ Chon Noriega, "Between a Weapon and a Formula" (recommended) *EEE*

WEEK 8: ICONOCLASM: LATINA/O PERFORMANCES OF SELF AS "OTHER"

11/16: Lecture: Luis Valdez and Cinematic Reflexivity in the "Hispanic Decade;" Eddie Olmos' archetypical screen personae
Screening: ZOOT SUIT, dir. Luis Valdez (Universal, 1981)

11/18: **Media Watch Checkpoint - Use Drop-Box on EEE **Final Research Project Presentations Begin****
Lecture/Discussion: Genre Appropriation & Hybrid Performance
Bonus Screening: CARMELITA TROPICANA: MY KUNST IS YOUR WAFFEN, dir. Ela Troyano, 1994
SEXAHOLICS, dir. Spike Lee (starring John Leguisamo), excerpt

Reading: Beltrán, Chapter 5

- ❖ Yolanda Broyles-González, "Re-Constructing Collective Dynamics" *EEE*
- ❖ José Esteban Muñoz, "Flaming Latinas" *EEE*
- ❖ Citizens' Committee for the Defense of Mexican-American Youth, "The Sleepy Lagoon Case" (recommended) *EEE*

WEEK 9: TRANSNATIONAL MIGRANT EXPERIENCES ON FILM & TV

11/23: Lecture: Between Nations: Negotiating New Latina/o Identities
Screening: AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE, dir. Lourdes Portillo (Xochitl Films, 1979)
GRANDMA HAS A VIDEO CAMERA, dir. Tânia Cypriano (2007)

11/22 Online Discussion: Latina/o portrayals on television, Anglophone v. Hispanophone (Participation Credit)

Reading: Arlene Davila, "Talking Back: Spanish Media and U.S. Latinidad" *EEE*

- ❖ Catherine Benamou "Televisual Melodrama in an Era of Transnational Migration" *EEE*
- ❖ Beltrán, Chapter 4 (recommended)

WEEK 10: LATINA/O MEDIA IN THE DIGITAL AGE

11/30: Mini-Lecture: The Digital Cinema of Alex Rivera: From Hybrid Parody to Transnational Sci Fi

Screening: ANIMAQUILADORA, dir. Alex Rivera & Lalo López (Subcine, 2003)

SLEEP DEALER, dir. Alex Rivera (Likely Story/This Is That Productions, 2008)

12/2: **SECOND SURVEY AVAILABLE ON EEE**

Mini-Discussion: The De-bordering of Latinidad in the work of Alex Rivera and Lourdes Portillo (with excerpts from Portillo's work)

Reading: Ramírez Berg, Chapters 7 & 8

❖ Rosa Linda Fregoso, "Interview with Lourdes Portillo" *EEE*

WEEK 11: REMEMBER TO COMPLETE ON-LINE COURSE EVALUATIONS

Final Media Watch Submissions and Research Reports Are Due No Later Than 5 p.m., Friday, December 11th in Professor's Mailbox 2000 Humanities Gateway, or in Designated EEE Dropbox; No Exceptions Without Proof of Medical or Family Emergency

Please Consult the Course EEE Website Regularly for Useful Information, Resources, and Documents

