

Articulations and Disarticulations: Gender and Race in Latin America

History & Literature 97
Sophomore Tutorial
Field of Latin America
Spring 2008
Tuesdays, 1–4pm, Sever Hall #101

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The sophomore tutorial is designed to give History and Literature concentrators an introduction to the skills and methods that are important to interdisciplinary scholarship: critical thinking, close reading, textual analysis, research, writing, and oral presentation. While History and Literature concentrators take courses in a number of different departments, the tutorial sequence provides a sense of continuity and structure to your program of study, in particular by emphasizing interdisciplinarity and asking you to think about the relationship between history and literature. There is no single way to do history and literature, so in order to introduce you to the interdisciplinary methods that we use in the program, we will return to a series of central questions throughout the course of our tutorial:

- What is history? What is literature? How do we know?
- What techniques do we use to analyze “historical” and “literary” texts?
- What is at stake in our delineation of a text as “historical” or “literary”?
- How do we put texts into historical perspective and how do we use “literary” texts to inform our historical interpretation?
- What constitutes evidence and how is it used?

We have organized the course around the broad theme of “Articulations and Disarticulations: Gender and Race in Latin America” in order to examine how gender and race have been imagined and articulated in literary, historical, and visual forms from 1492 through the present. Our analysis of race and gender will guide, but not limit, our study of the various historical, political and cultural encounters with the “other”, which helped establish some of the main questions that have contributed to the construction of what José Martí ultimately called “Nuestra América.” This course will focus on questions of gender and the “other” within Latin America, such as the descendants of Africans and indigenous peoples, who form an integral part of “Latinidad”. Because Latin America is such a vast geographical space, we cannot possibly cover everything in one class; therefore, we will focus on texts from Mexico and the Caribbean with the hope of addressing a broad, but not diluted, understanding of the issues that have historically faced the many countries and groups that comprise Latin America, and that continue to confront them today.

Divided into four units, the readings address various themes, including:

- 1) The articulation of a gendered narrative throughout the conquest in addition to the foundational dialectic of “Civilization” and “Barbarism” and its long-term effect on Latin American identity.
- 2) The encounter between the races and the discourse of *mestizaje* in the construction of “Nuestra América”.
- 3) The language and imaginaries of slavery, the idea of slavery as social death, and transculturation in the Caribbean.
- 4) The ways in which writers throughout the twentieth century have sought to break down, to *desarticular*, and refigure race and gender through language.

Our course materials will include novels, short stories, autobiographies, travel accounts, essays, paintings, film, poetry, and secondary sources. You will find, however, that many of the texts will blur the boundaries between genres and between history and literature.

Required Texts (available on Amazon.com and the Coop)

- Bartolomé de Las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies* [1552]. London: Penguin Classics, 1999.
- Juan José Saer, *El entenado* [1982].
- Rosario Castellanos, *Balún Canán* [1957].
- Alejo Carpentier, *El reino de este mundo* [1949].
- Mayra Santos Febres, *Sirena Selena vestida de pena*.

Except for Las Casas' *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, we encourage you to read the texts listed above in Spanish, though you may use English translations to help you. Copies of these books are also available on reserve in Lamont.

You will also be required to copy the **course reading packet**, available in the course box (marked “Deeny/Elphick”) in the History and Literature office.

Assignments

Class participation and weekly discussion questions (15%)

This class will be run as a seminar with students taking an active role in shaping class discussions. It is essential that you come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings. We will evaluate your participation based on your thoughtful, active, and informed participation in class discussions. Keep in mind that in addition to sharing your own insights with the class, you should listen and respond to the contributions of your fellow students. In preparation for class discussions, you will be required to submit 2–3 detailed discussion questions prior to each class meeting. The questions should be emailed to both tutors and to the other students by 10pm every Monday evening before class.

Oral presentations (15%)

Each student in the class will be asked to give three 10–12 minute oral presentations that introduce or complement the readings for a particular week. We will provide a list of suggested research topics for each week and will try to assign presentations based on your preferences. Presentations might consider the historical background of a particular text, biographical information about an author, or the broader cultural or literary context for a particular text. While this is not a major research assignment, we would like you to consult several sources in preparation for your presentation. You will be asked to prepare a short handout for the class, providing us with relevant details or facts as well as a bibliography for your presentation. We would be happy to make photocopies of your handout before class.

Paper 1 (10%): Friday, February 13

Close reading assignment (2–3 pages)

The first paper for the seminar will be a close reading of a selected passage from Las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*.

Paper 2 (15%): Friday, March 6

Comparative essay (4–5 pages)

For the second paper, you will write a comparative essay that deals with two texts from the course. We will provide a more specific description of this assignment closer to the due date.

Final Paper (25%): Friday, May 1

Sequenced research/writing assignment (10–12 pages)

Your final paper will be a thesis-driven interdisciplinary research paper on a topic related to the themes of the tutorial. You will complete several intermediary assignments that will prepare you for writing the final paper. You will give a brief oral presentation and turn in a one-paragraph summary of your primary source in class on **April 7**. A proposal that includes your central research questions as well as a description of the tentative sources and evidence for your final paper is due **April 10**. The next step is to complete an annotated bibliography of 5–7 secondary sources, due **April 17**. You will turn in a complete draft of the paper on **April 24** and a final version on **May 1**.

Oral Exam (20%): TBA (during Reading Period)

At the end of the sophomore tutorial, each student will take a 30-minute oral exam. The examination tests the students' ability to analyze and to discuss texts orally and is designed to prepare students for the oral component of the junior and senior tutorials. The two sophomore tutorial leaders serve as examiners. Each sophomore will submit a list of texts to their tutors for review by **May 4**. The list must consist of **six texts** from the sophomore tutorial syllabus, chosen by the student and organized around a title that expresses a suggested theme or binding category. The list must involve a diverse grouping of primary sources; a list that includes only fiction or only poems would not suffice. One or two of the six texts must be a secondary source. Extra-syllabus texts, including texts used for the final paper, are not allowed. As in the senior oral examination, students must know his/her texts well and be prepared to discuss them in a polished manner. They should have a command of specific textual and contextual details, and also be able to speak broadly about the texts in relation to the chosen theme. Students should be prepared to deliver an argument or narrative concerning their topic that attends to both historical change and the relationships

between texts. The main line of questioning will be directed toward the list of texts submitted by the student, but students may make reference to other texts from the syllabus as well. Examiners will then write a short evaluation of the student's performance on the exam and assign the student a letter grade. These evaluations, grades, and the student's examination list of texts become a permanent part of the student's record.

Course Policies

Attendance is mandatory. Barring a major emergency, students are expected to attend **all** class meetings. Please notify us beforehand if you have an emergency or other circumstances that will prevent you from coming to class.

Deadlines are strict. Late work will not be accepted unless accompanied by a medical note and a letter from your Resident Dean. We do not accept emailed work. Put two **copies of all assignments in our mailboxes in the History and Literature Office, Barker Center 122 by 4pm** on the due date (the office closes at 5pm).

Paper Formatting: Please turn in **two copies** of each of your assignments (one for each instructor). Papers should be in hard copy, double-spaced, and paginated. Use either MLA (Modern Language Association) or Chicago style for your footnotes and bibliography; see the most recent editions of *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* or *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

Plagiarism is a serious offense. If you commit plagiarism, you will definitely fail the assignment, and you will probably fail the course and face disciplinary action from the Administrative Board.

Special Needs: Please let us know if you have a disability that may require some modification of the seating, testing, or other class requirements.

~SCHEDULE & READINGS~

UNIT 1: Articulating the Conquest

February 3: America as Gendered Other

- Christopher Columbus, "The Breast of Paradise" and "New World Rhapsodies," in *The Discovery of America and Other Myths: A New World Reader*. Edited by Thomas Christensen. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1992.
Read: pp. 5-11 (photocopy)
- Bartolomé de Las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies* [1552]. London: Penguin Classics, 1999.
Read: whole book

February 10: (His)tory and Narration of Conquest

- Bernal Díaz, *The Conquest of New Spain* [1568]. London: Penguin Books, 1963.
Read: pp. 85–87; 189–307; 353–413 (photocopy)
- Miguel León-Portilla, ed., *The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1992.
Read: pp. 3–126 (photocopy)
- Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America* [1982]. New York: Harper & Row, 1984.
Read: “Montezuma and Signs,” pp. 63–97 (photocopy)
- Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2005.
Read: Chp. 3: “Collision at Cajamarca: Why the Inca Emperor Atahualpa Did Not Capture King Charles I of Spain” and Chp. 11: “Lethal Gift of Livestock” (photocopy)
- Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008. [For the seminar with President Faust on Friday, Feb. 13]
Read: excerpt (on the Hist. & Lit. website)

February 13, 1–3pm: Seminar with President Drew Gilpin Faust

****Due: Paper #1 (4pm, Friday, February 13 in Hist. & Lit. office)****

February 17: America as Savage and Racial Other or Civilization vs. Barbarism

- Juan José Saer, *El entenado* [1982]. 3rd ed. Buenos Aires: Grupo Editorial, 2000.
Read: whole book
- Laura García Moreno, “The Indigestible Other: Writing, Cannibalism, and Melancholy in Juan José Saer’s *The Witness*.”: 586–612 (photocopy)
- Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology*. Cambridge: CUP, 1982.
Read: Chp. 2: “The Image of the Barbarian,” pp. 15–26 (photocopy)

UNIT 2: Disarticulating the Conquest

February 24: *La raza cósmica: Mestizaje*

- José Vasconcelos, *The Cosmic Race: A Bilingual Edition* [1924]. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997.
Read: pp. 43–126 (photocopy)
- Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands: The New Mestiza = La frontera*. 3rd ed. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 2007.
Read: “La consciencia de la mestiza/Towards a New Consciousness,” pp. 77–98 (photocopy)

- Ilona Katzew, *Casta Painting: Images of Race in Eighteenth-Century Mexico*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005.
Read: Chps. 2–3; pp. 39–109 (photocopy)

March 3: Legacies of the Racialized and Gendered Others

- Rosario Castellanos, *Balún Canán* [1957]. Madrid: Cátedra, 2004.
Read: whole book
- Octavio Paz, *Labyrinth of Solitude* [1950]. London: Penguin Books, 1990.
Read: “The Sons of La Malinche” (photocopy)
- Elena Garro, *La semana de colores* [1964]. 3rd ed. Mexico: Editorial Grijalbo, 1989.
Read: “La culpa es de los Tlaxcaltecas” (photocopy)

****Due: Paper #2 (4pm, Friday, March 6 in Hist. & Lit. office)****

UNIT 3: Slavery

March 10: Slavery and Social Death

- *The Mission*, dir. Roland Joffé, 1986.
- Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982.
Read: Chps. 1, 2, 3; pp. 17–101 (photocopy)
- John Hemming, *Red Gold: The Conquest of the Brazilian Indians*. London: Papermac, 1995.
Read: Chp. 13; pp. 258–287; 607–612 (photocopy)

*In-class writing workshop for Paper #2

March 17: Haitian Revolution and Slave Emancipation

- Alejo Carpentier, *El reino de este mundo* [1949]. Mexico: UNAM, 2004.
Read: whole book
- Franklin W. Knight, “The Haitian Revolution,” *The American Historical Review*, vol. 105, no. 1 (Feb. 2000): 103–115 (photocopy)
- Laurent DuBois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004.
Read: Chps. 2, 13, and Epilogue; pp. 36–59, 280–306 (photocopy)

~SPRING RECESS~

March 31: From Serf to Self

- Juan Francisco Manzano, *Autobiografía del esclavo poeta y otros escritos* [c. 1840]. Ed. William Luis. Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2007.

Read: selections TBA (photocopy)

- Julio Ramos, "La ley es otra: Literatura y constitución de la persona jurídica," *Revista de crítica literaria latinoamericana*, vol. 20, no.4 (1994): 305–335 (photocopy)
- Sylvia Molloy, *At Face Value: Autobiographical Writing in Latin America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
Read: "From Serf to Self: The Autobiography of Juan Francisco Manzano," pp. 36–54 (photocopy)

UNIT 4: *Nuestra América*: Refiguring Race and Gender

April 7: "Yo soy un hombre sincero" and Other Ways to Speak of Us

- José Martí: "Nuestra América" and "Versos sencillos" (photocopy)
- Julio Ramos, *Divergent Modernities: Culture and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Latin America*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2001.
Read: "The Art of Good Governance" and "The Repose of Heroes: Poetry and War in José Martí," (photocopy)
- Nicolás Guillén, *Sóngoro cosongo y otros poemas*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial.
Read: "Negro bombón" [1930], "Mulata" [1930], "Sóngoro Cosongo" [[1930], "Sensemayá" [1934], and "El abuelo" [1934] (photocopy)
- Luis Palés Matos, *Tuntún de pasa y grifería* (photocopy)
- Nancy Morejón, *Parajes de una época*. Havana: Editorial de Letras Cubanas, 1979.
Read: "Mujer negra" [1994] (photocopy)

****Due: Primary source for final paper (in-class presentation and short paragraph)****

****Due: Proposal for final paper (4pm, Friday, April 10 in Hist. & Lit. office)****

April 14: Caribbean Debates of Race and Gender

- Fernando Ortiz, *Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y el azúcar: advertencia de sus contrastes agrarios, económicos, históricos y sociales, su etnografía y su transculturación* [1940]. Madrid: Cátedra, 2002.
Read: pp. 135–260 (photocopy)
- Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*. Trans. Richard Pilcox. New York: Grove Press, 2008.
Read: Foreword, Introduction, and Chp. 1; pp. vii–23 (photocopy)
- René Marqués, "El puertorriqueño dócil" [1966]; pp. 151–214 (photocopy)

****Due: Annotated bibliography for final paper (4pm, Fri., April 17 in Hist. & Lit. office)****

April 21: Paradigms of Masculinity in Puerto Rico

- Mayra Santos Febres, *Sirena Selena vestida de pena*. Barcelona: Mondadori, 2000.
Read: whole book

****Due: Draft of final paper (4pm, Friday, April 24 in Hist. & Lit. office)****

April 28: Paper presentations and workshop

****Due: Final Paper (4pm, Friday, May 1 in Hist. & Lit. office)****

****Due: Oral exam topic and list of texts (4pm, Monday, May 4 in Hist. & Lit. office)****

****Due: Plan of Concentration, cumulative bibliography, request for next year's tutor, and Choice of field form (4pm, Wed. May 20 in Hist & Lit office)****