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

Lecture/Discussion: M, W 6-7:20 HH254 Prof. Catherine Benamou

 Studio: M 7:30-9 p.m. HH254
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 Office Hours: T, W 3-5 p.m.
 2349 HG, (949) 824-5830

Taught in English; some media in Spanish & Portuguese

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, <u>Latino Images in Film: Stereotypes, Subversion, Resistance</u> (University of Texas Press, 2002)

Mary C. Beltrán, <u>Latina/o Stars in U.S. Eyes: The Making and Meanings of Film and TV Stardom</u> (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*:

https://eee.uci.edu/09f/26150

All films screened in studio will be available for viewing **on reserve** at the **MRC in Langson Library** within 24 hours of the scheduled screening time.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: each student is entitled to **one** unexcused absence; after that point, one half grade will be taken off of participation grade for each additional absence. **TARDINESS:** if you arrive more 10 minutes late or leave class more than 10 minutes early without a reasonable excuse, you will be marked "absent."

CLASSROOM COURTESY: Sleeping is not allowed in class; if you fall asleep, you will be marked "absent." Cellphones must be turned off during all class sessions. Using a laptop or digital phone for purposes other than accessing the course website, assigned reading, or taking course notes will result in being marked "absent." This year, we all need to pitch in: please remove any personal refuse upon leaving the classroom. PLAGIARISM will not be tolerated under any circumstances; if I determine that you have committed plagiarism in any assignment, you will fail that assignment. For more information, please consult the campus website on academic honesty and student conduct: http://www.editor.uci.edu/catalogue/appx/appx.2.htm

SCREENINGS: you are expected to view assigned films during scheduled viewing

times; if you must be absent during studio then please notify me via email and please view the film on reserve at MRC at your earliest convenience.

WEEK 1: CULTURAL SMUGGLING IN THE 80s & 90s

9/28: Lecture: CROSSOVER DREAMS & DILEMMAS: the Cinema of Gregory Nava

Screening: *MI FAMILIA (My Family)*, dir. Gregory Nava (American Playhouse/American Zoetrope/Majestic Films International, 1995)

9/30: Class discussion of *Mi Familia*; introduction to bonus film.

Bonus Screening: *Cross-Over Dreams*, dir. León Ichaso (Congress Entertainment/Miramax, 1985)

Reading: Harry P. Pachón, Louis DeSipio, Rodolfo O. de la Garza, and Chon A. Noriega, "Missing in Action: Latinos in and out of Hollywood" *EEE*

Mary C. Beltrán "Introduction" and Chapter 6: "Crossing Over the Latina Body"

WEEK 2: NAVIGATING THE ANGLO/LATINO SCREEN DIVIDE 1

10/5: Lecture: Guiding Concepts for Analyzing Latina/o Screen Representation and Audience Demographics

Screening: *THE BLUE DINER (La Fonda Azul),* dir. Jan Egleson (WGBH-Boston/CPB, 2001)

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*

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 Artenstein (CineWest Productions, 1988) RECEPTION: 6:30 p.m. SCREENING: 7 p.m., followed by Q&A with Director

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

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

WEEK 7: CHICANISMO REACHES THE SCREEN

11/9: **OUIZ #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)

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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

