

Spanish 722

The Usual Suspects: Gender and Sexuality in 20th Century Spanish Novel and Film

Spring 2016

Prof. Jorge Pérez

Mondays 4:00-7 pm

En este curso abordaremos las principales tendencias estéticas de la novela española (y en menor medida el cine) desde 1939 hasta la actualidad. Aunque el curso ofrecerá una visión panorámica de tales tendencias, habrá un enfoque específico en una lectura de tales novelas y películas desde la perspectiva de género y sexualidad. Por ello, el curso tendrá una carga de lectura teórica bastante pronunciada, con textos obligatorios de lectura y otros opcionales para aquellos estudiantes que no estén familiarizados con estas perspectivas teóricas.

Los textos primarios incluyen novelas incluidas en la lista de lectura del MA (entre 6-7 novelas, incluyendo *Nada*, *La colmena*, *Tiempo de silencio*, *Una mala noche la tiene cualquiera*, *El cuarto de atrás*, *El silencio de las sirenas*). Las lecturas secundarias incluyen una variedad de artículos y fragmentos sobre teoría y crítica que entregaré el primer día de clase en un paquete de fotocopias. También habrá varias películas como parte de la materia del curso.

La evaluación del curso se basará en la participación en clase, un trabajo final de investigación, un examen escrito y al menos una presentación oral.

SPAN 785: The Lettered City and its Undergrounds

In his posthumously published, groundbreaking 1983 work, Uruguayan critic Ángel Rama introduced the concept of the “lettered city” to describe the role of written discourse and urban development in the formation of Latin American societies and the consolidation of colonial and state power. In this course, we will take Rama’s text as the starting point for our analysis of the ways that the lettered city is, as he says, “revolutionized” beginning in the twentieth century. We will examine the “undergrounds” that challenge and confront the hierarchies of knowledge and power that are the foundations of the lettered city. This course will take a transmedia approach, and provide an introduction to the heterogeneous field of Latin American Cultural Studies, paying particular attention to debates and concepts from subaltern and postcolonial studies. In addition to *La ciudad letrada*, this course will include other texts from the MA Reading List, including: Rigoberta Menchú, Domitila Barrios de Chungara, Gloria Anzaldúa, EZLN, John Beverley, and Jean Franco.

Spring 2016:

Jonathan Mayhew

Spanish 795: Literary Theory and Criticism

An introduction to literary theory based on the “primary texts,” not introductory guidebooks or “applications.” The course will begin with an introduction to hermeneutics, or the nature of interpretation itself. We will continue with theories of language, questions of “validity,” feminism, Marxism, and translation theory. On two days students will choose the readings in order to allow for discussions that are relevant to student interest, or to expand the horizons of interpretation.

A typical day in the course will consist of a student presentation, a discussion of two or three theoretical readings, a “mini-lecture” by the professor, and occasionally a group activity. We will have a short break (10 minutes) at 17:15 or at a convenient stopping point. We will speak in English, Spanish, or a mixture of the two languages whenever it is convenient.

This material is the most important you will read in your graduate career. The point is not just to become a good scholar, but to be an intellectual. In order to do so, you must master a certain number of foundational ideas about interpretation, the nature of language, and literature itself. At the conclusion of the course, you will not only know how to use theory in your own work, but also how various theories relate to one another. Thus you will be able to understand any new theoretical concepts you encounter with the greatest of ease.

Span 985 (Seminar)

From Theater to Theory (and Back):

The seminar is divided into two equal sections, each of which will result in a culminating project and grade (grades from each section will be combined and divided by two in order to determine the course grade). The first section of the course provides a background in theater and theater theory. In addition to “classic” theater theory and Latin American / Latin@ plays, we will read numerous works by authors (Ionesco, Beckett, Lorca, Shakespeare, Albee, Sophocles, Pirandello, etc.) that have influenced the playwrights we study and / or provide students with crucial background knowledge for the second eight weeks. One of the focuses of this section will be the way women playwrights rework plays by (among others) the abovementioned male authors.

In the second section of the course we will focus on plays and performances from the Americas, as well as performance and cultural studies “theories”—the latter to determine the different approaches to literary, cultural, and / or performance studies that students find most productive for their own intellectual explorations. In addition to writing papers and guiding conversations, students will write a “theory manifesto” that expresses and exemplifies their integrations of primary and secondary works in fruitful ways in order to accomplish their goals as intellectuals.

