

Spanish 410. "Literature of Exile, Immigration and Ethnicity".  
 TOPIC: *IMAGES AND MEMORY IN CUBAN AND CUBAN AMERICAN FICTION*

Tuesdays 10-11:50

Professor Isabel Alvarez Borland

Spring 2008

Office Hours: Tuesdays 2-3:30/ Thursdays 11-12:30, and by appt  
 Stein 456 x 3457 ialvarez@holycross.edu

#### Course Description

In this course we will study the literature written by Cuban writers outside Cuba as well as US Cuban Americans in order to explore how these authors find and invent themselves in their fictions and autobiographical works. Particular attention will be given to literary aesthetics and the images of migration created by these authors. How do Cuban American writers experiment with the possibilities of the image in order to address changing constructions of immigration, language, exile, and identity? Our seminar will focus on the aesthetics of the exilic text in order to illuminate how the poetics of exile and memory have shaped the contribution of Cuban Americans to American culture. We will also discuss the Cuban American literary production as an indexical model and relate it to other immigrant groups writing in the US today.

#### Course Objectives

The purpose of this course is to enhance your understanding of the American literature produced in the United States by a particular ethnic group with a view toward making you a well-informed and articulate critic of the literature of these writers. It will be intended to strengthen your capacity to read and analyze literary texts as well as films. Because the literature that we will read will be about a specific historical period, i.e. the literature produced by individuals affected by the 1959 Cuban Revolution, it is expected that you will learn in more detail the history of US-Cuban relations during the last half of the XX century.

#### Format and Course Requirements

1. This course is designed as a seminar. Students are expected to have read the required materials before coming to class and to be fully prepared to discuss the book/topic identified in the syllabus.
2. Students should come to class prepared to discuss the "question of the day" -which I will send to you by email in advance of each class.
3. In addition, selected pairs of student leaders will prepare their own set of 4 questions for each seminar.
4. Students are required to keep a journal of their response to the readings which will be collected twice in the semester-middle and end. This journal will be part of your participation grade.
5. Two short papers will be assigned during the semester, and a research paper to be handed in during the final exams. Grades will be based on the following percentiles: class participation, journals and quality of participation 20%; two short papers 30% each ; the longer research paper 20%.

Required Readings SPANISH 410 2006

- 1.G. Cabrera Infante. Vista del amanecer en el tropico.
  - 2.Carlos Eire. Nieve en La Habana Free Press, 2003.
  - 3..Mirta Ojito. El Manana, Penguin 2005.
  - 4.Ana Menendez. Por amor al Che and Selections from Electronic Reserves
  - 5.Zoe Valdes. Café Nostalgia. Planeta 1998.
  - 6.Antonio Jose Ponte, Las comidas profundas
- Also see required reading from Electronic Reserves

Required Film Viewing:

1. "Memories of Underdevelopment: dir. Tomas Gutierrez Alea
2. "Adios Patria" or "Calle Ocho: Cuban Exiles Look at Themselves"
3. "Beyond the Sea" dir.
4. Azucar Amarga/Bitter Sugar.

Class Schedule and Assignments

Primera Parte. IMAGENES DE LA HISTORIA: GUILLERMO CABRERA INFANTE

1/22

*Topic: CONTEXTOS E HISTORIA: Cuba: Exilio e Inmigración. Siglo XX-XI*  
Objetivos para el curso.  
E-res Cuba: overview summary of history up and including the last 45 years of Castro's regime. Due today: G. Cabrera Infante's Vista del amanecer—first 25 pages

1/29

*Topic: Historia y Exilio*  
Due today: G. Cabrera Infante's Vista del amanecer—conc  
E-res. Lecturas recomendadas  
"Entrevista con GCI"

2/5

*Topic: Historia y Exilio*  
Due today: G. Cabrera Infante's Vista del amanecer—conclusion  
\*\*\*Antes de esta clase ver: Pelicula obligatoria: Memorias del subdesarrollo  
Discusion pelicula y texto.

2/12

*Topic: Exilio Existencial: Reinaldo Arenas*

Due today REQUIRED E-RES:

1.Reinaldo Arenas. See ERES /short story. \*\*\*\*\*Suggested reading e-res..additional articles about Arenas.

**NOTE:**

\*\*\* short Paper due today. Find an image in both text and film. Relate specific scene of film (MEMORIAS) to specific vignettes in Vista in terms of technique [aesthetics] and themes./discuss your paper in class

2/19

Segunda Parte. LOS HIJOS DEL EXILIO;

*Topic: La generacion de Pedro Pan*

Due today: Carlos Eire...Nieve en La Habana 1/2

ERES/ Lecturas recomendadas

Interview with Carlos Eire

2/26

Due today: Conclusion. Eire.

Due today: ver documental: "So far from Cuba"

DISCUSION Documental Y LIBRO

Lectura recomendada: Ivonne Conde The Children of Peter Pan[hard copy]

SPRING BREAK

3/11 *Topic: 1980s.Los niños del Mariel*

Mirta Ojito El Mañana

3/18 Due Today: Mirta Ojito's Mañana conclusion. Required View film : "Mas alla del mar." Discussion of links \*\*\*\*bet. film and Ojito's book.

EASTER BREAK 20-243/25 *Topic: Memorias prestadas*Ana Menendez.....Por amor al Che 1/2

4/1 Conclusion Por amor al Che

Ana Menendez...*Por amor al Che*

TERCERA PARTE: EL EXILIO MAS RECIENTE: PERIODO ESPECIAL

4/8*Topic: La Cuba de los 90*Due today: Zoe Valdes. Café Nostalgia . 1/2

\*\*\*SHORT PAPER DUE TODAY. Topic: TBA

4/15*Topic: La Cuba de los 90*Due today: Zoe Valdes. Café Nostalgia CONCDUE today: pelicula Azucar amarga. Relacionar libro y pelicula  
Topics and outline for FINAL paper due today.4/22 *Topic: La Cuba de los 90. Imagenes de la carencia.*Antonio Jose Ponte...*"Las comidas profundas"* ensayo4/29 Conc a Ponte. Haber visto pelicula "Havana Suite". Discussion de  
texto y pelicula. CONCLUSION AL CURSO

\*\* PAPER DUE FIRST DAY OF FINAL EXAMS

RESERVE READING LIST. CUBAN AMERICAN LIT.[HARD COPY]  
SPAN 410 AND HONORS SEMINAR

Alvarez Borland, Isabel, FROM PERSON TO PERSONA, U Virginia Press, 1999.

De Courtivron, Isabelle, editor. Lives in Translation: Bilingual Writers on Identity and Creativity. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

Kanellos, Nicolas, editor. Herencia: The Anthology of Hispanic Literature of the United States.

Perez Firmat, Gustavo. Tongue Ties. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

Torres, Maria de los Angeles, editor. By Heart/De Memoria. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003.

West-Durán, Alan, editor. Latino and Latina Writers. Vols. I and II. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2004.

\* This is an important reference work as it contains essays on topics such as "Latino Autobiography" as well as extensive essays on the individual authors followed by a selected bibliography on each author. I have made these writings available to you through electronic research as the individual author bibliographies will be essential reference for your research papers,

Augenbraun, Harold, and Ilan Stavans eds. Growing Up Latino. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1993.

Barthes, Roland. Camera Lucida.

Conde, Iyonne. Operation Peter Pan. NY: Routledge, 1999.

Eakins, Paul. Fictions in Autobiography. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1985.

-----. The Ethics of Autobiography

---Touching the World. Princeton: Princeton, UP, 1992.

Luis, William. Dance Between Two Cultures. Nashville: Vanderbilt UP, 1997.

Oboler, Suzanne. Ethnic Labels. Minneapolis: U of Minn P, 1995.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS E-RES

1. "Cuba" context/overview article
2. "The Cuban Diaspora"-context
3. "Writer taps into spirit of Cuba" -G. Cabrera Infante
- 3a. Interview G. Cabrera Infante
4. Arenas An Outcast of the Island
5. Arenas A Writer's last words
6. "La fuga" by Reinaldo Arenas -in Spanish Req 410
7. "Final de un cuento" by Reinaldo Arenas-Req 410
  
8. Selection of poems by Cuban Americans
9. Answering critics Peter Pan
10. Interview with Carlos Eire - 410 in Spanish
11. Poetry selections by other Latinos
12. "On Being Cuban"
13. Perez Firmat Mambos 1-7 -in Spanish-required 410
- 13a. article about Gustavo Perez Firmat
- 14 Roberto Fernandez An Interview
- 14a. article about Roberto Fernandez
- 15 "Parody" article by Mary Vazquez
- 16 "Transcending" article by Gabriela Ibieta
- 17 "In Cuba" story by Ana Menendez-required 410
- 18 "My mother's house" story by Ana Menendez-required 410
19. "Exile" on Cristina Garcia
- 19a. article about Cristina Garcia
20. "And there is only" interview w/ Cristina Garcia

submitted by Isabel Alvarez Borland  
 ERES SITE password

Updated 12/15