

# Latina Issues and Cultural Production: Latina Body Work

ETHN 137: Fall Quarter 2013  
Monday-Wednesday-Friday, 11-11:50am  
Sequoyah Hall, 147

Professor Jillian Hernandez, Ph.D.

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Office: Social Sciences Building, 245

Office Hours: Wednesdays 12:30-1:30pm/Fridays 9:30-10:30am  
and by appointment



*Crystal Pearl, "Havana Riviera," digital print, 2012*

In what ways do the representations and actions of Latina bodies shape and challenge constructions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and citizenship? This course will explore the poetics, aesthetics, and politics of Latinidad as expressed by a diverse group of visual artists, performers, writers, musicians, and moving image makers. Our discussions will center on narratives of racialization and sexuality.

We will engage with memoirs, manifestos, YouTube videos and experimental multimedia projects. Our aim is to conduct comparative historical, transnational, and interdisciplinary analyses of how and why Latina bodies work to make meaning and culture.

**Required Texts:**

*From Bananas to Buttocks: The Latina Body in Popular Film and Culture*, edited by Myra Mendible (2007, University of Texas Press) Available at bookstore and library reserve, also easily available for online purchase

*Flaming Iguanas* by Erika Lopez (1998, Simon & Schuster) Available at bookstore and library reserve, also easily available for online purchase

All other texts available as downloadable pdfs on TED (<https://ted.ucsd.edu/webapps/login/>) or as links for online material on syllabus reading list

If you encounter trouble with the TED system please contact:  
<http://acms.ucsd.edu/contact/index.html>

### **Required Films:**

All required films are on reserve at the Geisel library, you are expected to complete viewing of films on your own.

*Imitation of Life* (1934, John M. Stahl)

*Angelitos Negros* (1946, Joselito Rodriguez)

*La Lupe: Queen of Latin Soul* (2007, Ela Troyano)

### **Course Evaluation**

Your final grade will be based on the following:

Participation (20 points): Attendance and engagement in class discussion.

Prompted Response Papers (10 points each/20 points total): Due on October 16<sup>th</sup>; November 22<sup>nd</sup>

Prompts will be available 8 days prior to due date.

Mid-Term Exam (25 points): In-class October 28<sup>th</sup>

Body Language Creative Writing Project (10 points): Due December 2<sup>nd</sup>

Final Exam (25 points): In-class December 10<sup>th</sup>

*\*Please note, all assignments are to be submitted as hard copies unless I provide instructions stating otherwise.*

### **Grading Scale:**

100-95 points A+ / 94-90 points A / 89-85 points B+ / 84-80 points B

79-75 points C+ / 74-70 points C / 69-60 points D / 59-0 points F

## Course Requirements and Policies

**Attendance:** You may miss 2 classes without influencing your participation grade. Every unexcused or undocumented absence thereafter will effect your final grade. In order to be counted as present you must arrive on time and stay until class concludes. Attendance will be documented through brief writing prompts at the beginning of class, so please come to each session with a notebook and pen/pencil. If you have any questions regarding attendance please contact me.

**Participation and Discussion Ethics:** Class participation means you have done the assigned reading thoroughly and come to each class prepared with questions and comments for the discussion. I will document your engagement in class discussion when you make comments and pose questions.

Please engage one another in discussion with respect and consideration. Abusive and harsh language, intimidation and personal attacks will not be tolerated. These norms are reflected in the UCSD Principles of Community that we are all expected to follow (<http://www.vcb.ucsd.edu/principles.htm>).

**Correspondence:** I can answer questions during office hours or via e-mail. Please be aware that I receive a high volume of e-mails, if your query is time sensitive please indicate that in the subject line. I will expect for you to check your UCSD e-mail once a day in the event that there is a schedule change or if I need to send you important information. Class alerts will be sent via the TED system. For a useful and humorous guide to corresponding with professors, read:  
<http://www.usnews.com/education/blogs/professors-guide/2010/09/30/18-etiquette-tips-for-e-mailing-your-professor>

**Academic Integrity:** Whether intentional or inadvertent, plagiarism is a serious violation. All work submitted in this course must be your own. The use of sources such as ideas, quotations, paraphrases, or anything written by someone else must be properly acknowledged and cited. If you have questions about the proper citation of sources, please ask me. Students who plagiarize, or who cheat on an exam, will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with University policy. Students are expected to be familiar with UCSD's Policy on Integrity of Scholarship, available at <http://www.senate.ucsd.edu/manual/appendices/app2.htm#AP14>.

**Disability Support:** If you have a documented disability needing accommodations, please inform me and bring a notification letter outlining your approved accommodations. I will make all reasonable efforts to assist you. If, as a result of a disability, you cannot accept the content or terms of this syllabus, you must notify me in writing within one week of receipt of the syllabus. You may also seek assistance or information from the Office for Students with Disabilities, 858-534-4382.

**Electronic Devices and Laptops:** Cell phones must be turned off or set to silent in the classroom. If you must take an urgent call or send an important message please quietly

exit the room. Excessive disruption of class for use of cell phones will negatively impact your participation grade.

Laptops and tablets can be utilized solely for the purpose of taking notes. This privilege is contingent upon responsible use of these devices. If I notice or am informed that students are being distracted by such technology they will no longer be allowed in class.

**Late Submission of Assignments:** Assignments turned in late will lose 3 points per calendar day. If you foresee an issue in completing your assignment on time please contact me as soon as possible. Assignments over two days late will not be accepted without documentation from a doctor or dean.

**Sexual Content:** Some required course materials include explicit depictions and/or descriptions of sexual acts. I have assigned these works to facilitate learning about the politics and representation of girlhood sexualities. If you believe engagement with these materials would likely cause you significant discomfort it may be in your interest to drop the course.

### **Majoring or Minorin in Ethnic Studies**

Many students take an Ethnic Studies course because the topic is of great interest or because of a need to fulfill a social science, non-contiguous, or other college requirement. Often students have taken three or four classes out of interest yet do not realize how close they are to a major, a minor, or even a double major. An Ethnic Studies major is excellent preparation for a career in law, education, medicine, public health, social work, counseling, journalism, government and politics, international relations, and many other careers. If you would like information about the Ethnic Studies major or minor, please contact:

Daisy Rodríguez, Ethnic Studies Department Undergraduate Advisor

858-534-3277 or [d1rodriguez@ucsd.edu](mailto:d1rodriguez@ucsd.edu) or visit [www.ethnicstudies.ucsd.edu](http://www.ethnicstudies.ucsd.edu)

### **Reading and Screening Schedule (subject to change):**

*\*Please note, all reading must be completed by the date listed on the syllabus, as they will be discussed in class and I will expect for you to have comments and questions.*

#### **Friday September 27**

No class, I will be presenting at the Black Sexual Economies Conference at Washington University in St. Louis.

Read Myra Mendible's introduction in *From Bananas to Buttocks: The Latina Body in Popular Film and Culture* (2007, University of Texas Press)

#### **Monday September 30**

Course introduction and discussion of reading

## ***Conceptualizing & Embodying Race***

### **Wednesday October 2**

“Introduction” in *Latino Spin: Public Image and the Whitewashing of Race* by Arlene Dávila (2008, New York University Press)

Excerpt from Michael Omi and Howard Winant’s *Racial Formations*

- Suggested additional reading:
- *Latino Crossings* book introduction by Nicholas De Genova and Ana Y. Ramos-Zayas (2007, University of Texas Press)
- “African-American Women’s History and the Metalanguage of Race” by Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham in *Signs* Vol. 17 (No. 2), 1992, 251-274.

### **Friday October 4**

In-class screening and discussion of film *Imitation of Life* (1934, John M. Stahl)  
(complete film viewing on your own by next class, film on reserve in Geisel Library)

### **Monday October 7**

Lauren Berlant, “National Brands, National Body: *Imitation of Life*” from *The Female Complaint: The Unfinished Business of Sentimentality in American Culture* (2008, Duke University Press)

## ***Cuban/Mexican Crossings: Mujeres de Rumbo***

### **Wednesday October 9**

“Marquillas cigarreras cubanas: Nation and Desire in the Nineteenth Century” by Alison Fraunhar, *Hispanic Research Journal*, Vol. 9 (No. 5), 2008, 458-478

- Suggested additional reading:
- Excerpts from Frantz Fanon’s *Black Skin, White Masks*, “The Fact of Blackness” and “The Woman of Color and the White Man”
- Rey Chow, “Race and the Problem of Admittance” and “What Does the Woman of Color Want?”

### Friday October 11

In-class screening and discussion of film *Angelitos Negros* (1946, Joselito Rodriguez)

\*Complete film viewing on your own by next class, film on reserve in Geisel Library

### Monday October 14

Continued discussion of *Angelitos Negros*

“Alma Latina: The American Hemisphere’s Racial Melodramas” by Hiram Perez, *The Scholar and the Feminist Online*, Issue 7.2, Spring 2009 (access via this link, not on TED: [http://sfonline.barnard.edu/africana/perez\\_01.htm](http://sfonline.barnard.edu/africana/perez_01.htm))

### Wednesday October 16

In-class viewing of segments from films *Victimas del Pecado* (1951, Emilio Fernandez) and *Negro es Mi Color* (1951, Tito Davison)

“Mexican Cinema and the Woman Question” from *Mexican Cinema/Mexican Woman, 1940-1950* by Joanne Hershfield (1996, The University of Arizona Press)

\*\*Prompted response paper due

### *The Sounds & Bodies of Spectacular Latinas: From Latin Soul to Punk and Pop*

### Friday October 18

No class, I will be giving a keynote lecture at the Women and Girls in Georgia conference at the University of Georgia.

Your assignment is to view the film *La Lupe: Queen of Latin Soul* (2007, Ela Troyano) by the next class. Film is on reserve at the Geisel Library.

\*\*Mid-term short answer questions sent

### Monday October 21

Discussion of *La Lupe: Queen of Latin Soul*

“Celia’s Shoes” by Frances Negrón-Mutaner in *From Bananas to Buttocks* anthology

“Rita’s Pants: The *Charro Traje* and Trans-Sexuality,” Deborah R. Vargas, *Women and Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* Vol. 20 (No.1), 2010, pp. 3-14

### Wednesday October 23

“Jennifer Lopez: The New Wave of Border Crossing” by Tara Lockhart in *From Bananas to Buttocks* anthology

“Big Booty Beauty and the New Sexual Aesthetic” by Myra Mendible, January 5, 2009 (access via this link, not on TED):  
[http://www.alternet.org/story/117518/big\\_booty\\_beauty\\_and\\_the\\_new\\_sexual\\_aesthetic](http://www.alternet.org/story/117518/big_booty_beauty_and_the_new_sexual_aesthetic)

### **Friday October 25**

“Work that Hoe: Tilling the Soil of Punk Feminism” (p. 233-238) by Alice Bag from Punk Anteriors special issue of *Women & Performance* Vol. 22 (Nos. 2-3), 2012

Selections from *Violence Girl: From East L.A. Rage to Hollywood Stage, a Chicana Punk Story* by Alice Bag (2011: Feral House; available via TED, full book available electronically via Geisel Library)

### **Monday October 28**

**\*\*In-class mid-term examination (multiple choice), short answer responses due**

## ***Latina Bodies in Visual Art***

### **Wednesday October 30**

“Tarsila do Amaral: Art and Environmental Concerns of a Brazilian Modernist” by Carol Damian, *Women’s Art Journal*, Vol. 20 (No. 1), 1999, (p. 3-7)

“Manifesto Antropofágico” by Oswald de Andrade.

Coco Fusco “The Other History of Intercultural Performance” from *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader*, edited by Amelia Jones (2003, Routledge), p. 205-216

### **Friday November 1**

“From Inscription to Dissolution: An Essay on Expenditure in the Work of Ana Mendieta” by Charles Merewether (p. 134-153) and “The Burden of Guilt” by Tania Brugera (p. 153-154) from *Corpus Delecti: Performance Art of the Americas*, edited by Coco Fusco (2000, Routledge)

### **Monday November 4**

Lecture on contemporary Latina artists

### **Wednesday November 6**

"El desorden, Nationalism, and Chicana/o Aesthetics," by Laura Elisa Pérez from *Between Women and Nation Transnational Feminisms and the State*, edited by Caren Kaplan, Norma Alarcón, and Mino Moallem, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999.

## ***Creative Erotics***

### **Friday November 8**

Selected works by Sandra Cisneros, including "Guadalupe the Sex Goddess" in *Goddess of the Americas: Writings on the Virgin of Guadalupe*. Edited by Ana Castillo. New York: Riverhead Books, 1996.

"Poetry is Not a Luxury" by Audre Lorde (p. 36-39) in *Sister Outsider* (2007, Crossing Press)

### **Monday November 11**

No class, Veterans Day holiday

### **Wednesday November 13**

Selections from Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. 1987, San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.

"Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power" by Audre Lorde (p. 53-59)

### **Friday November 15**

"Art Comes for the Archbishop: The Semiotics of Contemporary Chicana Feminism and the Work of Alma López" (p. 96-120) by Luz Calvo from *Our Lady of Controversy: Alma López's Irreverent Apparition*. Edited by Alicia Gaspar de Alba and Alma López. (2011, University of Texas Press)

- Suggested additional readings:
- "Our Lady of Controversy: A Subject That Needs No Introduction" by Alicia Gaspar De Alba (p. 1-13)
- "The Artist of Our Lady (April 2, 2001) by Alma López (p. 13-16) , and

### **Monday November 18**

"Divas, Atrevidas, y Entendidas: An Introduction to Identities" and



“Welcome to the Global Stage’: Confessions of a Latina Cyber-Slut” by Juana Maria Rodriguez in *Queer Latinidad: Identity Practices, Discursive Spaces* (2003, New York University Press)

**Wednesday November 20**

*Flaming Iguanas* by Erika Lopez (1998, Simon & Schuster, pgs. 1-138)

**Friday November 22**

*Flaming Iguanas* continued (pgs. 139-end)

**\*\*Prompted response paper due**

**Monday November 25**

“Miss, You Look Like a Bratz Doll’: On Chonga Girls and Sexual-Aesthetic Excess” by Jillian Hernandez *National Women’s Studies Association Journal* 21 (3): 63-91. (2009)

**Wednesday November 27**

“This Tween Bridge over My Latina Girl Back: The U.S. Mainstream Negotiates Ethnicity” by Angharad N. Valdivia in *Mediated Girlhoods: New Explorations of Girls’ Media Culture*, edited by Mary Celeste Kearney (2011, Peter Lang)

**Friday November 29**

No class, Thanksgiving holiday

**\*\*Final exam short answer questions sent**

**Monday December 2**

**\*\*Body Language Project submission and sharing**

**Wednesday December 4**

No class, presenting at Hip Hop and Punk Feminisms Conference at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

**Friday December 6**

No class, presenting at Hip Hop and Punk Feminisms Conference at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

**Tuesday December 10**

**\*\*In-class final examination (multiple choice), short answer responses due, closing discussion, 11:30am-2:30pm**

**Student Consent for Release of Student Information**

I hereby authorize the UCSD Ethnic Studies Department to return my graded final examination/research paper by placing the examination/research paper in a location accessible to all students in the course. I understand that the return of my examination/research paper as described above may result in the disclosure of personally identifiable information, that is not public information as defined in UCSD PPM 160-2, and I hereby consent to the disclosure of such information.

Quarter: \_\_\_\_\_

Course: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

Student I.D.#: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_