Introduction to Latina/o Studies
Joseph Rodríguez

Joseph Rodríguez, "Puerto Rican Flag," 1996

It is in recognizing the specificity of the diverse histories and experiences of the population identified as Latinos in the United States that we can begin to better understand our multiculturalism. -- Suzanne Oboler

I write about race in America in hopes of undermining the notion of race in America. Brown bleeds through the straight line, unstauchable--the line separating black from white, for example. Brown confuses. Brown forms at the border of contradiction. -- Richard Rodriguez

This course surveys the multidisciplinary field of Latino/a Studies in order to better understand the place of Latinos in U.S. politics, history, and culture. How does the lens of U.S. Latino/a Studies--its interdisciplinary focus--help us to examine the heterogeneous and changing Latino communities? How are the Latin Boom of the entertainment industry and the recent demographic shift that places Latinos as the majority minority related? A selection of texts from a variety of disciplines (including history, the social sciences, literature, music, and the visual arts) will inform our discussions. Major themes to be addressed include: immigration, labor, civil rights, racial and ethnic identity, gender, and language. Fulfills RAD requirement.

Learning Goals

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Skills</th>
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<tr>
<td>Be aware of the diversity of the Latino community and understand the extensive history of Latinos in the United States.</td>
<td>Familiarity with and understanding of multiple perspectives on issues that are relevant for U.S. Latino communities</td>
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<td>Understand the current directions of research (i.e. the principle questions or concerns) in the major fields of interest to U.S. Latino Studies.</td>
<td>Ability to differentiate between the various disciplinary approaches to the central questions of Latino Studies.</td>
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<td>Comprehend how creative and cultural texts reinforce and/or question the issues raised within each discipline.</td>
<td>Willingness to begin to synthesize methods and results from different disciplines in order to create an interdisciplinary understanding of Latino Studies.</td>
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<td>Have studied opinions on the following questions: in what ways and to what degree are Latino cultures changing ideas of who and what America is? How are U.S. values transforming Latino cultures as they arrive and establish themselves as American? How do Latinos negotiate assimilation, acculturation, and resistance?</td>
<td>Ability to articulate your reasoning, both in oral and written forums, using evidence and argumentation effectively and accurately.</td>
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News forum
Required Texts and Useful Texts on Reserve
Course Requirements
Glossary for Latino Studies
Practice Wiki -- for Feb. 12

1. January 3
   1. Introduction to the topic and the syllabus
## Future Courses

- **Intro to U.S. Latino/a Lit (engl119-00-s09)**
- **Placing Identities (amst115-00-s09)**
- **Theory & Practice American Stds (amst345-00-w09)**

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### 2 Naming/Grouping: Latino vs. Hispanic and other Identity Quandaries

#### January 8 -- Read:
- "We the People" (Census Report)
- Scott, "A Census Query..." New York Times
- Fears, Darryl. "Latinos or Hispanics?" Washington Post, August 25, 2003. For this reading, please go to the library research database list and choose ProQuest. ProQuest is a database that compiles articles from different mass media, including this one by Fears.
- Oboler, "So Far From God, So Close to the United States..." in CF.

**In class:** library session
- **WeThePeople-census report**
- **Scott article, New York Times**

#### January 10 -- Read:
- Mora, "Legal Alien"
- Rodríguez, "Blaxicans and Other Reinvented Americans"
- Alcoff, "Is Latina/o Identity a Racial Identity?"
- Introduction from Latinos Remaking America [LRA]
  - Optional: Nelson and Tienda, "The Structuring of Hispanic Identity" [CF]
- **Pat Mora, "Legal Alien"**
- **Rodriguez, "Blaxicans","**
- **Alcoff article**
- **Guided Journal Entry #1**
- **Alcoff Discussion Points**
- **Agenda from Jan. 8**
- **Agenda from Jan. 10**

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### 3 Histories of Migrations and Becomings

#### January 15 -- Read:
- González, *Harvest of Empire*, Part One (Las Raíces)
- Hondagneu-Sotelo, Pierrette. "The History of Mexican Undocumented Settlement..." [CF]

#### January 17 -- Read:
- González, *Harvest of Empire*, Part Two (Las Ramas)
- Rodríguez, "A Summary of Puerto Rican Migration" [CF]

**In class:** video: Chavez Ravine

**Over the Weekend, see:** Salt of the Earth

**Official showings:**
- Friday, January 18, 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM; Library 305
- Saturday, January 19, 3:30 PM - 5:30 PM; Library 305

- **Agenda Jan 15**
- **Agenda Jan 17**

#### January 22 -- Read:
- Trumphour and Bernard, "Unions and Latinos" [LRA]
- Articles on the making of and issues surrounding *Salt of the Earth* (see resources)

#### January 24 -- Read:
- Flores, "Islands and Enclaves" [LRA]
- Steppick and Steppick, "Power and Identity" [LRA]
- Hamilton and Chinchilla, "Central American Migration" [CF]

- **Agenda Jan 22**
- **Agenda Jan 24**
- **Salt of the Earth Discussion Questions**
January 29--Read:
- González, Harvest of Empire, 167-205
- CASE STUDY: Recent articles on Latinos and contemporary politics:
  - "In Obama's Pursuit of Latinos, Race Plays Role"
  - Editorial: The Immigrant Vote
  - The Caucus Blog (check out the comments too)
  - "Everyone's an Expert..."
  - And for those who read Spanish

January 31--Read:
- Sánchez, "Y tú, ¿qué?" [LRA]
- Cornelius, "Ambivalent Reception" [LRA]
- Torres-Saillant, "Epilogue: Problematic Paradigms" [LRA]
- Díaz, Junot, "How to Date a Browngirl, Blackgirl, Whitegirl, or Halfie." in Drown.

4 Making Gender, Making Sexuality
February 5--Read:
- DeSipio and de la Garza, "Forever Seen as New" [LRA]
- Montoya, "Gender and Citizenship" [LRA]
- Domínguez, Commentary, pp 430-34 [LRA]

February 7--Read:
- Drown, by Junot Díaz
- Romero, "Life as the Maid's Daughter" [CF]

February 12 We will meet in CMC 110!!!
--Read:
- Berg, "Crash Course" (on e-reserves)
- Valdivia, "A Latina in the Land of Hollywood" (on e-reserves)

5 Finding/Making Place in the U.S.: Commerce, Education, Language
February 14--Read:
- Dávila, Latinos, Inc., Introduction and Chapters 2, 3, and 7
Over the weekend, see one of the movies on reserve for your cultural analysis assignment.
Girlfight, Mi Familia, Real Women Have Curves, or Spanglish
(If you'd prefer to work on another film, please discuss it with me first.)

February 19--
Conferences in pairs with la profesora, to discuss final projects.
(Sign up in the office hours module below.)

February 21--Read:
- Zentella, "Latin@ Languages and Identities" [LRA]
- Gándara, "Learning English in California" [LRA]
- Castro, "The Politics of Language in Miami" [CF]
- Recommended: Chapter 5 of Dávila, Latinos, Inc.
February 26—Read:
- Pearson, "Bilingual Infants" [LRA]
- Moll and Ruiz, "The Schooling of Latino Children" [LRA]
- Rodríguez, R., Excerpt from Hunger of Memory [see below]

February 28
- Padilla, F., sel. from Latino Ethnic Consciousness [e-reserve]
- Ricourt, M., sel. from Hispanics de Queens [e-reserve]

Mar 4
- García and Rúa, "Processing Latinidad"
- Masi de Casanova, "Spanish Language and Latino Ethnicity in Children's Television Programs"
- Torres-Saillant, "Pitfalls of Latino Chronologies"

Mar 6
Presentations on final projects
- Interesting recent article about Latino students at colleges
- E-reserves for Ricourt and Padilla excerpts
- Rodríguez chapter
- Literature Review
- Guided Journal Entry #4
- Agenda Feb 28
- PROJECT WIKI
- Working on your wiki—some resources
- Guided Journal #5—the very last one!
- GROUP PROJECT EVALUATION