

## SPAN 382: The Aesthetics of Violence in Latin America

### SYLLABUS

(Draft: subject to revision)

Fall 2016  
Section: 62272D  
Time: TTh 11-12:20  
Location: THH 209

Prof. Erin Graff Zivin  
E-mail: [egz@usc.edu](mailto:egz@usc.edu)  
Off. hrs.: Th. 12:30-2:30, by appt.  
Office: THH 156M



**Description:** This course, conducted in Spanish, will explore representations of violence and violent representations in Latin American narrative, poetry, music, painting and film from 1924-2005. Divided into five thematic clusters – cultural cannibalism, violence of the letter, postdictatorship, inquisition narratives and contemporary film – the course presents distinct aesthetic approaches to violence, whether visual or discursive, historical or allegorical. After a brief consideration of foundational works by Bartolomé de las Casas and D.F. Sarmiento, we will read texts, listen to music, look at paintings and view films by Francisco Botero, Oswald de Andrade, Caetano Veloso, Jorge Luis Borges, Ariel Dorfman, Albertina Carri, J.E. Pacheco, Arturo Ripstein, Sabina Berman, Fernando Meirelles. Class discussions will revolve around the relationship between the ethical, the political and the literary, with special attention paid to the following questions: what historical instantiations of violence inform the heterogeneous practices of artistic creation in Latin America? Is violence an inherent part of the act of creation? Is it possible to separate violence from Latin American cultural production? Does literature *thematize, enact and/or subvert* violence? Students will be expected to read and dissect literary and critical texts, as well as to formulate their own interpretations through written and oral assignments.

### Schedule:

## I. Introduction

### Week 1. Introduction: Foundational Violence (8/23, 8/25)

- Introduction
- Presentation assignments
- Bartolomé de las Casas, *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias* (selection)\*
- D. F. Sarmiento, “Asociación” in *Facundo*\*\*

## II. Cultural Cannibalism

### Week 2. Cultural cannibalism (8/30, 9/1)

- Oswald de Andrade, “Manifiesto de poesía ‘Palo del Brasil’”\*\*
- Oswald de Andrade, “Manifiesto antropófago”\*\*
- Carlos A. Jáuregui, excerpt from “*Antropofagia*” (pp. 425-435)\*\*
- Christopher Dunn, excerpt from “Poetry for Export” (pp. 13-20)\*\*

### Week 3. *Tropicália* (9/6, 9/8)

- Christopher Dunn, “The Tropicalist Moment”\*\*
- Caetano Veloso, “Sunday in the Park”, “*Tropicália*”, “Anthropophagy”\*
- Caetano Veloso, Gilberto Gil, Os Tropicalistas, etc. (music, in class)

### Week 4. *Tropicália*, cont. (9/13, 9/15)

- Marcelo Machado, *Tropicália* (film)

## III. Violence of the Letter

### Week 5. Letters of Violence (9/20, 9/22)

- Jorge Luis Borges, “El etnógrafo”\*\*
- Idelber Avelar, “The Ethics of Interpretation and the International Division of Intellectual Labor”\*\*
- Jacques Derrida, “The Violence of the Letter”\*\*

### Week 6. Letters of Violence, cont. (9/27, 9/29)

- Jorge Luis Borges, “Emma Zunz”\*\*
- Juan Duchesne-Winter, “Después de la pérdida de la justicia: una lectura zizekiana de ‘Emma Zunz.’”\*\*

### Week 7. Violent heroism, MIDTERM EXAM (10/4, 10/6)

- Jorge Luis Borges, “Deutsches Requiem”\*\*
- **MIDTERM EXAM will be given in class on Thursday, 10/6**

#### **IV. Postdictatorship**

##### **Week 8. Torture and truth (10/11, 10/13)**

- Marguerite Feitlowitz, “A Lexicon of Terror”\*\*
- Ariel Dorfman, *La muerte y la doncella*\*

##### **Week 9. Torture and Truth, cont. (10/18, 10/20)**

- Roman Polanski, “Death and the Maiden” (film)
- Idelber Avelar, “Five Theses on Torture”\*\*

##### **Week 10. Inscribing the Void of the Disappeared (10/25, 10/27)**

- Albertina Carri, *Los Rubios* (film)
- Gabriela Nouzeilles, “Postmemory Cinema and the Future of the Past in Albertina Carri’s *Los Rubios*”\*\*

#### **V. Violence and Globalization**

##### **Week 11. Violence at the Border (11/1, 11/3)**

- Roberto Bolaño, *2666* (selection)\*
- Kate Jenckes, *Witnessing Beyond the Human* (selection)\*

##### **Week 12. Violence at the Border (11/8, 11/10)**

- Roberto Bolaño, *2666* (selection)\*
- Patrick Dove, *Literature and Interregnum* (selection)\*

##### **EXTRA CREDIT opportunity: “Latin America in Theory” symposium (Fri. 11/11 and Sat. 11/12)**

#### **VI. Contemporary Film**

##### **Week 13. Exoticized Violence (11/15, 11/17)**

- Fernando Meirelles, *Cidade de Deus* (film)

##### **Week 14. Thanksgiving Week (11/22, 11/24: NO CLASS)**

- DRAFT OF FINAL PAPER DUE 11/22

##### **Week 15. Conclusion (11/29, 12/1)**

- Final presentations
- FINAL PAPER DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS 11/29
- EXAM REVIEW

##### **FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, December 13, 8-10am**

## **Course Requirements:**

**PARTICIPATION.** Each student should complete the weekly reading assignments by Tuesday of each week. Films will be shown in class on the date specified. You are expected to voluntarily contribute to class discussions, which will be reflected in your participation grade. This means that you should prepare notes with comments and questions to bring up in class.

**FACEBOOK GROUP.** You will be required to make weekly contributions to the course Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/280881545609532/>. These contributions are twofold. First, you will be expected to post a paragraph-long response to one of the required readings each week, due by midnight on the Monday before the reading is to be discussed. Second, you will be expected to post a comment on at least one other post each week, due by midnight the following Monday. No late posts will be accepted for credit.

**PRESENTATIONS.** You will be responsible for two in-class presentations. The first presentation (approximately 15 minutes in length) is based on one of the required readings. The presentation will not summarize the text nor give biographical information about author, but rather critically engage the themes, images, metaphors and rhetoric of the work in question. The second will be a presentation of your final paper during the last week of class. Please speak to Prof. Graff Zivin if you have any questions about this assignment.

**EXAMS.** There will be two exams: an in-class midterm and a final exam. There are no make-ups for exams.

**FINAL PAPER.** The final paper (7-8 pages) will be due on November 29. Papers handed in late will receive a lower grade. In addition, you will be required to turn in a one-page abstract for your final paper, which will describe in prose form your main thesis and supporting arguments. Late or missing abstracts will result in a lower grade for the final paper. Paper assignments will be distributed after exam #1.

**FINAL GRADE.** The final grade will be calculated in the following manner: participation (15%), Facebook group (10%), presentation #1 (10%), midterm exam (15%), final paper presentation (10%), final paper (20%), final exam (20%).

## **Course Materials:**

\*Texts marked with one asterisk will be distributed by professor.

\*\*Readings marked with two asterisks will be accessible via USC's Automated Reserves System (ARES) <https://usc.ares.atlas-sys.com/>.

## **Course objectives:**

Students will:

- learn to reflect critically on how violence is represented in narrative, poetry, music and film from Latin America
- become familiar with and be able to employ methods of critical analysis of literary texts in Spanish
- acquire fluency in the oral and written discussion of narrative, audio and visual cultural materials

**Statement for Students with Disabilities:**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in GFS 120, and is open 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is 213-740-0776.

**Statement on Academic Integrity:**

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. The Trojan Integrity Guide can be found at <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/forms/tio.pdf>. A Guide for Graduate Students can be found at <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/forms/GradIntegrity.pdf>.