

SPANISH 481 | Literature and Popular Culture

MW
3:30 - 4:50pm
VKC 111

Image credit:
The Eternal Getdown
by Quetzal



course overview

The popular—that which pertains to the “common folk” or the “masses”—has been perceived, at times, to be at odds with the high-minded ideals of the literary. With this in mind, this course will explore the tension and points of contact between the literature and the informal voices of the people in Spain and Latin America, from the early twentieth-century until the present. Moreover, we will examine the sociopolitical forces that drive the distinction between high and low cultures.

Overall, we will focus on the following themes: 1) how the artist/intellectual and the masses relate to and perceive each other; 2) how the meaning of the popular mass has been racialized and gendered; and 3) the value of reading and writing literature in print (especially, in a language other than English), given the competing influences of the media under the forces of globalization and neoliberal consumption. We will interrogate how these themes unfold in a diverse body of primary texts—novels, essays, short stories, social media, films, and music—read alongside key, secondary theoretical texts on the popular mass.

instructor info

Dr. Natalie L. Belisle, Assistant Professor, Department of Spanish and Portuguese
Office: Taper Hall 156 N | email: nlbelisl@usc.edu
Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 1:00 – 2:00 pm, and by appointment

primary reading list

literature

José Ortega y Gasset, *La rebelión de las masas*

José Camilo Cela, *La colmena*

Edgardo Rodríguez Juliá, *El entierro de Cortijo*

Luis Rafael Sánchez, *La importancia de llamarse Daniel Santos*

Mario Vargas Llosa, *La tía Julia y el escribidor*

Aurora Arias, *Emoticons*

film

Torrente

El Santo: El enmascarado de plata contra los marcianos

Un mundo maravilloso

La flor de mi secreto

social media

Generación Y

Lunes de Post-Revolución

Octavo Cerco

music

reggaetón (Rita Indiana y los Misterios, Daddy Yankee, and others)

tropicália (Gal Costa, Caetano Veloso, Gilberto Gil)

The primary textbooks will be available for purchase from the USC bookstore. Some may be available through online vendors such as amazon. Links to theoretical readings, social media, and audiovisual texts will be available on Blackboard. Films will be available on reserve at the library. You are required to bring physical (**printed**) copies of written texts to class so that we can all be on the same page.

All work for the class will be conducted in Spanish. Knowledge of Portuguese is helpful, but not required.

More information about the course requirements will be forthcoming.