

## **Violence in Contemporary Mexican Literature**

Spring 2013

SPN 350/LAS 370S/WGS 340 20

Prof. Héctor Domínguez-Ruvalcaba

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Unique numbers: 40525, 46850, 47330

Classroom: BEN 1.122

Class hours: TTH 2:00-3:30

Office: BEN 3.130

Office hours: T 11-12 and 1-2, TH 1-2 or by appointment

**Description.** This course will be devoted to the study of literary texts, art pieces, and films dealing with violence in Mexico in recent years. The class will discuss the characteristics of these representations and how they can lead us to understand social, economic, and political processes that generate violent events. The questions we are going to address are: what are the aesthetic, ethic, and political implications of the representations of violence? How can we understand Mexican society and gender system through the analysis of these narratives? What are the strategies that these works suggest for the solution of such difficult reality?

**Note on flag.** This course carries Global Cultures Flags, which is defined by the School of Undergraduate Studies as follows:

"Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one non-U.S. cultural group, past or present."

### **Grade criteria:**

Participation                    30%

Tests                                30%

Final project                    40%

**Participation.** Students are expected to participate actively in class discussions and on-line assignments. In their participation, students will contribute with comments on texts and other materials of study, response to professor and classmates positions, and questions addressing analysis and criticism. Attitudes and interventions that discourage the learning experience of the class will be considered negative participation and may affect participation grade.

**Tests.** Three tests will be given in order to strengthen reading comprehension.

**Final project.** Final must be 5-7 pages double space (including bibliography), Times New Roman 12 p., MLA style. The topic will be the analysis of a literary text, a film, or audio and visual materials which content is related to the subject of the class. It will include also quotations of at least 10 sources such as criticism, history, and literature. Students are strongly encouraged to visit the professor and the teaching assistants to be assisted in the process of writing. These papers will be graded as follows: 50% writing (vocabulary, grammar, sophistication), 50% content (use of concepts studied in class, documentation, clarity in the arguments).

### **Course policies**

Only 2 absences are allowed without penalty. After the 2nd one, a point from the final grade will be reduced for each absence, except when valid and documented excuse is presented: illness, accidents, court attendance, etc. (family reunions and non-emergency travels are not excusable).

Only when a student has a valid excuse, he or she will be allowed to present tests or turn in assignments out of the scheduled date.

Students must talk to the professor in the office when they have any concern with grades, class performance, and other issues related to the class.

Professor musts give grades of tests and assignments at least one week after student presented or turned it in.

Professor will give general feedback in class after each test or assignment or any time students request it; he also will be available in office hours or by appointment (in cases of schedule conflict) to talk on the progress of any particular student.

Instructor will make himself available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that a student may require as a student with a disability. Before course accommodations will be made, students will be required to provide documentation prepared by the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (SSD). To ensure that the most appropriate accommodations can be provided, students should contact the SSD Office at 471-6259 or 471-4641. For more information, read regulations for Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/ssd>

Scholastic dishonesty: students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from The University of Texas. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For more information, visit Student Judicial Services (SJS) at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/>

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

## Course materials

### Readings:

- Arjona, Arminé. *Delincuentes. Historias del narcotráfico*. Ciudad Juárez: Al Límite Editores, 2005.
- Blancornelas, Jesús. "Plata y plomo." In Carlos Monsiváis et al. *Viento Negro. Diez historias del narco en México*. México: Plaza Janés, 2004.
- Cacho, Lydia. *Los demonios del Edén*. México: Grijalbo, 2005.
- Centro de Derechos Humanos Fr. Bartolomé de las Casas. *...ésta es nuestra palabra: testimonios de Acteal*. San Cristóbal de las Casas: Centro de Derechos Humanos Fr. Bartolomé de las Casas, 1998..
- Regillo, Rossana. "La construcción social del miedo. Narrativas y prácticas urbanas." In Susana Rotker, ed. *Ciudadanías del miedo*. Caracas: Nueva Sociedad, 200,185-201.
- Reveles, José. *Levantones, narcofosas y falsos positivos*. Mexico: Gribalbo-Mondadori, 2011.
- Rotker, Susana. "Introduction". *Citizens of Fear. Urban Violence in Latin America*. Susana Rotker, ed. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002.
- Valdez Cárdenas, Javier. *Miss Narco. Belleza, poder y violencia*. México: Aguilar, 2009.

### Films:

- Acteal, estrategia de muerte*. Carlos Mendoza, dir. México: Canal 6 de julio, 1998.
- Digna. Hasta el último aliento*. Felipe Cazals, dir. México: Academia Mexicana de Derechos Humanos-CONACULTA, 2004.
- El sicario, Room 164*. Gianfranco Rosi, dir. USA-France: 21 One Productions-Arte Franc-Les Films d'Ici, 2011.
- La matanza de Aguas Blancas*. Carlos Mendoza, dir. México: Canal 6 de julio, 1996.
- Presunto culpable*. Roberto Hernández, Geoffrey Smith, dir. México: Abogados con Cámara- Beca Gucci Ambulante-Jan Vrijman Fund, 2011.
- Traspatio*. Carlos Carrera, dir. México: Tardan-Berman-INBURSA, 2009

**Schedule:**

## January

- 15. Introduction to the course
- 17. Rotker
- 22. Reguillo
- 24. Aguas blancas
- 29. Aguas blancas
- 31. Digna Ochoa

## February

- 5. Digna Ochoa
- 7. Testimonios de Acteal
- 8. Acteal. Estrategia de muerte
- 12. Test 1.
- 14. Rascón Banda
- 19 Rascón Banda
- 21. *Traspatio*
- 26. *Traspatio*
- 28. Lydia Cacho

## March

- 5. Lydia Cacho
- 7. Monsiváis
- 19. Brancornelas
- 21. Test 2
- 26. Trujillo
- 28. Trujillo

## April

- 2. Arminé Arjona
- 4. Arminé Arjona
- 9. *Sicario Room 164*
- 11 *Sicario Room 164*
- 16 Javier Valdez
- 18 Javier Valdez
- 23 *Presunto Culpable*
- 25 Reveles,.San Fernando
- 30 Test 3

## May

- 2 Conclusions. Final projects due