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Borders in Play Syllabus

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2017

SPAN 382: Borders in Play Syllabus

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Undocumented Border Flowers, 2010
Consuelo Jiménez-Underwood



Tejas uno, 1887
Gloria Anzaldúa



Tonatzín, Digital Print, 02
Yolanda López

SPAN 380: **Cultural Productions of the Borderlands**

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Fall 2017

Course Description

Chicana/o culture produced in the U.S. is a vast field, often underrepresented in undergraduate curricula. Even so, Chicana/os' contributions to literature, visual and public art, music, film, cultural theory, and political activism are among the richest in this nation. This absence is symptomatic of a larger societal reality, namely, a history of cultural and economic oppression, which results in silencing "the other" America. In this regard, Gloria Anzaldúa, one of the most important borderland theorist in the U.S., states: *"I write to record what others erase when I speak, to rewrite what others have miswritten about me, about you."*

In "Cultural Productions of the Borderlands," students gain deep understanding of theories and representations of borderlands within the context of their colonial legacies. Students may choose to read, write, and test in either English or Spanish, and work with an array of cultural materials including, literature, visual art, film, music, and Chicano/a history, as sites of opposition to sexist, racist, classist, and homophobic ideologies. SPAN 380 is a core course within the Latino/a Studies concentration. It also counts towards majors in American Studies, International Studies, Women and Gender Studies, Religious Studies, and Spanish Area Studies.

Course Objectives

Two primary objectives of the course are to engage students with Chicana/o identities and critiques from the Mexican-American civil rights movements to the present and to gain a deeper understanding of the theories of borderlands that anchor our analysis; in particular, the Mesoamerican concept of *nepantla*, a Nahuatl word referring to "the land in the middle," and the idea of *border crossing*, as an alternative epistemological approach to dominant ideologies. These objectives are achieved through deep critical reflection of theories and cultural productions of the borderlands and the development of core civic competencies enabled by community-engaged learning projects embedded in the course syllabus.

Community–engaged learning (CEL) builds on partnerships between institutions of higher education and surrounding communities to identify and work with public issues that have both academic and public life dimensions. It can prepare students for an active civic life by combining classroom-learning objectives with social action, geared at empowering community groups.

By the end of the semester students will:

- 1- Summarize in writing Columbia Elementary students' perspectives through active listening (biography driven pedagogy)
- 2- Connect an academic disciplinary theme (borderland theories) to a real-life expression of that issue through deep reflection
- 3- Develop lesson plans to address a need identified by Columbia Elementary School
4. Explain a system of oppression for an identity other than their own
5. Document the role they play in improving local civic life through the creation of a portfolio
6. Frame the issue of poverty, marginalization and borders according to multiple perspectives in a reflective journal

The CEL Project

Reading and Expressing Borderlands

The CEL project of the course will consist of a partnership with Columbia Elementary School, where approximately 60 % of the children qualify for free or reduced cost lunches and many participate in an in-school support group for children with parents in prison. Students will engage with 5th graders and their teachers in the teaching of

children stories and poems that represent borderlands, including issues of marginalization, poverty, cultural, racial, and ethnic differences. Focused activities will target reading and interpretation, writing and deep learning about issues of borderlands that are relevant to both groups of students. Together, students will create their own representations / expressions of borderlands through visual art or skits and will share them with the community at large, at both the elementary school and Kenyon College.

Textbooks

Most of the assigned readings are in ERES. Following are the titles you need to purchase:

Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands: La Frontera, The New Mestiza*. 3rd edition Sonia Saldívar Hull, San Francisco, Aunt Lute Books, 1999.

Román-Odio, Clara. *Sacred Iconographies in Chicana Cultural Productions*. Palgrave, 2013

Nail, Thomas. *Theory of the Border*. Oxford. Oxford UP, 2016

To access ERES Go to LBIS home page and search ERES. Click on Electronic Reserve and course page. Search for the professor's name select the correct course. Type the password of the course. List of items assigned will be displayed. **Password: chicana**

Films

Chicano! The History of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement (videos 1-2-3)
Onda Chicana

Performance

Guillermo Gómez-Peña, *The Chica-Iranian Project* (pochanostra.com)

Homework There will be homework questions, based on lectures, readings, and films. Reflect about these materials, answer the questions and come prepared for class discussion.

Mid-Term and Final Oral Exams There will be a mid-term and a final oral exam based on homework, literary and cultural analysis, films, and critical readings. These are not conversations. You will do most of the talking. You will draw two questions and explain your answer orally. You will have about 15 min. per question. I will let you know when time is winding down. You will want to get right to the core of your answer (your examples and how they support the answer you are developing). Once you've finished, I may ask you some follow-up question.

You may bring to the exam three main talking bullet points for each question. Questions may include the follow topics:

- What is distinctive about a particular period or movement (feminist, civil rights, cultural trend) and how authors we have read or artists we have discussed characterize such period / movement, or break with the past.
- A citation from a literary or critical text and how authors we have read reflect or respond to such observations.
- How would you explain evolving gender relations, behaviors, and ideals in Chicana/o culture? What changes and why? How are these changes reflected in literature, film and visual art we have analyzed?
- What is the relationship between technological change, economic interests and Chicana/o cultural change? Culture here can be understood broadly (how people communicate, what they communicate), as well as more narrowly (forms of expression such as writing, literature, plastic and fine arts, music, film, etc.).

Plan for CEL Project: Columbia / Kenyon Student Activities

1) Students enrolled in SPAN 380 will prepare lessons based on four children stories and poems for 5th graders in Columbia Elementary.

2) Given the enrollments (2 groups of 20 students in 5th grade), 2 Kenyon students will work 5-6 students.

3) Students Activities will include:

1. Reading with focus on specific learning outcomes - what is plot, sequencing, character, inferring, interpreting, analyzing new vocabulary, retelling, grammatical point, symbols, etc.

2. Producing an original representation based on the readings - visual representation, skit, poetic reading where the kids explain to the audience what they have learned, etc.

3. Teaching will happen Tuesdays from 10:00-11:00 at school, beginning Tuesday, Sept 26, ending October 17.

4. **From October 24 to November 2 Kenyon and Columbia students will work on public presentations.** Meetings will be at Columbia on Tuesdays at 11:15-12:00 pm.

5. Public presentations will last about 45 min. in addition to a brown bag lunch. These could be an art talk, a skit, or a poetry reading with an explanation or a commentary based on readings. **There will be two presentations, one at Columbia on Nov. 7 and one at Kenyon on No. 14, both at 11:00-12:00.**

6. Students will meet with teachers 2-4 times to make sure everything is aligning at the initial stage, middle, and end of the project.

7. The school principal will meet with our class the first day of classes, August 24th at 10:45 am to offer students a perspective on the school history and present context.

Kenyon Critical Reflection Activities

The D.E.A.L Model for Critical Reflectionⁱ

- **D**escribe – Objective description of experience
- **E**xamine – Analyze experience through academic/disciplinary lens
- **A**rticulate **L**earning – What was learned, how it was learned, why it matters, what it means for my future behavior

Kenyon Critical Reflection Assignments (Structured with D.E.A.L)ⁱⁱ

Describe your CEL experience

- When and where did this experience take place?
- Who else was there? Who wasn't there?
- What did I do? What did others do? What actions did I /we take?
- Who didn't speak or act?
- Etc.

Examine – Analyze experience through academic /disciplinary lens (academic learning)

- What specific academic material is relevant to this experience? Explain the concept, theory, etc.
- How did the material emerge in the experience (When did I see it or note its absence? How did I or should I or someone else use it?)
- What academic (e.g. disciplinary, intellectual, professional) skills did I use / should I have used? In what ways did I / others think from the perspective of a particular discipline and with what results?
- In what specific ways are my understanding of the material or skill and the experience the same and in what specific ways are they different? What are the possible reasons for the difference(s)? (e.g. bias, assumptions, lack of information on my part or on the part of the author / instructor / community?)

Articulate **L**earning – What was learned, how it was learned, why it matters, what it means for my future behavior

- *"I learned that" ...*

- Express an important learning, not just a statement or fact
- Provide a clear and correct explanation of the concept(s) in question so that someone not in the experience could understand it.
- Explain your enhanced understanding of the concept(s) as a result of reflection on the experience
- Express the learning in general terms, not just in the context of the experience (so that the learning can be applied more broadly to other experiences)
- ***“I learned this when” ...***
 - Connect the learning to specific activities that gave rise to it, making clear what happened in the context of the experience so that someone who wasn’t there could understand.
- ***“This learning matters because” ...***
 - Consider how the learning has value, both in terms of this situation and in broader terms, such as other organizations, communities, activities, issues, professional goals, courses, etc.
- ***“In light of this learning” ...***
 - Set specific and assessable goals; consider the benefits and challenges involved in fulfilling them
 - Tie back clearly to the original learning statement

Desired / Expected Learning Outcomes (for Kenyon Students)

From this community-engaged learning experienced the following learning outcomes are expected / desired.

- A deeper and enriched understanding of the theoretical / conceptual side of learning (theories and concepts of borderlands)
- The establishment of a civic identity and a firm commitment to public action
- Preparation for student public life as local, national and global citizens

This will be achieved by:

- Establishing connections between academic knowledge and civic life;
- Collaborative work within and across communities, contexts and social structures
- The cultivation of leadership, competence, character, and ethics
- Enabling heightened awareness and voice to generate positive change in the world

Desired / Expected Learning Outcomes (for Columbia Students)

To be determine in conversation with teachers

Final CEL Project will consist of a Portfolio including:

Critical Reflections

Lesson Plans

A visual media representation of the project (i.e., social media posts, photo essay, based on Skit, art work, or poetry reading with commentary done in collaboration with elementary school student

Pictures documenting the experience

Films: We have reserved the Multimedia Room in Olin Library for the screening of films. If you are unable to attend the time of the screening, please watch the film on your own and come to class prepared for discussion.

Criteria for Course Evaluation:

Mid-Term Exam:	25%
Final Exam:	25%
Final CEL Project Portfolio:	25%
Class Participation Grade:	15%
Attendance	10%

Course Program:**August**

8/24 - What are borders? What do they have in common? Where, how, and why are they created? Introduction to the course syllabus and CEL project; class visit – Mr. Matt Dill, Ed. D, Columbia Elementary School, Principal.

Borderlands Theories and Representation of Borderlands

8/29 *Nepantla* or “the land in the middle,” M. León Portilla ‘s *Endangered Cultures*” (selection in ERES)– What happens when internal or external factors, or both, threaten the very core of a culture? What are the results of contact between indigenous cultures and more powerful European groups?

8/31 Román-Odio *Sacred Iconographies*, chap. 2 “Nepantlismo, Chicana Approach to Colonial Ideology.” Visual Art: Yolanda López and Yreina de Cervantes

September

9/5 Gloria Anzaldúa, Selection from *Borderlands: La Frontera*

9/7 Anzaldúa, *Borderlands*, on crossing borders

9/12 José Saldívar, "Towards a Chicano Poetics: The Making of the Chicano-Chicana Subject," *Confluencia* 1(2): 10-17 (ERES) & short story "El Patron" 41-47 (ERES)

9/14 Infinite Divisions; "Self & Identity" pp.75-78; Cisneros, "My name" p.79; Anzaldúa, p. 81 "By your true faces we will know you" & "To Live in the Borderlands Means You" p. 96 (selections in ERES)

9/19 Thomas Nail, *Theory of the Border*, Introduction, Moving Borders

9/21 Thomas Nail, *Theory of the Border*, Chapter 3, The Wall

Borderlands in Children Stories and Poems

9/26 Ray Bradbury, "All Summer in One Day" (short story) and Pat Mora, "Legal Alien" (poem) (ERES) @ Columbia

9/28 Thomas Nail, *Theory of the Border*, Chapter 8, The US Mexico Wall

October

10/3 Sandra Cisneros, "Rice Sandwich" and Tino Villanueva, "Variation on a Theme by William Carlos Williams" (poem) (ERES) @ Columbia

10/5 **October Break**

10/10 Pat Mora, "Tomás and the Library Lady" and Francisco Alarcón, "Oda a mis zapatos" (Bilingual) (ERES) @ Columbia

10/12 **Reflection #1, Describe** email submission by 10/11 @ noon

10/17 Gabriel García Márquez, "A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings" and Guadalupe Garcia McCall, *The Bully*; (ERES) @ Columbia

10/19 Latorre, Guisela "Gender, Indigenism, and Chicana Muralists" (ERES); Judith Baca's murals, David Botello's *Read Between the Lines* and Juan Garduño *Aztec Mural*

History of Chicano/a Civil Rights Movement

10/22 **Film Screening, Multimedia Room, Olin Library, 7:00-9:00 pm Chicano!** (video 1)

10/24 **Film Chicano! The History of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement** (video 1) and "I'm Joaquín (Search in the Internet) **Kenyon and Columbia students will work on public presentations @ Columbia 11:15-12:00**

10/25 **Film Screening, Multimedia Room, Olin Library, 7:00-9:00 pm Chicano!** (video 2)

10/26 **Film Chicano! The History of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement** (video 2) and "El Plan Espiritual de Atzlán (Search in the Internet)

10/29 - **Film Screening, Multimedia Room, Olin Library, 7:00-9:00 pm, Chicano!** (vid. 3)

10/31 - **Film Chicano! The History of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement** (vid. 3)
November

11/2 - **Reflection #2, Examine** email submission by 11/1 @4:00; **Kenyon and Columbia students will work on public presentations @ Columbia 11:15-12:00**

11/5 **FILM Screening, Multimedia Room, Olin Library, 7:00-9:00 pm** *Onda Chicana*
 11/7 **Public Presentations of CEL Projects 10:00-11:00 am (Columbia Elementary)**
Class discussion (common hour) Mestizaje in Music, Film *Latin Music USA / Onda Chicana*

11/9 **Mid Term**

Chicana Feminist Thought

11/14 Marta Cotera, "Our Feminist Heritage," pp. 41 to 44 Marta Cotera, "Feminism As We See It," pp. 202 to 204; Alicia Sandoval, "Chicana Liberation," pp. 204 to 205
 Consuelo Nieto, "The Chicana and the Women's Rights Movement," pp. 206-211.
 Corrine J. Gutiérrez, "The Progress of the Chicana Woman," p. 211-212. (All in ERES)
Public Presentations of CEL Projects 11:00-12:00 (Location TBA);
Reflection #3, Articulate Learning – due @ 4:00 pm, email submission

11/16 **Class cancelled**

11/18-26 **Thanksgiving**

Borders in Motion & Circulation

11/28 Marta Cotera, "Among the Feminists: Racist Classist Issues – 1976," p. 213- 220
 Yolanda Orozco, "La Chicana and 'Women's Liberation,'" pp. 221-223
 Marta Cotera, "Feminism: The Chicano and Anglo Versions – A Historical Analysis," p. 223-231 (All in ERES)
 11/30 Román-Odio, *Sacred Iconographies*, chap. 4, "Globalization and Chicana Politics of Representation," Visual Art by Ester Hernández, Marion Martínez, and Juana Alicia
December

12/5 **Performance** - Guillermo Gómez-Peña's *The Chica-Iranian Project* (*pochanostra.com*); Jordan, Kelly, "On the Border of Participation: Spectatorship and the 'Interactive Rituals' of Guillermo Gómez-Peña and La Pocha Nostra." *Journal of Contemporary Drama in English*, Vol. 4, pp. 104-118 (ERES)
 12/7 Thomas Nail, Conclusion; Tying Theory and Practice - **Share your Portfolios**

12/12 **Final Exam – Sing in**

TITLE IX

Kenyon College seeks to provide an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have been the victim of sexual harassment/misconduct/assault we encourage you to report this. If you report this to a faculty member, she or he must notify our college's Title IX coordinator about the basic facts of the incident (you may choose whether you or anyone involved is identified by name). For more information about your options at Kenyon, please go

to: <http://www.kenyon.edu/directories/offices-services/office-of-equal-opportunity/sexual-assault-and-harassment/>

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

Students who anticipate they may need accommodations in this course because of the impact of a learning, physical, or psychological disability are encouraged to meet with me privately early in the semester to discuss their concerns. In addition, students must contact Erin Salva, Director of Student Accessibility and Support Services ([740-427-5453](tel:740-427-5453) or salvae@kenyon.edu), as soon as possible, to verify their eligibility for reasonable academic accommodations. Early contact will help to avoid unnecessary inconvenience and delays.

ⁱ Ash, Sarah L. and Patti H. Clayton. (2009). "Generating, Deepening, and Documenting Learning: The Power of Critical Reflection in Applied Learning". *Journal of Applied Linguistic in Higher Education*. (pp. 25-48)

ⁱⁱ PHC Venture, 2013 www.curricularengagement.com