

This course proposes a definition of Latino literature and culture by reviewing some of the canonical texts produced by Mexican American, Chicano and Hispanic Caribbean Diasporic writers. The course begins with a working definition of Latino Studies, using foundational work by Juan Flores, Nicolas Kanellos, Juan Poblete and Frances Aparicio. Then we will focus on the close-reading of a selection of texts from the Chicano tradition (Gloria Anzaldúa, Cherrie Moraga, Helena Viramontes and Richard Rodríguez), followed by a selection of Nuyorican, Dominican American and Cuban American texts (Piri Thomas, Pedro Pietri, Tato Laviera, Judith Ortiz Cofer, Lourdes Casal, Gustavo Pérez Firmat, Cristina García, Junot Díaz, Julia Alvarez and Sonia Rivera Valdés).

Some of the topics addressed in class will be: conceptualizations of the border and hybrid identities, */mestizaje/* vs. racialization, Spanglish and the limits of transculturation, the transformation of Latino gender and sexualities, and the subversion of internal colonialism in the creation of a new notion of American identity.

We will also see clips from the following films: */Before Night Falls/*, */Mad Hot Ballroom/* and */Ugly Betty/*.

Requirements and grading: 2 scheduled examinations (midterm and final) (20%); 2 essay exams written in class (20%); 3 short reaction papers (3-4 pages) (30%); class attendance and participation (includes presentations of some critical readings) (20%), and pop quizzes (10%).