First Year Seminar - Spring 2019:

Countercultural Encounters in Latin America

Monday 12:30 - 3 pm

Instructor: Patricio Orellana
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Office hours Mondays 10am-12pm
Spanish and Portuguese Department
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Course description

This course traces the impact and legacies of countercultures throughout Latin American literature, film, music and the visual arts, with a focus in Mexico, Cuba, Brazil and Argentina in the second half of the 20th century. Through readings of canonical and less famous works will discuss key concepts for the analysis of literary and cultural production of Latin American recent history, such as regional, national, communal and sexual identities; high, popular and counter-culture; tradition, modernization, (under)development, revolution, (neo)colonialism, among others. Beginning in the 1960s, we will look at cultural artifacts that responded to the “Invasion of Centaurs”, to use the figure deployed by Theodore Roszak in The Making of a Counter Culture (1970), that invaded the “Letted City”. We will trace how the new forms of political contestation interfaced on the one hand with the cultural traditions of the Left, in the aftermath of the Cuban Revolution, and, on the other with the “modernist” notions of the critical power of art and literature. We will also try to think on the relations between this spreading of countercultural practices and the death certificates being issued for art and literature -and concomitant figures such as the author, and notions such as autonomy and specificity. Our focus will be on cultural artifacts and practices that brought the creation of new subjectivities and alternative communities to the forefront, and that were interdisciplinary in nature.
Course Expectations

Active participation in class requires thoughtful preparation of the texts for each session, engaging productively in class discussions, and refraining from using electronic devices.

In the event that you are for good reason unable to attend class, please contact me in advance or as soon as possible. Each unexcused absence will invariably lower your class participation and attendance grade by 4%. A failing grade will be assigned to any student with three absences.

Every week you are expected to post a reading/viewing reaction paragraph on the seminar discussion forum on NYU Classes. These postings are due by 10 am each Monday and must revolve around at least two of the materials we will discuss on the upcoming week. Occasionally, you will have to complete in-class assignments on the materials covered that week. These assignments will not be announced beforehand.

You are required to present on one of the readings once throughout the semester. These presentations will take up to 15-20 minutes in total (during the first 5-10 minutes you will present the reading; then, you will engage in a discussion with the rest of the class for another 5-10 minutes). You will be exempted from posting a reading response for the class in which you present.

The three short essays (3-4, 5-6, and 8-10 pages long, respectively) will allow you to critically engage with ideas and contents presented in class in greater depth. Please find all deadlines in the class schedule—you will receive the essay prompts at least a week prior to each due date. Later papers will be graded down accordingly.

You must complete each of the following assignments and requirements in order to receive a passing grade for the class.

- Class participation and attendance: 10%
- Weekly reading reactions; in-class assignments: 20%
- Seminar presentations: 10%
- Two papers (first paper: 10%; second paper: 20%): 30%
- Final paper: 30%

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. The Moses Center website is [www.nyu.edu/csd](http://www.nyu.edu/csd). Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.
Class materials

All readings will be posted online.
Films can be rented or watched for free online.

Schedule of Topics and Readings

Jan 28
Introduction: The Invasion of Centaurs and the New Sensibility

Feb 4
Cooptation and Rebelliousness
-Film: Pajarito Gómez (Rodolfo Kuhn, 1965)

Feb 11
Lost Intellectuals
-Roberto Schwartz, “Culture and Politics” (126-160). COMPLEX TEXT.
-Julio Garcia Espinosa, “For an Imperfect Cinema” (458–465)
-Film: Memories of Underdevelopment (G. Alea)
FIRST PAPER TOPICS DISCUSSION

Feb 18
NO CLASS

Feb 25
Tropicalia
-Film: Tropicalia (M. Machado)
-Christopher Dunn, “The Tropicalist Moment”, in Brutality Garden (73-121)
-Musical selection of Tropicalismo artists
FIRST PAPER DUE

Mar 4
Art’s Dematerialization: From Pop to Politics
-Hal Foster, “Homo Imago” in The First Pop Age (1-29)
-Works by Marta Minujín

Mar 11
Art’s Dematerialization: From Pop to Politics
-Works by Hélio Oiticica, in Smalls, Folding the Frame (Images and descriptions provided by professor).
-Brief film about Tucumán Arde (https://vimeo.com/146694527)
-Film: The Hour of the Furnaces (Solanas and Getino, 1969)

Mar 18
NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK

Mar 25
Mexico’s Onda
-SECOND PAPER DUE

Apr 1
Queer Encounters North-South
-Works by David Wojnarowicz and Luis Frangella
-Visit to David Wojnarowicz’s archives at Bobst Library

Apr 8
Queer Counterpublics
-Archive of Frente de Liberación Homosexual, poems by Néstor Perlongher. (30 pages long PDF provided by professor).
-FINAL PAPER TOPICS DISCUSSION

Apr 15
Colombia from Onda to Punk
-Andrés Caicedo, Liveforever (novel)
- Rodrigo D. No Futuro (Gaviria, 1990, film)
- **FINAL PAPER FIRST OUTLINE DUE**

**Apr 22**
Memory and Archival Disidentifications
- Los Rubios (Albertina Carri, 2003)
- Cuatreros (Albertina Carri, 2017)

**Apr 29**
May 68 and its Afterlives
- Kristin Ross, *May ’68 and its Afterlives* (1-64)
- Film No Intenso Agora (J. M. Salles)
- Fragments of film *Le fond de l'air est rouge* (Chris Marker)

**May 5**
May 68 and its Afterlives
- Feedback on final paper

**May 12**
Final paper due
Final discussion