Transculturation. This course takes its title from the concept of transculturation, introduced into cultural theory by the Cuban scholar Fernando Ortiz in 1940. He used this term as a corrective to the notion of acculturation, prevalent in U.S. social science. By transculturation he meant the reciprocal influence that various groups have on each other in the creation of a new national identity. Instead of assimilation into an already constituted society, Ortiz imagined the migratory process as one in which all groups gave a new shape to the society resulting from their encounter. Both the U.S. and Latin American countries are societies of immigrants. However, the U.S. was imagined throughout a good part of the 19th and 20th centuries as normatively white and Anglo-conforming. In Latin America, by the beginning of the 20th century, a different notion of the national citizen emerged, one that included all of the different groups that comprise their societies: whites, blacks, indigenous peoples, and other groups as well.

Transculturation is the recognition that there is no originary culture, but that a society is formed by the encounter of multiple groups. This is a theme prevalent in much Latin American thinking about identity. To be sure, the elites who endeavored to create nations out of fragmented colonies sought to give these societies a homogeneity that did not exist. The early readings in the course are a testament to these endeavors. Latin American intellectuals and political leaders also had to contend with the influence of European, and subsequently, U.S. intellectual, political, social and cultural forms on their own societies. In the face of these multiple pressures, was it possible to fashion an autonomous culture? By the 1960s, many intellectuals recognized that cultural autonomy may be as difficult to achieve as economic and political autonomy, especially with regard to the enormous impact of U.S. film and music. One of the most innovative developments in this period was the recognition that all culture is sampled (as in hip hop music, for example). This view went under various names: cannibalism, mixing, mestizaje, and, of course, transculturation.

Required Texts: You should purchase a course packet at the New University Copy Shop, 11 Waverley Place (next to the Falafel and Juice store).

We shall also be using BLACKBOARD for communications AND FOR SOME OF THE READINGS THAT ARE NOT IN THE PACKET. You can access BLACKBOARD through your NYU Home account: click on the “Academics” tab. You must be registered for the course and have an NYU Home account in order to access the course packet, which also contains valuable supplementary materials (slides, video and music clips, handouts).

Assignments will be posted on BLACKBOARD. So be sure to check it on a daily basis.
CRITERIA FOR GRADING
1. 4 bi-weekly two-page reaction papers, each of which is worth 6 points, for a total of 24 points
2. Midterm and final exams, each of which is worth 25 points, for a total of 50 points
3. Four surprise quizzes, worth 4 points each; for a total of 16 points.
4. Attendance at lectures and recitations, and participation in recitations, worth 10 points.

This adds up to 100 points.
The GRADING SCALE is as follows:

95 - 100 = A
90 - 94 = A-
87 - 89 = B+
83 - 86 = B
80 - 82 = B-
77 - 79 = C+
73 - 76 = C
70 - 72 = C-
67 - 69 = D+
63 - 66 = D
60 - 62 = D-
0 - 59 = F
SCHEDULE OF READINGS

WEEK ONE

Wed Sept 8  Introduction: what is transculturation?
No assigned readings

WEEK TWO

Mon Sept 13  Travel artists

Wed Sept 15  Nation-Building
Bello, Andres. 1997. Selected Writings of Andres Bello. Trans. Frances M. Lopez-

WEEK THREE

Mon Sept 20  Nation-Building
Sarmiento, Domingo Faustino. 1972 [1845]. Facundo: Civilization and Barbarism. In A

Wed Sept 22  Comparative Nation-Building
Sarmiento, Domingo Faustino. 1847. “Travels in the United States: A General Description.” In

Author of a Nation. Berkeley: University of California Press.

WEEK FOUR

Mon Sept 27  Nation-Building and Race
Jose Marti’s “Our America”: From National to Hemispheric Cultural Studies. Eds. Jeffrey

Mraz, John. 1997. “Recasting Cuban Slavery: The Other Francisco and the Last Supper.” In
Based on a True Story: Latin American History at the Movies. Ed. Donald F. Stevens.
Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources Books, pp. 103-122.

Giral, Sergio, director. El Otro Francisco. Avery Fisher Media Center: VCA 2058

Wed. Sept 29  Criticizing Empire within the “Belly of the Beast”

**WEEK FIVE**

**Mon. Oct 4**  
Latin American *Mestizaje vs Anglo Segregation*


**Wed. Oct 6**  
Art and Nation-Building


**WEEK SIX**

**Mon. Oct 11**  
A Critique of Liberal Solutions to the “Indian Problem”


**Wed. Oct 13**  
*Mestiçagem as an Aesthetic Betterment of the Citizen*


**WEEK SEVEN**

**Mon Oct 18**  
*Mestiçagem as an Aesthetic Betterment of the Citizen*

Freyre, continued.


**Wed. Oct 20**  
REVIEW FOR MID-TERM EXAM

**WEEK EIGHT**

**Mon Oct 25**  
MID-TERM EXAM

**Wed. Oct 27**  
Hight Art Meets Popular Music


Chapter 1, “The Encounter.” Chapter 4, “The Unity of the Nation.” Chapter 5, “Race Mixture.”

**WEEK NINE**
Mon Nov 1  Transculturation


Wed. Nov 3  Transculturation in Music

Santería

**WEEK TEN**

Mon. Nov 8  Afro-Cubanism


Afro-Cuban music  TBA

Wed. Nov 10  Afro-Cubanism


Afro-Cuban music  TBA

**WEEK ELEVEN**

Mon. Nov 15  Wilfredo Lam And Afro-Cuban Aesthetics


Wed. Nov 17  Roberto Schwarz and Misplaced Ideas


**WEEK TWELVE**

Mon Nov 22  Cultural Disjuncture and Combined and Unequal Developmen


Wed. Nov 24  Cinema Novo: A New Visual Culture for a “Peripheral” Culture


**WEEK THIRTEEN**
Mon Nov 29  Tropicália 1


Videos, CDs  TBA

Wed. Dec 1  Tropicália 2


Videos, CDs  TBA

WEEK FOURTEEN

Mon Dec 6  Brazilian Funk and Afro-Reggae


Videos, CDs  TBA

Wed. Dec 8  Hybridity and Consumption


Videos, CDs  TBA

WEEK FIFTEEN

Mon Dec 13  Review for Final Exam – Last day of class