

Spanish 280A: Studies in Contemporary Spanish-American Literature
The Place of Narratives of Imprisonment in Latin American Literature
Department of Spanish and Portuguese (UCLA)
Winter 2009, T 12:00 - 2:50
Rolfe 4330

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Office hours: R: 2:00pm – 3:00pm, or by appointment

Course Description

This seminar has been conceived as an exploration of the relation between prison narratives and contemporary Latin America literature (mainly during the twentieth-century) and as such we will read examples of prison narratives from a variety of historical and national backgrounds. We will interrogate the prison as a space in which bodies are constantly being written while at the same time bodies manage to write about themselves and the prison itself. On the one hand, we will pay attention to questions of subject formation and disciplinary practices in “spaces of enclosure,” interrogating throughout the relationship between subjection, sexuality, and space, and discussing the relationship between theory and imprisonment. On the other hand, we will pay attention to questions of form and narratives of imprisonment, interrogating the relationship between imprisonment and literature in twentieth-century Latin America, between race, fictionalization, and testimonial drive and questions of genre, point of view, and authorial voice. Throughout the seminar we will closely read a list of selected texts including short stories and novels by José María Arguedas, Antonio Arráiz, Carolina de Geel, Agnieszka Hernández Díaz, Carlos Montenegro, José Revueltas, Angel Santiesteban, Jacobo Timmerman, Pablo de la Torriente Brau, Piri Thomas, and Hernán Valdés. Secondary readings listed below aim to illuminate major points of discussion on prison and society, so more critical readings on specific primary works will be added during the seminar. Primary readings will be in Spanish and class lectures will be conducted in the same language.

Readings at APS or Xerox

AA.VV. *Bajo condena*

José María Arguedas. *El Sexto*

Antonio Arráiz. *Puros Hombres*

Borges, Jorge Luis. “El milagro secreto”

Bertot Cabrera. *Presidio*

María Carolina Geel. *Cárcel de mujeres*

Agnieszka Hernández Díaz, selections

Carlos Montenegro. *Hombres sin mujer*

Miguel Piñero. *Short Eyes* [play]

Ricardo Piglia. *Prisión perpetua*

José Revueltas. *El Apando*
Sánchez, José León. *La isla de los hombres solos*
Angel Santiesteban. *Dichosos los que lloran*
Pablo de la Torriente Brau. *Presidio Modelo* [fragments]
Piri Thomas. *Down These Mean Streets* [short chapters on prison]
Jacobo Timerman. *Preso sin nombre, celda sin número*
Hernán Valdés. *Tejas Verdes*

Schedule of assigned readings

Week 1

Tuesday, January 6

Borges. “El milagro secreto”

Piglia, *Prisión perpetua*

Secondary readings

Franklin, H. Bruce. “Can the Penitentiary Teach the Academy How to Read?”

Davies, Ioan. “Prison Writing – Marging and Centre”

Week 2

Tuesday, January 13

Cabrera, *Presidio*

Torriente Brau, *Presidio Modelo* [fragmentos]

Secondary readings

Foucault, Michel, “Panopticism”

Alford, Fred. “What Would It Matter ... Foucault Said... Was Wrong?”

Certeau, Michel de. “Micro-techniques and Panoptic Discourse . . .”

Week 3

Tuesday, January 20

Arguedas, *El sexto*

Revueltas, *El apando*

Secondary readings

Redfield, Peter. “Foucault in the Tropics: Displacing the Panopticon”

Foucault, Michel. “Other Spaces”

Deleuze, Gilles. “A New Cartographer”

Week 4

Tuesday, January 27

Montenegro, *Hombres sin mujer* * [those who haven’t read it]

Arráiz, *Puros hombres*

Secondary readings

Parrini Roses, Rodrigo. “Una delgada línea: género, performatividad y subjetivación”

Kunzel, Regina. “The Problem of Prison Sex...”

Week 5

Tuesday, February 3

Arráiz, *Puros hombres*

Sánchez, *La isla de los hombres solos*

Secondary readings

Parrini Roses, Rodrigo. "Tiempo, espacio y poder: el orden social carcelario"

Kunzel, Regina. "Rape, Race, and the Violent Prison"

Week 6

Tuesday, February 10

Geel, *Cárcel de mujeres*

AA.VV, *Bajo condena*

Secondary readings

Antony, Carmen. "Mujeres invisibles: las cárceles femeninas en América Latina"

Butler, Judith. "Subjection, Resistance, Resignification: Between Freud and Foucault"

Week 7

Tuesday, February 17

Miguel Piñero. *Short Eyes* [play]

Thomas, *Down These Mean Streets* [short chapters on prison]

Secondary readings

Hall, Stuart. "Signification, Representation, Ideology ..."

Zizek, Slavoj. "Class Struggle or Postmodernism? Yes, please!"

Week 8

Tuesday, February 24

Hernán Valdés, *Tejas verdes*

Timerman, *Preso sin nombre, celda sin número*

Secondary readings

Gordon, Avery. "Methodologies of Imprisonment."

Todorov, Tzvetan. "Facing the Extreme"

Week 9

Tuesday, March 3

Angel Santiesteban Prats. *Dichosos los que lloran*

Secondary readings

Barber, Stephen et al., "Queer Moments: The Performative Temporalities..."

Betsy, Aaron, "Queer Space"

Week 10

Tuesday, February 10

Agnieska Hernández Díaz, short stories

Conclusions

Secondary readings

Kaplan, Amy. "Violent Belongings and the Question of Empire Today"