



Nereida Garcia-Ferraz, Cuban artist

CL 280.002

Winter 2009

MWF 3:00 PM–4:00 PM, 3401 Mason Hall

**Introduction to U.S. Immigration:
*Women of Color and the American Dream***

Instructor: Roxana Galusca

Office: 2028 Tisch

Phone: 615-7213

Office Hours: W 10am-12pm

E-mail: rgalusca@umich.edu

This course is an introduction to U.S. immigration studies through the lens of gender and sexuality. The focus will be specifically on the late-twentieth century Mexican and Caribbean immigration to the U.S. More specifically, we will investigate the American Dream, its realities and its representations in twentieth-century theories and literary narratives of migration, with exclusive attention to the unique migrational experience of women from Mexico and the Caribbean. Over the span of this semester, we will read literary works and theoretical studies that, in their focus on immigrant women, interrogate the universality of the immigration experience. We will explore the diverse economic and political circumstances that shape the migration of women to the U.S. at the same time that we will investigate these women's relationship to the U.S. nation-state and its institutions. Major discussions and readings in this class will revolve around immigrant women of color in the U.S. labor force, as maquila, sweatshop, and domestic workers; immigrant women's legal status and identities in immigration and asylum laws; as well as these women's civil roles of community members and activists. Some of the readings for this class include novels by Cristina Garcia and Michelle Cliff, as well as theoretical feminist studies by Chandra Mohanty and Kimberley Crenshaw. We will also watch feature movies and documentaries, among which *Maquilapolis* (2006) and *Borderless* (2006).

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

At the end of this course, you should be able to:

- know major U.S. immigration policies and debates, especially the way they impact women of color;
- be familiar with major women of color feminist interventions in immigration studies;
- understand the ways gender, alongside sexuality, race, and class, shapes migrational experiences;
- understand how local immigration trends are determined by global structural inequities.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

The required texts are available at Shaman Drum (313 S. State St., 662-7407). Additional materials will be available on C-tools.

Cliff, Michelle. *No Telephone to Heaven*. Plume Printing, 1996.

García, Cristina. *Dreaming in Cuban*. Ballantine Books, 1993.

Viramontes, Helena María. *Under the Feet of Jesus*. Plume Printing, 1996.

C-tools texts:

Andersen, Margaret L, and Patricia Hill Collins. "Why Race, Class, and Gender Still Matter." *Race, Class, Gender: An Anthology*. Ed. Margaret L. Andersen and Patricia Hill Collins. 6th ed. Belmont: Thomson, 2007. 1-16.

---. "Systems of Power and Inequality." Andersen and Hill Collins 61-90.

Benoît, Patricia. "The Red Dress." *The Butterfly's Way: Voices from the Haitian Diaspora in the United States*. Ed. Edwidge Danticat. Soho, 2001. 60-65.

Chang, Grace. "Globalization in Living Color: Women of Color Living under and over the "New World Order." pp. 230-61

Chacón, Justin Akers. "Mexico: Caught in the Web of U.S. Empire." *No One is Illegal: Fighting Racism and State Violence on the U.S.-Mexico Border*. Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2006. 87-122.

Crenshaw, Kimberlé Williams. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color." *Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings That Formed the Movement*. Ed. Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, Neil Gotanda, Gary Peller, and Kendall Thomas. New York: The New Press, 1995. 357-83.

Dreyfuss, Joel. "A Cage of Words." Edwidge 57-59.

Falcón, Sylvanna. "'National Security' and the Violation of Women: Militarized Border Rape at the US-Mexico Border." *color of violence: the incite! anthology*. Ed. Incite Women of Color Against Violence. Cambridge: South End Press, 2006. 119-29.

Fusco, Coco. "El Diario de Miranda/Miranda's Diary." *English is Broken Here: Notes on Cultural Fusion in the Americas*. New York: The New Press, 1995. 3-20.

Lindsley, Syd. "The Gendered Assault on Immigrants." *Policing the National Body: Sex, Race, and Criminalization*. A Project of the Committee on Women, Population, and the Environment. Ed. Jael Silliman and Anannya Bhattacharjee. Cambridge: South End, 2002. 175-96.

Mickelson, Arlin Roslyn, and Stephen Samuel Smith. "Can Education Eliminate Race, Class, and Gender Inequality?" Andersen and Hill Collins 404-13.

McIntosh, Peggy. "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack." Andersen and Hill Collins 98-102.

Moraga, Cherrie. "La Güera." Andersen and Collins 22-29.

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses." *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity*. Durham: Duke UP, 2003. 17-42.

Ortiz Cofer, Judith. "The Myth of the Latin Woman: I just Met a Girl Named Maria." *The Latin Deli: Prose and Poetry by Judith Ortiz Cofer*.

Sassen, Saskia. "Immigration: an International Perspective." *Beyond the Borders: Art by Recent Immigrants*. 22-27.
(<http://www.bangla2000.com/Immigration/Features/global-immigration.html>)

Smith, Andrea. "Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy: Rethinking Women of Color Organizing." *color of violence: the incite! anthology*. Ed. Incite Women of Color Against Violence. Cambridge: South End Press, 2006. 66-73.

Torres de Los Angeles, Maria. "Beyond the Rupture: Reconciling with Our Enemies, Reconciling with Ourselves." *Bridges to Cuba/Puentes a Cuba*. Ed. Ruth Behar. Ann Arbor: the U of Michigan P, 1995.

Waters, Mary. "Optional Ethnicities: For Whites Only?" (hand-out to be distributed)

Williams, Patricia J. "Of Race and Risk." Andersen and Hill Collins 103-105.

Detroit News, October 19th, 2008, "A rogues' gallery in border fence's shadow."
Helena Herrada, Letter to the Editor

Films (on reserve at Askwith Media Library)

Life and Debt. Dir. Stephanie Black. DVD. 2001.

Maquilapolis. Dir. Vicky Funari and Sergio de la Torre. DVD. 2006.

Bread and Roses. Dir. Ken Loach. DVD. 2001.

Online resources:

The Gender Ads Project < http://www.genderads.com/Gender_Ads.com.html>

Incite! Women of Color against Violence < <http://www.incite-national.org>>

Maquilapolis: The Project < http://www.maquilapolis.com/project_eng.html>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Weekly responses to a text of your choice assigned for that week. The response should be one page, double-spaced and demonstrate your critical engagement with the text. It may and should question the text's main argument, offer different perspectives, and ask analytical questions. The response paper SHOULD NOT BE a summary of the text.
DUE: Any of the class meetings, every week, on C-tools under the "Assignments" rubric. Before each class, you must check the C-tools site and read the responses posted by your colleagues.
2. A final paper (10-12 pages) exploring a topic of your own choice pertaining to class discussions and readings. Topic suggestions will be up on C-tools. PAPERS DUE MONDAY APRIL 24 BY 5 PM IN MY OFFICE.

3. Individual presentations on a text assigned for that particular week. On the week you sign up for presentation, you do not have to hand in a response piece. I will circulate a sign-up sheet for presentations during the first week.

GRADE BREAKDOWN:

Attendance and participation:	20%
Weekly Responses:	30%
Presentation:	20%
Essay:	30%

PAPER FORMAT:

This course requires you to use MLA style. All essays should be word-processed, 12-point font sized, Times New Roman, and double-spaced, with 1-inch margins. Please include page numbers and staple the paper. Please see the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 6th ed. If buying the MLA Handbook might prove too costly, you can use the library copy.

LATE WORK:

All assignments are due in class on the date given in the syllabus. I will NOT accept any late work. If you have an irresolvable conflict or emergency when an essay is due, please let me know two days before and I will consider your situation.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:

Participation and attendance are crucial to the success of this course. I expect you to be present every class and contribute to class discussions. Please talk to me in advance if you must miss a class period.

PLAGIARISM:

The University of Michigan defines plagiarism as “Submitting a piece of work (such as a draft, an essay, ideas for an essay, etc.) that in part or in whole is not entirely the student’s own work, without acknowledging the original source through quotation marks and paraphrasing.” If you commit an act of academic dishonesty in this course by either plagiarizing someone’s work or allowing your own work to be misused by another, you will fail the assignment and possibly the course.

NOTE that submitting completed work for another class as original work for this class is also considered serious academic dishonesty and will result in your failing the assignment and possibly the course.

ACCOMMODATIONS:

The University of Michigan tries to create a diverse and inclusive environment for all its students. In this course, I will be happy to accommodate students with disabilities and I will protect students’ confidentiality. Please notify me at the beginning of the semester about special accommodations you might need. If you haven’t contacted the Office for Students with Disabilities (SSD) yet, I encourage you to do so. Please email me by the second week of the term in order to meet with me and discuss appropriate accommodations. See more information at: <http://www.umich.edu/~sswd/index.html>

CHALLENGES AND SENSITIVE CONTENT:

During this class, you will be exposed to some sexually explicit materials and possibly some graphic scenes of violence. I hope this will not prevent you from grasping the complexity and sophistication of the readings.

Because immigration is a controversial issue, please also be prepared to be challenged on your own perceptions by some people in the class and be ready to challenge others in your own turn. **Do not forget, however, that debates should be polite and trying to understand your peers' opinions is central to any teamwork and collaborative process.** I encourage you (indeed, I hope you will feel free to do so) to share your opinions and perspectives, but please be respectful when others share their own as well.

SCHEDULE

Structures of Power

Week 1 (W 1/7 and F 1/9)

Introductions

Williams, "Of Race and Risk" 103-105 (on C-tools)

Andersen and Collins, "Systems of Power and Inequality" 61-90 (on C-tools)

Andersen and Collins, "Why Race, Class, and Gender Still Matter" 1-16 (on C-tools)

Week 2 (M 1/12, W 1/14, F 1/16)

Sassen, "Immigration: an International Perspective" 22-27

(<http://www.bangla2000.com/Immigration/Features/global-immigration.html>)

Waters, "Optional Ethnicities: For Whites Only?" (on C-tools)

"The White Ethnic Revival" by Matthew Frye Jacobson (<http://hnn.us/articles/23824.html>)

Smith, "Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy" 66-73

Moraga, "La Güera" 22-29 (on C-tools)

McIntosh, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" 98-102 (on C-tools)

1/19 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – NO CLASS

Week 3 (W 1/21 and F 1/23):

Torres, "Beyond the Rupture: Reconciling with Our Enemies, Reconciling with Ourselves." 25-43.

Cofer, "The Myth of the Latin Woman: I just Met a Girl Named Maria"

The Gender Ads Project (http://www.genderads.com/Gender_Ads.com.html)

Week 4 (M 1/26, W 1/28, and F 1/30):

Mickelson and Smith, "Can Education Eliminate Race, Class, and Gender Inequality?" 404-13 (on C-tools)

Falcón, " 'National Security' and the Violation of Women" 119-29

Dreyfuss, "A Cage of Words" 57-59

Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes" 17-42

Movie: *Bread and Roses*

Theories of Intersectionality

Week 5 (M 2/2, W 2/4, F 2/6):

Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins" 357-83

Lindsley, "The Gendered Assault on Immigrants" 175-96

Benoît, "The Red Dress" 60-65.

Coco Fusco, *Only Skin Deep: Changing Visions of the American Self* (collection of photographs) - **optional**

Week 6 (M 2/9, W 2/11, F2/13):

Viramontes, *Under the Feet of Jesus* 1-90.

Detroit News, October 19th, 2008, "A rogues' gallery in border fence's shadow."

Helena Herrada, Letter to the Editor

Week 7 (M 2/16, W 2/18, F 2/20):

Viramontes 93-176

Chang, "Globalization in Living Color"

2/21 – 3/1 SPRING BREAK

Neoliberalism and Globalization

Week 8 (M 3/2, W 3/4, F 3/6):

"What is neoliberalism?"

(<http://www.globalexchange.org/campaigns/econ101/neoliberalDefined.html>)

Chacón, "Mexico: Caught in the Web of U.S. Empire" 87-122

Week 9 (M 3/9, W 3/11, F 3/13):

"NAFTA Free Trade Myths Lead to Farm Failure in Mexico." (<http://americas.irc-online.org/am/4794>)

Cliff, *No Telephone to Heaven* 2-84

Week 10 (M 3/16, W 3/18, F 3/20):

Cliff 85-160

Movie: *Life and Debt*

Week 11 (M 3/23, W 3/25, F 3/27):

Cliff 161-208

Agathangelou, "Gender, Race, Militarization, and Economic Restructuring."

Activism and the Power of Story Telling

Week 12 (M 3/30, W 4/1, F 4/3):

Dreaming in Cuban 3-95

(Optional)Fusco, "El Diario de Miranda/Miranda's Diary" 3-20

Week 13 (M 4/6, W4/8, F4/10):

Dreaming in Cuban 97-181

Watch Incite! Video < <http://www.incite-national.org/index.php?s=80>>

Week 14 (M4/13, W4/15, F 4/17):

Dreaming in Cuban 183-245

Week 15 (M 4/20)

Wrap up Session

In-class screening of *Maquilapolis*

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Response Papers (One page, double-spaced, MLA style)

Note: Please avoid summarizing the main arguments of the text. **Think of this assignment as your chance to raise questions, challenge the author's assumptions, or/and add to his or her argument.**

Due: each week, on C-tools. It is not required when you are presenting.

Task

1. Pick up ONLY ONE reading from that particular week.
2. Focus only on ONE aspect in that reading. **Your response paper should revolve around one main argument, be coherent, and read well.** One way to think about the response paper is the essay format – of course, in a much more simple and concise form – with a thesis statement/argument stated clearly at the beginning and with the rest of your writing as a support. **Do not formulate two or more unrelated arguments in the same response paper.** Because this is such a short piece of writing, you should focus on a sole point and do your best to develop it in one page.

For instance:

For week 2, we read Matthew Jacobson's essay on the revival of white ethnicity. You might find his essay lacking because it does not take into account experiences of sexuality, gender, religion, etc. One possible topic for your response paper could be this striking absence in his essay, how and why it matters for his argument. Also, I am not interested in seeing original arguments (although that would be great, too). I am more interested in seeing you engaged with the readings.

At the end of your essay, you could also raise questions you want us to consider in class.

Please note that reading your peers' postings and engaging with them in class also counts towards the final grade for your response assignment.

2. Final Paper (10-12 pages, double-spaced, MLA style)

Due: April 24, BY 5 PM, IN MY OFFICE

Your final paper is an opportunity for you to focus on a particular topic discussed in class and to explore it further. You can, if you wish, bring outside theoretical sources, although you are not required to. Please note, however, that, whether or not you choose to rely on other external articles, you **SHOULD USE AT LEAST TWO ESSAYS FROM THE SYLLABUS** in your final paper. Your final paper can take two distinct forms: **a literary analysis of a novel OR an examination of a particular theoretical aspect** (from intersectionality to women's reproduction in immigration policies and the American dream, for e.g.)

I. If you choose to do the literary analysis (this includes novels and the movies we discuss in class):

Please identify one particular aspect in a novel or movie that you would like to focus on and develop an argument around it. For instance, in a novel like Viramontes's, you might want to do an analysis of the mother Petra and her role in a feminist novel about immigrants. Or, you can focus on Estrella's character and the feminist agenda of the book.

Other topics you can examine for your final paper are:

- The idea of "home" for the piscadores in the novel;
- The role of religion;
- Where is the American dream in the book or is there any hint to it in the novel?

We will address some other possibilities for final papers in class.

Note, however, that a good literary essay starts with a question about the novel, something that intrigues you. To answer the question you need to work through the novel's symbolism and meanings.

Also note: for your literary essay, you **MUST** also use **TWO** theoretical texts discussed in class.

II. If you prefer the theoretical or non-literary essay:

This essay consists of an analysis of a group of ads, piece of immigration law, an artist's work, or an item of pop culture in light of the theoretical texts discussed in class.

This particular essay is a bit more challenging than the first one, but I believe it is also more rewarding because it allows you to contribute your own training to issues that are of concern and interest to you. If you are interested in political science, law, social work, or art, this

paper can offer you the chance to actually think about immigration issues through the disciplinary lens most familiar to you. To offer a few examples:

- if you are interested in art, find one specific artist that deals with immigration and read his or her work in light of the theoretical issue you are concerned with;
- if you are familiar with legal studies, take a specific piece of immigration legislature and read it using the insights of theoretical texts on immigration;
- if you are interested in mass media and popular culture, you can center on a series of ads, some newspaper editorials, or a TV show (one of the Oprah Winfrey's shows for instance) and analyze them using insights from immigration essays we've read in class.

Of course, this will presuppose some research on your part. It will also mean that you must identify two or three articles from the syllabus that revolve around a particular issue you are interested in discussing. For instance, if you might want to explore the idea of whiteness and immigration, you will have to build your paper on Waters's "Optional Ethnicities" and Smith's "The Three Pillars of White Supremacy." If you want to write about violence against women, you might want to read together Falcón's "National Security' and the Violation of Women" and Saucedo's "INS Raids and How Immigrant Women Are Fighting Back."

Here are some ideas for topics:

- Chicana artist Ester Hernandez's work and her representation of the American dream in relation to Mexican immigrants. Theoretical texts you can use include but are certainly not limited to: "INS Raids and How Women Are Fighting Back" and Mathew Jacobson's discussion of white immigrants (the internet source we discussed in our second class-session).
- Find some ads that depict women of color and discuss them in relation to the daily violence perpetrated against women of color. Is there anything in the depiction of women of color in these ads that encourages violence against women of color in general?
- Focus on a recent immigration law and unpack it using our readings on INS and Lindsley's "The Gendered Assault on Immigrants."
