

LAA/HIST 177
Myth vs. History in Latin American Fiction and Film
Fall 2013

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Office Hours:
T & Th 11am – noon, or by appointment

Overview

How do we understand our past? Most cultures have used mythology and history to record and pass on their conceptions of the past. This course will examine how cultures construct a narrative of their past. From Pizarro to Pancho Villa this class will use the example of Latin America to examine the relationship between myth and history. Like the contemporary American myth about George Washington and the apple tree, Latin Americans have also melded history with myth as a tool for understanding their past. Using a variety of materials including films, novels, and historical documents, students will explore the process of making myths and writing history. What makes a good myth? What distinguishes myth from history? How do Latin American mythologies differ from those familiar to most Americans? By exploring varied mythologies in film, literature, and history students will develop the skills of analysis, interpretation, and communication that will help them better understand how their own past has been constructed.

Learning Objectives

- Students should be able to conduct basic historical inquiry
- Students should be able to analyze and critique literary and cinematic texts
- Students should be able to explain how myth and history are related
- Students should be able to conduct research using resources available at KU
- Students should be able to express themselves in writing and in-person

Discussion and Attendance

This course is based around in-class discussion. In order to get full credit for these discussions, students must have read the assigned readings and be active participants in class. **I reserve the right to hold pop-quizzes** over reading material. Attendance is mandatory. Students may have up to two (2) unexcused absences during the semester. Students should make all due effort to inform the instructor of any excused absences in advance.

Required Books

- 1) Restall, Matthew. *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*. (ISBN: 9780195176117)
- 2) Matto de Turner, Clorinda. *Torn from the Nest* (ISBN: 9780195110067)
- 3) Fuentes, Carlos. *Aura* (ISBN: 9780374511715)
- 4) Gamberro, Carlos. *An Open Secret* (ISBN: 9781908968340)

Optional Textbook

- 1) Chasteen, John. *Born in Blood and Fire* (ISBN: 9780393911541)

Grade Assessment

Student's grades will be assigned as follows:

Class Attendance and Participation

(including any pop-quizzes): **10%**

Short Writing Assignments: 10%

(Blog posts, in-class writings)

Conquest Myths Essay (1200 words) (10/1): **10%**

19th century Struggles Essay (1500 words) (10/22): **10%**

Dirty War Essay (1500 words) (12/5): **10%**

Research Topic and Bibliography for Research (11/5): **5%**

(requires at least 1 out of class meeting with instructor)

Thesis for Research Paper(11/12): **5%**

Rough Draft of Research Paper(11/26): **10%**

Class Presentation (2 times): **10%**

Research Paper (12/17): **20%**

Grade Scale:

A = 100-93 D+ = 69-67

A- = 92-90 D = 66-63

B+ = 89-87 D- = 62-60

B = 86-83 F = 59-0

B- = 82-80

C+ = 79-77

C = 76-73

C- = 72-70

****IMPORTANT** Students must complete all grade segments to receive a passing grade! Failure to complete a graded assessment may result in a failing grade in the class.**

Late Papers:

Papers received late will suffer a loss of one letter grade per day! After 5 days I **will not** accept any papers for any reason. Students with a verifiable illness, emergency, or other university approved excuse should inform me of any problem as soon as possible to avoid late penalties.

Academic Misconduct:

The University of Kansas defines Academic Misconduct as follows:

6.1 Academic misconduct by a student shall include, but not be limited to, disruption of classes; threatening an instructor or fellow student in an academic setting; giving or receiving of unauthorized aid on examinations or in the preparation of notebooks, themes, reports or other assignments; knowingly misrepresenting the source of any academic work; unauthorized changing of grades; unauthorized use of University approvals or forging of signatures; falsification of research results; plagiarizing of another's work; violation of regulations or ethical codes for the treatment of human and animal subjects; or otherwise acting dishonestly in research. (<https://documents.ku.edu/policies/governance/USRR.htm#art2sect6>)

Academic misconduct will not be tolerated in this course. Should academic misconduct be identified the assignment will receive no credit and a report will be submitted to the College. In all cases of academic misconduct, History Department and College procedures will be followed. If a student has questions concerning citation, quotation, sources, or any other issue relating to academic honesty they should contact the instructor prior to submitting the assignment in question.

Accessibility:

The KU office of Disability Resources coordinates accommodations and services for all students who are eligible. If you have a disability or require an academic accommodation and have not contacted DR, please do so as soon as possible. Their office is located in 22 Strong Hall; their phone number is 785-864-2620 (V/TTY). Information about their services can be found at <http://disability.ku.edu>. Please also contact me privately in regard to your needs in this course.

Class Topics

!!!IMPORTANT!!! Blog assignments are not listed below. Blogs will be posted to Blackboard. Students are required to check Blackboard regularly in order to complete Blog assignments!!!

Week 1

8/27 – Introduction

8/29 – What is history? What is mythology?

Week 2

9/3 – Lecture/Discussion – Spanish Conquest

9/5 – Discussion *Seven Myths*

Read – *Seven Myths*, Intro and Chapter 1

Week 3

9/10 – Discussion *Seven Myths*

Read – *Seven Myths*, Chapter 2-3

9/12 – Discussion *Seven Myths*

Read – *Seven Myths*, Chapter 4-5

Week 4

Film: Watch *Road to El Dorado* by 9/24

9/17 – Discussion *Seven Myths*

Read – *Seven Myths*, Chapter 6-7, Epilogue

9/19 – Discussion – How to critique a film.

Read – Handout Available on Blackboard

Week 5

Film: Watch *Road to El Dorado* by 9/24

Film: Watch *La Otra Conquista* by 10/1

9/24 – Discussion *Road to El Dorado*

9/26 – How to write an academic essay.

Week 6

Film: Watch *La Otra Conquista* by 10/1

10/1 – Discussion *La Otra Conquista*

10/3 – Lecture - Independence in Latin America and National Struggles
How to develop a research topic

Conquest Essay Due 10/3

Week 7

Film: Watch *Camila* by 10/17

10/8 – Discussion *Torn from the Nest*

10/10 – Discussion *Torn from the Nest*

How to evaluate sources.

Week 8

Film: Watch *Camila* by 10/17

10/15 – No Class – Fall Break

10/17 – Discussion *Camila*

Week 9

10/22 – Meet at Spencer Art Museum

Due 19th c. Stuggles Essay 10/22

10/24 – No Class

Week 10

10/29 – Meet at library for specialized research session

10/31 –

Week 11

Film: Watch *Like Water for Chocolate* by 11/7

11/5 – Discussion *Aura*

Read Carlos Fuentes' *Aura*

Research Topic and Bibliography Due 11/5

11/7 – Discussion *Like Water for Chocolate*

Week 12

11/12 – Presentations on thesis statement and preliminary research

11/14 – Presentations cont.

Thesis Statement Due 11/12 or 11/14

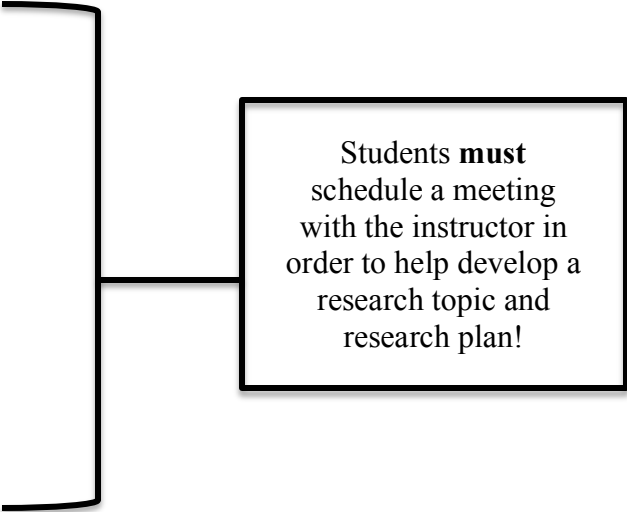
Week 13

Film: Watch *La Historia Oficial* by 11/21

11/19 – Lecture – Military Rule in the Southern Cone

Read Ariel Dorfman's "Reader" – Available on Blackboard

11/21 – Discuss *La Historia Oficial*



Students **must** schedule a meeting with the instructor in order to help develop a research topic and research plan!

Week 14

11/26 – Discuss *La Historia Oficial*

Rough Draft Due 11/26

11/28 – Happy Thanksgiving!! (No class)

Week 15

12/3 – Discuss *An Open Secret*

12/5 – Discuss *An Open Secret*

Dirty War Essay Due 12/5

Week 16

12/10 – Presentations

12/12 – Presentations

Finals Week

12/19 – **Final Drafts Due via Blackboard**