

Cultures of Latin America: Coloniality and Resistance

COLT 250g: Satisfies GE Category II Requirements

Fall 2007 Lectures: Tues & Thurs, 11 to 12:20 pm, THH 202

Select One Discussion Section: Tues at 10, Thurs at 10, or Fri at 12 or 1



This course explores some of the distinctive cultural aspects of Latin America by looking at the ways it has been defined and represented in cultural terms. What is expected, desired or supposed to be “Latin American”? For whom? Is there a common identity among the many “cultures of Latin America”? How do the cultures of Latin America help us understand the history and the very notion of the “global”? How did the economic and cultural expansion of modern European powers verify in Latin America its first colonial (mis)encounters? With what consequences? Two themes will guide us through this exploration along Latin America’s landscapes of difference: *monstrosity* and *multitudes*. Cultural representations of cannibalism and monstrosity are artifacts that allow collective desires, fears and anxieties to be represented, channeling multiple perspectives and voices. The “multitudes,” in their turn, embody threats to social and cultural orders, as well as resistance to political and cultural colonization and homogenization. Monsters and multitudes, in this sense, make visible some of the forces and tensions involved in the making of Latin American “bodies” in their cultural dislocations and racial *mestizaje*.

The course draws mainly on literary and filmic production, but also on art, postcolonial theory and journalism. Literary works by José Martí, William Shakespeare, Jorge Luis Borges, Elena Poniatowska, Manuel Puig, and Clarice Lispector, among others, will be read and discussed together with films by Walter Salles, Andes Wood, and Lucrecia Martel.

Gabriel Giorgi

giorgi@usc.edu, THH 156K, x01270