Latina/o Literature: Text and Context
English 6053
CULTURES OF THE CHICANA/O
BORDERLANDS
Prof. Sonia Saldívar-Hull

DRAFT

MB 1.103 M 2-4:45
Office Hours: Tuesday 2-3 and by appointment
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Course Description:
This seminar examines how US novelists of Mexican descent construct a culture and an American identity in the post-Guadalupe-Hidalgo era. What kinds of narration result from intercultural crossings between the United States and Mexico? How do issues of subjectivity, gender, class, race/ethnicity and sexuality influence the formation of a culture of the Borderlands? We will explore how theories of displacement, colonization, mestizaje and Third Space Feminisms complicate Chicana/o literatures beginning with texts by the Tejana, Jovita González, on through a collection of short stories by East LA eastsider, Richard Villegas, published in June 2011. We will examine essays that provide theoretical articulations by Chicano/as on how they negotiate the borders (transfronteras) of theory and aesthetics, history and experience, nationalism and feminism. In addition to the texts listed below, we will also examine literary criticism and theory in journals, anthologies and book chapters.

Required Texts:
Jovita González & Eve Raleigh, Caballero (1930-40/96) Texas A&M Press
Jovita González, Dew on the Thorn (1926-1940s/1997) Arte Público Press (On Amazon and other sites.)
Cherrie Moraga, Loving in the War Years (1983) 2nd Ed. 2000 South End Press
Helena Maria Viramontes, Their Dogs Came With Them (2007) Atria Books
Sandra Cisneros, Caramelo (2002) Vintage
Denise Chavez, Face of an Angel (1994) Grand Central Publishing
Monserrat Fontes, First Confession (1992) (Out of print: available on Amazon and other sites.)
Richard Villegas, Jr., I (Heart) Babylon, Tenochtitlan, and Ysteléi (2011) Villegas
(Available on Amazon.)

Course Requirements:
Participation in seminar discussions, oral presentations, one seminar facilitation, weekly position papers, seminar paper prospectus with a working bibliography, and a seminar paper in two installments.
Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings and to share their thoughts and responses to the texts in class discussions. All students will write
two-page position papers in which s/he critiques, observes and/or contextualizes the reading. At times I will assign a specific topic for the position paper.

Each doctoral and MA student will facilitate one seminar. The facilitation includes bringing up issues for further exploration by the class, an outline or bibliography and talking points or questions for the class. The facilitator will be responsible for initiating and leading class discussion on the particular text(s) under consideration.

Seminar paper: the prospectus is due on Week 4, September 19th. The proposal includes stating which text or author that you will examine for your seminar project, a research question, and a working bibliography (3-5 pages). The first installment of your seminar paper (5-10 pages and works cited) is due on Week 8, October 17th, at the beginning of class. The final paper (25 pages) is due at the end of the semester. No late papers accepted; I do not give incompletes.

Student work is evaluated under following categories: a) attendance and participation in class discussion 10%; b) seminar facilitation 15%; c) position papers: 15%; Prospectus and Working Bibliography 10%; First installment of seminar paper 20%; Final seminar paper 30%.

Grades: The following grade scale is the new +/- grading scale adopted by the University this year:

- A+ 97-100 4.00 GPA
- A 93-96 4.00
- A- 90-92 3.67
- B+ 87-89 3.33
- B 83-86 3.00
- B- 80-82 2.67
- C+ 77-79 2.33
- C 73-76 2.00
- C- 70-72 1.67
- D+ 67-69 1.33
- D 63-66 1.00
- D- 60-62 0.67
- F 0-59 0.00

**Absences:** I allow two excused absences. Any other absences will result in 10 points deducted from your final grade.

**Late Work:** Position papers are to ensure you have done the assigned reading and come to class prepared to participate fully; therefore I do not accept late position papers.

**Scholastic Dishonesty:** UTSA’s Student Code of Conduct states: “Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor, providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment), or the attempt to commit such an act.” Please see http://www.utsa.edu/infoguide/appendices/b.html.

**Students with Disabilities:** For detailed information see (http://www.utsa.edu/disability/students.htm).

**Class Disruptions:** Turn off your cell phones! If you are expecting an urgent call, please leave the room as quietly as possible. Do not text during seminar.
**Statement on behavior:** Much of the content of this course is partisan and political. You must treat each other with respect. Personal attacks will not be tolerated!

**UTSA Creed:** The University of Texas at San Antonio is a community of scholars, where integrity, excellence, inclusiveness, respect, collaboration, and innovation are fostered. As a Roadrunner, I will:
- Uphold the highest standards of academic and personal integrity by practicing and expecting fair and ethical conduct
- Respect and accept individual differences, recognizing the inherent dignity of each person;
- Contribute to campus life and the larger community through my active engagement; and
- Support the fearless exploration of dreams and ideas in the advancement of ingenuity, creativity, and discovery.

**Honor Code:** The University of Texas at San Antonio community shares the responsibility and commitment to integrity and the ethical pursuit of knowledge and adheres to the UTSA Honor Code: www.utsa.edu/about/honorcode

**Course Schedule** (subject to change)

**Week 1 August 29:** Course introduction; identity politics and history. Reading on Blackboard: Excerpts from Jose David Saldívar, *Border Matters: Remapping American Cultural Studies,* "Tracking Borders," and "Cultural Theory in the U.S-Mexico Borderlands.

**Week 2 September 5:** Labor Day: No Class

**Week 3 September 12:** Specificities of “the Border,” representations of "our" borderlands, becoming Mexican American: *Caballero or Dew on the Thorn*

**Week 4 September 19:** Chican@ Double Conscious/ Frontera Consciousness: Continue González. Begin Américo Paredes, *George Washington Gómez*

**Week 5 September 26:** *George Washington Gómez,* continued.

**Week 6 October 3:** *The Brick People;" Fictionalizing Workers in the Barrio," James Kyung-Jin Lee.

**Week 7 October 10:** Engendering Aztlán: Cherrie Moraga, *Loving in the War Years. "Queer Aztlán," in The Last Generation."

**Week 8 October 17:** Fronteriza Hermeneutics and Mestiza/o Consciousness: Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/ la frontera.* Essays: "Now let us shift..." Norma Alarcón, “In the Tracks of ‘the’ Native Woman.”

**Week 9 October 24:** *First Confession*

**Week 10 October 31:** *Face of an Angel. Thomson Delgado*, from *Spiritual Mestizaje.*

**Week 11 November 7:** *The Gloria Anzaldúa Reader.*

**Week 12 November 14:** Moraga, *A Xicana Codex of Changing Consciousness.*
Week 13 November 21: Cisneros, *Caramelo.*
Week 14 November 28: Viramontes, *Their Dogs Came With Them.* Eric Avila, "Suburbanizing the City Center: The Dodgers Move West."

Week 15 December 5: Villegas, *I (Heart) Babylon, Tenochtitlan, and Ysteléi.*

Final Essay due TBA