

ENGL 4650
Literature and Environment: Chicana Feminist Voices
University of North Texas

Fall 2015
T 6:30-9:20pm
Lang 114



Professor Ybarra
Lang 407E (office)
priscilla.ybarra@unt.edu
Office hours: R 12:30-
3:30pm

Course Description

This course takes a dynamic approach to the intersection of literature and environment by focusing on writings by Mexican American women, a.k.a. Chicanas. We begin with an overview of Chicana/o history and then establish the groundwork for thinking ecocritically. After establishing these two foundations, we will focus our readings and discussions on the major writings of Chicanas from the mid to late twentieth century. Students should expect a heavy reading load. We will take into account the unique histories of each work and the point in the development of environmental literary criticism that the work amplifies. Students should expect exams and assignments to require historical as well as literary knowledge.

Course Purpose

Students will gain a familiarity with the development of Chicana feminist writing in the context of ecocriticism. Assignments and discussions in this course provide a forum for articulating an understanding of foundational works and themes in a diverse array of Chicana literature and theory. In pursuing these goals, students will write two short close-reading analyses, complete reading quizzes, complete in-class writing assignments, prepare an edited oral history, complete two exams, and participate in classroom discussion.

Required Texts:

- check class website regularly: pybarra.weebly.com password: hungrywoman
--subscribe to LatinoUSA podcast: www.latinousa.org (optional)
- | | |
|--|---|
| --PURCHASE: Anzaldúa, Gloria. <i>Borderlands/La Frontera</i> . Aunt Lute Press, 1987. (any edition) \$19 on Amazon | -- PURCHASE: Viramontes, Helena María. <i>Under the Feet of Jesus</i> . New York: Plume, 1995. \$13 on Amazon |
| -- PURCHASE: Moraga, Cherríe. <i>Heroes and Saints and Other Plays</i> . Albuquerque, NM: West End Press, 1994. \$13 at West End Press | -- Essays, short stories, and poems available on my website: pybarra.weebly.com (required to print+bring to class) |

Grading

- (20%) Close-reading analyses: explicate a passage from a text (two essays; 500 words each)
- (20%) Reading Quizzes (at start of each class period; drop lowest grade)
- (15%) Regular participation in class discussion; including attendance, asking questions, responding to questions, and responding to other students' comments. I record a participation grade for each student for each class period.
- (15%) Midterm Exam
- (15%) Final Exam
- (15%) Oral History Project NO LATE PROJECTS ACCEPTED

ATTENDANCE: Students should endeavor to attend every class. Roll will be taken at every meeting. As this course meets only once a week, I will enforce a very strict attendance policy. **Only ONE absence is permitted.** After ONE absence, the student begins to put his or her participation grade in jeopardy. **THREE absences result in an F.**

Academic Integrity

Students must cite all sources when writing papers and never use others' writing as their own. Please ask Dr. Ybarra if you need any clarification on this policy. If you are found to have committed any act of academic dishonesty or plagiarism, you will fail the given assignment and possibly face other University-level sanctions. Please refer to the "Policies of the University of North Texas" 18.1.16 Student Standards of Academic Integrity for further information.

Academic integrity emanates from a culture that embraces the core values of trust and honesty necessary for full learning to occur. As a student-centered public research university, the University of North Texas promotes the integrity of the learning process by establishing and enforcing academic standards. Academic dishonesty breaches the mutual trust necessary in an academic environment and undermines all scholarship.

The Student Standards of Academic Integrity are based on educational principles and procedures that protect the rights of all participants in the educational process and validate the legitimacy of degrees awarded by the University. In the investigation and resolution of all allegations of student academic dishonesty, the University's actions are intended be corrective, educationally sound, fundamentally fair, and based on reliable evidence. Publication of academic standards is an essential feature of the University's efforts to advance academic ideals and to protect the rights of the University community.

Students with Disabilities

In accordance with university policies and state and federal regulations, the university is committed to full academic access for all qualified students, including those with disabilities. Students must be registered with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to receive an accommodation. The ODA collects proof of disability and recommended compensation techniques from the licensed or certified professional who made the diagnosis of disability. Students who have disabilities that are covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act and who have been properly registered with the ODA are called "qualified students." Instructors are expected to make reasonable and appropriate adjustments to the classroom environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies in order to facilitate equality of educational access for such qualified persons with disabilities.

Qualified students must notify the instructor that disability accommodations will be needed. A qualified student should present an Accommodation Request Form that will contain information relative to the needs of the student and will assure the instructor that proof of disability is on file with the ODA. Students who do not present such a form can be referred to the ODA for assistance in registering with the ODA.

Writing Lab (Auditorium Building 105)

The Writing Lab offers free tutoring to all UNT students and helps students in all disciplines and at all stages of their academic careers—from English Composition students to Graduate students writing dissertations. For further information see: ltc.unt.edu/labs/unt-writing-lab-home

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS (subject to adjustment; come to class to find out; check the website for updates)
--

Week One

T 08/25

- Course description, goals, schedule of assignments, introductions
- Watch Part One: "Quest for a Homeland" (55 mins) of documentary *Chicano!: A History of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement*
- **Take notes and write a one-page response to the documentary: DUE T 09/01**

Week Two

T 09/01

- **DOCUMENTARY RESPONSE DUE (1 PAGE)**
- **ONLINE:** Neil Foley, "The Genesis of Mexican America," *Mexicans in the Making of America*, Harvard UP, 2014.
- Mexican and Mexican American history discussion
- **ONLINE:** Jovita González, "What the Coming of the Americans Has Meant to the Border People," *Life Along the Border: A Landmark Tejana Thesis*, Texas A&M UP, 2006. [1930]
- **ONLINE:** Jovita González, "The Mocking Bird" from: "Folklore of the Texas-Mexican Vaquero." Trans. J. Frank Dobie. *Texas and Southwestern Lore*. Austin: Texas Folk-lore Society, 1927. 10-11.

Week Three

T 09/08

- **ONLINE:** Michael P. Cohen, "Blues in the Green: Ecocriticism Under Critique," *Environmental History*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Jan., 2004), pp. 9-36
- **ONLINE:** Jorge Marcone and Priscilla Solis Ybarra, "'Inhabiting and Unearthing: Chicana/o and Mexican Environmental Writing.'" *Teaching North American Environmental Literature*. Eds. Laird Christensen, Mark C. Long, Fred Waage. New York: Modern Language Association Publications, 2008. 93-111.
- **ONLINE:** Gloria Anzaldúa, "Chapter 7 La conciencia de la mestiza: Toward a New Consciousness," *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. Aunt Lute, 1987.
- **DUE: Syllabus agreement**
- **Assign Oral History Project**

Week Four

T 09/15

- Work on Oral History Project

Week Five

T 09/22

- Greta Gaard, "Toward a Queer Ecofeminism," *New Perspectives on Environmental Justice: Gender, Sexuality and Activism*, Rutgers UP, 2004.
- Adamson, Joni, "Throwing Rocks at the Sun," *The Environmental Justice Reader: Politics, Poetics, and Pedagogy*. U of Arizona P, 2002.
- The Principles of Environmental Justice
- **ASSIGN EXPLICATION ONE**

Week Six

T 09/29

- **ONLINE:** Patricia Preciado Martin, "Earth to Earth," *Days of Plenty, Days of Want*, University of Arizona Press, 1988.
- **ONLINE:** Maylei Blackwell, "Introduction: The Telling is Political," *Chicana Power! Contested Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement*, University of Texas Press, 2011.
- **ONLINE:** Enriqueta Vasquez, from *Enriqueta Vasquez and the Chicano Movement: Writings from El Grito del Norte*
- **ASSIGN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**

Week Seven

T 10/06

- **PURCHASE:** Gloria Anzaldúa, Chapters 1-6 from *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*
- Review for Midterm Exam
- **Explication One DUE**

Week Eight

T 10/13

- **MIDTERM EXAM**

Week Nine

T 10/20

- **ONLINE:** Cherríe Moraga, "Introducción to the First Edition," and "La Guerra," *Loving in the War Years: lo que nunca pasó por sus labios*. South End Press, 2000. [1983]
- **ONLINE:** Cherríe Moraga, "A Long Line of Vendidas," *Loving in the War Years: lo que nunca pasó por sus labios*. South End Press, 2000. [1983]

Week Ten

T 10/27

- **PURCHASE:** Cherríe Moraga, *Heroes and Saints*
- (R 10/29: ATTEND WGS SYMPOSIUM AT UT-ARLINGTON)

Week Eleven

T 11/3

- **ONLINE:** Ana Castillo, "The 1986 Watsonville Women's Strike: A Case of Mexican Activism," *Massacre of the Dreamers: Essays on Xicanisma*, University of New Mexico Press, 1994.
- **ONLINE:** Cherríe Moraga, *Watsonville*
- **ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS FINALIZED**
- **SOUND EDITING WORKSHOP**

Week Twelve

T 11/10

- **PURCHASE:** Helena María Viramontes, *Under the Feet of Jesus*, (3-176)
- **SOUND EDITING EXAMPLES IN CLASS**

Week Thirteen

T 11/17

- **PRESENT ORAL HISTORIES IN CLASS**

Week Fourteen

T 11/24

- **ONLINE:** Priscilla Solis Ybarra, "Defining Mexican American Goodlife Writing," *Writing the Goodlife: Mexican American Literature and the Environment*, University of Arizona Press, forthcoming 2016.
- **ASSIGN EXPLICATION TWO**

Week Fifteen

T 12/1

- Gloria Anzaldúa, "now let us shift . . . the path of conocimiento . . . inner work, public acts," *This Bridge We Call Home: Radical Visions For Transformation*, Routledge, 2002.
- **EXPLICATION TWO DUE**

FINAL EXAM: TUES 12/08; 6:30PM-8:30PM