

SYLLABUS

**Spanish 1700:
Contemporary Hispanic Topics: Imagining Jewishness
(Cross-listed with Jewish Studies 1274 and English Literature 1731)**

**Fall 2005
TTh 9:30-10:45
Cathedral of Learning 249**

**Professor: Erin Graff Zivin
E-mail: egz@pitt.edu
Off. Hrs.: T 4-5, Th 11-12(CL 1217C)**

Course description: Taking as its point of departure Max Silverman's contention that "'Jew' is one of the most malleable signifiers," this course will explore diverse representations of Jewishness in literature from Latin America, the United States, and Europe. We will examine how Jewishness is imagined and used rhetorically to address issues such as memory, the nation, value and difference – in Jewish and non-Jewish writers alike – asking finally what it means to represent the other through aesthetic means. Required reading will include works by William Shakespeare, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Franz Kafka, Jorge Luis Borges, Mario Vargas Llosa, Margo Glantz and Michael Chabon. Assigned texts and discussions will be in English.

Week 1: Introduction

8/30

- Introduction; presentation assignments

9/1

- Tamar Garb, "Introduction: Modernity, Textuality, Identity." In Linda Nochlin and Tamar Garb, eds. *The Jew in the Text: Modernity and the Construction of Identity****
- Zygmunt Bauman, "Allosemitism: Premodern, Modern, Postmodern." In Bryan Cheyette and Laura Marcus, eds. *Modernity, Culture, and 'the Jews'****

Weeks 2-4: Money

9/6

- William Shakespeare, *Merchant of Venice***

9/8, 9/13

- Film: *Merchant of Venice* (shown in class)

9/15

- James Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews* (Chapters 3-4)**

9/20

- Gale B. Murray, "Toulouse Lautrec's Illustrations for Victor Joze and Georges Clemenceau and their Relationship to French Anti-Semitism of the 1890's." In Linda Nochlin and Tamar Garb, eds. *The Jew in the Text: Modernity and the Construction of Identity****

Weeks 4-5: Bodies

9/22

- Film: *Dracula* (on reserve at Hillman Library Media Center)
- Judith Halberstam, "Technologies of Monstrosity: Bram Stoker's *Dracula*." *Victorian Studies* 36:3 (Spring 1993) 333-352***

9/27

- Sander Gilman, "The Jew's foot." In *The Jew's Body**
- Margo Glantz, "Shoes: andante with variations" In Marjorie Agosin, ed. *The House of Memory: Stories by Jewish Women Writers of Latin America****

9/29

- Nathan Englander, "The Wig." In *For the Relief of Unbearable Urges***

Weeks 6-10: Conversion

10/4

- NO CLASS (Jewish New Year)

10/6

- Alberto Gerchunoff, *The Jewish Gauchos of the Pampas**

10/11

- Franz Kafka, *The Metamorphosis**

10/13

- NO CLASS (Yom Kippur)

10/18

- MIDTERM EXAM

10/20

- Mario Vargas Llosa, *The Storyteller** (pp. 3-69)

10/25

- *The Storyteller** (pp. 70-145)

10/27

- *The Storyteller** (pp. 146-246)

11/1

- Englander, "The Gilgul of Park Avenue." In *For the Relief of Unbearable Urges***

Weeks 10-12: Crime

11/3

- PAPER PROPOSALS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS
- Sander Gilman, "The Jewish Murderer." In *The Jew's Body**
- Jorge Luis Borges, "Emma Zunz." In *The Aleph and Other Stories***

11/8

- Michael Chabon, *Mysteries of Pittsburgh**

11/10

- *Mysteries of Pittsburgh**

11/15

- *Mysteries of Pittsburgh**

Weeks 12-15: Unrepresentability

11/17

- Jorge Luis Borges, "Deutsches Requiem." In *The Aleph and Other Stories***

11/22

- Ricardo Piglia, *Artificial Respiration**

11/24

- NO CLASS (Thanksgiving)

11/29

- FINAL PAPER DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS
- *Artificial Respiration**

12/1

- *Artificial Respiration**

12/6

- Final Exam Review

12/8

- FINAL EXAM IN CLASS

Course Materials

*The following books (marked with one asterisk in the syllabus) are available for purchase at the University Book Center:

1. Michael Chabon, *Mysteries of Pittsburgh*
2. Franz Kafka, *The Metamorphosis*
3. Mario Vargas Llosa, *The Storyteller*
4. Sander Gilman, *The Jew's Body*
5. Ricardo Piglia, *Artificial Respiration*
6. Alberto Gerchunoff, *The Jewish Gauchos of the Pampas*

**Readings marked with two asterisks are on reserve at Hillman Library. The records can be accessed by entering PittCat, clicking on "Course Reserves" and selecting "1700: CONTEMPORARY HISPANIC TOPICS" on the "course" menu.

***Articles marked with three asterisks are on e-reserve at Hillman Library. Once in course record on PittCat Course Reserves, click on "E-RESERVES" link. The password is "culture".

The **course website** can be found by logging in (with your Pitt username and password) at <http://courseweb.pitt.edu>.

Requirements:

PARTICIPATION. Each student should read the texts specified above before each class session. You are expected to voluntarily contribute to class discussions, which will be reflected in your participation grade. This means that you should prepare notes with comments and questions to bring up in class.

REACTION PAPERS. You will be required to write five (5) one-page reaction papers during the semester, one during each thematic segment of the course. The paper is an informal, open-ended assignment in which you discuss aspects of a text of your choice that are particularly interesting, problematic, or difficult for you. The reaction papers are due at 4:00 on the Monday before the text is to be discussed in class, and should be handed in electronically via the Digital Drop Box, which can be found under "Tools" on CourseWeb. Late reaction papers will not be accepted (i.e. after text has been discussed in class).

PRESENTATIONS. Each student will be responsible for making a 15 minute presentation on one of the readings. The presentation will not summarize the text nor give biographical information about author, but rather critically engage the themes, images, metaphors and rhetoric of the reading. Please speak to Prof. Graff Zivin if you have any questions about this assignment.

EXAMS. There will be an in-class midterm on October 18 and an in-class final exam on December 8. There are no make-up dates for exams.

FINAL PAPER. The final paper (7-8 pages) is due AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS on November 29. Papers handed in late will receive a lower grade. In addition, you will be required to turn in a one-page proposal for your final paper on November 3, which will describe in prose form your main thesis and supporting arguments.

FINAL GRADE. The final grade will be calculated in the following manner: attendance and participation (15%), reaction papers (10%), midterm exam (15%), presentation (10%), final paper (20%), final exam (30%).

If you have a disability for which you may be requesting an accommodation, you should speak to professor as well as Disability Resources and Services (412-648-7890).