

Spanish 462A
Nomads in the New World: Latin American Jewish Film and Literature
Fall 2011

What does it mean to be Jewish in a region dominated by Catholicism? This course will consider representations of Jewish life in Latin American film and literature. We will take into account questions including the differences between Sephardic and Ashkenazi communities and immigration patterns, nostalgia, representations of Israel, the inquisition, anti-semitism and the connections between the Holocaust and Southern Cone dictatorships, memory, diaspora, community, urban/rural Jewish communities, exile and belonging. We will pay particular attention to Mexico, Brazil and Argentina, which have especially large and dynamic Jewish communities, but will take into account other areas as well. The course will provide an introduction to some of the key texts and debates in the emerging field of Latin American Jewish studies.

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Horas de oficina:

Lunes y Miércoles de 3-5PM o por cita previa

Horario de clase:

Lunes y Miércoles de 1-2:20 PM en Olin 305

Muestra de películas: Miércoles de 6:30-10PM Olin 314 & Jueves 10/20 6:30PM. If you cannot make it to these screenings you may view the films on your own time in the library. You must, however, see the film in advance of the day when we will discuss it in class. All are on 2 hour reserve in the library and will be there at all times except when they are screened for the class. Simply present your ID at the desk and ask to view the film you want to see, which will be on reserve for Spanish 462A. When you finish return the film to the front. *Under no circumstances are you allowed to remove the films from the library.*

Texts:

A.. On CLEO (<http://cleo.whitman.edu>)

- 1. Primary Sources**
- 2. Secondary Sources**

B. Films. See note above and screening schedule below.

Requirements:

Regular and active participation: 20%

This involves careful and critical reading of the texts before class and substantial and clear contributions to class discussion. To receive a 90% or higher in participation you must contribute every day to pair work, group work and class discussions. You are expected to use Spanish all the time, and the use of English when Spanish could be used instead will negatively impact your participation grade.

Class Presentation: 10%

In a group of 3 you will present material for the day and lead class discussion of it. Detailed information on the presentation will be provided separately and you will sign up for a date.

Papers (3): 70%

First paper (3-5 pages): 15%

Second paper (5-7 pages): 25%

Third paper (10-12 pages): 30%

Plagiarism:

All work must be your own. Wherever you draw on ideas from others, you must cite and recognize the source. Any violation of this policy will have serious consequences.

Attendance:

Punctuality and regular attendance are critical. Lateness and/or more than one unexcused absence will lower your final grade by one notch. For example, if you have two unexcused absences, and your final grade is an A-, it will be lowered to a B+.

Calendar (all texts must be read or viewed BEFORE the day of discussion when they appear below)

Week 1 (8/31): Introduction

Week 2 : Defining Judaism in the Americas

9/5: Daniel Burman's *El Abrazo partido*. Readings: Wirth-Nesher, "What is Jewish Literature?" and Lesser and Rein Introduction p. 1-13.

9/7: Philip Roth's "The Conversion of the Jews" and Deleuze and Guattari, "Toward a Minor Literature"

Week 3: Foundations of Latin American Jewish Studies and Jews in Rural Settings: Gerchunoff and the Jewish Gauchos

9/12 Gerchunoff, *Los Gauchos judíos*. Film: *Nido vacío*.

9/14): Gerchunoff, *Los Gauchos judíos*. Watch scenes from *Yiddishe Gauchos* in class. Lindstrom, “Alberto Gerchunoff: Rhaposidizing a Jewish New World”

Week 4 The Jew as Symbol in the Work of Jorge Luis Borges

9/19: “La Muerte y la brújula,” “El Milagro secreto.” Film: *Zelig*

9/21: “Emma Zunz”, “Deutsches requiem.”

Week 5: Latin American Jews and Dictatorship

9/26 : *O ano em que meus pais saíram de férias*. Article by Viera, “Outsiders and Insiders: Brazilian Jews and the Discourse of Alterity.” **Entregar primer ensayo**

9/28: Timerman, *Preso sin nombre, celda sin número*

Week 6 Latin American Jews and Dictatorship

10/3: Timerman, *Preso sin nombre, celda sin número*

10/5: Timerman, *Preso sin nombre, celda sin número*. Film: *Buenos Aires Vice Versa*.

Week 7 Jewish Family/American Family

10/12 *Annie Hall*

Week 8: Tradition and Innovation: Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews in Mexico

10/17 *Novia que te vea* and poem by Aridjis, “Sefarad, 1492”

10/19): Coll-Tellechea, “Remebering Sepharad,” and Muñiz Huberman, “The Sephardic Legacy” on Sephardim. Unamuno, “Canción del sefardita.”

Week 9 Jewish Attitudes towards Death and Mourning, and the Family Comedy

10/24 *Cinco dias sin Nora* and article by Levine, “Jewish Views and Customs on Death”

10/26: *Morirse está en Hebreo* and Goldenberg, “Bound Up in the Bond of Life: Death and the Afterlife in the Jewish Tradition”

Week 10: Jews and Christians

10/31: *The Merchant of Venice* film and Shapiro, “Introduction” and “The Pound of Flesh”.

11/2: *The Merchant of Venice* and Shapiro “Race, Nation or Alien?” and “Conclusion”. **Entregar segundo ensayo**

Week 11 Post-Dictatorship Anti-Semitism, Terrorism, and Mourning.

11/7 *J18* and Aizenberg Introduction to *Books and Bombs in Buenos Aires*.

11/9 *J18* Articles by Feldman, “Catstrophe and Periphery: July 18, 1994 and September 11, 2001 on Film,” and Sadow, “Lamentations for the AMIA: Literary Responses to Communal Trauma.”

Week 12: Autobiography and Construction of Self

11/14 Shua, *El Libro de los recuerdos*. Film: *Brighton Beach Memoirs*.

11/16 Shua, *El Libro de los recuerdos* and article by Beard, “Re-membering the Nation by Remembering the Family: Ana María Shua’s *The Book of Memories*.”

Week 13: Negotiating Jewish Identity in the New World

11/28: *Esperando al Mesias*. Read Goldemberg, *La Vida a plazos de Don Jacobo Lerner* p. 9-75

11/30): Goldemberg, *La vida a plazos de Don Jacobo Lerner* p. 76-129

Week 14 Negotiating Jewish Identity in the New World

12/5 *Derecho de familia*. Goldemberg, *La Vida a plazos de Don Jacobo Lerner* p. 130-208

12/7: Goldemberg, *La Vida a plazos de Don Jacobo Lerner* p. 209-final (p. 274) + Feierstein, “Judíos latinoamericanos: una nueva forma del mestizaje.”

Week 15 (Semana de Exámenes):

12/14: **Entregar trabajo final a mediodía en mi casillero en Olin**

Fechas de Entrega de Trabajos Escritos:

9/26 Primer Trabajo Escrito
11/2 Segundo Trabajo Escrito
12/14 Tercer Trabajo Escrito

Films Screenings (all at 630PM in Olin 314):

8/31: *El Abrazo partido*

9/7: *Nido vacío*

9/14: *Zelig*

9/21: *O ano em que meus pais saíram de férias.*

9/28: *Buenos Aires Vice Versa.*

10/5: *Annie Hall*

10/12: *Novia que te vea*

10/19: *Cinco días sin Nora.*

10/20: *Morirse está en Hebreo.*

10/26: *The Merchant of Venice*

11/2: *J18*

11/9: *Brighton Beach Memoirs.*

11/16: *Esperando al Mesías.*

11/30: *Derecho de familia.*

Note: It may be necessary to make adjustments to this schedule as appropriate.