

HIST 173B

LATIN AMERICAN WOMEN: HEROINES, ICONS, AND HISTORY

Prof. Silvia Arrom
Brandeis University
Spring 2007
Wed. 2-5

Office hours: M-W-Th 11-12,
Thurs. 1:30-2:15 & by appt.
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This seminar explores Latin American women's history by focusing on female icons and heroines such as La Malinche, Sor Juana, Eva Perón, Frida Kahlo, Carmen Miranda, and the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo. These women provide a lens for understanding women's roles in conquest, mestizaje, religion, independence, revolution, tropical exoticism, dictatorship, and social movements. The course analyzes films and literature as well as historical texts to compare historical figures to their representation in popular culture. It provides credit in the Latin American & Latino Studies and Women & Gender Studies programs, as well as fulfilling the Non-Western & Comparative Studies distribution requirement.

Course requirements and expectations:

1) Class attendance and participation (30% grade). This class is a seminar, a shared learning experience that requires the commitment of all students to making discussions work. Students must attend all classes, complete the reading/film/journal assignments before class, and come prepared to participate in class discussions. Students should bring copies of the assigned texts and notes to each class session. Each student will be responsible for leading one hour of class discussion during the semester. In addition, students will post a discussion question on the class list serve each week by 9 AM.

2) Journal (25% grade). Students will keep an intellectual journal in which they record their thoughts about the assigned readings and films. Students should bring the journal to each class session, since the professor will periodically collect and grade it throughout the semester.

3) Mid-term and final in-class review exercise (10% each = 20% grade). The class will develop exam questions in the middle and end of the semester. The class will discuss these collectively, and each student will address one in an in-class or take-home essay.

4) Research paper (25%). A 10-page research paper explores a topic of the student's choice. Topic is due February 28 and must be approved by the professor. Paper is due April 25. Each student will make a class presentation on the research during one of the last two class sessions.

4) Assigned readings and films. All articles and films are on the class webct. The following texts are on reserve at the library and may also be purchased at the bookstore:

Sandra Cypess, *La Malinche in Mexican Literature: From History to Myth* (1991).

Hayden Herrera, *Frida Kahlo: The Paintings* (1993).

Marguerite Bouvard, *Revolutionizing Motherhood: The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo* (1994).

Julie Taylor, *Eva Perón: The Myths of a Woman* (1979).

Notes: All assignments must be completed in order to pass this course. All work must be submitted on time unless you have a signed medical excuse. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Written work must be original and created individually for this course. Any suspected incident of academic dishonesty will be reported to the appropriate university authorities. **If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see the Professor immediately. Please keep in mind that accommodations are not provided retroactively.**

Syllabus:

- Jan. 17 Introduction
Concepts: Icons, Feminism, Marianismo/machismo, Misogyny, etc.
In-class documentary film: DOUBLE DAY (1976).
Reading: in-class analysis of Evelyn Stevens, "Marianismo: The Other Face of Machismo" (1973), reprinted in *Confronting Change, Challenging Tradition: Women in Latin American History*, ed. Gertrude Yeager (1994), pp. 3-17.
- Jan. 24 La Malinche
Reading: Julia Tuñón Pablos, *Women in Mexico: A Past Unveiled* (1999), pp. 13-22; Cypess, *La Malinche*, pp. 1-13, 26-97; Octavio Paz, "The Sons of La Malinche," chap. 4 in *The Labyrinth of Solitude: Life and Thought in Mexico* (1950), pp. 65-66, 70-88.
- Jan. 31 No class (Brandeis Monday)
- Feb. 7 La Malinche II
Reading: Cypess, *La Malinche*, pp. 123-152; "Frances Karttunen, "Rethinking Malinche," in *Indian Women of Early Mexico*, ed. S. Schroeder, S. Wood & Robert Haskett (1997), pp. 291-312; Mary Louise Pratt, "'Yo Soy La Malinche': Chicana Writers and the Poetics of Ethno-nationalism," *Callaloo* 16, 4 (Autumn 1993), pp. 859-73; Franco Mondini-Ruiz, "Malinche Makeover: One Gay Latino's Perspective," in *Feminism, Nation and Myth: La Malinche*, ed. Rolando Romero and Amanda Harris (2005), pp. 154-57.
- Feb. 14 Sor Juana
Discuss feature film "I, THE WORST OF ALL" (1993); and Electa Arenal, "Cruz, Sor Juana Inés de la" in *Encyclopedia of Mexico*, vol. 1, pp. 379-82; Rosario Castellanos, "Once Again Sor Juana" (1963) in *A Rosario Castellanos Reader*, ed. Maureen Ahern, pp. 222-25; Pamela Kirk, *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: Religion, Art, and Feminism* (1999), pp. 9-36, 95-101, 130-36, 147-58; and Sor Juana, Selected Poems.
- WINTER RECESS
- Feb. 28 Sor Juana II
Reading: Susan Socolow, "The Brides of Christ and Other Religious Women," in *The Women of Colonial Latin America* (2000), pp. 90-111; Ruth Behar, "Sexual Witchcraft, Colonialism, and Women's Powers: Views from the Mexican Inquisition," in *Sexuality and Marriage in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Asunción Lavrin (1989), pp. 178-206; Jean Franco, "The Power of the Spider Woman: The Deluded Woman and the Inquisition," in *Plotting Women: Gender and Representation in Mexico* (1989), pp. 55-76; Paul Vanderwood, "Santa Teresa: Mexico's Joan of Arc," in *The Human Tradition in Latin America, The Nineteenth Century*, ed. Judith Ewell and William Beezley (1989), pp. 215-32.
Paper topic due.

March 7 Independence Heroines

Reading: Evelyn Cherpak, "The Participation of Women in the Independence Movement in Gran Colombia, 1780-1830, in *Latin American Women: Historical Perspectives*, ed. Asunción Lavrin (1978), pp. 219-34; Silvia Arrom, "The Mobilization of Women," in *The Women of Mexico City, 1790-1857* (1985), pp. 14-38; Victor von Hagen, *The Four Seasons of Manuela: A Biography, The Love Story of Manuela Sáenz and Simón Bolívar* (1952), pp. 3-39; Sarah Chambers, "Republican Friendship: Manuela Sáenz Writes Women into the Nation, 1835-1856," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 81, 2 (2001), pp. 225-57; and Wikipedia articles on Manuela Sáenz, Policarpa Salavarrieta, Josefa Ortíz de Domínguez, and Gertrudis Bocanegra.

Mid-term Review Exercise.

March 14 Frida

Discuss feature film "FRIDA" (2002); and Herrera, *Frida: The Paintings*, esp. pp. 3-7, 46-69, 180-226; Liza Bakewell, "Frida Kahlo: A Contemporary Feminist Reading," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 14, 3 (1993), pp. 165-89.

4:00 Library Session

March 21 Carmen Miranda

In-class documentary film: "BANANAS IS MY BUSINESS" (1994).

Reading: Shari Roberts, "The 'Lady in the Tutti-Frutti Hat': Carmen Miranda, a Spectacle of Ethnicity," *Cinema Journal* 32, 3 (Spring 1993), pp. 3-23; James Mandrell, "Carmen Miranda Betwixt and Between, or, Neither Here Nor There," *Latin American Literary Review* 29, 57 (2001), pp. 26-39; Robert Stam, *Tropical Multiculturalism: A Comparative History of Race in Brazilian Cinema and Culture* (1997), pp. 79-87.

Focused paper topic and bibliography due.

March 28 Eva Perón

Discuss feature film "EVITA" (1996); and Taylor, *Eva Perón: The Myths of a Woman* (1979).

SPRING RECESS

April 11 Eva Perón II

In-class documentary film: EVITA: THE WOMAN BEHIND THE MYTH (1996).

Reading: Tomás Eloy Martínez, *Santa Evita*, (1995), selection; Diana Taylor, *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's "Dirty War"* (1997), pp. 29-34, 44-53; Donna Guy, "Life and the Commodification of Death in Argentina: Juan and Eva Perón," in *Death, Dismemberment, and Memory in Latin America*, ed. Lyman Johnson (2004), pp. 245-72; Marta Savigliano, "Evita: The Globalization of a National Myth," in *Rereading Women in Latin America and the Caribbean: The Political Economy of Gender*, ed. Jennifer Abbassi and Sheryl Lutjens (2002), pp. 344-60; Ilan Stavans, "Santa Selena," *The Essential Ilan Stavans* (2000), pp. 176-81.

April 18 Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo
In-class documentary film: "LAS MADRES DE LA PLAZA DE MAYO" (1986).
Reading: Bouvard, *Revolutionizing Motherhood*, selection; Diana Taylor, *Disappearing Acts*, pp. 183-207.

April 25 Paper Presentations
Research Papers due.

May 2 Paper Presentations
Final Review Exercise