

Radical Arts: Literature, Visual Arts, Theater and Cinema in the Americas

ENGL 1261, ARTH 2990, LALS 1261, THARS 1261, COML 1261, CIMS 1261

Fall 2024 Prospectus

Professor: Jennifer S. Ponce de León (poncej@sas.upenn.edu)

Course Description

This course examines intersections of artistic production and left politics in the 20th and 21st centuries. It addresses art from across a wide array of media: street art, film, theater, poetry, performance art, fiction, graphic arts, digital media, and urban interventions. We will examine artistic movements and artists from across the Americas, including revolutionary Latin American theater, film, and literature; the art of Black and Chicano Liberation in the U.S.; street performance and protest produced in the context of dictatorship; anticolonial performance art and alternative reality gaming; and activist art, political theater, and cinema from the 21st century. Through its focus on the relationship between art and politics, this course also introduces students to foundational concepts related to the relationship between culture and power more broadly.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance and participation in class discussion

Canvas Discussion board: You are required to post a short commentary to Canvas once a week that reflects on the readings assigned for that day.

Final paper: 8-9 pages double-spaced. You will provide an analysis of one or more of the artworks or movements discussed in the course. You must reference at least two secondary scholarly sources not from the syllabus, in addition to sources we have addressed in class.

Creative project, artist statement & in-class presentation: After a semester of learning about different approaches to politically-engaged cultural production, you will do some of it yourself! Your creative project may take any form, e.g. a visual artwork, a performance piece, a short story or collection of poems, a short screenplay, a one-act play, a video, a comic, digital media, urban intervention, a work of critical cartography, etc., though it must engage with theories and topics we have discussed in the course. You may do your project individually or in a group. You must also submit a short artist statement (2-3 pages in length) with your project that explains how it relates to the topics and theories discussed in this course. You will give a short

presentation about your project to the class during one of our last two final meetings before submitting your completed project to me on the last day of class.

COURSE SCHEDULE (Subject to change)

Week One

Introduction to the course

Culture as a Battlefield: Ideology & Cultural Imperialism

- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology* [1846] Excerpt
- Watch "Men Against Fire," written by Charlie Brooker and directed by Jakob Verbruggen. *Black Mirror*, season 3, episode 5. (under "Course Materials @ Penn Libraries" on Canvas)
- Reference: Karl Marx, "Private Property and Communism," from *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*.
<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/manuscripts/comm.htm>

Week Two

- Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart, *How to Read Donald Duck: Imperialist Ideology and the Disney Comic* [1972] (New York: I.G. Editions, 1991). Introduction to the English edition by David Kunzle, "Instructions on How to Become a General in the Disneyland Club," and chapters 3 and 4.
- James Petras, "Cultural Imperialism in Late 20th Century"
- *The New Mole: Paths of the Latin American Left*. Translated by Ian Bruce. New York: Verso, 2011. Chapter 1

Week Three

Revolutionary Literature in Brazil

- *Industrial Park* by Patricia Galvão (Pagu), translated by Elizabeth Jackson and David K. Jackson. Originally published in 1933.
- Bertolt Brecht, "Popularity and Realism" [1938]

Revolutionary Cinema in Argentina

- Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino, "Towards a Third Cinema" Originally published in *Tricontinental 14* (October 1969)
- Bertolt Brecht, "Radio as an Apparatus of Communication," [1932] in *Brecht on Film and Radio*, ed. Marc Silberman (London: Methuen, 2001)
- Reference (optional): Walter Benjamin, "The Author as Producer" [1934]:
<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/benjamin/1970/author-producer.htm>

Week Four

- Watch: *La Hora de los hornos* [The Hour of the Furnaces], Part 1, "Neocolonialism and Violence." Directed by Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino (Grupo Cine Liberación), 1968. Available on You-Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jQOXXKoMH0E0> DVD is available at Van Pelt Reserves Desk.
- Watch: Raymundo Gleyzer / Cine de la Base, *Los Traidores, Me matan si no trabajo y si trabajo me matan, Swift, BANADE, Ni olvido ni perdón, Los AAA son las tres armas*. Available under "Course Materials @ Penn Libraries" on Canvas

The Cuban Revolution & Its Arts

Week Five

- Ernesto "Che" Guevara, "Socialism and Man in Cuba," first published March 12, 1965, under the title, "From Algiers, for *Marcha* . The Cuban Revolution Today." Available here: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/guevara/1965/03/man-socialism.htm>
- Watch: *La última cena*, directed by Tomás Gutiérrez Alea (1976). Accessible via Canvas (Go to "Course Materials @ Penn Libraries")
- Watch *Tercer Mundo, Tercera Guerra Mundial*, directed by Julio García Espinosa, Miguel Torres, Roberto Fernández Retamar (1970). Available here: <https://vimeo.com/299755505>

Week Six

Theater & Pedagogy of the Oppressed

- Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, translated by Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Bloomsbury, 2000) [1968]. Chapters 1 & 2.
- Augusto Boal, *Theater of the Oppressed*, translated by Charles A. McBride (New York: Theater Communications Group, 1979). [1974] Chapters 3 & 4
- Luis Camnitzer, *Conceptualisms in Latin American Art: Didactics of Liberation* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007). Read Chapters 2, 6, 7 and 11. Other chapters and Introduction (included in PDF) are optional. Please note that the scans from this book appear in two separate PDFs under "Files"

Labor, Gender & Imperialism: Bolivian *testimonio*

Week Seven

10-10

- Domitila Barrios de Chúnigara with Moema Vizzer, *Let Me Speak!: Testimony of Domitila, A Woman of the Bolivian Mines*, translated by Victoria Ortiz (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1978)

Marxism and Race

- Adolph Reed Jr., "Marx, Race and Neoliberalism, *New Labor Forum* 22.1 (2013): 48-57.
- Barbara and Karen Fields, *Racecraft: The Soul of Inequality in American Life*. New York: Verso, 2012.

Black Power in the US

Week Eight

- Black Panther Party 10-point Program, published in *The Black Panther* in 1967. Available here, along with a link to The Black Panther newspaper archive: <https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/workers/black-panthers/>
- Fred Hampton, "Power Anywhere Where There's People" (1969): <https://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon1/fhamptonspeech.html>
- Kathleen Neal Cleaver, "Women, Power, and Revolution" (1998): <https://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon1/cleaverwomenpowerrev.html>
- Optional (highly recommended!): Watch *All Power to the People* by Lee Lew Lee:. Available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pKvE6_s0jy0

- Greg Jung Morozumi, "Emory Douglas and the Third World Cultural Revolution" in *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas* (New York: Rizzoli, 2014)
- Browse images of Emory Douglas's work from *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas*, which appears in a separate file titled "Douglas, Emory MORE IMAGES"
- Selections from *The Black Panthers Speak*, edited by Philip S. Foner (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 1970), including "The Black Panther: Voice of the Party" by The Black Panther (1967) and "Revolutionary Art /Black Liberation" by Emory Douglas/ The Black Panther (1968)

The Chicano Liberation Movement in the US

Week Nine

- Alan Eladio Gómez, *The Revolutionary Imaginations of Greater Mexico: Chicana/o Radicalism, Solidarity Politics, and Latin American Social Movements* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2016). Chapter 1 "Cartographies of the Chicano Left"
- Shifra Goldman, "The Iconography of Chicano Self-Determination: Race, Ethnicity and Class," *Art Journal* Vol. 49, no. 2 (Summer 1990)
- George Lipsitz, "Not Just Another Social Movement: Poster Art and the Movimiento Chicano" in *¿Just Another Poster? Chicano Graphic Arts in California*, edited by Chon Noriega (Santa Barbara: University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara, 2001).

NOTE: Images of poster art referenced in the above article appear in a separate file named "Just Another Poster images.pdf"

- Browse images of Chicano murals here: on <http://calisphere.cdlib.org>
- Luis Valdez and Teatro Campesino, selections from *Luis Valdez Early Works: Actos, Bernabe and Pensamiento Serperntino* (Houston: Arte Publico Press, 1990): the plays "Los Vendidos," "Las Dos Caras del Patroncito," "Quinta Temporada," and "Vietnam Campesino," as well as Valdez's essays "Notes on Chicano Theater" and "The Actos"
- You can watch this television adaption of "Los Vendidos" instead of, or in addition to, reading the play: <https://hemisphericinstitute.org/en/hidvl-collections/item/592-campesino-vendidos.html>

On US State Violence

Week Ten

- Watch: *Punishment Park* by Peter Watkins (1971). Available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4bRMMdaQ790>
- Watch Peter Watkins speak about *Punishment Park*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jxb0ed9izis>
- Angela Davis, "Organized Struggle Against Racist and Political Repression," Keynote Address to the Founding Conference for a National Defense Organization Against Racist and Political Repression, May 12, 1973, Chicago, Illinois, USA. Published in *Black Agenda Report*: <https://www.blackagendareport.com/notes-toward-national-defense-organization-against-racism-and-political-repression-1973>
- Reference: Ward Churchill, "To Disrupt, Discredit and Destroy: The FBI's Secret War against the Black Panther Party" (on Canvas). Also: Ward Churchill and James Van Der Wall, *Agents of Repression: The FBI's Secret Wars Against the Black Panther Party and the American Indian Movement*. Boston: South End Press, 1990.
- George Jackson, *Blood in My Eye*. Pages 3-51, 97-113, 129-140. These page numbers refer to those of the scanned book (not pages of the PDF)
- Reference: Ruth Wilson Gilmore, "Globalisation and US prison growth: from military Keynesianism to post-Keynesian militarism," *Race & Class* 40 2/3 (1998/99).

Responses to Dictatorship in Argentina & Chile

Week Eleven

- Watch: *Chicago Boys* (2015), written and directed by Carola Fuentes and Rafael Valdeavellano (under "Course Materials @ Penn Libraries" on Canvas)
- Watch: *El Siluetazo: The Politics of the Event (2009-2011)*, directed by Marcelo Expósito: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yfMkgitSP-U>

- Grupo de Arte Callejero (GAC), "The Escraches: A Brief History" in *GAC's Thoughts, Practice, and Actions*, translated by the Mareada Rosa collective. Common Notions, 2020.
- Watch: *Escrache a Videla Organized by H.I.J.O.S. (2006)*, by Marcelo Expósito (2006): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGFOZWRxK1g>

Ecology and Counter-Cartography

Week Twelve

- Iconoclasistas (Pablo Ares and Julia Risler), *Manual of Collective Mapping*, translated by María Belén Riveiro. (Buenos Aires: Iconoclasistas, 2016). Both the original Spanish version of this book and its English translation are available under "Readings"
- Sabrina Fernandes, "Ecosocialism from the Margins," *NACLA – Report on the Americas* (Summer 2020): 137-143.

Zapatismo

- Watch: Chiapas Media Project, *A Very Big Train Called the Other Campaign*.
- EZLN (Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional / Zapatista Army of National Liberation) General Command, First Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle
- EZLN General Command and Clandestine Revolutionary Indigenous Committee, Sixth Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle

Race, Labor, Citizenship and Contemporary Science Fiction

Week Thirteen

- Watch: *Sorry to Bother You*, written and directed by Boots Riley (under "Course Materials @ Penn Libraries" on Canvas)
- Boots Riley, *Tell Homeland Security-We Are the Bomb* (Haymarket Books, 2015). Selections include lyrics from The Coup's songs, including those on the *Sorry to Bother You* soundtrack
- Ricardo A. Bracho, *Puto* [2007].
- Third World Gay Revolution (New York City), "What We Want, What We Believe," [1971] reprinted in *Out of the Closets: Voices of Gay Liberation*, edited by Karla Jay and Allen Young (New York: Jove/HBK Books, 1977)

Week Fourteen

Final Symposium! Presentation and discussion of creative projects.