

Spring 2021

Stony Brook University
Department of Hispanic Languages and Literature
College of Arts and Sciences
SPN 612 Interdisciplinary Approaches to Hispanic Studies
Course Instructor: Joseph M. Pierce
Section: 01
Office Hours: Mon./Tues./Weds. 11am-12noon. (via Google Calendar appointments or by email)
Course Time: Mondays 4:25-7:15 pm
Instructor office: HUM 1139
Instructor email: joseph.pierce@stonybrook.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A seminar course designed primarily for doctoral students about any of the various areas of Latin American and Iberian literatures and cultures. Recent topics include Latina fiction, Cuba/Spain, Postdictadura, Fictions of Power, A World of Cinemas, Art and literature, Politics and literature. Prerequisite: Admission to the Spanish Ph.D. program or permission of instructor.

Course Topic

Decoloniality and Queer Studies

Decoloniality and Queer Studies

White supremacy sux. Let's do queer decolonial? Or maybe: how does queerness interface with recent critiques of coloniality, the decolonial turn (if such a thing exists), and ongoing Indigenous and Black resistance? Or maybe, what this course means to say is: what does queerness have to do with decoloniality? Let us recall: in recent years, the epistemological foundations of queer studies, as a field and mode of engagement with bodies and their diverse orientations, have been critiqued by scholars and activists from the Global South—where the Global South is not so much a place, but a mode of critique attuned to Black and Brown solidarities. To Queer, Cuir, Cuyr, Kuir, Kuyr. These critiques have consolidated around the possibility—indeed the desirability—of translating queerness to other contexts, the commensurability of embodied knowledge and desires across difference, and the imperial reach of western modernity in its complicity with academic fields and disciplines. This course is about these embodied conflicts: of knowledge production, the desire and desirability of translating queerness, and the possibilities of decolonial refashionings grounded in Indigenous and Afrodiasporic knowledges, embodiments, and histories. (Course taught in English. Readings in Spanish, Portuguese, and English).

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Introduce queer theory and decolonial praxis as interdisciplinary forms of knowledge creation in the context of Latin America—focusing on Indigenous communities and Afro-diasporic communities.

- Contextualize relations between cultural productions—in particular literature, art, and performance—in Latin America. In so doing, question the formation and adaptation of tropes of the body, gender, and sexuality, in the production of particular types of populations (i.e. Indigenous, Afro-diasporic, criollo, and mestizo) in the context of political and economic developments in Latin America.
- Introduce methodological approaches to queer theory and decoloniality (decolonial praxis) in relation to cultural production, and thus, to the politics of aesthetics.
- Develop critical writing and research skills regarding visual, literary and performance cultures; improve analytical vocabulary and critical awareness of archival materials and new digital media; apply these approaches via close readings and critical analyses.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Attendance and Make Up Policy

- Attendance: What does it mean to “attend class” online, during a pandemic? I would like to discuss this in class with all of you and come to an agreement about what we expect of each other. I will not be taking attendance this semester in the normal sense. You are empowered to make choices about how you log on to class and under what conditions. However, the optimal situation (of course this depends on many factors) includes logging on via zoom during class time, turning your video on, and actively participating in class. Not everyone will be able to do this all the time. I understand that, which is why I am asking you to describe your own attendance and participation in this course.
- Late Work: Let’s do our best.

Description and schedule of Required Readings and/or Assignments.

1. **Reverse Outline:** This will serve as a method of critical analysis and also a tool for improving your own analytical voice. A handout will be provided on Blackboard, but the gist is that you analyze not only the content of one chapter/article, but also the form of analysis and argumentation. These should be turned in on the assigned day and also posted on our Blackboard discussion board. This outline may serve (I encourage you to do this) as a model for your final paper.
2. **Oral Presentation:** This should not exceed 20 minutes. It is a model of a conference presentation in which one student provides a critical analysis of a primary text and lays a framework for a broader discussion of and connection with other course readings. Seriously. **You should not speak for more than 20 minutes.** You should have a critical point of view and be prepared to prompt and critically intervene in the subsequent class discussion. Finally, you should post your presentation on Blackboard discussion board by 5PM the day before you are to present (i.e. 5PM on Sunday).
3. **Final Essay Abstract:** This should explain the object of study, methodological approach, rationale, and stakes of your final paper. It should be between 250 and 300 words.
4. **Annotated Bibliography:** This is an exercise intended to help you identify and evaluate resources for your final essay. Each of the seven entries should include a brief rationale

(3-4 sentences) for its use to your project. Each entry should answer: a) what is its main point of this text, and b) why are you using this text in your research? I will provide an example on Blackboard. Your Annotated Bibliography must include the following elements:

- 1) One historical text;
- 2) One book about the author, artist, generation, or artistic movement;
- 3) Four (4) peer-reviewed journal articles or book chapters;
- 4) One book review (of a historical or theoretical text);
- 5) One theory text;
- 6) One dissertation;
- 7) One website/digital archive.

Note: It must be rigorously formatted according to MLA style.

5. **Final Essay:** This may, but need not, take one of our course texts as a primary object of analysis. You are encouraged to make this paper work for you, to the service of your broader thematic and/or theoretical interests. This means that transnational and/or transhistorical approaches are encouraged, though not necessary. Topics should be discussed with the professor in office hours beforehand, and the Abstract will serve as the formal proposal of your topic. These papers need to be between 15 and 20 pages (not more, not less) and strictly follow MLA guidelines for citation and formatting. Argumentative efficaciousness and technical proficiency in writing the essay is expected, originality is required, and queer decoloniality encouraged.
6. **Not-a-Final Essay Project:** Not everyone benefits from the Final Essay. Not everyone wants to be an academic or will end up doing this type of research, which is modeled on the demonstration of expertise that is at odds with a decolonial approach to knowledge. So, please, feel fully empowered to do a Not-a-Final-Essay Project, which may entail creating a podcast, a website, a translation, a zine (or series of zines), a digital gallery, a web series, an oral history project, etc. If you do want to do this type of work, please make an appointment with me so we can discuss how best to support you and how to evaluate this work. We'll work on this together.

Participation: This course will be taught online. It is synchronous, which means that the class time itself is the main mode of instruction for the course. I understand that these are difficult times. They are difficult for me as well. We will all be understanding with each other as we try to do the best we can.

To receive an A in participation you should come to class prepared and on time, ask questions in the chat and/or on Blackboard, and provide insightful commentary about course materials. Students who come to class but intervene infrequently should receive a B. Those who come to class sometimes and seldom intervene should receive a C. Students who arrive unprepared or late and don't participate should receive a D. An F will be given to students who stop attending class or rarely if ever intervene.

Workload: I aim for you to read approximately 200 pages per week in this class, sometimes more, sometimes less. Some of these readings are dense, and will require careful, slow reading. By limiting the amount of reading in this course, I want you to be able to engage deeply with

fewer readings. However, if more reading is assigned, then I ask that you identify main concepts and arguments, reading the entire text, but not stopping to interrogate the details (in this case we will discuss them in class).

Languages: This course will be taught primarily in English. However, students should feel free to contribute to class discussions in whatever language they feel most comfortable. We will do our best to summarize/translate as needed so that we can all be on the same page. In addition, while the majority of the texts selected for this course are in English, there are a few crucial texts that do not exist in English translation. I will submit a course bibliography with some of these titles as an annex. Students may write their final papers in English, Spanish, or Portuguese.

Diversity: As a form of radical citational practice, I endeavor to foreground texts written by marginalized and racialized communities in this course. The majority of texts included are written by Indigenous and Black/Afrodiasporic authors/artists/critics/theorists. This is because, for a course about decolonial praxis and queerness, we have to start with our own voices, and foreground our own methods. This selection is not perfect, but it aims to enact the politics of queer Indigenous relationality that this course is essentially, about.

Exams

No exams in this course.

GRADING:

10%	Course Participation
15%	Reverse Outline
15%	Oral Presentation
10%	Final Essay Abstract
20%	Annotated Bibliography
30%	Final Essay/Project

Grade System

A = 94-100 B+ = 87-89 B- = 80-83 C = 73-76 F = 0-70
A- = 90-93 B = 84-86 C+ = 77-79 C- = 70-73

A note about course organization:

There are many different ways to organize a course. One is chronologically. But from the perspective of Indigenous populations, “time” is already colonial. So, settler time cannot be the organizing criteria for a course about decoloniality and queerness. Another is to move from theory to object of study. But Black and Brown queers have always been the objects studied by scientists and artists and collected in museums and on police reports; have been the material out of which theory is extracted. And so, this way will not do either.

What I have landed on is a series of four thematic axes: Body/Land, Wounds/Hungers, Cuir(s)/Desires, and Movements/Becomings. Within each axis are key words/topics for discussion for each day of class. I hope that by stitching together these key words and these larger thematic clusters, we will be able not to comprehend queerness and decoloniality, but to enact, to practice, some of the ways through which queerness and decoloniality matter today.

This means, finally, dispensing with a lot of material that could have been included. There are three strands of thought that I want to recognize, but which we are not reading here.

1. White Queer Theory. We will not read Foucault, Butler, Sedgwick, Halberstam, Halperin, Edelman, or in fact, any US/Anglophone (or Francophone) queer theory. We are starting elsewhere.
2. In a similar fashion, we are also not starting with the “decolonial turn” (Quijano, Moreiras, Mignolo) or its precursors (Mariátegui, Cornejo Polar, Rama; Fanon, Glissant), but rather with current practitioners of decoloniality, with Indigenous writers and knowledge keepers; Black feminist and trans theorists; displaced and diasporic praxis.
3. The Anthropocene. Nope. We do not begin from that body of work either.
4. Finally, the important issue of language and translation needs to be considered part of this decision-making process. Because this course is being taught in English, all required readings are in English. That is problematic, obviously, but we are going in with eyes wide open. This means that much work by Latin American queer/cuir and trans writers is going to be left out. This is systemic (having to do with editorial practices, reading publics, market forces, etc.). I will create a supplemental reading list for this course with readings in Spanish and Portuguese.

The following books are required for this course, please order them ASAP. All sources not listed here will be posted on Blackboard in .pdf format.

1. Billy-Ray Belcourt, *This Wound is a World* (U of Minnesota Press, 2017)
2. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance* (U of Minnesota Press, 2017)
3. Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants* (Milkweed, 2013)
4. Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, *Ch'ixinakax utxiwa: On Practices and Discourses of Decolonization*. Trans. Molly Geidel. (Polity Press, 2020)
5. “Trans Studies en las Américas” *TSQ* Special Issue 6:2 (2019) (Duke UP)

MEETING SCHEDULE

I. Body/Land

Week 1. February 1, 2021. Ancestral Futures

Combahee River Collective Statement

Lee Maracle, *I am Woman*, “Isn’t Love a Given”

Radical Indigenous Survivance & Empowerment (R.I.S.E.) [Instagram](#)

Week 2. February 8, 2021. Relations

Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance* (pp. 1-144).

Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, “Decolonization is not a Metaphor,” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1:1 (2012): 1-40.

Week 3. February 15, 2021. Praxis

Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance* (pp. 145-247).

Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States*, Ch. 4, “Ethnographic Refusal: Anthropological Need” (pp. 95-114).

Week 4. February 22, 2021. Kin

Karyn Recollet and Emily Johnson, “Kin-dling and Other Radical Relationalities,” *Movement Research Performance Journal*, no. 52/53 (October 2019): 18–23.

Kim TallBear, “Making Love and Relations Beyond Settler Sex and Family,” in *Making Kin Not Population*, Eds. Adele E. Clarke and Donna Haraway (2018), pp. 145-166.

Lukás Avendaño, “Buscando a Bruno” (Film, link TBD)

Week 5. March 1, 2021. Care

Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants*

Sebastián Calfuqueo, “Kowülen (Ser líquido)” ([Video](#))

II. Wounds/Hungers

Week 6. March 8, 2021. Heridas abiertas

Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (pp. 23-120)

Sylvia Wynter, “Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—An Argument,” *CR: The New Centennial Review* 3:3 (Fall 2003): 257-337.

Note: March 12, 2021 4pm-6pmET Queer Directions Symposium, “Indigeneities & Sexualities” with Audra Simpson, Dayna Danger, Joseph M. Pierce, and T.J. Tallie. (Register [here](#). Will also be live streamed.)

Week 7. March 15, 2021. Colonial Wounds

Billy-Ray Belcourt, *This Wound is a World*

Laura Ortman and Demian DinéYazhi’, “An Infected Sunset” ([Video](#))

Week 8. March 22, 2021. Do you eat this gold?

Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, *Ch’ixinakax utxiwa: On Practices and Discourses of Decolonization*

III. Cuir(s)/Desires

Week 9. March 29, 2021. Desire and Politics

Néstor Perlongher, *Plebian Prose* (pp. 13-92)

Diego Falconí, TBD

Week 10. April 5, 2021. Quare/Decolonial

E. Patrick Johnson, “‘Quare’ studies, or (almost) everything I know about queer studies I learned from my grandmother,” *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 21:1 (2001): 1-25.

Héctor Domínguez-Ruvalcaba, *Translating the Queer*, Chapter 1, “Queer decolonization,” pp. 19-53

Pedro Paulo Gomes Pereira, “Reflecting on Decolonial Queer” *GLQ* 25:3 (2019): 403-429.

Week 11. April 12, 2021. Queer/Decolonial

Michael J. Horswell, *Decolonizing the Sodomite: Queer Tropes of Sexuality in Colonial Andean Culture*, Chapter 3, “From Supay Huaca to Queer Mother: Revaluing the Andean Feminine and Androgyne” pp. 114-166.

T.J. Tallie, *Queering Colonial Natal: Indigeneity and the Violence of Belonging in Southern Africa*, Chapter 1, “‘That Shameful Trade in a Person’: Ilobolo and Polygamy,” pp. 15-52.

Jennifer Nez Denetdale, “Return to ‘The Uprising at Beautiful Mountain in 1913’ Marriage and Sexuality in the Making of the Modern Navajo Nation” in *Critically Sovereign: Indigenous Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies*, Ed. Joanne Barker, pp. 69-98.

IV. Movements/Becomings

Week 12. April 19, 2021. Trans/lation

Marcia Ochoa, *Queen for a Day: Transformistas, Beauty Queens, and the Performance of Femininity in Venezuela*, Chapter 5, “Sacar el Cuerpo: Transformista and Miss Embodiment” pp. 155-200.

C. Riley Snorton, *Black on Both Sides: A Racial History of Trans Identity*, Chapter 2, “Trans Capable: Fungibility, Fugitivity, and the Matter of Being,” pp. 55-97.

Week 13. April 26, 2021. Trans/Américas

“Trans Studies en las Américas” *TSQ* Special Issue 6:2 (2019) (the entire issue)

Week 14. May 3, 2021. Where are we right now?
Class Presentations

CLASS PROTOCOL

We will define our own class agreements for electronic devices and interruptions.

CLASS RESOURCES

Blackboard

STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORT CENTER STATEMENT

If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Student Accessibility Support Center, ECC (Educational Communications Center) Building, Room 128, (631) 632-6748. They will determine with you what accommodations, if any, are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

Students who require assistance during emergency evacuation are encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors and Student Accessibility Support Center. For procedures and information go to the following website: <http://www.stonybrook.edu/ehs/fire/disabilities>.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT:

Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty is required to report any suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. Faculty in the Health Sciences Center (School of Health Technology & Management, Nursing, Social Welfare, Dental Medicine) and School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty please refer to the academic judiciary website at http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/academic_integrity/index.html

CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT:

Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of University Community Standards any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, or inhibits students' ability to learn. Faculty in the HSC Schools and the School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures. Further information about most academic matters can be found in the Undergraduate Bulletin, the Undergraduate Class Schedule, and the Faculty-Employee Handbook.

You need to join a zoom meeting every class through BB. Please see instructions here: <https://it.stonybrook.edu/services/zoom/students>

All sessions will be recorded. In case of internet disruption, technology failure or any other problem to connect synchronously, the material will be posted on Blackboard and will be available for the rest of the semester.

FOR IT SUPPORT: Students can visit the Keep Learning website at <https://sites.google.com/stonybrook.edu/keeplearning> for information on the tools you need for alternative and online learning. Need help? Report technical issues at <https://it.stonybrook.edu/services/itsm> or call 631-632-2358.

To access mental health services, call Counseling and Psychological Services at 631-632-6720; Counselors are available to speak with 24/7.

If your instructor fails to connect to one of your weekly meetings, there are no new announcements on Black Board and you cannot reach him/her/they by email after 48 hours (weekdays), please email the department chair daniela.flesler@stonybrook.edu.