

FALL 2009
F 6:25 - 9:05pm
SPW 5286

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O Hours: F 1:00-2:00pm; 5:00- 6:15pm

CONTEMPORARY SPANISH AMERICAN NOVEL: THE LITERATURE OF THE "BOOM"

DESCRIPTION

The course will examine four of the most representative novels of the Spanish American literary "boom" of the 1960s: *La ciudad y los perros* (1962), *La muerte de Artemio Cruz* (1962), *Rayuela* (1963), and *Cien años de soledad* (1967). The first classes will explore the general characteristics of the "boom" against its historical and literary background. Among its precedents, we will study Jorge Luis Borges' *Narraciones* (1944-1969) and Alejo Carpentier's *Los pasos perdidos* (1953). The analysis of the central novels will be carried out according to the formal, historical and cultural aspects that make them into an homogeneous group, regardless of their diverse origins and styles. Among the common features of the movement, the following will be addressed: 1) the rejection of the assumptions and forms of conventional realism; 2) the novels' underlying theory of reading, which purports to favor the reader's participation; 3) their simultaneously apocalyptic and utopian vision of history; and 4) the controversial concept of "magical realism" as a way to reinterpret literary tradition from a contemporary perspective. These aspects of the "boom" novels will be analyzed from the theoretical perspectives of their authors, but also from critical points of view that may reveal limitations and inconsistencies. Later classes will be devoted to ascertaining the significance of the "boom" for contemporary fiction.

FORMAT

Lectures and discussion about selected authors and readings. The discussions of the novels will be conducted on the basis of previously distributed reading guides. Audiovisual materials--such as interviews with the authors, documentaries, and fragments of film adaptations--will be periodically presented to illustrate the subject (see "Available audiovisual materials" in this syllabus). Based on a list of suggested topics and a calendar established at the beginning of the course, students will present an oral report to the class. This course has a web site (<http://online.fiu.edu>) where the professor will post announcements, class notes, articles, related links, and all other relevant information.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADE DISTRIBUTION

1. A midterm examination (30%)
2. A research paper (40%).
3. A brief oral report (15%).
4. Attendance and participation (including participation in the course's web site) (15%).

REQUIRED WORKS

BORGES, *Narraciones*
CARPENTIER, *Los pasos perdidos*
VARGAS LLOSA, *La ciudad y los perros*

FUENTES, *La muerte de Artemio Cruz*
GARCIA MARQUEZ, *Cien años de soledad*
CORTAZAR, *Rayuela*

COURSE SEQUENCE

1. Introduction: Historical and Literary Background of the "Boom"
2. Lost in the Hall of Mirrors: Borges' Textual Labyrinths
3. Carpentier's History of America as a Chronicle of the "Real-maravilloso"
4. Mario Vargas Llosa Between Civilization and Barbarism

MIDTERM EXAM

5. Mexican Masks: Fuentes and Latin America's New Historical Novel
6. Thematizing Narrative Artifice: Cortázar's Theory of the Novel
7. García Marquez: The Magic of the Real (History, Myth, and Metafiction)
8. Conclusion: Towards a Theory of Latin America's New Novel

FINAL EXAM

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Blanco Aguinaga, Carlos. *De mitólogos y novelistas* (1975)
Donoso, José. *Historia personal del boom* (1972)
Franco, Jean. *La cultura moderna en América Latina* (1983)
Fuentes, Carlos. *La nueva novela hispanoamericana* (1969)
Herrero Olaizola, Alejandro. *The Censorship Files* (2007)
Martin, Gerald. *Journeys Through the Labyrinth* (1989)
Parkinson-Zamora, Lois, y Wendy Faris (eds.), *Magical realism* (1995)
Rama, Angel. *Más allá del boom: literatura y mercado* (1981)
Shaw, Donald L. *Nueva narrativa hispanoamericana* (1981)
Swanson, Philip, ed. *Landmarks in Modern Latin American Fiction* (1990)
Williams, Raymond Leslie (ed.). *The Boom in Retrospect* (1987)

AUDIOVISUAL MATERIALS

INTERVIEWS: Borges, Carpentier, Cortázar, García Márquez, Fuentes

FILMS: *El muerto*, *The Spider's Stratagem* (Borges), *Old Gringo* (Fuentes); *La ciudad y los perros* (Vargas Llosa); *Eréndira*, *Crónica de una muerte anunciada*, *Los amores difíciles* (García Marquez)

DOCUMENTARIES: *The Buried Mirror* (Fuentes); *La magia de lo real* (García Márquez); *Borges and I*, *Borges para millones* (Borges).