

AMST-A399/ AAAD-A354: Advanced Topics in Society & History  
**Transnational Americas**

Tuesday/Thursday 2:30-4:30 p.m.  
Instructor: Micol Seigel  
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GL (Glenn Black Lab) 101  
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**Course Summary:**

I heard her story from across the sea, ...  
I set sail into a cold, dark sky. ...  
I crossed the ocean in a tiny ship  
With her image in my mind and her name on my lips ...  
    She breathed new life inside of me.  
    A whole new world she gave to me.  
    Surrendered all she had to me,  
    Even silver and gold.  
    All she asked was my soul...

-- Ozomatli, "(Who Discovered) America"

In their hauntingly melodic hit, "(Who Discovered) America," the Los Angeles Chicano fusion hip hop band Ozomatli sing about the compromises required in order to meet and love "America." Peering south over the U.S.-Mexico border and west over the Pacific, this group of Mexican-, Filipino-, Irish- and African American musicians performs a compelling synthesis of people and cultural forms. But this is no simple celebration of assimilation, and no patriotic anthem to the U.S. nation-state—"America" is much more than that, to these brilliant artists as to so many of us.

With Ozo as launching-off point, this course approaches the question of "America" as a product of the crossings of individuals, groups, ideas, and cultural forms that have linked or divided people throughout the hemisphere in violent and exploitative as well as gorgeously productive and collaborative ways. Taking a thematic approach and using the tools of history and Cultural Studies, the course will explore the contradictory legacies of such Americas-wide topics as the Cold War, cultural imperialism, the rise and fall of Marxist hopes and right-wing military regimes, civil rights, slavery, transnational networks of revolt and dissent, popular culture, cultural politics, and music in particular as a channel for transnational racial formation and anti-racist activism.

**Course Requirements**

- ∞ 8-10 pp. final paper: 40 points. Each student will write a term paper placing an event in U.S. or local history in transnational, particularly Americas-wide context. Students will choose a topic by 11/23 & locate sources by 11/29; the final paper is due 12/13 at 4:45 p.m., the end of our final exam timeslot.
- ∞ Book review & in-class presentation on Dudziak, Wade, or Williams (students will choose one): 30 points.
- ∞ Participation: 30 points. In-class discussion of assigned material will determine nearly one-third of your final grade. Your participation grade will be based on your attendance, how often you speak, how regularly you are prepared to speak, and, of course, on what you say when you do chose to speak. Only positive class participation—that which engages in and sparks a meaningful dialogue about some aspect of the session's reading—will be rewarded. You should read all the required material for the week by Tuesday's class, have thought about the issues it raises, and have questions, ideas and arguments ready.

**Grading:** This class will use a standard 100-point scale without D-, D+, or A+ (0-59=F; 60-69=D; 70-71=C-; 72-77=C; 78-79=C+; 80-81=B-; 82-87=B; 88-89=B+; 90-91=A-; 92-100=A).

## **COURSE MATERIALS**

### **Books for Purchase (also available on library reserve)**

- Dorfman, Ariel, Heading South, Looking North: A Bilingual Journey (NY: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1998).
- Dudziak, Mary, Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy (Princeton: PUP, 2000).
- Roberts, John Storm, The Latin Tinge: The Impact of Latin American Music on the United States (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999 [1979]). *NB: the 2007 edition is also fine.*
- Wade, Peter, Music, Race, & Nation: Musica Tropical in Colombia (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).
- Williams, Eric, Capitalism & Slavery (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1944 [1938]).

### **Readings on Library Reserve**

- Dorfman, Ariel, with Armand Mattelart, How to Read Donald Duck: Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comic (Para leer al Pato Donald), trans. David Kunzle (NY: International General, 1975). *NB: some of you may also be able to purchase this book. If you can, do—it's a classic!*
- Rodó, Enrique, Ariel (in Spanish), excerpt of your choice.

**Readings on E-reserve,** <http://ereserves.indiana.edu/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=5507>; password: rock.

Kun, Josh, Audiotopia: Music, Race, & America, excerpt.

Winn, Peter, Americas: The Changing Face of Latin America and the Caribbean (NY: Pantheon Books, 1992), excerpt.

### **Reading Online**

Martí, José, “Nuestra América”/”Our America,” online via Oncourse (resources) & the www (Google it).

**Please note that movies are available on reserve or in the regular video section at Wells Library.**

### **Academic Honesty**

It is the obligation of all students to inform themselves of University regulations on academic honesty as outlined in Indiana University's Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct, <http://campuslife.indiana.edu/Code/>. Cheating, plagiarism, and other examples of academic misconduct will be pursued and sanctions will be levied. There will be no exceptions. If you have questions about academic integrity, please do not hesitate to consult with me. Plagiarism in particular is a very serious concern. You should always remember to cite the sources of the words or ideas that are not yours. You will be asked to upload your book review and final essay to Turnitin.com. Be aware that plagiarism will ensue disciplinary procedures as outlined by the Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct. Please make sure you are familiar with the guidelines on how to properly use and quote material you are using. Helpful information on citation styles is available on the IU libraries' website at <http://www.libraries.iub.edu/index.php?pageId=337>. **In addition to university-mandated sanctions, plagiarism or cheating will result in an “F” grade in this course.**

### **Absences**

Students may miss one class without penalty. The second absence will cause the deduction of one point from the FINAL point grade. The third and each subsequent absence will subtract two points each from the final point total. No distinction will be drawn between excused and unexcused absences.

## CLASS AND READINGS SCHEDULE

### **Part I: Marxism, Cultural Imperialism, & the Transnational Context of the Cold War**

- Week 1, T 23 - Th 25 Oct      Movie: Motorcycle Diaries, dir. Walter Salles (2005) (Tuesday in class).  
Winn, Americas, excerpt. E-reserves  
Martí, “Nuestra América”/”Our America.” Online  
*Optional*: Rodó, Ariel. In Spanish. Library reserves  
*POSSIBLE PRESENTATION ON RODÓ; BOOK REVIEW DUE TUES 10/30*
- Week 2, T 30 Oct - Th 1 Nov      Dorfman, Heading South, Looking North. purchase  
Movie: Machuca, dir. Andrés Wood (2004) (Tuesday in class).
- Week 3, T 6 - Th 8 Nov      Dorfman & Mattelart, How to Read Donald Duck. purchase  
Movie: Saludos Amigos, Walt Disney (1943) (on your own before Tuesday).

### **Part II: Racism & Resistance in Transnational Context**

- Week 4, T 13 - Th 15 Nov      Dudziak, Cold War Civil Rights (whole book). purchase  
*PRESENTATION ON DUDZIAK & BOOK REVIEW DUE Tuesday 11/13*
- Week 5, T 20 Nov      Williams, Capitalism & Slavery (whole book). purchase  
*PRESENTATION ON WILLIAMS & BOOK REVIEW DUE Tuesday 11/20*
- [Th 22      Thanksgiving: no class]  
*FINAL ESSAY TOPIC DUE Friday 11/23 at 10:00 p.m. via email to*  
[mseigel@indiana.edu](mailto:mseigel@indiana.edu)

### **Part III: Racism & Resistance in Transnational Popular Culture**

- Week 6, T 27 - Th 29 Nov      Roberts, The Latin Tinge, Introduction to the First Edition (ix-xi); chapter 1, “The Roots,” 2, “The Foundations” (3-43); 9, “Mundo Latino,” “Afterword: Newer Voices, Harder Sounds,” (212-254). purchase  
Kun, Audiotopia, Introduction: “Strangers among Sounds” (pp. 1-28) & chapter 1, “Against Easy Listening” (29-47). E-reserves.  
*FINAL ESSAY SOURCE LIST DUE in class on Thursday 11/29*
- Week 7, T 4 – Th 6 Dec      Wade, Music, Race, & Nation, Introduction (pp. 1-29); chaps 2-3 & 8-9 (pp. 30-66 & 213-238). purchase  
*PRESENTATION ON WADE & BOOK REVIEW DUE Tuesday 12/4*
- Week 8, T 11 - Th 13 Dec      Exam week. Work on final essay; Tuesday classtime is open office hours.  
Office hours also available by appointment.  
*FINAL ESSAY DUE Thursday, December 13, 4:45 p.m.*