

Missouri Western State University
SPAN 442-01 Spring 2008
Contemporary Spanish Culture through Film
Monday-Wednesday-Friday
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Texts: Course packet. You may pick this up from. There will be also several texts and films on reserve at the library.

On-line Resources:

Dictionary: <http://www.wordreference.com/>

Course Description and Goals: In this course, film is used as a tool through which students will learn about Spanish culture and society.* While students learn about Spain's tumultuous history from just prior to the Civil War to the present day, they will also learn how to critically discuss, analyze and write about film. As students become astute critics of cinema, they will become increasingly aware of the ways the camera lens narrates, serving not only to accurately reflect Spanish culture, but also to subvert and manipulate it. The works of some of Spain's most talented directors will be studied, among these, Luis Buñuel, Pedro Almodóvar, Alejandro Amenábar, , and Carlos Saura, among others.

This class furthers the mission of the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures and the State and National Learning Standards by providing students frequent opportunities to communicate in the target language, both orally and in writing, and by developing an awareness and appreciation for the cultures to which the Spanish language belongs.

*Please note that some of the films we will be watching include adult content. If for any reason you are upset by this kind of content, inform me.

Possible Films:

- *Un Chien Andalou (Un perro andaluz)*, Luis Buñuel / Salvador Dalí (1928); *L'âge d'or (La edad de oro)*, Luis Buñuel / Salvador Dalí (1930) ; *Viridiana*, Luis Buñuel (1961)
- *El Sacerdote*, Eloy de la Iglesia (1978); *El Diputado* (1979)
- *¡ Ay! Carmela*, Carlos Saura (1990)
- *Abre los ojos*, (1997); *Tesis* (1996), *Los Otros* (2001), *El mar adentro* (2005) Alejandro Amenábar
- *La lengua de las mariposas*, José Luis Cuerda (1999) ; *Libertarias*, , José Luis Cuerda (1996)
- *Tacones Lejanos* (1991); *Todo sobre mi madre*(1999) , *Hable Con Ella* (2001), *La Mala Educación* (2004); *Volver* (2006) Pedro Almodóvar
- *El día de la bestia*, Alex de la Iglesia (1995);

Books on Reserve:

Behind the Spanish Lens: Spanish Cinema under Fascism & Democracy, Peter Besas (1986)
Spanish Cultural Studies: An Introduction: The Struggle for Modernity, Helen Graham and Jo Labanyi (1995)
Contemporary Spanish Cinema, Barry Jordan and Rikki Morgan-Tamosunas (1998)
Contemporary Spanish Cultural Studies, Barry Jordan, Rikki Morgan-Tamosunas (2000)
Blood Cinema: The Reconstruction of National Identity in Spain, Marsha Kinder (1993)
Constructing Identity in Contemporary Spain: Theoretical Debates and Cultural Practice, Jo Labanyi (2002)
Spanish Cinema, Rob Stone (2001)
Spanish National Cinema, Nuria Triana-Toribio (2003)

Mode of Assessment: Portfolio: You will hand in a portfolio for evaluation *every three to four weeks* and at the end of the semester. I suggest you use a 1.5” or 2” binder to compile your work. Use labeled dividers to organize sections (i.e., “Cuestionarios,” “Ensayos auto-reflexivos,” etc.). Make sure the outside of the binder is clearly labeled with your name, a place/phone number where you can be reached, your e-mail address, class level and section. If you lose your binder at any time during the semester, you *must* make up all lost work. No exceptions. On that note, make *multiple* copies of your work (i.e., have homework assignments and essays saved on computer and zip/CD, etc.). Each time your portfolio is collected, it will be evaluated/graded. Your portfolio must include:

1. **Cuestionarios (Film Comprehension Questions):** For each film, you will be given a series of comprehension questions to answer. Though you must complete all of these to fully participate in daily lectures, *choose 10* to insert, typed (use 12 point, Times New Roman font, with margins of 1”), in the portfolio. Be sure to place these in the portfolio in the order they were originally completed during the semester, and make sure that your work reflects the range of your abilities as a student. Also, for each of the cuestionarios in the portfolio, *comment on which questions were most difficult/easy to complete and why*. A comment on the ways in which this material fits into your academic life/other classes is also appreciated. *You need write only a few sentences (3 to 5) per assignment*. Remember that I will be grading your comments as much as your ability to analyze culture through film. Your answers and comments should be well organized, coherent and detailed, but they do not need to be very long. Make sure that your responses to questions show insight. Do not be afraid to make reference to class discussion or articles read in preparation for class. (20%)
2. **Ensayos auto-reflexivos (Reflection Papers):** Almost every week, you will write a reflection paper that focuses on one aspect of Spanish culture as it is represented in film. Reflection papers should be between 250 and 300 words, double-spaced and typed (use 12 point, Times New Roman font, with margins of 1”). These will be graded with a $\sqrt{+}$ (check-plus, A), $\sqrt{}$ (check, B) or $\sqrt{-}$ (check-minus, C). At the end of the semester, *choose your best 5* and put them in the portfolio in the order they were originally completed. Preface this section of the portfolio with a paragraph telling why you think these reflection papers were more success than others. (30 %)
3. **Ensayo final (Final Essay):** Your final essay is a *research paper* in which you should discuss one socio-cultural theme as it is portrayed in four films. For example, you might want to talk about surrealism, the portrayal of the Civil War, women, sexuality, or horror/suspense in contemporary Spanish culture. Though you must refer to outside resources, I value your ideas and creativity above those of so-called experts. This essay should be about 2000 words.
4. **Ensayo auto-reflexivo sobre su experiencia académica:** You will write a reflective paper in Spanish about your experience in class. This essay should take into account what you have learned about reading and interpreting Spanish culture through film. It should also discuss your experience of this class as a member of an academic community. In your writing, I encourage you to talk about how your portfolio, class participation, attendance and engagement at all levels influenced your performance. This essay should be about 1000 words. (20%)
5. **Final presentation:** You will present to your class the content, analysis and criticism of your Final Essay. This will enrich your classmates learning and help you to reflex in what you have learned from these films, the culture and this art as a text of cultural representation of a nation.. Your presentation will use 25 minutes, you can consider part of scene as well as part of essays read to support your own criticism. Make sure it is your work, in order to defend it. Do not stop at the obvious points, analyze.

More on Grades:

A: 90.0-100 %

B: 80-89.9%

C: 70-79.9 %

D: 60.-69.9 %

F: menos de 60.0 %

Requirements and Policies:

A. Though English subtitles are available for most of the films we will watch, all films will be screened in Spanish. The language to be used in class discussions, homework, quizzes, presentations, and writing assignments must be Spanish. We will watch segments of the films together, *but you must watch the majority of films at the Media Center*

in the campus library. Other local video rental shops and companies such as Netflix also carry these films. If you cannot view the film to be discussed by class time, in the Media Center, please consider using one of these venues for personal viewing.

B. All students are required to attend weekly sessions and orally participate in discussions. Students are permitted to miss a maximum of 1 class period. For each absence beyond three, your final cumulative grade will be reduced by 2% percent per missed class. After a total of 8 unexcused absences, the professor maintains the right to withdraw any student. Please note that I regard tardiness as equally offensive as excessive absence. Legitimate extenuating circumstances (grave illness, hospitalization, funeral of a family member, etc.) merit special consideration. Please see me if a special circumstance requires you to miss class.

Make an effort to arrive to class on time, and if some extenuating circumstance keeps you from arriving on time, please be kind to those already in class (do not interrupt the class more than necessary).

C. Students are required to have COMPLETED the assignment listed for each class period PRIOR to the class in which the material is covered. By "completed," I mean that students will have: 1) screened the movie listed, 2) read assigned texts, 3) written out questions that emerged from viewing the film or doing the reading 4) TYPED OUT assignments to be handed in at the beginning of class.

D. Again, students are expected to view some films analyzed outside of class. Though films will be available at the Multi-Media Center for individual screening, I will make arrangements so that the class can have them there as soon after we use it in class.

E. Late assignments—essays, homework, etc--will NOT be accepted unless there is some dire extenuating circumstance of a medical or legal nature. Likewise, a student who misses an exam for any reason will not be allowed to make it up unless 1) the exam was missed due to grave illness and 2) a medical excuse deems that the student was too ill to take an exam.

F. No electronic submission of any assignment will be accepted. No handwritten submission of any assignment will be accepted. Except if it is arranged and agreed by the instructor with you.

G. Students should turn off cellular phones during class. Cellular phones distract your colleagues from the task at hand.

H. Academic dishonesty and/or plagiarism. All assignments handed in must reflect the individual work of the student handing in the assignment. I am personally offended and disturbed by acts of academic dishonesty, cheating and plagiarism. This Institution Student Conduct Code describes these offenses and possible actions resulting from such behavior here: [STUDENT CONDUCT CODE OF THIS UNIVERSITY](#) If you have ANY doubt as to how to cite or paraphrase a source, ask.

Introducción a la clase; ¿Qué es “cultura”? Definiciones y ejemplos

El surrealismo y *Un Chien Andalou*, Luis Buñuel (1928); Leer “[Un Chien Andalou](#),” de Michael Koller

Un Chien Andalou (Un perro andaluz), Luis Buñuel / Salvador Dalí (1928);

L'âge d'or (La edad de oro), Luis Buñuel / Salvador Dalí (1930); Leer “[L'Âge d'or: faux raccord \(false match\)](#),” de

Sophy Williams, **Reflection Paper Due**

La Guerra Civil Española: Representaciones de la historia; Leer “Re-framing the past: representations of the Spanish Civil War in popular Spanish Cinema,” de David Archibald; **Reflection Paper Due**

Representaciones de la historia;

:*La lengua de las mariposas*, José Luis Cuerda (1999); Leer “Coming of Age in the Spanish Civil War,” de Thomas Deveny

;*Ay! Carmela*, Carlos Saura (1990); Leer “La República va al doctor: Síntomas de la Guerra Civil en tres películas de Carlos Saura,” de Margarita Pillado-Miller

Reflection Paper Due

Leer “The ‘Mother’ in Films of Pedro Almodóvar”

v: *Todo sobre mi madre*, Pedro Almodóvar (1999); **Reflection Paper Due**

: *Tesis*, Alejandro Amenábar (1996); Leer “From the Margins to the Mainstream: Trends in Recent Spanish Horror Cinema,” de Andrew Willis

Tesis, Alejandro Amenábar (1996); Leer “Tesis,” de Leora Lev

Abre los ojos, Alejandro Amenábar (1997); Leer “Alejandro Amenábar’s *Abre los ojos*/ Open Your Eyes,” de Chris Perriam

Reflection Paper Due

: *El día de la bestia*, Alex de la Iglesia (1995); Leer “Nuevas representaciones culturales en la España posolímpica,” de Luis Martín-Cabrera

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: : *El mar adentro*, Alejandro Amenábar (2005); Leer “[Cansado de ser hombre](#)” y las hojas sueltas de [La resurrección literaria del gallego Ramón Sampedro](#)

: *El mar adentro*, Alejandro Amenábar (2005); Leer *Cartas desde el infierno* (hojas sueltas)

Proyectos Finales

El cuerpo en la cinematografía española (patología, estética, uso, sexo, instrumento, objeto-sujeto, derechos)

Los niños, ¿Como símbolos sociales? (edad, género, relación al adulto, honestidad, maldad, política, sumisión)

El trauma de una nación e identidad. (Ideal, unión, libertad, igualdad, fraternidad)

Existencialismo, comunidad y globalización en el cine. (Internacionalismo, individualidad, tecnificación, sentimientos)

Memoria, Presente y ¿Hay futuro? (Fantasía, deseos, fantasmas, Generación X o Y?,

Colores y música en la cinematografía española (socialización, códigos, arte, moda, natural-artificial, _____

_ Se deben entregar el día de su Examen final asignado por la universidad

_ Ocho páginas a doble espacio (12 font), más una para la bibliografía.

_ Debe analizar un concepto y aplicar la crítica a un mínimo de 4 de las películas vistas.