

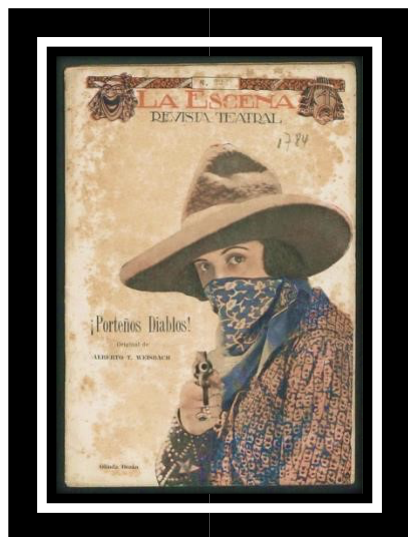
TRANS*CULTURES IN LATIN AMERICA
MODERNISM'S ECCENTRIC MASCULINITIES

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This undergraduate course introduces students to the literary history of transgenderism in the Latin American long fin-de-siècle (1890-1930), with particular attention to *modernista* and *avant-garde* cultural productions. Recent scholarship on representations of deviance in Latin America argued that gender and sexual abnormalities were nineteenth-century medical constructs that identified queerness as a monstrosity. We will explore how queer women and early forms of transmasculinities, pejoratively called *marimachos* in the vernacular culture, came to embody dissident identities that disputed gender binaries and late nineteenth-century concepts of womanhood, decorum, and maternity.

Drawing from a variety of methodological approaches, the course will illuminate the specificity of practices carried out by a rich plethora of female and transmasculine subcultures in Mexico, the Caribbean, Brazil, and the Southern Cone: soldaderas (women soldiers), llaneras (rural women), cuchilleras (knife fighters), arrabaleras (tango singers), marimachos (tomboys), suffragists, and other iconic figures of the turn of the century. Some of the topics covered include notions of Greek love, primitivism, teratology, and sexual inversion, as well as why first-wave feminism caused a crisis in the traditional ways of representing women in Latin American literature and print culture. The course will engage with major topics within gender, disability, and trans* theories, including intersectional approaches, transfeminist and queer studies.

Course objectives

- Develop and demonstrate an understanding of key terms, concepts, and ideas in queer and transgender studies in Spanish and Lusophone America.
- Recognize and articulate how culture shaped queer and trans embodiment in turn-of-the-century Latin America, with particular attention to queer women and modern expressions of transmasculinities.
- Explore the significance of queer and transgender studies in the Latin American context.

Course requirements

The course is designed to facilitate regular and critical engagement with course readings and primary documents. Students are expected to keep up with reading assignments in order to be prepared for weekly discussion. A research paper of approximately twenty double-spaced pages is required on a topic of your own choice on some aspect of the history of transgenderism in Latin America's fin de siècle. Each week, one or two students will present during the seminar a critical reading of the assigned theoretical essay.

- Preparation and participation: 20%
- Paper topic, thesis statement, sources 20%
- Seminar presentation: 30%
- Final research paper: 30%

Feeling welcome: I am committed to maintaining an inclusive and welcoming classroom, a space for critical and civil exchange of ideas. I believe that recognizing that we have different backgrounds is beneficial for our learning, and I ask that everybody engage with empathy towards those with a different viewpoint than one's own. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity. This course is a critique of how colonial taxonomies of race, gender, and

sexuality produce bodies. Such production entails violent methods that have an effect in the materiality of bodies that do not conform to “the norm.” In this sense, the material covered will include topics that may trigger negative reactions. Our task will be to do a critique of violence to create an inclusive and diverse environment that is equal for all.

Academic integrity

The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise, and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment and more serious consequences may apply.

SCHEDULE

Module I

Week 1 The New Woman: The End of Gender Normativity in Latin America

Objectives: To examine male anxieties over the new role of women in the public sphere. Keywords: positivism, feminism, New Woman, and nation.

Session 1

- Crónica: “La mujer del porvenir.” *El popular*, año II, no 703, 17 de diciembre de 1898, México.
- Crónica: Marrasquino. “Guerra al marimacho”. *El tiempo*. Año XII, No 3411, p1, 19 de enero de 1895, México.

Session 2

- Ensayo crítico: Stryker, Susan. “A Hundred Years of Transgender History.” *Transgender History*. Seal, 2008. Introduction.

- Ensayo crítico: Guerrero, Javier. *Tecnologías del cuerpo. Exhibicionismo y visualidad en América Latina*. Iberoamericana Vervuert, 2014. Introduction.

Week 2 Technologies of Gender: The Pants Revolution

Objectives: To explore aesthetic practices such as clothing, hair, makeup, fashion, and sports that queer women used to contest naturalized notions of masculinity. Keywords: technogender, pants, masculinity.

Session 1

- Ensayo crítico: Preciado, Paul B. “Technogenders.” *Testo Junkie*. U of New York, 2013.
- Ensayo crítico: Halberstam, Judith. *Female Masculinity*. Duke University Press, 1998. Introduction.

Session 2

- Crónica: Chavarri. “El traje de las mujeres.” *El correo español*. 12 de noviembre de 1901, México.
- Crónica: Unamuno, Miguel. “Más acerca de los pantalones.” *Caras y caretas* (Buenos Aires), no. 1,238, 1922. Argentina.

Week 3 Trans* Identities of the Fin de Siècle

Objectives: To study pre-transsexual nineteenth-century gender expressions. Keywords: Transgender, lesbian sexualities, and fin de siècle.

Session 1

- Ensayo crítico: “Inocultables realidades del deseo. Amelio Robles, masculinidad (transgénero) en la Revolución Mexicana.” (Gabriela Cano, 2009.)
- Ensayo crítico: Domínguez Ruvalcaba, Héctor. *Translating the Queer: Body Politics and Transnational Conversations*. Zed Books, 2016. Introduction & chapter 1.

Session 2

- Telegrama: “Marimachos.” *La Patria. Diario de México*, año XXVIII, no 8252, 10 de junio de 1904. México.
- Telegrama: “Marimacho.” *El tiempo. Diario católico*, año VII, no 2024, 4 de junio de 1890. México.
- Telegrama: “Extranjero. Alrededor del mundo.” *El tiempo. Diario católico*, año V, no 1205, 8 de setiembre de 1887. México.

Week 4 First-Wave Feminism and the Modernista Male Gaze

Objectives: To discuss ways in which first-wave feminism caused a crisis in the traditional ways of representing women. Keywords: first-wave feminism, suffragettes, modernismo.

Session 1

- Ensayo crítico: Montero, Oscar. “Modernismo and Homophobia: Darío and Rodó.” *Sex and Sexuality in Latin America*. Edited by Daniel Baldeston and Donna J. Guy. New York, 1997.
- Ensayo crítico: Fiol-Matta, Licia. *A Queer Mother for the Nation: The State and Gabriela Mistral*. University of Minnesota Press, 2002. Introduction.

Session 2

- Crónica: Darío, Rubén. “¡Estas mujeres!” *Todo al vuelo*. Renacimiento, 1912.
- Crónica: Rodó, José Enrique. “Feminismos.” *Revista moderna de México*, 1908.

Week 5 Hellenic Nations- Lesbian Love and Classical Reception

Objectives: To reflect on how the Greek poetess Sappho was reimagined to exoticize, pathologize, or celebrate lesbian love in the modernista archive. Keywords: Sappho, lesbian sexualities, and modernismo.

Session 1

- Crónica: Gómez -Carrillo, Enrique. “La purificación de Safo.” *Mundo latino* [c1921].

- Cuento: Diniz, Almacho. *Voluptuosas*. Garnier, 1911. Brazil.

Session 2

- Ensayo crítico: Molloy, Sylvia. *Poses de fin de siglo. Desbordes del género en la modernidad*. Eterna Cadencia Editora, 2012. Selections.
- Ensayo crítico: Wittig, Monique. *The Lesbian Body*. Peter Owen, 1975. Selections.

Module II

Week 6 The French Scandal

*Objectives: To discuss the transnational circuits by which the French novel *La Garçonne* (1922) by Victor Margueritte was used to discuss female bisexuality and gender-bending practices in numerous Latin American nations. Keywords: garçonnas, machonas, and tango.*

Session 1

- Novela: Margueritte, Victor. *La marimacho*. Traducción. Lima, Peru: Pando, 1923. Selections.
- Crónica: Aramburu, Ricardo. "Los cabellos de corte a la *garçonne*." *Fray Mocho* (Buenos Aires), no. 750, 1926.

Session 2

- Canción: Correa, Ramón. *La machona*, (tango). *Populares*, 1923.
- Ensayo crítico: Sifuentes-Jáuregui, Ben. *Transvestism, Masculinity, and Latin America Literature: Genders Share Flesh*. Palgrave, 2002. Selections.

Week 7 Exotic Perversions: Vampire Women, Prostitution, and Antisemitism

Objectives: To study prostitution and hysteria as tropes of degeneration theory that were key in the fabrication of immigrant and Jewish women as vampire monsters in Argentine avant-garde projects. Keywords: vampirism, antisemitism, and avant-gardes.

Session 1

- Novelín: Chas de Cruz, Israel. *El burdel de la judía. Novela realista de costumbres judías*. Los realistas, 1923.

Session 2

- Ensayo crítico: Guy, Donna J. *Sex & Danger in Buenos Aires: Prostitution, Family, and Nation in Argentina*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991. Introduction.
- Ensayo crítico: Beatriz Sarlo. *Una modernidad periférica*. Nueva Visión, 2003. Cap. 1.

Week 8 The Female Invert

Objectives: To address the strategies by which queer women's desires for masculine identification were performed through techniques of cross-dressing. Keywords: crossdressing, psychiatry, and eugenics.

Session 1

- Ensayo crítico: Halberstam, Jack. "Perverse Presentism: The Androgyne, the Tribade, the Female Husband, and Other Pre-Twentieth-Century Genders." *Female Masculinity*. Duke University Press, 1998.
- Ensayo crítico: De Lauretis, Teresa. *Technologies of Gender: Essays on Theory, Film, and Fiction*. Indiana University Press, 1987. Introduction.

Session 2

- Ensayo crítico: Jorge Salessi. "La educación nacionalista como profilaxis contra el mal de lesbianas profesionales." *Médicos maleantes y maricas*. 1995.

•Crónica: Mercante, Victor. "Uranismo en los internados." *Archivos de psiquiatria y criminología* , 1905. Argentina.

Week 9 The Other Mexican Revolution. Soldaderas

Objectives: To study the male gaze's visceral response against female queerness in the context of the first popular revolutions of the twentieth century. Keywords: Revolution, women soldiers, and nation.

Session 1

- Novela: Quevedo y Zubieta, Salvador. *México Marimacho, Novela Histórica Revolucionaria*. México: Ediciones Botas, 1933.
- Ensayo crítico: Ruiz-Alfaro, Sofia. "A Threat to the Nation:"México Marimacho" and Female Masculinities in Postrevolutionary Mexico." *Hispanic Review* 81.1 (2013): 41-62.

Session 2

- Ensayo crítico: Moraña, Mabel. *El monstruo como máquina de guerra*. Iberoamericana, 2017. Selections.

Week. 10 La devoradora de hombres. Llaneras

Objectives: To study how the marimacho llanero becomes a monstrous conspiracy against family, peace, and modernity in the post-modernist era. With a focus on the novel and film Doña Bárbara (1929-1943) we will study how the classic antinomy civilization vs. barbarism, urban vs. rural helped to create 1) the desert as a queer space of meaning and 2) the visceral response of criollo maleness against female queerness. Keywords: regionalismo, civilization, modernity, queer.

Session 1

- Film: *Doña Bárbara*. Fernando de Fuentes (1943)
- Novela: Rómulo Gallegos. *Doña Bárbara* (1929). Selections.

Session 2

- Ensayo crítico: Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. Columbia University Press, 1985. Selections.
- Ensayo crítico: Paulson, Susan. *Masculinities and Femininities in Latin America's Uneven Development*. Routledge, 2015. Selections.

Week. 11 & 12**Research presentations**

Amelio Robles Ávila (3 November 1889 – 9 December 1984) was a colonel during the Mexican Revolution. Assigned female at birth with the name Amelia Robles Ávila, Robles fought in the Mexican Revolution, rose to the rank of colonel, and lived openly as a man from age 24 until his death at age 95.