

By emphasizing a decolonial approach to the history of rhetoric, this graduate-level module covers three major foci of Chicanx rhetoric: the rhetorics of colonization, rhetorics of Indigenous Mexican autonomy and the Zapatistas, and the rhetorics of the borderlands. Each pod within the module addresses these rhetorical approaches through engagement with many different kinds of texts that recognizes the cultural texts of Indigenous peoples as legitimate sources.

Week One – Indigenous Mexican Autonomy

Goal for the week: to exemplify the contemporary struggle of the Indigenous peoples of Mexico by telling the story of the Zapatistas. Through a communiqué, an essay, three short videos, a song, and a Smithsonian exhibit website, this week hopefully shows how one group of Indigenous people are working to delink from colonialism by rooting themselves firmly within Maya traditions and building new communities from the ground up.

[6th Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle](#)—EZLN Communiqué

[Zapatista! Trailer](#)—Big Noise Films

[Zapatista Timeline](#) (skim)—Schools For Chiapas

“[Himno Zapatista](#)”—“Zapatista Anthem” ([Lyrics in English](#))

[EZLN Action](#) at Military Base

“[The Fourth World War](#)”—Subcomandante Marcos

[Occupied on Mayan Time](#)—Smithsonian *National Museum of the American Indian*

[An Introduction to Zapatista Education](#)—Schools For Chiapas

[Autonomy in a Poetic Voice: Zapatistas and Political Organizing in Los Angeles](#)--Kara Zugman

Week Two – Rhetorics of Colonization

Goal for the week: to show how histories of the conquest of Mexico have been told, and what other histories are also there, hiding, yet still very much speaking. The materials below are listed in order of situation. For instance, the first three are categorically historical. Then, there’s the treaty, which situates that here for context and also perspective. Next, there are two texts offering different readings of Europe, and a way to see that even nations—regions—have been rhetorically conceptualized and named strategically. The last two are links to Indigenous Mexican Indian tribes that have their own histories, stories, myths, and poetry. These links provide an alternative reading to the land that is absolutely necessary for understanding the dominant histories also in this week.

Enrique Dussel’s *The Invention of the Americas: Eclipse of "the Other" and the Myth of Modernity*
[Hopefully, students would attempt to read this in full first]

Students could skim these, but read specific chapters from each and talk about them:

Source for Prescott’s History of the Conquest of Mexico:

<http://pinkmonkey.com/dl/library1/mexico.pdf>

Bernal Díaz del Castillo’s The Discovery and Conquest of Mexico:

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/32474/32474-h/32474-h.htm>

I would encourage this reading simply for context:

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo: <http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/guadalupe-hidalgo/>

Both of these:

Susan Castillo's "Colonial Encounters in New World Writing, 1500-1786"

Enrique Dussel's "Europe, Modernity, and Eurocentrism: The Semantic Slippage of the Concept of 'Europe'"

I would also point students here and have them look around for interesting stuff:

Yaqui History: <http://www.manataka.org/page129.html>

Mexican Tribes: <http://www.native-languages.org/mexico.htm>

Week Three – Border Rhetorics, Erasure, and Shifting Worlds

This week has a specific structure and hierarchy. The first five texts set a sort of basis for understanding a core of border rhetorics. Teaching Anzaldúa is essential because she provides a foundation for teaching secondary texts of her work. Cristina Ramirez's dissertation also connects to the previous week as well as provides a great way to understand how women are currently leading many groups of resistance in Mexico.

With *Bad Indians*, this week connects overall to the other weeks, but it also sets up its own agenda: a rhetoric of healing. This week is all about using rhetoric to heal from the trauma of colonization. That is why Anzaldúa does the work she does—and how she does it!

There's an analysis of how anger can be rhetorical in Espinosa-Aguilar's short essay. Then, there is Hill's brief explanation of how to teach Anzaldúa to students of white privilege. I have provided students with a choice of two essays from four, where one would address a way to read Anzaldúa and the other would provide them with a methodology for inspiration. The last three are all essays by men, which shows another way of seeing border rhetorics. Each one has their charm and intellectual supplement. Loewe's essay explains how several kinds of linguistic identifications in Mexico shape Mexican identity, which complements Anzaldúa's use of *mestiza* in possibly interesting ways. Noe's essay is particularly intriguing because he begins by speaking about Bartholomae's "Inventing the University." For Noe, border rhetorics can democratize the classroom and our consciousness. Such an essay would be particularly useful for students raised in migrant families and/or for those of us who will teach them. Lastly, Cisneros's essay, which is a bit longer than the others, provides an additional way to interpret border rhetorics within Mexican activism, more specifically, Mexican activism regarding the land. In some ways, it reminds me of the SAI documents. His work attempts to understand the connection between identity, agency, and what people call themselves in relation to a nation. For Mexicans and Mexican Americans, this connection between land and name symbolizes the very terrain of who we are.

These first five texts are especially relevant to the week I envision:

Gloria Anzaldúa: “La Conciencia de la Mestiza”

Cristina Ramirez’s Dissertation: *Mestiza Rhetorics of Mexican Women Journalists*. Specifically, the first chapter “Forging a Mestiza Rhetoric.”

Excerpts from *Bad Indians* by Deborah Miranda

“Radical Rhetoric: Anger, Activism, and Change” by Amanda Espinosa-Aguilar

“Teaching la Conciencia de la Mestiza in the Midst of White Privilege” by Simona J. Hill

Students have a choice of one from each of these:

“Reclaiming Pleasure” by Mary Loving Blanchard **OR** “From within Germinative Stasis” by Maria Lugones [These are both strategies for reading Anzaldúa]

“Daughter of Coatlicue” by Irene Lara **OR** “Doing Mestizaje” by Monica Torres [These are both kinds of methodologies students can use to get ideas for doing their own work]

Students can pick one of these, and separate into groups so each would be read:

“Rhetoric and Ethnic Identity at the Mexican Periphery” by Ronald Loewe

“The Corrido: A Border Rhetoric” by Mark Noe

“Reclaiming the Rhetoric of Reyes López Tijerina: Border Identity and Agency in the ‘Land Grant Question’” by Josue David Cisneros