ABSTRACTS

CELEBRATING EL DÍA DE CERVANTES
USC Department of Latin American and Iberian Cultures
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Iris Yao
SPAN 316x: Spanish for the Professions (Consuelo Siguenza-Ortiz)

The Effect of Science Enrichment Programs in Reducing the Achievement Gap in Latino K-5

It is known that there is a significant achievement gap in STEM fields between Latino students and those of their white counterparts. For many schools in the Los Angeles School District, a majority of students are Latino and represent a historically underachieving population. This is in part due to the lack of exposure starting as early as the first three years of elementary school. These qualitative case studies explore the educational and sociocultural factors that ultimately lead to such achievement differences. The curriculum will be analyzed, along with further social barriers such as language and family environment. Finally, we study the effects of academic collaborative efforts for science enrichment in inner-city schools, with programs such as JEP and Science Outreach at the University of Southern California. Results from these studies will be helpful to understand how best to increase the retention of the growing Latino youth in future STEM fields.

Jonathan Horwitz
SPAN 310: Structure of Spanish (Marianna Chodorowska-Pilch)

Coastal Caribbean Spanish and the Debate to Change

With 50 million inhabitants, Colombia is the country with the most Spanish speakers outside Mexico. Within Colombia, a number of Spanish dialects have developed due to the country’s diverse geography and demographics. Today, centralized state media broadcast the capital’s interior Bogotan dialect across the country through the Caribbean Coast. This factor and global Spanish language media exert pressure on young speakers in the Coastal Colombian region to adopt a more standard variety of Spanish. In this paper, I will briefly analyze the history and linguistic features of the Coastal Caribbean dialect. Secondly, I will present the debate for Coastal Colombians to conform or to hold out for their unique style, taking Shakira as an example. Should the region embrace the star, and, in doing so, consent to the erosion of its unique accent and history in favor of global assimilation and recognition? Or, should it denounce Shakira’s Spanish accent in order to secure its image as a bastion of unique, local Spanish?
Keala Rusher
SPAN 301: Introduction to Literature and Film (Camila Moreiras)

*Lo transitorio en las obras de Akerman y Álvarez*

In this paper, I discuss the ways in which the films *No Home Movie* and *News from Home* by Chantal Akerman and *El Cielo Gira* and *Mercado de Futuros* by Mercedes Álvarez intersect thematically, specifically in their exploration of the transitory. In each film, the directors use elements such as sound and cinematography to dissect themes of love, loss, and liminality. Each of the two directors comes from different backgrounds, and their works portray outwardly disparate topics and settings, but all four films share an interest in the experience of anxiety about the uncertain space between the past and the future. I will interrogate the ways the directors use elements of film in order to compare the four films to each other, but most importantly the way in which the characters in *No Home Movie* and *El Cielo Gira* both exist in limbo between the nostalgia of memory and the apprehension of tomorrow. Notably, these themes exist as a part of the human condition, spanning decades and physical location, from New York City, to Brussels, to Aldealseñor.

Ashley Sohn
SPAN 301: Introduction to Literature and Film (Camila Moreiras)

*El poder del feminismo oculto en Volver*

Este ensayo enfatiza la importancia de la tensión que resulta del contraste entre los elementos patriarcales y feministas en la película, *Volver*, de Pedro Almodóvar. Los componentes patriarcales son necesarios porque crean un fondo contra el cual la protagonista femenina se destaca. Según Julián Gutiérrez-Albilla, *Volver* demuestra cómo los traumas reverberan en el presente. El sutil aspecto feminista es la respuesta proactiva de la protagonista, Raimunda, a las heridas de su pasado, así demostrando su fuerza. Al mismo tiempo, hay escenas con muestras de sexismo y masculinidad que parecen a las de una obra patriarcal, ocultando el tono feminista y creando la tensión que es tan importante. *Volver* invita al espectador a pensar en la tensión invocada por este contraste, haciéndolo así “feminist-forward” y no completamente feminista. Por crear esta obra, Almodóvar se distingue de los cineastas feministas típicos y se marca como pionero de un nuevo género que aquí llamo “feminist-forward.”