The main objective of “Latin American Cultural and Literary Theory” is the careful analysis of discourse from and about Latin American literature and culture in recent decades. We will question the problematic divide between theory “by” and “about” Latin Americans, read provocative works of theory and fiction, and have passionate arguments about topics such as the relationship between the local and the global, subalternity and difference, narrative and representation, dictatorship and postdictatorship. The course is designed especially for students specializing in Latin America, as well as for those who have an interest in Latin Americanist thought and/or cultural and critical theory in general.

Required reading will include excerpts from Idelber Avelar’s The Untimely Present: Postdictatorial Latin American Fiction and the Task of Mourning, John Beverley’s Subalternity and Representation: Arguments in Cultural Theory, Jean Franco’s Critical Passions, Francine Masiello’s The Art of Transition: Latin American Culture and Neoliberal Crisis, Walter Mignolo’s Local Histories/Global Designs, Alberto Moreiras’s The Exhaustion of Difference: The Politics of Latin American Cultural Studies, Angel Rama’s The Lettered City, Silviano Santiago’s The Space In-Between: Essays on Latin American Culture, Beatriz Sarlo’s Scenes from Postmodern Life, Doris Sommer’s Proceed with Caution, When Engaged by Minority Writings in the Americas and Gareth Williams’s The Other Side of the Popular: Neoliberalism and Subalternity in Latin America.

COLT L/M/CT Track: This is a Critical Thought Concentration Course.

Professor Erin Graff Zivin
egz@college.usc.edu, THH 156, (213) 740-8043