

ROSA E. SOTO

I. **Module for Current Course:**

Expand on [ENG 3040 American Literature Survey](#):

Currently teaching “Nuestra America” but possibly adding the following Readings:

- A. “Impressions of America” (will be taught in conjunction with Walt Whitman’s “Songs of Myself”)
- B. Some of his Poetry (TBD) (in conjunction with Dickinson)
- C. Letters from New York: “Coney Island,” “The Indians in the United States,” “A Great Confederate Celebration,” and “New York Under Snow” (in conjunction with Bret Harte, Mark Twain, Jack London)
- D. “Letters from New York: Our America” (in conjunction with Walt Whitman’s “Democratic Vistas”)
- F. Patria “My Race” (in conjunction with excerpts of the following readings by either Frederick Douglass “Autobiography,” W.E.B. Dubois “Atlanta Exposition Speech,” Booker T. Washington “The Wings of Atlanta”, or Pauline Hopkins “Contending Forces”)
- G. Selections of Newspapers clippings by Jose Marti (in conjunction with Ida-B. Wells Barnett “From Mob Rule in New Orleans” or her newspaper clippings) <https://www.loc.gov/rr/news/topics/ida.html>
<https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/scrc/findingaids/view.php?eadid=ICU.SPCL.IBWELLS>

Student Learning Objectives:

- A. Learn about the politics (economic and social realities) of the US during the time period between 1865-1914 (from the Civil War to World War I).
- B. Learn about US creation of “America” or “American Identity” or an “American voice”.
- C. Learn about US imperialism and Manifest Destiny. (More broadly about internal wars versus external wars.)
- D. Learn about the writers of the time period and how they articulate and struggle with a burgeoning America. Learn about the literature of the time period.
- E. Learn the ways in which authors paint a picture of America as it was in the time period.

Assessment:

- A. Group Projects: Select a text by Marti and a text by an American writer and present a an overall introduction to the tropes in the writing and explain the ways in which the writings examine “America” and what it is to be an American during the time period between the Civil War (1865) to the beginning of World War I (1914).
- B. Individual Research Projects:
 - A. Future Teachers: Create your own teaching module for American Literature (making sure to incorporate a diversity of voices and a multiplicity of different texts, which may include: Poetry, Non-fiction, Newspapers, etc.)
 - B. Creative Writers: Write your own version of America (poetry, non-fiction or a play)
 - C. Theorists: Critically examine one of Marti’s works and make an argument for his positionally as a prophet of Cuba, Cuban Identity, the Spanish-American war, etc.
 - D. Critique of Social Media: Using Jose Marti’s “Notebooks,” ask yourself: What would your notebooks and thinking look like? What would your social media profile say about who you are as an “individual” and what you are preoccupied with?

Key Words: Transcendentalism, Manifest Destiny, Identity, Self-Reliance, oppression, colonization, landscape,

Bibliography:

<http://www.josemarti.cu/publicacion/nuestra-america-version-ingles/>

II. [Create New Course](#):

Jose Marti and the Americans: This course will focus on examining 19th and early 20th century writings and the creation of America or Americans, following the American Revolution and onward into its expansion period of "Manifest Destiny". How do the writings of that century reflect the writings of new voices (as Emerson's questioned: Who were American writers and what did they have to say?)? How do the writings express ideas of self-reliance, American identity, the individual's responsibility to society, ideas of government, ideas of the economy and more? How does Marti fit into the discoveries of America? How does he frame the personality of America and the Americans? In what ways does he use an American voice to posit possibility for Latin American nations? And, in what ways does he use what he learns to be disagreeable about America to frame what Latin Americans should avoid?

Possible Readings might include:

1. Definitions of America:

- A. "Letters from New York," "Our America," "The Truth about the United States," "The Poet Walt Whitman," "Emerson" (will be taught in conjunction with "The American Scholar" by Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Songs of Myself" by Walt Whitman, and/or Henry David Thoreau's "Civil Disobedience")
- B. "Prologue To Poem of Niagara" (will be taught in conjunction with Jose Heredia's "Niagara")
- C. "New York Under Snow" (will be taught in conjunction with Williams Carlos Williams "To Elsie" and "Paterson")
 - A. Space and Place
 - B. American through the Visual (what subtle political, economical and social ideas permeate the regional/geographic visual context?)
- D. Clips of Readings from Jose Marti in newspapers will be compared to clips of readings by Washington Irving <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/author/34> or James Russell Lowell "On Democracy" <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~DRBR/lowell2.html> in the newspapers.
- E. "Impressions of America" (in conjunction with Mark Twain. Excerpts of "A Connecticut Yankee")

2. Jose Marti and Race and Ethnicity:

- A. Anti-slavery writings by Harriet Beecher Stowe will be compared to Jose Marti's writings on slavery and race. (Along with Frederick Douglass excerpts) <https://www.harrietbeecherstowecenter.org/harriet-beecher-stowe/her-global-impact/> <https://docsouth.unc.edu/highlights/stowe.html>
- B. "The Abolition of Slavery in Puerto Rico" Lola Rodriguez del Tio poems "Two Wings of the Same Bird" "La Boriquena" (comparison to Puerto Rico) <https://www.loc.gov/rr/hispanic/1898/lola.html>
- C. Jose Marti "Indigenous Art" "Mexico, the United States and Protectionism" "The Cutting Case" *Writers of Mexican ancestry* (Comparison to Mexico) (perhaps "The Squatter and the Don" by Ruiz de Burton)
- D. Jose Marti "The Indians in the United States" (Treaty Wars) "Hiawatha" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. (Possible excerpts of "The Last of the Mohicans" by James Fenimore Cooper)
- E. "A Chinese Funeral" (Comparison to Chinese)
- F. "The Lynching of Italians" (Comparison to the Italians)

For this section, I might have students work on one of the above groups to flesh out the history (including history of immigration) each individual group and their trajectories to the U.S (mapping) and how they transformed themselves in America (might include discussions about assimilation)

3. Class and Race in America:

- A. Jose Marti "Tributes to Karl Marx," "A Town Sets a Black Man on Fire" Connection to WEB Dubois "Souls of Black Folks" and Booker T. Washington "Atlanta Exposition Speech" (as critical thinkers and philosophic writers)
 - A. America and the Race Dilemma "A Great Confederate Celebration"
 - B. Concepts of the "I" Individual versus the "we" communal
 - C. Ideas of Exile and Communism.

- D. Jose Marti's "Class War in Chicago: A Terrible Drama"
- B. (in conjunction with "Voices of Freedom" by John Greenleaf Whittier)

4. Jose Marti and Poetry:

- A. "Waking Dream"
- B. "My Kinglet"
- C. "My Verses"
- D. "Famous Island"
- E. "Love in the City"
- F. "Simple Verses"

(in Conjunction with Poems by William Cullen Bryant, John Howard Payne, Oliver Wendell Holmes,)
(in conjunction with Edgar Allen Poe and discussions about the "function" of poetry)

5. Jose Marti and Gender??? Helen Hunt Jackson and "Ramona" (or simply attach to the above and Indians)

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III. Create a new Course: Jose Marti and the Latinx:

“There are no letters, which are expression, till there is an essence to express in them. Nor will there be Hispanic American Literature till there is a Hispanic America” -Jose Marti

This course would tentatively examine the authors that have been influenced by Jose Marti. Which Marti readings influenced their own writing and how do they use Marti to formulate their own ideas of a Cuban identity or a broader Latinx identity (which would be more of the focus of the course)? How did Marti’s ideas of a unified Latinx community get imagined or negotiated or re-imagined in current works by Latinx authors? Do we see the same unity being posited?

- A. Cristina Garcia (Cuban) “Dreaming in Cuban” “The Pink Shoes” (opera based on Marti’s life)
- B. Junot Diaz (Dominican) (who speaks about Marti as an influence in many interviews)
- C. Lin Manuel Miranda (Puerto Rican) Discussion of his attempt to create a Broadway play on Marti.

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