

History 582
Protest and Resistance in the Americas
Fall 2017



Professor Jeffrey Rubin

Wednesdays, 2:30 -5:15 PM

Office Hours:

10 Lenox Street

Thursdays, 1:00 – 4:00 PM

Or by appointment

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This course will examine the relationship between culture and politics in 20th and 21st century social movements and instances of protest and resistance in Latin America and the United States. Why and how do people form movements, imagine radical change, and protest in the streets to oppose harm and injustice?

We will examine the origins, actions, and effects of such movements in Latin America as the Mexican Revolution, the Zapatista Rebellion in Chiapas, the 23 de Enero neighborhood mobilizations in Venezuela, and the Movement of Landless Rural Workers (MST) in Brazil. In the U.S., we will study the United Farm Workers Union, African-American anti-foreclosure movement, and #BlackLivesMatter. In the last three weeks of the course, we will use the knowledge we have gained about protest and resistance to examine a range of efforts to promote social justice in the Americas since 2000, with each student choosing a movement or set of events to study and present to the class for discussion.

Throughout the course, we will relate theoretical work on culture, economic development, democracy, and neoliberalism to the day to day activities and broader trajectories of the movements we study. In so doing, we will evaluate the ways in which such theoretical perspectives contribute to our historical understanding.

In analyzing social movements, protest, and resistance we will consider such questions as: What are the goals of the different movements and actions we study? Do they seek revolution or reform, act “in the streets” or “in the institutions?” How do the locations in which protesters act and the goals they seek change over time? How do cultural and political processes overlap and interact? When do regional movements and protests provoke national processes of political and cultural change? When and why are issues of race or gender highlighted in the activities of social movements and when are they obscured? How do social movements perpetuate some forms of exclusion and inequality even as they combat others?

Readings

Books are available for purchase at Barnes and Noble, and they will be on reserve in the library. Books available for purchase are marked (T) below. Articles and chapters from other books will be available on the course website. They will be posted at the beginning of the semester for the first half of the course and later in the semester for the second half.

Students should be aware that we are reading substantial portions of the books marked “T” and that there will be only one copy of each book on two-hour reserve in the library. (There will be two copies of Womack.) Note also that several of the books are available online. While this is a useful resource for keeping costs down, bear in mind that in a discussion seminar of this sort, it is useful to have the text in front of you in class when possible.

The books available for purchase are:

- John Womack, Jr., *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution* (also available online through Mugar)
- Manuel Azuela, *The Underdogs* (also available at <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/549>)
- Alejandro Velasco, *Barrio Rising: Urban Popular Politics and the Making of Modern Venezuela* (also available online through Mugar)
- Miriam Pawel, *The Union of Their Dreams: Power, Hope, and Struggle in Cesar Chavez' Farm Worker Movement*
- Wendy Wolford, *This Land is Ours Now: Social Mobilization and the Meanings of Land in Brazil*
- Raquel Gutiérrez Aguilar, *Rhythms of the Pachakuti: Indigenous Uprising and State Power in Bolivia*
- Laura Gottesdiener, *A Dream Foreclosed: Black America and the Fight for a Place to Call Home*

Course Requirements

Students will be required to write three papers in the course of the semester, the first two approximately five pages in length and the final paper eight pages. One of the papers will discuss either the Mexican Revolution (due Sept. 19th) or the Zapatista Rebellion (due October 3). Students will sign up at the beginning of the semester to do one of these papers, as well as to write a second paper for a week of their choice, between October 11 and November 15. Papers will be due as email attachments by 9 PM on the night before the class in which the book will be discussed. Late papers will not be accepted. Assignments for the papers will vary, addressing a range of issues and developing different analytic skills. One may be a summary of the reading. Others will involve comparing the way a particular issue is presented in different readings or analyzing the readings for one week in light of ideas we have developed in earlier readings or discussions. Assignments will be distributed a week in advance. You may also design topics of your own choosing, so long as you check them with me.

Final papers will compare four movements/protests/forms of resistance that have developed since 2000. Each student will write about the movement they have chosen to study and present as well as three movements presented by others. I will provide a list of possible movements on which you might focus though you may also choose others. Class readings and discussions for the last two weeks of the course will address issues related to final papers and strategies for preparing and writing final papers.

In order to discuss all of the movements that students will be studying individually, class will meet TWICE during the week of November 29 and TWICE during the week of December 6. We will meet at our regular Wednesday time each of those weeks, and we will meet on Thursday November 30 and Thursday December 7, at

times to be determined. Each student will be expected to attend a total of THREE out of these four classes.

Final papers will be due on Monday, December 11 at 5 PM.

For the first class after the Introductory class (that is, for September 13), everyone will write a 1-2 page chronology/summary of the main events of the Mexican Revolution, as presented by John Womack, to be submitted by email by 9 PM on the night before class. This should be written in prose form, not presented as a list. Be sure not to use too much of this very short summary to discuss the first chapters of the book, but rather to think about the whole trajectory of the Mexican Revolution as presented by Womack. This paper is required, but it will not be graded. Summaries of the readings or responses to particular questions may be required for other weeks of the course as well.

Students will also be required to submit a short paragraph or list of “lessons learned” about protest and social movements after each class. The purpose of this is to generate individual lists, and a collective list, of what we are learning, so that we can apply these ideas to each new movement we study and to the multiple movement we examine in the final two weeks of the course and you write about in your final papers. Each week, you should think of two or three main points you have learned, add them to your existing list and submit them to me by 9 PM Wed night, the night after the class. You are welcome to develop these points while you are preparing for class, or to jot down ideas during class, so it does not need to be something done after class, though you have that option, too. I do not mean for this assignment to take a lot of time or effort, but rather to reflect the thinking you are doing in the course of preparing for class and class discussion.

Every person’s papers should consist of his or her own analysis and writing. Cases of suspected plagiarism will be dealt with in accord with the Academic Conduct Code.

Papers will count for 60% of the course grade (approx. 18%, 18%, and 24%), your list of main points for 10%, and class participation for 30%.

The colloquium will be run as a focused, in-depth discussion. Students will be expected to do the reading in full and come to class prepared to discuss it.

During the first class, I will present guidelines for discussion and suggest ways in which students might develop their skills in preparing for class and making comments that move the discussion along and deepen it. Later, I will discuss reading strategies in greater depth. In the course of the semester, I will meet with students who would like additional guidance in these areas. Each student’s participation will be graded on the basis of how actively and thoughtfully he or she joins in the discussion.

I will meet with every student at least once during the first 4 – 5 weeks of the semester. Please make an appt. to come to see me during my office hours early on. I can

also be available at other times on Thursdays. After a few weeks, I will pass around a sign-up sheet so as to be sure to meet with everyone.

Films

We will see six films for the course. These are a required part of the course and will be included in paper assignments. Most of the films are available on YouTube or at Geddes, some will be shown in groups showings at Geddes, one can be purchased for viewing online on Amazon (and will be shown at Geddes). One of the films, Dolores, a new documentary, will be shown at the Kendall Theater from October 6 – 12. Please be sure to work out in advance how you will see each film.

Office Hours

I am available during office hours to speak to students about any aspect of the course or related interests. If you are having difficulty with the course in any way, you should be sure to come see me as soon as possible. You should also come see me if something intrigues or puzzles you, if you would like to know more about a topic or talk about it further, etc. I can be particularly helpful with ways to improve your ability to read and understand the material, prepare for and carry out written assignments, and participate in class discussion. If you are having trouble joining in the class discussion, be sure to speak with me early in the semester. If you know in advance that you would like to see me, talk to me after class or contact me by email to make an appointment, which will generally be during my office hours. It is also fine to come to see me during office hours without an appointment.

My office is located at 10 Lenox Street, which is not far from the Student Union. If you stand on Commonwealth Ave with your back to the Student Union and look across the bridge over the Mass Pike, you will see a big white house with lots of dark green trim. That is 10 Lenox Street, and it is a ninety second walk from the Student Union. Once you are inside, come up right-hand stairway, and my office is the first door on the left.

September 6: Introduction

Part I Take 1 and Take 2: Revolution and Rebellion in Mexico

September 13: The Zapatistas and the Mexican Revolution: A Struggle for Land and Community?

(1-2 page chronology/summary of the main events of the Mexican Revolution, as presented by John Womack, to be submitted by email by 9 PM Sept. 12)

John Womack, Jr., *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution*: Prologue, Chapter 1, 37-52, 61-69, 76-96, Chapter 4, 159-178, 185-190, Chapter 7, 224-235, 240-255, 331-336, 346-370 (T)

September 20: The Villistas and the Mexican Revolution: Rebels and Bandits?

(PAPERS DUE BY EMAIL BY 9PM TUESDAY IF YOU ARE WRITING FOR THIS WEEK)

Mariano Azuela, *The Underdogs* (a novel, entire)

Reread Womack, Chapter 8

Samuel Brunk, "The Sad Situation of Civilians and Soldiers: The Banditry of Zapatismo in the Mexican Revolution," *American Historical Review*, April 1996

Ana Alonso, "U.S. Military Intervention, Revolutionary Mobilization, and Popular Ideology in the Chihuahuan Sierra, 1916-1917" in Daniel Nugent, ed., *Rural Revolt in Mexico and U.S. Intervention*

September 27: At the Borders of Violence: The Zapatista Rebellion in Chiapas

FILM: *A Place Called Chiapas*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m9cuC1Cex0s>

newspaper and magazine articles, 1994-present

Zapatista communiqués--approx. 19 pages

NY Times articles from the beginning of the rebellion--4 pages

Mexico's Poet Rebel--ends on p 132, before the end of the article

NY Times articles from later--15 pages (optional)

Chiapas Times--2 pages--read "Major US Bank"
 Media Recognition--Opportunities and Dangers--10 pages (optional)
 The War Within--pp. 6-21

J. Rus, S. Mattiace, and A. Hernandez Chavez, a chronology, 1994-2002, pp. 15-23 (ONLY) of the Hernandez PDF. Those are the pages marked on the text, not the pages in the Adobe Acrobat document. (This is useful for a general overview and for reference)

George Collier, "*Basta!*", Chapters 2 & 4

Lynn Stephen, "The Zapatista Army of National Liberation and the National Democratic Convention," *Latin American Perspectives*, Fall 1995

John Womack, Jr., "Chiapas, the Bishop of San Cristóbal, and the Zapatista Revolt," in *Rebellion in Chiapas* (This one is the longest and most synthetic of the readings for this week. Read it carefully for main points and framework.)

John Ross, "The Zapatistas at Ten," in *NACLA Report on the Americas*, 2003

Optional Documents:

"The Mexican Revolution in Tzotzil: "When We Stopped Being Crushed," 1914-1940

"Migrant Labor on the Coffee Plantations: Debt, Lies, Drink, Hard Work, and the Union, 1920's – 1930's) "

"The Church's New Mission in a De-Christianized Continent: Bishop Ruiz in Medellín, 1968"

"The Proletarian Line: From Torreón to the Canyons, 1976-77"

October 4: At the Borders of Violence: Real-World Complexity in Chiapas

(PAPERS DUE BY EMAIL BY 9PM TUESDAY IF YOU ARE WRITING FOR THIS WEEK)

Rosalva Aída Hernández Castillo, "Between Civil Disobedience and Silent Rejection: Differing Responses by Mam Peasants to the Zapatista Rebellion," in Jan Rus, Rosalva Aída Hernández Castillo, and Shannan L. Mattiace, eds., *Mayan Lives, Mayan Utopias*

Xóchitl Leyva Solano, "Regional, Communal, and Organizational Transformations in Las Cañadas," in Rus et. al., *Mayan Lives, Mayan Utopias*

Jan Rus, "The 'Comunidad Revolucionaria Institucional': The Subversion of Native Government in Highland Chiapas, 1936-1968, in Gil Joseph and Daniel Nugent, eds., *Everyday Forms of State Formation*

Márgara Millán Moncayo, "Indigenous Women and Zapatismo: New Horizons of Visibility" in *Dissident Women: Gender and Cultural Politics in Chiapas*

Paulina Villegas, "In a Mexico 'Tired of Violence,' Zapatista Rebels Venture Into Politics, NY Times, August 26, 2017,
<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/26/world/americas/mexico-zapatista-subcommander-marcos.html>

Film – A new documentary, *Dolores*, will be showing at Kendall Sq. Cinema from October 6 – 12. It is about Dolores Huerta, the co-founder of the United Farm Workers Union, and it is getting a lot of attention. We will discuss the documentary along with *Union of Their Dreams* on October 25. But you must see it October 6 – 12.

Part II Protest and Resistance in Venezuela, Brazil, Bolivia, and the United States from the 1960's to the 2000's

October 11: Expanding Democracy in the City: Radical Organizing in Venezuela's 23 de Enero Neighborhood

FILM: *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Id--ZFtjR5c>

Alejandro Velasco, *Barrio Rising: Urban Popular Politics and the Making of Modern Venezuela*, Preface, Introduction, Pp. 21-24, Chapter 2, Pp. 87-89, Pp. 111-112, Pp. 118-126, Chapter 5, Chapter 6, Chapter 7, Conclusion (T)

Optional, on recent events:

William Finnegan, "Venezuela, a Failing State," *The New Yorker*, November 14, 2016 <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/11/14/venezuela-a-failing-state>

Greg Grandin et. al., "What Is to Be Done in Venezuela," *The Nation*, May 1, 2017

October 18: Becoming the Government in the City: Participatory Budgeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil

Abers, Rebecca. "From Clientelism to Cooperation: Local Government, Participatory Policy, and Civic Organizing in Porto Alegre, Brazil." *Politics & Society* 26:4 (December 1998)

Gianpaolo Baiocchi, "Emergent Public Spheres: Talking Politics in Participatory Governance," *American Sociological Review* 2003, Vol. 68

Benjamin Junge, "Civic Participation, Ambivalence, and Political Subjectivity Among Grassroots Community Leaders in Porto Alegre, Brazil," in Alvarez, Rubin, and Thayer, et. al., *Beyond Civil Society*.

Benjamin Junge, "NGOs as shadow pseudopublics: Grassroots community leaders' perceptions of change and continuity in Porto Alegre, Brazil," *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 39, No. 2, 2012

Jeffrey Rubin, "Fighting with Words: An Ethnographic View of Participatory Budgeting," manuscript

Jeffrey Rubin and Sergio Baierle, "Democracy by Invitation: The Private Sector's Answer to Participatory Budgeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil," in Jeffrey Rubin and Vivienne Bennett, eds., *Enduring Reform: Progressive Activism and Private Sector Responses in Latin America's Democracies*

October 25: Challenging the Growers in California: Cesar Chavez and the UFW

FILM: *The Struggle in the Fields*
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FIgIaI5AVpY>)

FILM: *Dolores* (Kendall Sq. Cinema October 6 – 12)

Miriam Pawel, *Union of Their Dreams*, entire (T)

November 1: Challenging the Landowners in Brazil: Mobilization and Threat in the Movement of Landless Rural Workers

FILM: *Land for Rose* (October 30, Geddes)

Wendy Wolford, *This Land is Ours: Social Mobilizations and the Meaning of Land in Brazil* pp. 1 – 111 (but you can skip 22-26 & 70-76), p. 112, pp. 125-134, all of Chapter 5, pp. 180-200 (T)

(con't)

Julia S. Guivant, “Agrarian Change, Gender, and Land Rights: A Brazilian Case Study,” United Nations Research and Development Programme, paper no. 14, June 2003

Ruti Caldeira, “The Failed Marriage between Women and the Landless People’s Movement (MST) in Brazil,” *Journal of International Women’s Studies* 10, no. 4 (May 2009)

<http://www.dollarsandsense.org/archives/2009/1009kennedyramostilly.html>

<https://grassrootsonline.org/blog/newsblogafter-two-decade-occupation-mst-families-win-land-rights/>

November 8: Mobilizing in the Streets and Reimagining Indigenous Futures in Bolivia

FILM: *Our Brand is Crisis* (November 6, Geddes) WE WILL BE WATCHING THE DOCUMENTARY, NOT THE FEATURE FILM ABOUT THE SAME SUBJECT WITH SANDRA BULLOCK. Can be purchased for online viewing on Amazon.

Raquel Gutiérrez Aguilar, *Rhythms of the Pachakuti: Indigenous Uprising and State Power* (selections to be announced) (T)

November 15: Mobilizing in the Streets and Reimagining African-American Futures in the US

Laura Gottesdiener, *A Dream Foreclosed: Black American and the Fight for a Place to Call Home*, entire (T)

Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, “Black Lives Matter: A Movement, Not a Moment,” in *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*

Part III Protest and Resistance in the Americas Since 2000

Note that we will meet twice during the week of November 29 and December 6, at our usual Wednesday time and at a Thursday time to be determined. Each student must attend three out of the four meetings.

Assignments & Dates

Each student must choose a movement or set of events of protest/resistance to present to the class and include in their final paper. For your presentation and writing, you will have to use two substantial articles (longer than newspaper articles) and/or two chapters from one or two books. I will distribute a list of possible topics and articles. You may also choose any topic that interests you, so long as you run it by me.

Each student must write a three page summary/analysis of the movement they are presenting, to be emailed to me by Monday night of the week in which you are presenting your topic

In your eight-page final paper, you will discuss the movement/protest on which you have focused along with three others that other students have presented, comparing and contrasting them in light of the list you have kept all semester of lessons learned about social movements.

Schedule:

November 20: Email me your final topic and PDF's of your two readings

November 27: Those of you presenting your topics this week email me a three-page paper summarizing/analyzing your movement/protest

December 4: Those of you presenting your topics this week email me a three-page paper summarizing/analyzing your movement/protest

December 11: Final Papers Due by 5 PM

November 29, 30, December 6, 7: Protest and Resistance in the Americas Since 2000

I will distribute the readings that student presenters have selected before each class. Five students will present their topics in each class, and we will discuss and compare the movements in light of the themes and “lessons” we have developed in the course of the semester.