

**History 397
Modern Latin America
Spring 2019**



Professor Jeffrey Rubin

Monday, Wednesday, & Friday 1:25 PM – 2:15 PM
CAS 228

Office Hours:

Wednesdays, 3:00 – 4:30

Thursdays, 2:00 – 3:30

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Course Description

This course will examine struggles for equality and inclusion in Mexico, Argentina, Peru, Chile, Brazil, Venezuela, and Bolivia from the 19th to the 21st centuries. We will begin by considering novels, narrative non-fiction, and film to

situate ourselves in Latin America today and raise key questions about the past. We will then discuss issues of civilization and barbarism, slavery, indigenous life, gender, and liberalism that shaped life and politics in the 19th century.

In the 20th century, which will constitute most of the course, we will start with the Mexican Revolution and conclude by examining innovative grassroots experiments of the 1990s and 2000s, including land take-over movements, Afro-Reggae music groups, and women's organizations. In between, we will examine political and cultural processes that shaped 20th century politics and social life, including the formation of the Mexican state, the rise of Eva Peron in Argentina, economic growth and shantytown life in Brazil, and military rule and neo-liberal economics in Chile.

Through focused comparison of several themes and countries over time, we will seek an understanding of both underlying patterns and new directions. We will address the persistence of forms of inequality, authoritarianism, and exclusion in Latin America, the experiences and visions of different groups and classes, the lives of spectacular individuals and experiments, and the successes and limits of democracy and economic growth in recent decades.

Readings

The following books (3) are required reading and are available for purchase at Barnes and Noble:

ONE of the following:

Shantytown, by César Aira (Argentina)

Talking to Ourselves, by Andrés Neuman (Argentina)

Ways of Going Home, by Alejandro Zambra (Chile)

The Sound of Things Falling, by Juan Gabriel Vásquez (Colombia)

Plus:

Carolina Maria de Jesus, *Child of the Dark*

Peter Winn, *Weavers of Revolution*

These books will also be on reserve at Mugar Library. (But there will only be one or two copies of each book on reserve.)

Links are provided in the syllabus for readings available directly online. All other readings will be found in PDF or Word documents on the course website (Blackboard).

It is essential that readings be available to students. If there is a problem obtaining a particular reading (if, for instance, the reading on the website is

incomplete), let me know immediately by email so I can do something about it. The same goes for films.

Course Requirements

News

Students are encouraged to read the Latin America Daily Briefing regularly <http://latinamericadailybriefing.blogspot.com/>. This briefing consists of short summaries of the most important news articles about Latin America appearing in Latin American and US newspapers each day. By reading these, you will get a sense of what is happening in Latin America during the semester of the course and how historical and current events we study relate to what is happening throughout the region.

You can arrange to receive the blog in the form of a daily email by signing up for the daily news briefing in the upper right hand corner of the website.

Writing

Students will be required to do three kinds of writing for the course. At the end of each of the first *two* parts of the course, you will write a 3-4 page paper exploring themes and events we discussed in that part. Each of these papers will count for 15% of the course grade.

For Part 3 of the course, which consists of 12 classes, each student will set up a Lessons Learned document in Google Docs and write 1 – 2 paragraphs discussing ideas you have had or material you have learned after each class. (You will need to write a “lessons learned” entry for at least 9 of the 12 classes in Part 3). I will comment on these entries as Part 3 progresses. The Lessons Learned document will count for 20% of the course grade.

For Part 4 of the course, each student will write a 5 page final paper on a country of your choosing in Latin America, discussing what has been happening in that country since 2000 in light of the lessons learned in Part 3 and drawing on readings in Part 4 to illuminate current events. The final paper will count for 30% of the course grade.

We will not have class on April 29 or May 1. The final class will be held on Friday April 26. We will have two 2-hour evening class meetings, one on Tuesday April 23 and the other on Thursday April 25. Each student must attend *one* of the evening classes. During these evening classes, students will present the countries they are focusing on for their final papers and their ideas for relating them to Lessons Learned and current events. Final papers will be due on Sunday, May 5.

The assignments for the three 3 – 4 page papers will take the following form, though I may make changes as we near the end of each part of the course, to reflect the work we have done in class:

In a 3-4 page paper due February 5, at the end of our exploration of Latin America Today, you will identify and discuss a theme/issue/question that interests you in the readings and films we have covered so far in the course. Your discussion will include one novel, one piece of narrative-non-fiction, one film, and one article or set of articles mentioned in the Latin America Daily Briefing

In a 3-4 page paper due February 21, at the end of our discussion of social issues in the 19th century, you will use the readings we have discussed in class to discuss two instances where significant reform either occurred or was fought for (or envisioned in some way). In addition, you will identify and explain two instances where reform was not envisioned or was defeated and shut down.

Class Format and Class Participation

Overall, approximately 1/3 of the classes for this course will be lectures and about 2/3 will be discussion. Students will be expected to participate regularly and actively in class discussion. The discussions in this class are generally lively and interesting, and they are best when many different people comment and a wide variety of viewpoints are expressed. Class participation will count for 20% of the course grade. I will be available throughout the semester to discuss strategies for effective class participation, especially with students who are not accustomed to speaking in class.

Attendance in class is required. If you miss more than three classes during the semester, then your grade will be lowered one grade for every two classes you miss (after the three).

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

Films

Several films will be shown as part of the course, particularly in the last few weeks of the semester. These are a required part of the course and will be included in exams and paper assignments. Some of the films are available online. For those

films not available online, the locations and times for group showings at Geddes Language Center will be sent by email.

Films not available online will be on reserve in the Geddes Language Center for a week before class, so that students can view them individually or in groups. However, you may not be able to view the films close to the times of the showings. It is much better to arrange to come to the group showing.

Office Hours

I am available during office hours to speak to students about any aspect of the course or broader Latin American 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, if you are interested in continuing your study of Latin America, 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, think about lectures, and, especially, speak in class.

Introduction

Jan 23: Course Overview

Part 1: Latin America Today



Jan 25: Narrative Non-Fiction (DISCUSSION)



Read or Listen to All:

Subcomandante Marcos, "Today We Say Enough is Enough," "Who Should Ask for Forgiveness and Who Can Grant It?"

Ann Louise Bardach, "Mexico's Poet Rebel," *Vanity Fair*, July 1994

Ana Alderstein, "A Stitch in Time," NPR, July 24, 2015 (radio broadcast, 17 minutes, click on left, above "embed," to hear it)

"Berta Cáceres, Indigenous Activist, is Killed in Honduras" *New York Times*, March 3, 2016

"Isidro Baldenegro, Mexican Environmental Activist, is Shot to Death" *New York Times*, January 18, 2017

Tom Phillips, "Jair Bolsonaro's Inauguration," *The Guardian*, January 1, 2019

Read one:

Elisabeth Jay Friedman and Constanza Tabbush, "#NiUnaMenos: Not One Woman Less, Not One More Death!" *NACLA Report on the Americas*, November 1, 2016

Luis Gómez, "#Yosoy132" *NACLA Report on the Americas*, October 26, 2012

Skim:

Jon Lee Anderson, "Nicolás Maduro's Accelerating Revolution," *The New Yorker*, December 11, 2017



Jan 28: Contemporary Novels (DISCUSSION GROUPS)

Read ONE of the following for today and come to class prepared to discuss it:

Shantytown, by César Aira (Argentina)

Talking to Ourselves, by Andrés Neuman (Argentina)

Ways of Going Home, by Alejandro Zambra (Chile)

The Sound of Things Falling, by Juan Gabriel Vásquez (Colombia)

Jan 30: Contemporary Novels (PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION)

Feb 1: Film (DISCUSSION)

FILM: *The Official Story*

Available at Geddes for individual viewing, SP 8.013, original title *La historia oficial*. Available at Kasker, 10418.DV. Available for rental on Amazon Prime Video. Available through Kanopy until 1/31/19. (I'm not sure if it will be available on the 31st or not.)

Feb 4: Film (DISCUSSION)

FILM: *Y Tu Mamá También*

Available on Netflix. For rental on Amazon. Available at Geddes for individual viewing, SP 8.259, and at Krasker, 23367.DV

**3-4 page paper for Part 1 due Feb 5 by 9 PM.

Part 2: The 19th Century: Civilization, Barbarism, and Nation-Building

Feb 6: Historical Context: Wars of Independence and Consolidating Nations (LECTURE)

John Chasteen, "Independence" (91 – 112), in *Born in Blood and Fire*

Feb 8: Civilization and Barbarism (DISCUSSION)

Domingo Sarmiento, "Frontier Barbarism," in David Weber and Jane Rausch, eds., *Where Cultures Meet*
 Nils, Jacobsen, "Civilization and Its Barbarism: The Inevitability of Juan Bustamante's Failure," in Judith Ewell and William Beezely, eds., *The Human Tradition in Latin America*
 Christine Hunefeldt, "At Home and in the Streets," in *Liberalism in the Bedroom*

Feb 11: Economic Growth and Peasant Resistance (DISCUSSION)

Florencia Mallon, "The Peasant Village and the Limits of Power," (pp. 67-79) and "The War of the Pacific and the Problem of Internal Pacification," in *The Defense of Community in Peru's Central Highlands*

BE SURE TO READ TO THE END OF "THE WAR OF THE PACIFIC" AND KNOW WHAT HAPPENED IN COMAS AND WHY!

Feb 13: Liberalism in Mexico and Argentina (LECTURE)

John Chasteen, "Postcolonial Blues" (119 – 143) and "Progress" (149-158, 166-17), in *Born in Blood and Fire*

Feb 15: Women in the Public Sphere (DISCUSSION)

James Scobie, "The City and the Factory," in *Argentina*, pp. 160-176 ONLY
 June Hahner, "Pioneers for Women's Rights," in *Emancipating the Female Sex*

Feb 19 (Tuesday Class): Women in the Public Sphere (DISCUSSION)

(We will continue discussion of Scobie and Hahner today.)

Donna Guy, "Public Health, Gender, and Private Morality: Paid Labor and the Formation of the Body Politic in Buenos Aires," *Gender and History* 2:3
 Christine Hunefeldt, "Redefining Female Domains," in *Liberalism in the Bedroom*

Feb 20: Slavery (LECTURE)

"Slave Life at Morro Velho Mine," "Scenes from the Slave Trade," "Cruelty to Slaves," "Slavery and Society," "Abolition Decree, 1888," "Laws Regulating Beggars in Minas Gerais, 1900," in Robert Levine and John Crocitti, eds., *The Brazil Reader*
Michael Coniff and Thomas Davis, "Emancipation in Brazil," in *Africans in the Americas*

**3-4 page paper for Part 2 due Feb 21 by 9 PM.

Part 3: The 20th Century: The People Coming on the Scene

**Remember to set up a Lessons Learned document in Google Docs and to write an entry after each class in Part 3. (Instructions will be sent by email.)

Feb 22: The Mexican Revolution (LECTURE)

Gilbert Joseph and Jürgen Buchenau, *Mexico's Once and Future Revolution*, pp. 30 - 85

Feb 25: The Mexican Revolution and Postrevolutionary Mexico (LECTURE AND DISCUSSION)

Nora Hamilton, "Cárdenas and the New Alliance," in *The Limits of State Autonomy*

Feb 27: State-Building and Politics in Post-Revolutionary Mexico (DISCUSSION)

(We will continue discussion of Hamilton today.)

Mary Kay Vaughan, "The Construction of the Patriotic Festival in Tecamachalco, Puebla, 1900-1946, in William Beezley et. al., eds., *Rituals of Rule, Rituals of Resistance*

Marjorie Becker, "Torching La Purísima, Dancing at the Altar," in Gilbert Joseph and Daniel Nugent, eds., *Everyday Forms of State Formation*

(OPTIONAL, provides context: Keen and Haynes, "Cárdenas")

Mar 1: Mexico in the 1970s (DISCUSSION)



FILM: *Roma* (available on Netflix)

Mar 4: Peronism in Argentina (LECTURE)

Daniel James, "Introduction," "Peronism and the Working Class," in *Resistance and Integration*

(OPTIONAL, provides context: Keen and Haynes, "The Infamous Decade" and "The Peron Era")

Mar 6: Social Myths and Popular Culture in Argentina (DEBATE)

Julie Taylor, "Introduction," "The Biography," and "The Myth," in *Eva Perón: The Myth of a Woman*

Eva Perón, "A Great Sentiment," from *La Razón de Mi Vida*

National Investigations Commission, "The Role of Eva Perón," in Helen Delpar, ed., *The Borzoi Reader in Latin American History*

Mar 8: Music, Blackness, and Cultural Shift in Brazil (DISCUSSION)

FILM: *Black Orpheus* (1959 version), Available for rental on Amazon, or at Geddes PG 8.002, Krasker 29591.DV, original title *Orfeu negro*

Hermano Vianna, "The Encounter," "The Mystery," and "Samba of My Native Land," in *The Mystery of Samba: Popular Music and National Identity in Brazil*

Barbara Weinstein, "Introduction," *The Color of Modernity*

Mar 18: Economic Development in Brazil and Latin America (LECTURE)

"How Big Business Got Brazil Hooked on Junk Food," NY Times, September 17, 2107

Jake Spring, "Soy Boom Devours Brazil's Tropical Savanna," Reuters, August 28, 2108

Keen and Haynes, "Vargas," "Reform and Reaction"

Mar 20: Politics and the National Security State in Brazil (LECTURE)

Keen and Haynes, "Brazil's Colonial Fascism"

March 22: Life in Brazil's Favelas (DISCUSSION)

FILM: *Bus 174* (Part 1) (Part 2)

Carolina Maria de Jesus, *Child of the Dark* (entire)

Mar 25: Chile: Socialist Reform and Military Coup (LECTURE)

Peter Winn, in *Weavers of Revolution*, pp. 3-7, 32-52, 53-69, 79-119, 134-136, 209-226, 246-252

Mar 27: Torture, Disappearance, Terror (DISCUSSION)

FILM: *Chile Obstinate Memory*

Jacobo Timerman, "Under the Dictator," *The New Yorker*, November 2, 1987

Peter Kornbluh, "Destabilizing Democracy," in *The Pinochet File*

March 29: The Cuban Revolution (LECTURE)

Selections from *The Cuba Reader*: Roosevelt, Castro, Guevara, Matthews, Puebla, Rodriguez, Benjamin et. al., Lewis et. al, Landau, Paz, Sanchez

Part 4: Latin America since 2000: The Second Coming of the People on the Scene

April 1: Democracy & Economic Development (DISCUSSION)

FILM: *Our Brand is Crisis*, (2005, NOT the Sandra Bullock version!) Krasker 25859.DV Since this is not available elsewhere, a group showing will be arranged.

Alejandro Velasco, *Barrio Rising: Urban Popular Politics and the Making of Modern Venezuela*, "Introduction (1-17)," "A Weapon as Powerful as the Vote (160-163, 173-179), "Killing Democracy's Promise (194-197). Available Online.

April 3: Social Movements and Political Innovation in Brazil I (DISCUSSION)

John Hammond, "Law and Disorder: The Brazilian Landless Farmworkers' Movement," *Bulletin of Latin American Research*
Rebecca Abers, "From Clientelism to Cooperation: Local Government, Participatory Policy, and Civic Organizing in Porto Alegre Brazil," in *Politics and Society* 26:4

April 5: Social Movements and Political Innovation in Brazil II (DISCUSSION)

FILM: *Favela Rising*

Jeffrey Rubin, "When Cultural Activists Speak a Business Language," in *Enduring Reform*

April 8: Neoliberalism and Globalization (LECTURE)

Patrick Iber, "Worlds Apart: How neoliberalism shapes the global economy and limits the power of democracies," *The New Republic*, April 23, 2018

April 10 : Religion I (DISCUSSION)

Robert Brenneman, "Wrestling the Devil: Conversion and Exit from Central American Gangs," in *Lived Religion and Lived Citizenship*
 Omar Encarnación, "Amid Crisis in Brazil, the Evangelical Block Emerges as a Political Power," *The Nation*, August 16, 2017,
 Catherine Osborn, "Bolsonaro's Christian Coalition Remains Precarious," *Foreign Policy*, January 1, 2019

April 12: Religion II (DISCUSSION)

Laura Roush, "Santa Muerte, Protection, and Desemparo: A View from a Mexico City Altar," in Rubin, Smilde, and Junge, eds., *Lived Religion and Lived Citizenship*

****Note that we will have only one class during the week of April 15. You should use this time to begin reading up on your country for our country-based discussions during next week's evening class. This material will form the basis of your Part 4 Paper. You must choose one article to submit for the class to read and discuss during the evening class on April 23 or 25.**

April 15: No Class: Patriot's Day

April 17: Mining (DISCUSSION)

Anthony Bebbington, "The New Extraction: Rewriting the Political Ecology of the Andes?." *NACLA Report on the Americas*, Fall 2009 *NACLA Report on the Americas*, Fall 2012
 Rafael Hoetmer, "This is No Longer a Democracy: Thoughts on the Local Referendums on Mining on Peru's Northern Frontier," in Alvarez, Rubin, & Thayer, et. al., *Beyond Civil Society*
 "Mining in Latin America: From Conflict to Cooperation," *The Economist*, February 6, 2016.

April 19: No Class: Passover

April 22: Women's Rights and LGBTQ Rights (DISCUSSION).

Jeffrey Rubin and Emma Sokoloff-Rubin, *Sustaining Activism: A Brazilian Women's Movement and a Father-Daughter Collaboration*, Chapter 2, "Transforming Southern Brazil;" Chapter 4, "Gambling on Change;" Chapter 6, "Holding Paradox;" Chapter 8, "Intimate Protest (107-112);" Chapter 9, "Demanding Speech and Enduring Silence"

Shannon, Sims, "Women Move from Samba's Sidelines to the Center of the Circle," New York Times, Sept. 8, 2018

Omar Encarnación, "Latin America's Gay Rights Revolution," *Journal of Democracy*, April 2011

April 23: Evening Class, 21st Century Country-Based Articles for Papers

Time to be announced. (Each student must attend one evening class this week.)

Apr 24: Violence and Security (DISCUSSION)

Nancy Scheper-Hughes, "Death Squads and Vigilante Politics in Democratic Northeast Brazil," in Auyero, Bourgois, and Scheper-Hughes, eds., *Violence at the Urban Margins*

WOLA, "Ayotzinapa Fact Sheet"



April 25: Evening Class, 21st Century Country-Based Articles for Papers

Time to be announced. (Each student must attend one evening class this week.)

Apr 26: The Pink Wave and the Turn to the Right (LECTURE)

Omar Encarnación, "The Rise and Fall of the Latin American Left," The Nation, May 9, 2018