

CORE-UA 515 **Cultures and Contexts: Latin America**
Spring 2018: Tuesday, Thursday 9:30–10:45, plus recitation

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Office hours : Wednesdays, 2:30 PM – 4:00 PM by appointment

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Teaching Assistants, Recitations

Section: 002	Fri 8.00 AM - 9.15 AM at BOBS LL141 with Ezequiel Zaidenweg
Section: 003	Fri 9.30 AM - 10.45 AM at BOBS LL141 with Ezequiel Zaidenweg
Section: 004	Fri 11.00 AM - 12.15 PM at BOBS LL141 with Héctor Celis
Section: 005	Fri 12.30 PM - 1.45 PM at BOBS LL141 with Héctor Celis
Section: 006	Fri 2.00 PM - 3.15 PM at BOBS LL142 with Maria Pichon Rivière
Section: 007	Fri 3.30 PM - 4.45 PM at BOBS LL142 with Maria Pichon Rivière

Course Overview

Over the last 60 years, millions of Latin Americans have experienced extraordinary shifts in their social, political, and cultural landscape, a result of the transformative effects of revolution or insurgency, state repression, popular resistance and social movements. To understand this experience, this course uses three strategies, focusing on (1) key dates, (2) keywords, and (3) primary sources.

By “**key dates**” we mean dates that mark a critical juncture in larger processes of social change, usually marking a consolidation of or turn from the dominant social forces of the time: elections, deaths of leaders, signing of new laws or treaties, the beginning or end of governments, social movements, and of insurgencies and counterinsurgencies. For this class, we focus on events that had continental, hemispheric, and even global impact, including the Cuban Revolution of 1959, the military coups of the 1970s, and the Zapatista uprising in 1994. But by key dates, we also mean something more: our goal is not only to learn about the succession of events, but to capture the urgency and contingency of those moments. A historian might ask: “why did the Chilean military coup take place in 1973?” and offer an explanation of why events unfolded as they did. Drawing on a range of primary sources and cultural forms (film, music, art), we listen carefully to the voices of the major social actors of the time, in order to ask, “at the moment of the military coup in 1973, what was in the balance? What concert of competing hopes or fears were in play? And how did these shape the course of events?” Historian Greg Grandin helps us understand such moments as “simultaneously compressed and exploded moments of intense hope and dread—hope of release and liberation, and dread of either the coming of the new or the return of the old.”

By “**keywords**” we use the rich meaning lent to the term by cultural theorist Raymond Williams. Keywords name concepts that are central to understanding a

shared reality even though—or because—they have highly contested and at times mutually exclusive meanings. Imagine, for example, the contested meanings invested in the idea of “revolution” by the insurgents, the leaders, and different sectors of the population in Cuba in 1959. A dictionary definition of such a term would try to eliminate contradiction and ambivalence by laying out a hierarchy of distinct and accepted meanings. A keywords analysis would focus on exactly those competing, overlapping, and contradictory meanings in order to understand better what social relations and what struggles such contradiction may reveal. Where a dictionary cares about establishing consensus around what a term means, a keywords approach examines and understands that lack of consensus. Over the last 60 years Latin America has generated keywords with global impact that anchor the greatest of hopes, particularly Revolution, and also the most harrowing: *desaparecido* (disappeared).

In the class we overlay key dates with keywords, and draw on a range of **primary sources** to understand the realities they name. Our sources are drawn from a wide range of media: newsprint, television broadcasts, transcripts, testimony, essay, documentary and feature film, art, and music. We deliberately mix artistic representations with documentary evidence: one goal of the course is to understand how the arts—music, visual art, literature, film—do not just reflect the reality around them, but are themselves vital sites for shaping and changing that reality and our imagination of it, both then and now.

In this class, then, you will learn how to analyze key dates and keywords through a study of primary sources. At the end of the course, you will: (1) have familiarity with many of the key dates, political events, social forces, and actors that have shaped the course of Latin American history in the last 60 years; (2) will have read, heard, or watched the work of leading intellectuals, artists, and politicians whose decisions and actions were decisive in that history; and (3) will have a deeper understanding of how the legacies of those actions continue to inform Latin American reality today.

Required course readings, recordings, or other media

All texts, recordings, or other media listed below are **required**.

Almost all will be found on NYU Classes (including links to other sites). Most are drawn from Duke University Press’s excellent “Latin America Readers” series, which are compilations of primary documents by or about key social actors in the history of the region, and from ***Latin America and the United States: A Documentary History*** (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011) edited by Robert Holden and Eric Zolov.

There are no books required for purchase, but if you are interested in the study of the region, you may want to own some of the books from which our readings are drawn.

Some assignments are recordings, films, music or other media: these are required, and should be treated as seriously as any assigned texts. The duration of each film/video is listed below; please budget your time accordingly.

Films

Films will be available via NYU Stream or on other platforms (eg. youtube), with all links provided via NYU Classes.

- Skin of the cat***, Dir. Joaquin de Andrade, 1960. 15 minutes.. [Brazil]
 - Soy Cuba*** [I am Cuba], Dir. Mikhail Kalatozov, 1964. 108 minutes. [Cuba]
 - Memories of Underdevelopment***. Dir. Tomás Alea. 1968. 97 minutes. [Cuba]
 - Grin without a Cat***, Dir. Chris Marker, 1977. Clip approx. 35 minutes. [France: about US, Cuba, Bolivia]
 - Tropicalia***, dir. Marcelo Machado, 2012. 87 minutes. [Brazil]
 - Batalla de Chile/Battle of Chile***, Dir. Patricio Guzmán [Chile]
 - Part I “The Insurrection of the Bourgeoisie”*** 191 mins.
 - Part II “The Coup”*** 88 mins.
 - Las Madres: the mothers of the plaza de mayo***. Dir. Lourdes Portillo. 1985. 64 minutes. [Argentina]
 - 500 Years***, Dir. Pamela Yates, 2017. [Guatemala]
 - New Art of Making Ruins [Nuevo arte de hacer ruinas]***, dir. Florian Borchmeyer, 2007. 86 minutes [Cuba]
 - Unfinished Spaces***, dir. Alys Nahmias, Benjamin Murray, 2011. 86 minutes. [Cuba]
 - Batería***, by Damián Sáinz, 2016. 15 minutes. [Cuba]
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Schedule of classes and readings

Readings should be **completed** by the date under which they are listed.

Tuesday Jan 23 **Introduction**

Thursday Jan 25 **Hunger**

Short story: José María Arguedas, “The Pongo’s Dream,” in the ***Peru Reader***, 258–263.

Film: *Skin of the cat* [original title: Couro de Gato] Dir. Joaquin de Andrade, Brazil, 1960. 15 mins. You will not need English subtitles.

Essay: Farmer, Paul. “On Suffering and Structural Violence: Social and Economic Rights in the Global Era,” in ***Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor*** (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005) 29–50.

1959 revolution

Tuesday Jan 30 **Empire and Sovereignty 1898–1959**

Film: ***Soy Cuba*** [I am Cuba], Dir. Mikhail Kalatozov, 1964. 108 minutes.

Short film: "Visualizing Sovereignty" <https://vimeo.com/169690419> (5.30 mins)

Primary documents from ***Latin America and the United States: a documentary history***

No. 22 1894 The Character of the United States, by José Martí

No. 27 1898 Anti-Imperialism in the United States, by Andrew Carnegie

No. 25 1898 The Decision to Act Against Spain, by William McKinley

No. 30 1901 Platt Amendment, by the Congress of the United States

"A Prostitute Remembers," by Oscar Lewis, Ruth M. Lewis, and Susan M. Rigdon in ***The Cuba Reader***, 260–63.

Thursday Feb 1 **Revolution**

Essay/Testimony: Fidel Castro, "History Will Absolve Me" in the ***Cuba Reader***, 306–314 (8 pages)

Testimony/Interview: Carlos Franqui, ***The Twelve***, "Haydee Santamaría and Celia Sánchez," 65–87 (22 pages)

Julie Sweig, "The Sierra Manifesto. June–July 1957," in ***Inside the Cuban Revolution: Fidel Castro and the Urban Underground*** (2002): 29–38 (9 pages)

Ernesto "Che" Guevara, "Man and Socialism," in ***The Cuba Reader***, ed. Aviva Chomsky et. al. (2003), 370–374 (4 pages)

Tuesday Feb 6 **Inside the Revolution, Everything**

Oscar Lewis, Ruth M. Lewis, and Susan M. Rigdon, "The Literacy Campaign" (389–394) and "The 'Rehabilitation' of Prostitutes" (395–98) in the ***Cuba Reader***

News Coverage: "Memories of a young Cuban revolutionary"

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/06/cuban-revolutionary-young-fear-160628160054866.html>

Documentary Short: ***Por primera vez / For the First Time***, Dir. Octavio Cortázar (1967), 9 mins. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gKf4maMqbVo>

Short story: Reinaldo Arenas "The Parade Begins"

Poem: Nicolás Guillén "Tengo"

Thursday Feb 8 **Memories of Underdevelopment**

Film: ***Memorias del subdesarrollo / Memories of Underdevelopment***, dir. Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, 1968

Excerpt from Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, *The Viewer's Dialectic*, 1–6

Julio Garcia Espinosa, “For an Imperfect Cinema,” in *The Cuba Reader*, 458–65

Tuesday Feb 13 **Outside the Revolution, Nothing**

Fidel Castro, “Words to the Intellectuals — Havana, June 30, 1961” 1–8 (PDF includes whole speech; read first 8 pages)

Poem: Heriberto Padilla, “In Difficult Times”

Short story: Reinaldo Arenas “The Parade Ends”

1968 counterculture

Thursday Feb 15 **Anti-imperial**

Lecture on “Disney and its Countercultures”; includes excerpts from *The Three Caballeros*, *The Gang's All Here*, and *The Original Chiquita Banana* (30 minutes)

Dorfman, Ariel, and Armand Mattelart. *How to Read Donald Duck: Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comic*. New York: International General, 1975. Chs. I., II., III. (33–60)

Primary document from *Latin America and the United States: a documentary history*:

No. 58 1940 Marketing Pan Americanism, by the U.S. Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs

In class, we'll watch an excerpt from Hora de los Hornos, 1968.

Friday February 16 FIRST PAPER DUE, at the start of recitation

Tuesday Feb 20 **Latin America's 1968**

Documentary Film: Selection from Chris Marker, Grin without a Cat [original title: "Le fond de l'air est rouge"], 1977.

Songs: Canción Protesta (online)

“Canción Protesta: Protest Songs from Latin America,” liner notes to the CD. (16 pages)

Lyrics: Violeta Parra and Victor Jara, Lyrics of the new song movement, from *The Chile Reader*, 371–375 (5 pages)

Song/lyrics: Geraldo Vandré, "Pra não dizer que não falei das flores" (also known as "Caminhando")

Thursday Feb 22 **Student Movements/Mexico & Brazil**

Audio Documentary: Radio Diaries: [Mexico '68: A Movement, A Massacre, and the 40-Year Search for the Truth \(21 minutes\)](#)

Elena Poniatowska, "The Student Movement of 1968," in *The Mexico Reader*, 555–569

Historical analysis: "From martyrdom and militancy to memory: 1968 in Brazil" in Victoria Langland, *Speaking of Flowers: Student Movements and the Making and Remembering of 1968 in Military Brazil* (Duke 2013)

Tuesday Feb 27 **Political Art/Politics of Art**

Documentary: selection from *Tropicalia*, dir. Marcelo Machado (2012, 87 minutes)

Historical analysis: Christopher Dunn, "The Tropicalist Moment," in *Brutality Garden. Tropicália and the Emergence of a Brazilian Counterculture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001) 73-121.

Film on Tucumán Arde in *emisférica*, 22 mins.

<http://hemisphericinstitute.org/journal/8.1/tucumanarde/index.html>

popular

Thursday March 1 **The Popular: The Battle for Chile**

Documentary film: selection from: *Batalla de Chile, Part I "The Insurrection of the Bourgeoisie"* [original title: "La batalla de Chile: La lucha de un pueblo sin armas - Primera parte: La insurrección de la burguesía"] Dir. Patricio Guzmán, 1975. 191 mins. Clip approximately 40 mins.

Salvador Allende, "First Annual Message to the National Congress, May 21, 1971," from the *Salvador Allende Reader: Chile's Voice of Democracy* (Ocean Press, 2000), 89–113

Tuesday March 6 **MIDTERM, taken in class**

1973 golpe / coup

Thursday March 8 **The first September 11**

Documentary Film: *The Battle of Chile: Part II "The Coup"*

[original title: "La batalla de Chile: La lucha de un pueblo sin armas - Segunda parte: El golpe de estado"] Dir. Patricio Guzmán. 88 mins. (watch entire film)

In ***The Other September 11***:

- Poem: Pablo Neruda, "I begin by invoking Walt Whitman"
- Salvador Allende, "Last words transmitted by Radio Magallanes, September 11, 1973"
- Editorial: Ariel Dorfman, "The last September 11"

Tuesday March 13, Thursday March 15 No Classes - Spring Break

desaparecido

Tuesday March 20 **Terror**

Analysis/Testimony: Marguerite Feitlowitz, ***A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture*** (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998): Chapter 1 (21-71)

Play: Griselda Gambaro, ***Information for Foreigners*** (1974)

Declassified Documents:

Document 5: ARA Monthly Report (July) "The 'Third World War' and South America" August 3, 1976

Thursday March 22 **Torture**

Rodolfo Walsh, "An Open Letter to the Military Junta" (11 pages)

Poem: Néstor Perlongher, "Cadáveres" / "Corpses" Trans. William Rowe.

Declassified Document: Kubark Manual, "The Coercive Counterintelligence Interrogation of Resistant Sources" (1963). (32 pages)

Tuesday March 27 **Desaparecido**

Documentary film: ***Las Madres: the mothers of the plaza de mayo***, Dir. Lourdes Portillo and Susana Muñoz, 1985.

Hebe de Bonafini and Matilde Sánchez, "The Madwomen at the Plaza de Mayo," in ***The Argentina Reader***, 429–439

Steven Volk, "Lessons and Legacies of a Dark Decade," ***NACLA: Report on the Americas*** (Vol. 17, No. 5) 1983: 2–14.

Thursday March 29 **Counterinsurgency**

"The Wider War," **NACLA Report on the Americas**, 1981: El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua

Primary documents: from **Latin America and the United States: a documentary history**:

No. 111 1984 Central America in Revolt: A Reagan Administration View, by the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America

No. 112 1984 The Fear of Communism in Central America, by Ronald Reagan

No. 113 1984 Teaching Sabotage, by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency

Ronald Reagan, Address on Central America (April 27, 1983) (35:07)

<http://millercenter.org/president/reagan/speeches/speech-5858>

"The Solitude of Latin America," acceptance speech by Gabriel García Márquez for the Nobel Prize in Literature, 8 December 1982

Tuesday April 3 **Atrocity, Genocide**

Documentary film: **500 Years**, Dir. Pamela Yates, 2017. xxx minutes. (US, about Guatemala)

Thursday April 5 **Accountability: Never Again**

Report: Nunca Más. Report of the National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons (1984) in the **Argentina Reader**, 440–447 (7 pages)

President Ricardo Lagos, "To never again live it, to never again deny it," from The Valech Report, the **Chile Reader**, 588–591. (3 pages)

Photography: Marcelo Brodsky, **Memory Under Construction**, selections: Nando, Los condenados de la tierra/The condemned of the earth, Los archivos/The archives, Bosque de la memoria/Memory Forest

Photography: Daniel Hernández-Salazar. "Angel" project / "So that all may know"; Read article/review by David Gonzalez, "Angels Watch Over Memories of War" **New York Times** (June 4, 2012) and View slideshow (19 images)

<http://lens.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/04/angels-watch-over-memories-of-war/>

Friday April 6: Final Paper Part I, due in recitation

Tuesday April 10 **Free markets, free people?**

Excerpt from the film ***The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism***. Dir. Naomi Klein, 2009. Whole film 78 mins; clip approximately 30 minutes.

David Harvey, Chapter One, “Freedom’s Just Another Word...” in ***A Brief History of Neoliberalism*** (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) 5–38. (33 pages)

Primary documents from ***Latin America and the United States: a documentary history***:

- No. 123 1994 The North American Free Trade Agreement, by the Governments of Canada, the United States and Mexico
- No. 124 1994 Insurgency After the Cold War, by the Zapatista Army of National Liberation

Thursday April 12 **Borderlands, Border walls**

NPR: Borderland <https://apps.npr.org/borderland/> (entire slideshow)

Ronald Rael “Borderwall as Architecture” In ***Borderwall as Architecture: A Manifesto for the U.S.-Mexico Boundary***

Gloria Anzaldúa, “The Homeland, Atzlán” from ***Borderlands/La Frontera*** (Aunt Lute Books, 1987)

President Donald J Trump, “Executive Order: Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvements” Issued on: January 25, 2017
<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/executive-order-border-security-immigration-enforcement-improvements/>

Tuesday April 17 **“Narcomachine”: from NAFTA to Narcos**

Historical analysis: María Josefina Saldaña, “The Afterlives of the Indio Bárbaro,” from ***Indian Given: Racial Geographies across Mexico and the United States*** (Duke UP, 2016), 233–258 (25 pages)

Essay: Rossana Reguillo, “The Narco-Machine and the Work of Violence—Notes Toward its Decodification” in e-misférica

Repeating Islands

Thursday April 19 **Ruins (Cuba)**

Documentary: ***New Art of Making Ruins [Nuevo arte de hacer ruinas]***, dir. Florian Borchmeyer (2007, 86 minutes)

Documentary: **Unfinished Spaces**, dir. Alys Nahmias, Benjamin Murray (2011, 86 minutes)

Documentary: **Batería**, by Damián Sáinz (2016, 15 minutes)

Tuesday April 24 **Race-Nation (DR/Haiti)**

Historical Analysis: Lauren Derby “Haitians, Magic, and Money: Raza and Society in the Haitian-Dominican Borderlands, 1900 to 1937”

Novel (excerpt): Edwidge Danticat, **Farming of Bones**, 1999.

Essay: Jonathan Katz, “In Exile,” New York Times, 13 January 2016
<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/17/magazine/haitians-in-exile-in-the-dominican-republic.html>

Thursday April 26 **The Last Colony (Puerto Rico)**

Historical analysis: Juan Gonzalez, **Harvest of Empire** (Penguin Books, 2000, Rev. 2011), “Puerto Ricans: Citizens Yet Foreigners” (81–95) and “Puerto Rico USA: Possessed and Unwanted” (278–306)

Spoken word: Pedro Pietri, “Puerto Rican Obituary” (1969)

Three Poems by Tato Laviera, New York Times, 13 February 2010

Friday April 28: Final Project, in recitation

Tuesday May 1 **Environment (Disaster politics)**

Historical analysis; Stuart B. Schwartz, “Ancient Storms in a New Century” from **Sea of Storms: A History of Hurricanes in the Greater Caribbean from Columbus to Katrina** (Princeton UP, 2015)

Essay: Junot Díaz, “Apocalypse: What disasters reveal”
<http://bostonreview.net/junot-diaz-apocalypse-haiti-earthquake>

Poem: Franketienne, “Dialect of Hurricanes”
<http://www.poetrytranslation.org/poems/dialect-of-hurricanes>

Op Ed: Yarimar Bonilla, “Why would anyone in Puerto Rico want a hurricane? Because someone will get rich.” Op Ed in the Washington Post, 22 September 2017.

Thursday May 3 TBA

Thursday May 10 FINAL EXAM 8am-9:50am

Please note: this exam cannot be rescheduled, and cannot be taken in any format other than in the classroom on the assigned day and hour. Do not make travel plans prior to Thursday May 10.

Assignments and Evaluation

You will receive a fuller explanation of each paper assignment at least 10 days before the due dates.

Paper 1	5 pages	Due Friday February 16	15%
Midterm		Tuesday March 6	15%
Final Project Part 1	5-6 pages	Due Friday April 6	15%
Final Project Part 2	8 pages	Due Friday April 27	20%
Final exam		Thursday May 10	20%
Recitation Grade		Preparation, participation	15%
Lecture and recitation attendance, Required . See note below; missed classes count against your final grade			+/- on your final grade

Course expectations and evaluation guidelines

Essays: assignments must be turned in on (or before) the due date noted in the syllabus. Late papers turned in without prior permission will be reduced by one grade-step for each day that the assignment is late. For example, a paper due on Friday, February 30 which is turned in on Saturday, March 1 will get a "B-" instead of the "B" that it merited.

Participation: Your full preparation (completing all of the readings), attention, and participation for lectures and recitations is expected.

Attendance: Perfect attendance at lectures and recitation is the expected norm; attendance will be taken regularly. **Missed classes will count one point against your final (total) grade.** For example, if your work averaged to a 90 (an A-) and you had one unexcused absence, your grade would drop to 89, or B+. If you missed three classes, it would become an 87, or a B. However: if you are too sick to come to class, or if you have a medical or other emergency, do take care of your health first (don't

drag yourself to class!), and contact the professor and/or your recitation instructor at your first opportunity.

Late arrivals: Late arrivals are disruptive to the professor and to your fellow classmates; two late arrivals will be considered the equivalent of an absence and will count against your grade accordingly.

Early departures: Do not pack up your belongings prior to the end of class, which will be indicated by the Professor. Doing so is noisy and rude. The last five minutes may be used for a flash quiz, so your attention is required to the end of the session.

Laptops, tablets and phones:

Phones: Turn your phone off and put it away during lecture and recitation. You should not read or write texts during class, or otherwise interact with your phone. Do not leave class to take a phone call: doing so will count as a full day's absence.

Laptops, tablets: these should be used ONLY to consult assigned readings for the course and to take notes. If you use these for other purposes you will lose the privilege of using them for the rest of the semester. You should turn off and put away ALL electronics for your recitation session, unless otherwise directed by the recitation instructor. The Professor and TAs have no wish to police your behavior; please have the courtesy to follow the rule.

Recording: Please do not record the professor's lectures.

Contacting us

Please contact the professor or recitation instructor with any queries or concerns about the course. Note our office hours and please come to see us. If you can't make office hours, contact us to schedule an appointment at another time. Remember that office hours are not only for discussing problems or assignments: we are here to reflect with you on what you are learning and the curiosities and ideas that the course may raise. We look forward to talking with you.

Did you know?

This course is a gateway course for the **CAS major and minor in Latin American and Caribbean Studies**. It is the one required course in a 5-course minor. It is the foundation course for a 9-course major.

At **NYU Buenos Aires** you can take a range of CAS and other courses related to Latin America. Almost all of these courses count toward the major/minor.

BA/MA in Latin American and Caribbean Studies

The College of Arts and Sciences has an accelerated B.A./M.A program in which you can major in any field in CAS and complete an M.A. in Latin American and Caribbean Studies in 5 years. You can receive reduced tuition for your one year of graduate studies and are still eligible for graduate financial aid.