

**History S331:  
MODERN LATIN AMERICA**

Yale University Summer Session A 2017  
Tuesday and Thursday, 1:00 - 4:15  
Building and Room TBD

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Adolfo Mexiac, "El títere (The Puppet)," 1955 (Yale University Art Gallery)

## History S331: Modern Latin America

This course investigates the history of modern Latin America from independence in the early nineteenth century through the present. As the image above conveys, we will explore connections - hidden and plainly visible - between Latin America and world events. We will critically examine historical contexts behind recent headlines such as anti-immigrant and anti-Mexico sentiment in the 2016 U.S. election and Mexico's own upcoming presidential election, the death of Fidel Castro and the opening of US-Cuban relations, the Puerto Rican debt crisis and June 11 statehood vote, political violence, authoritarianism, populism, the international drug trade, and the long-awaited Colombian Peace Accords. We will use these issues to launch into historical case studies of the Amazon, Mexico, the Caribbean, Chile, and Colombia in order to gain a deeper understanding of the region's past and present.

The ability to think critically, analyze a variety of sources, and evaluate the historical contingency of current events is especially relevant today. In pursuit of sharpening students' analytical, interpretative, and argumentative skills, two weekly meetings will incorporate lectures, discussion of readings, discussion of questions and materials introduced by students, free-writing, and practice using primary documents. Specifically, in this course, students will:

I. Discuss and evaluate significant moments in Latin American history and relate case studies on the Amazon, Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Chile, and Colombia to these broader processes.

II. Contextualize and interrogate the historical dimensions of contemporary challenges and news emanating from Latin America, including but not limited to its relationship with the United States.

III. Analyze primary and secondary source texts, critically assessing these through both writing exercises and group discussion. Discern and appreciate a wide variety of sources that speak to politics, culture, identity, economics, and the environment.

IV. Examine the major thematic concerns of scholars in the field and compare selected works covering a particular area of personal interest.

In order to accomplish these objectives, students will undertake the following assignments:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Percentage of grade</u>
Regular attendance and participation in discussions:	30%
Source analyses (one per week):	25%
In-class writing exercises (one per week):	10%
Annotated Bibliography:	35%

## **History S331: MODERN LATIN AMERICA**

Attendance and participation: This is an intensive summer course holding seminar-length meetings two days per week. As such, it is vital that students engage with the readings, attend every class, and participate actively. Each week will focus on a particular chronology and set of themes. As preparation for class, students will typically analyze a collection of primary documents, including literature, poetry, art, and ephemera. These will be available on the ClassesV2 webpage as well as in packet form. Each week, our focus will also constrict to particular case studies as students read and discuss an important secondary book or series of articles that incorporate the broader themes presented in lecture and the primary documents.

Source analyses: During weeks 2-5 students will choose a primary document or new article to analyze in particular detail and compose a one-page summary focusing on its *historical significance*. This will replace the usual IDs found on midterm and final evaluations of full-semester courses while emphasizing attention and skill in assessing primary documents. We will discuss the finding of sources appropriate for this activity more in class.

In-Class Writing Exercises: Students will have an opportunity to compose free-form short essays over the duration of the course. These are expected to be informative and interpretative. Each of these will be scheduled during class time and will be intended to facilitate group discussion about relevant issues. The first exercise will introduce the student's interests in Latin America, including the student's chosen topic for the annotated bibliography (see below). The second and third exercises will evaluate newspaper articles or other sources presented in class.

Annotated Bibliography: By the Thursday of the second week (June 8), students will be required to meet with the instructors to discuss a theme or topic they are interested in exploring further. Based on this conversation, students will prepare for their first writing exercise (see above) introducing their interests to the rest of the class. Over the remaining weeks of the session, students will then draft an annotated bibliography on that topic, including major secondary works. The annotated bibliography takes the place of the final paper usually required for semester-long courses. Due to the confines of the short five-week course, students will not be expected to have read each work on the bibliography in its entirety. Annotations should focus instead on assessing the work's basic contribution to the field. Students will be encouraged to think of this assignment as an opportunity to explore an area of personal interest to them and assemble a bibliography for future work they may wish to do on that topic. The process and methods for this type of assessment will be discussed and practiced at length in the course.

### **Required Texts (available at the Yale Bookstore):**

Taussig, Michael. *Law in a Lawless Land: Diary of a Limpieza in Colombia*. University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Weise, Julie M. *Corazón de Dixie: Mexicanos in the U.S. South since 1910*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015. (also available online through the Yale Library)

# History S331: Modern Latin America

Articles and secondary sources available on Canvas.

In addition to the required reading, we recommend the following text which you may find helpful in establishing a narrative for Latin American history (also available at the bookstore):

Chasteen, John Charles. *Born in Blood and Fire: A Concise History of Latin America*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2011.

## **Schedule:**

### **WEEK ONE: INTRODUCTION TO POSTCOLONIAL LATIN AMERICA**

#### **Tuesday, May 30: Course Introduction: Independent Latin America**

Course Overview

Introductory Lecture: *Colonial Legacies, Independence, Liberalism, Capitalism, and the Idea of Latin America*

#### **Thursday, June 1: The Periphery at the Heart: Amazonia**

Lecture: *The Meanings of Independence. A View from the Periphery.*

Short Primary Source Readings:

Antonio Vieira, "The Sins of Maranhão" [1643] in Robert Levine and John C. Crocitti (eds.). *The Brazil Reader: History, Culture, Politics*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1999: pp. 43-44.

Hardenburg, W.E. *The Putumayo, The Devil's Paradise; Travels in the Peruvian Amazon Region and an Account of the Atrocities committed upon the Indians therein*. London: T.F. Unwin, 1912 (Selection)

Chico Mendes. *Fight for the forest. Chico Mendes in his own words. Additional material by Tony Gross*. London and New York: Latin American Bureau, 1992. (Selection)

Visit to Sterling Memorial Library: Introduction to Yale's Library System

### **WEEK TWO: MEXICO**

#### **Tuesday, June 6: The Mexican Revolution**

Lecture: *Revolutionary Mexico*

## History S331: MODERN LATIN AMERICA

Short Primary Sources Reading:

Creelman, James. "President Díaz, Hero of the Americas."

Flores Magón, Ricardo. "Land and Liberty."

"Plan of Ayala"

Lewis, Oscar. Excerpt from *Pedro Martínez*.

"The Constitution of 1917: Articles 27 and 123"

Visit to the Yale Art Gallery

### **Thursday, June 8: Contemporary Mexico**

Lecture: *Twentieth-Century Mexican Politics: Politics, Immigration, and the War on Drugs*

Readings:

Julie Weise, *Corazón de Dixie: Mexicanos in the U.S. South since 1910*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015. (Selection)

Sam Quiñones, "A Soccer Season in Southwest Kansas" in his *Antonio's Gun and Delfino's Dream: True Tales of Mexican Migration*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press: 2017.

Alma Guillermoprieto, "Mexico, The Murder of the Young" in *New York Review of Books*, January 8, 2015. <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2015/01/08/mexico-murder-young/>

## **WEEK THREE: THE CARIBBEAN**

### **Tuesday, June 13: Cuba**

Lecture: *Cuban Exceptionalism? A Caribbean Story*

Reading:

Ferrer, Ada. "Cuba, 1898: Rethinking Race, Nation, and Empire." *Radical History Review* 73 (January 1999): 22-46.

Guerra, Lillian. "Beyond Paradox: Counterrevolution and the Origins of Political Culture in the Cuban Revolution, 1959-2009" in Greg Grandin and Gilbert M. Joseph (Eds.). *A Century of Revolution: Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Violence During Latin America's Long Cold War*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010: Pp. 199-235.

Short Primary Source Readings:

Jose Martí, "Our America" (selections)

Fidel Castro, "History will Absolve Me" (selections)

## History S331: Modern Latin America

Visit to Sterling Memorial Library, Cuba Collections

### **Thursday, June 15: The U.S. and Latin America and a Case Study on Puerto Rico**

Lecture: *Caribbean Counterpoints: United States Expansion and Hemispheric Policies*

Reading:

Schwartz, Stuart B. "Chapter 8: Public Storms, Communal Action, and Private Grief," in *Sea of Storms: A History of Hurricanes in the Greater Caribbean from Columbus to Katrina*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015: pp. 272-294.

Short Primary Source Readings:

Darío, Rubén. "A Roosevelt."

Darío, Rubén. "Salutación del águila."

Martí, José. "Our America."

Galeano, Eduardo. Selections from *Memoria del Fuego*.

Luis Muñoz Marín, "Porto Rico: The American Colony."

### **WEEK FOUR: COLD WAR, DICTATORSHIPS, AND VIOLENCE**

### **Tuesday, June 20: Social Movements, Dictatorships, and Violence During Cold War**

Lecture: *The Cold War in Latin America / Latin America in the Cold War*

Main Readings:

Sanford, Victoria. "'¡Si Hubo Genocidio en Guatemala' ¡Yes! There Was Genocide in Guatemala" in Dan Stone (ed.). *The Historiography of Genocide*. Hampshire (UK): Palgrave-MacMillan, 2008: pp. 243-276.

Langland, Victoria. "Birth Control Pills and Molotov Cocktails: Reading Sex and Revolution in 1968 Brazil," in Gilbert M. Joseph and Daniela Spenser (Eds.). *In from the Cold: Latin America's New Encounter with the Cold War*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008: pp. 308-349.

Short primary sources:

Elizabeth Burgos-Debray (ed.). *I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala*. London and New York: Verso, 2010. (selection)

Lina Penna Sattimini. *A Mother's Cry: A Memoir of Politics, Prison, and Torture under the Brazilian Military Dictatorship*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2010. (selection)

**History S331:  
MODERN LATIN AMERICA**

**Thursday, June 22: A Case Study on Chile**

Lecture: *Revolution (and Dictatorship) with Empanadas and Red Wine*

Short Primary Source Readings:

Winn, Peter. "Diary of a Coup."

"Shantytown Protest: Interviews with *Pobladores*."

Pinochet, Augusto. "Letter to All Chileans."

Selections from "Historians' Manifesto."

**WEEK FIVE: PEACE, JUSTICE, AND COLOMBIA**

**Tuesday, June 27: Colombia**

Lecture: *The Colombian Conflict from "La Violencia" to the 2016 Peace Accords*

Reading:

Taussig, Michael. *Law in a Lawless Land: Diary of a Limpieza in Colombia*. University of Chicago Press, 2003.

**Thursday, June 29: Democracy and Reconciling with the Past**

\*\*\*Annotated Bibliographies Due in Class

Lecture: *Memory, Justice, Democratization: What to do with the Past?*

Reading:

Grandin, Greg. "The Instruction of Great Catastrophe: Truth Commissions, National History, and State Formation in Argentina, Chile, and Guatemala." *The American Historical Review* 110, No. 1 (February 2005): Pp. 46-67.

García Márquez, Gabriel. "The Solitude of Latin America." Nobel Lecture: December 8, 1982.

[http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/literature/laureates/1982/marquezlecture.html](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1982/marquezlecture.html)

**Support:**

All students are encouraged to take advantage of Yale's rich resources, including the Writing Center: <http://ctl.yale.edu/writing>

**Academic Integrity:**

Students are responsible for avoiding plagiarism in all written assignments. Material taken from another source must be cited for which we will discuss the proper methods as a class. Following Yale's policies, all plagiarism will have consequences, potentially including failure of the class,

## **History S331: Modern Latin America**

suspension, and/or dismissal from the university. If you have questions, please ask! For more information on avoiding plagiarism, speak with the instructor and consult the university's Writing Center: <http://ctl.yale.edu/writing/using-sources>.

### **Disabilities:**

We will strive to create an open and inclusive atmosphere in this course. It is your responsibility as a participating student to inform me on the first day of class of any disabilities that may impact your work. Please feel free to discuss any concerns you may have with me in private after class or via email.