



Pueblos Mágicos
SOAN 353: Latin American Ethnography
(Spring 2022)

“Hay locuras que son poesía, hay locuras de un raro lugar. Hay locuras sin nombre, sin fecha, sin cura, que no vale la pena curar.”

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Office Hours: See Zoom Link (Mon 1pm-2:30pm & Thurs 1:30-3:30pm)

COURSE GOALS

Public representations of Latin America in the West are often limited to imagery and narratives that emphasize poverty, corruption, violence, rural landscapes, and/or colorful people or places presented as tourist attractions. However, Latin America is a complex place, one that harbors impressive intellectual traditions, innovation across many realms, and a great diversity of lived experiences rooted in intricate pre-Columbian, colonial, post-colonial and even global yet also fundamentally local processes.

This course explores the origins and development of contemporary lived experiences in Latin America as interpreted through ethnographic works in anthropology. We will examine and analyze the structural processes that have shaped contact among indigenous, European, and non-European immigrants (e.g. African and Asian peoples) in Latin America since the Conquest and through colonial periods to understand today's Latin American societies. We will pay special attention to the impacts of global capitalist expansion and state formation, sites of resilience and resistance, as well as the movement of Latin American peoples throughout the world today. Course themes will address gender, identity, social organization, indigeneity, immigration, social inequality and environment.

In addition, as part of this exploration we will also turn our critique on anthropology since anthropologists have long examined the socio-cultural complexity of the region and have contributed to the construction of Latin America as a place of important anthropological inquiry. In the process certain narratives about Latin America have been created and perpetuated about the region as well as for the different kinds of people and societies that live in this space. Given this tradition, the course will shed light on three related issues:

1. How anthropologists have contributed to the conception of Latin America as a place of a seemingly cohesive area of study.
2. How ethnographic works have contributed to both establishing, reproducing and/or contesting enduring ideas about Latin America, its peoples, and how the region engages with the rest of the world.
3. To appreciate the opportunities and limitations of ethnographic works manner in representing complex social and cultural processes often rooted in the past, lived in a dynamic present, and with an intense and proactive interest in the future.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

As part of Carleton's assessment initiative, the SOAN Department of has identified six Student Learning Outcomes for SOAN majors. In this course you will learn four of these outcomes:

- Formulate appropriate sociological and/or anthropological research questions about socio-cultural phenomena.
- Select appropriate sociological and/or anthropological research methods to study socio-cultural phenomena.
- Apply sociological and anthropological theory to analyze socio-cultural phenomena.
- Draw upon your understanding of historical and contemporary socio-cultural phenomena to engage the world.

GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS

Your grade during the term will be assessed through a combination of assignments, participation and exams. Instructions, rational and objectives for each assignment will be clearly outlined for you before you begin and generally posted on Moodle or handed out during class. Please note that there is a lot of emphasis placed on participation and this means evidence of engagement in the class. There will be many different avenues in which you can participate so your grade will not be solely based on the frequency of your contributions during large group discussions but do make the effort to contribute at all times. If I see a problem in this area I will contact you and ask you to come see me so we can discuss your performance.

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| • Attendance & Participation | 20% |
| • Reflection Essays (4 total / 5% each) | 20% |
| • Foro Reflection | 10% |
| • Annotations (15) | 30% |
| • Final Project | 20% |

LATE AND MAKE-UP POLICY

Please note that I am very strict about due dates. Unless you have a legitimate excuse for turning in an assignment late or missing and exam I will either not accept the assignment or deducts points from your grade. Although I am certainly sympathetic to emergencies I do ask you to try to let me know what is happening before the assignment or exam comes around in order to avoid misunderstandings. Students that turn in 2 or more late assignments will forgo their participation grade.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to adhere to Carleton's code of academic honesty. Even in the event of participating in team projects, your final work should still reflect your own ideas and other people's ideas should always be credited. If you have any questions regarding this policy please visit <http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/doc/integrity/> or come speak to me. Failure to follow Carleton's expectation will result in a failing grade and formal action with the administration.

OFFICE HOURS AND COMMUNICATIONS

I hope you will all come see me during office hours to discuss the course, ideas for projects, or career plans. Interacting with students is one of the aspects that I most enjoy about my job so please **DO NOT BE SHY** and take advantage of office hour! If you cannot make office hours let me know and we can always schedule an alternative time, or even go out to lunch through the dining services “take a prof out to lunch” scheme (it is free to both of us and we get three a term). Please note that I do not text with students and although I encourage questions via email if they required a long answer I may simply ask you to come see me so we can discuss it in person.

CREATING AN INCLUSIVE & COMPASSIONATE CLASSROOM

My primary goal as an educator and scholar is to foster a joy for learning and prepare students for their future professional paths. Although joyful, the process is not necessarily always fun or easy. To me learning is a convoluted process that is difficult, as it requires us to push our intellectual limits, take risks, and face our -- and other’s -- legacies straight on. The “reward” that results from this process is not always readily apparent or may take years to manifest.

I also believe that learning should not be painful or hurtful to those involved in the process. I can assure you that I make a conscious effort to consider the possible consequences or impacts of what happens in my courses. The problem is that even though I try to avoid these situations it is very difficult for anyone to be error-free. Trying to accommodate or predict the reactions of a diverse and ever-changing group of individuals that venture to take my classes is impossible and overwhelming at times.

For these reasons, a belief in the academic process and a commitment to creating a compassionate learning space, I avoid an explicit policy of providing trigger warnings in my courses. I will give some background of the readings and will certainly give a heads up when certain kinds of difficult material approaches but I will not give trigger warnings. In a nutshell, the fundamental reason is that what might *to you* merit an obvious trigger warning may not be for others and vice versa. For example, a common occurrence in my courses is that issues of sexual violence depicted in a North American context will elicit multiple requests for trigger warning, yet material that discusses extreme cases of violence and genocide in regions of the world that we refer to as the Global South are consumed by most with a dry analytical stance and almost no consideration or acknowledgement of the emotional implications this may have to others in the room (including the instructor or visitor).

This is a very delicate issue and there is no magic bullet. What I ask you is to engage in this journey with me and trust me (and this may mean giving me or your peers multiple chances). I will definitely address issues that are brought to my attention in a constructive manner. I do my best to teach and model the manner in which difficult material can be engaged with in the classroom, but more importantly please know that *I am willing to learn with you; but this can only happen in a companionate and honest environment*. I hope you are willing to learn with me as well!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

If you need any help dealing with the requirement of the course please let me know so I can direct you to the multitude of resources available to you at Carleton. Although I will be posting relevant resources to individual assignments do let me know if you are having trouble taking notes, studying for the exam, writing up assignments, stress, etc. I will be more than delighted to help direct you and work with you with what you need. In case you are interested in exploring your options on your own, a comprehensive list of resources can be found here: <https://www.carleton.edu/student/support/>

LIBRARY: Worth mentioning is our fabulous library staff, in particular Kristin Partlo (the social sciences reference librarian). If you have any questions or need help finding resources for the class, she is a great resource. You can email her at: kpartlo@carleton.edu.

COURSE READINGS

Readings will be posted in Moodle or available as e-resources on the library website. You are expected to complete the assigned readings by class time and come prepared to participate in class discussions. Please note that some weeks have heavier readings loads than others, for this reason I suggest you pay attention to reading guidelines discussed in class. Also remember that **I change readings often** depending on class interest and progress so follow postings on Moodle rather than on this initial schedule. Please note all assignment are due at the beginning of class and you need to turn in a hard copy for all assignments.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1

Does Latin America Exist? An introduction to the idea, origins, and power of Latin America as a region.

Tues March 30

Readings: none

Thurs April 1

Reading: Sanabria (Introducing Latin America)
Fuentes (Mirror of the Other)
100 Years (Chapters 1-5)

Week 2

A Complicated History: Tracing cultural configurations, social propositions and societal interpretations since 1492

Tues April 6

Readings: Redfield (Tepoztlan)

Thurs April 8

Readings: Wolf (Sons of the Shaking Earth)

Week 3

Entrenched Power: Exploring who rules and dominates Latin America and the ways in which this hegemony might be challenged today.

Tues April 13

Readings: Stone (Costa Rica Power)
Hunter (Columbian Life Patterns)

***Assignment:** Explore environmental anthropology journals for research project ideas. Turn in a research question and identify one article (include abstract). **Key Journals to Consider:** Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology (JLACA), American Ethnologist, Latin American Research Review (LARR), Human Organization.

Thurs April 15

Readings: Taussig (Devil and Commodity Fetishism)
100 Years (Chapters 6-8)

Week 4

Environmental Stories: Investigating the construction, production and consumption of Nature in Latin America

Tues April 20

Readings: Mann (1491)
Oslender (Counter Spaces in Columbia)

***Assignment:** First annotation due

Thurs April 22

Readings: Foro Speakers (TBA) & 100 Years (Chapters 9-10)

Sat April 24 **(Foro Latinoamericano)** Attend Lectures 9:15am-noon
More information on the Foro Latinoamericano and Zoom link here:
<https://www.carleton.edu/latin-american-studies/foro-2019/>

Week 5

Environmental Stories: Investigating the construction, production and consumption of Nature in Latin America cont...

Tues April 27

Readings: Khon (How Forests Think)

***Assignment:** Reflection on Foro

Race, Place, and Belonging: Understanding different peoples of Latin America and how race affirms of denies belonging across nations

Thurs April 29

Readings: Barragan (Social, Order, Census and Race in Bolivia)
Anderson (Garifuna Activism)
100 Years (Chapters 11-12)

Complementary Readings: Kicza (Indians in Latin America), Sanabria (Race and Ethnicity) and Foster (Culture and Conquest)

***Assignment:** second annotation due

Week 6

Sustainable Development and Environmentalism: How Latin America became a site of need, intervention, and rediscovery.

Tues May 4

Readings: De La Cadena (Andean Cosmopolitics)

Thurs May 6

Readings: Escobar (Encountering Development)

***Assignment:** two annotations due

Week 7

From Fieldwork to Ethnography: Ethnographic Methods in Latin American

Tues May 11

Readings: Ocampo-Raeder & Reason (How to Cook a Cat)

***Assignment:** two annotations due

Thurs May 13

Readings: Cat Article Peer Reviews
100 Years (Chapters 13-15)

Week 8

Gender Mystiques: Truths and Myth of Gender, Family, and Sexuality in Latin America

Tues May 18

Readings: Guttman (the Meaning of Macho)
Silva (Ethnographic Striptease)

Complementary Readings: Murray (Transnational Sexuality in Martinique) &
Stevens (Marianismo and machismo)

Religion in Latin American Society: How does religious belief shape the Latin American experience?

Thurs May 20

Readings: McCarthy Brown (Mama Lola)
100 Years (Chapters 16-17)

***Assignment: 2 annotations due**

Week 9

Neoliberal Stories: How has neoliberalism impacted the idea of Latin America and it's people

Tues May 25

Readings: De Leon (Land of Open Grave)
Wright (Murder, Women and Maquiladoras)

Thurs May 27

Readings: Root (Latina Fashion Reader)
Davila (Latinos Inc)

***Assignment: 2 annotations due**

Week 10

Concluding Remarks and Class Symposium on Research Projects

Tues June 1

Readings: Kottak (Assault on Paradise)
100 Years (Chapters finish)

Week 11

Monday June 8th (Exam Days)

***Assignment: Final Paper Project due by 5pm Monday in Moodle folder.**