LACS 497: Research Seminar
Memory, Narrative, and Human Rights in Latin America
Winter 2018

Professor: Fernanda Macchi
fernanda.macchi@mcgill.ca
Office hours: Tuesday 12 to 13 or by appointment (688 Sherbrooke St. W, rm 381)

I. Description

This course explores the way historical accounts, testimonial narratives, investigative reports, films, and novels from the 16th century to nowadays have shaped the debate on human rights and memory in Latin America. In doing so, it offers students the opportunity to explore how violence and discrimination have been conceived in (and about) Latin America from the perspective of cultural history.

II. Evaluation

Participation (15%): Students are expected to attend classes regularly and participate actively in class discussions.

Group presentation (25%): Students will work in small groups on case studies assigned by the instructor. Students are expected to approach case studies from a perspective that takes into account not just the historical facts, but the way in which societies remember them through art, literature, commemorative ceremonies, films, etc. Grades will be assigned taking into account both individual and group performance.

Final Paper Proposal (20%): Students will present a research project for their final paper on a specific topic related to human rights in Latin America. The project will include a description of the objectives and relevance of such a project and an annotated bibliography. Due date: February 26, 2014.

Final paper (40%): Students will write a final paper based on their research project. It should be double-spaced and at least 15 pages long (Times New Roman 12). Due date: April 9, 2014.

Late submission: Students who submit their research project/final paper after the due date will lose 3 points per day up to a maximum of 7 days. No assignment will be accepted after 7 days. Exceptions to this rule can be made for documented medical reasons.

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/integrity for more information).

In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

III. Required Books


All other required books and materials are available through either McGill University Library or other online services and repositories. See class schedule for more information.

IV. Class schedule

11/1/2015 Introduction

18/1/2015 - 

**XVI century: Bartolomé de Las Casas**

*Required reading:*


25/1/2015

**Early XIX century: Abolitionism**

*Required reading:*

Required reading:


Catherine Legrand “Living in Macondo: Economy and Culture in a United Fruit Company Banana Enclave in Colombia” in Close Encounters of Empire: Writing the Cultural History of U.S.-Latin American Relations. Ed. by Gilbert M. Joseph, Catherine LeGrand; Ricardo D. Salvatore. (ebook available through McGill Library)


Poem: Neruda, Pablo. “The United Fruit Company” http://books.google.ca/books?id=sEe_6MRg5xQC&pg=PA79&dq=pablo+neruda+poems+united+fruit&hl=en&sa=X&ei=HHx5uqqHYj_qqGhzYDACQ&ved=0CDMQ6wEwAQ#v=onepage&q=pablo%20neruda%20poems%20united%20fruit&f=false


Group Presentation (1): Case Study: Colombia
6/2/2015

Intellectuals

Required reading/viewing:


Film: Nestor Almendros & Orlando Jiménez Leal. *Improper conduct*. (In several parts on YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wcF5ubWiy5k)


In class:


Group Presentation (3): Case Study: Cuba

15/2/2015

Indigenous Rights

Mapuches communities in the Southern Cone: Professor Luis Carcamo Huechante, director of the Indigenous Study Institute at the University of Texas, Austin

Required readings:


22/2/2015

Terrorism and Dictatorships

Required reading/viewing:


*Group Presentation (4): Case Study: Chile/Argentina/Uruguay*

1/3/2014 -

**Victims' Testimony**-

*Required reading:*

*Group Presentation (5): Case Study: Guatemala*

--------RESEARCH PROJECT DUE--------

6/3/2015

**READING WEEK**

13/3/2015

**Controversies**

*Required reading:*


*Group Presentation (6): Case Study: El Salvador*

22/3/2015

**Memory**
(Professor Manuel Balan)

Required reading:


**Group Presentation (7): Case Study: Peru**

27/3/2015

Poverty and the State

Required reading/viewing:


Recommended reading/viewing


**Group Presentation (8): Case Study: Brazil**

3/4/2015

Labor and Rights

Required reading:


**Group Presentation (9): Case Study: Mexico**

10/4/2014

Conclusion Final paper due