

Fall 2014
MW 2:00-3:30
College Hall 314

Professor Amy C. Offner
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Office Hours M 3:30-5, W 12:30-2
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History 174
Reform and Revolution in the Americas

The United States and Latin America produced a remarkable series of revolutions and reforms from the Great Depression to the 1970s. This course examines efforts in the United States, Guatemala, and Cuba to reform capitalism or build socialism; to address entrenched patterns of racism; to define and realize democracy; and to achieve national independence. Americans conceived of these challenges in dramatically different ways. Together, we'll compare national histories and analyze the relationships between national upheavals.

In studying the US and Latin America together, the class allows students to explore central questions in both regions' histories. Why were Americans so enticed by economic growth, and how did they pursue it? What did Communism amount to? What purposes did unions serve? How did racialized groups mobilize and relate to the state? How did Christianity inform movements for and against social change? What did democracy mean in the midcentury period? How did the Cold War shape social movements?

Studying these regions together also allows us to explore international interactions. How did the black freedom movement in the US relate to the Cuban revolution? How did Guatemalan immigration shape the US labor movement? How did US Cold War policy influence Latin American revolutionary movements?

The goal of this class is for you to interpret the readings and lectures and decide what you think. What you learn in this class, and the quality of our experience together, depends on your reading closely, coming to class with informed ideas and questions, and being prepared to help your classmates answer theirs.

We will read approximately 150 pages per week. No background is required.

Required Readings: All readings on the syllabus are required. The following books are on reserve in Van Pelt Library (Rosengarten Reserve) and available for purchase at House Of Our Own, 3920 Spruce Street. All other readings are on Canvas or, where noted in the syllabus, available as ebooks in the Penn library system.

Piero Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope* (1992)
Lillian Guerra, *Visions of Power in Cuba* (2012)
Michael Honey, *Southern Labor and Black Civil Rights* (1993) [also an ebook]
Deborah Levenson-Estrada, *Trade Unionists Against Terror* (1994)
Bethany Moreton, *To Serve God and Wal-Mart* (2010)

Required Work

1. Weekly Canvas posts and informed, responsive class participation. (15%)

Each student must post a one-page response to the week's readings by Wednesday at 11:00 a.m. Posts are not graded, but are required to pass the class. Each week, I'll post a few questions, and you'll choose one to answer.

Discussing the material in class is essential to your learning. Everyone must complete the readings before class and participate in discussion throughout the semester in an informed, responsive way. By "informed," I mean informed by a close reading of our texts, and by "responsive," I mean responsive to each other, taking one other seriously enough to respond to each others' observations, analyses, and questions. If speaking in class makes you nervous, consider the Canvas post an opportunity to prepare an idea that you can share with the group.

2. A four-page paper analyzing primary sources, due at the beginning of class on Wednesday, September 24. (15%)

A required part of this assignment is a draft workshop. A four-page first draft of paper is due on Canvas on Sunday, September 21 by 12:00 p.m. We will workshop all drafts in class on Monday, September 22.

3. An in-class midterm on October 15. (20%)
4. An eight-page synthetic paper due at the beginning of class on November 17. (25%)
5. A final exam. (25%)

Option to revise and resubmit papers. Upon receiving a graded paper back, any student may revise the paper and resubmit it within one week. The final paper grade will be an average of the two versions.

Attendance and Participation: Attendance is required, and students should complete the assigned reading before class on Monday. We will discuss the readings in class, so please bring all readings with you.

Required Film Screening: To be scheduled outside class time, we will have a required screening of *Memories of Underdevelopment*, a great film about the Cuban revolution. Students who can not attend the screening are expected to watch the film on reserve in Van Pelt Library or through the Penn Video Network, where it will screen during the month of November.

Communication: The great pleasure of teaching is getting to know students. Come by my office hours or make an appointment to discuss any of the course material. For brief, procedural questions about the class, email is fine.

Disability policy: If you have a disability that requires special test-taking arrangements, please let me know at the beginning of the semester.

Academic integrity: Plagiarism and other violations of academic honesty can result in suspension and expulsion from Penn. Please review the university's guide on academic integrity (www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity), and do not hesitate to talk with me if you have any questions about the definition of plagiarism and academic honesty.

Class Schedule

Aug. 27 Introduction
“Declaration of Independence by United Steel Workers of America”
FDR, Speech to the Democratic National Convention, 1936

Part 1: A US Story

Sept. 1 Labor Day: No Class
Sept. 3 The 1930s and the Crisis of Capitalism
Michael Honey, *Southern Labor and Black Civil Rights*, pp. 1-116

Sept. 8 Industrial Unionism in Depression and War
Sept. 10 The Popular Front
Michael Honey, *Southern Labor and Black Civil Rights*, pp. 117-213
W. E. B. Du Bois, “A Nation Within a Nation”
Howard Johnson, “A Communist in Harlem”
David Friedman, “A New York City Schoolteacher in the Party”

Sept. 15 Competing Visions of Economic Growth
Sept. 17 The Sunbelt and the Suburb
Michael Honey, *Southern Labor and Black Civil Rights*, pp. 214-291
Joshua Freeman, *American Empire*, chapters 1-5
Walter Reuther, “More Airplanes for Defense,” 1940
Walter Reuther, radio broadcast, Toledo, February 22, 1946
Walter Reuther, Labor Day speech, 1958
“Resolution on Expulsion of the United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers of America”

SUNDAY, September 21: Drafts of first paper due on Canvas by 12:00 p.m.

Students will be paired up to workshop each others' drafts in class the next day.

I will also give you feedback on your drafts.

Sept. 22 Paper Workshop
Sept. 24 Cold War Civil Rights
First paper due at the start of class
Joshua Freeman, *American Empire*, chapter 6

Thomas J. Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, chapter 7
Waldo E. Martin, *Brown v. Board of Education*, pp. 199, 202-203, 214

- Sept. 29 Wars on Poverty
Oct. 1 Poverty in Two Worlds
President's Commission on Civil Rights, "To Secure These Rights"
Annelise Orleck, *Storming Caesar's Palace*, chapters 3-5
- Oct. 6 Capital Flight
Oct. 8 The Ethics of the Market
Bethany Moreton, *To Serve God and Wal-Mart*, Prologue and chapters 2, 3, 5-7
- Oct. 13 The Sunbelt as National Destiny?
Bethany Moreton, *To Serve God and Wal-Mart*, chapters 8-13
- Oct. 15 Midterm

Part 2: A Guatemalan Story

- Oct. 20 The Democratic Spring
Oct. 22 Land Reform: Local and Global Meanings
Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, Prologue and Chapters 1-2, 4-8, 10
Greg Grandin et. al., eds., *Guatemala Reader* (2011), 206-210, 214-220 [ebook]
- Oct. 27 Explaining US Intervention
Oct. 29 Indigenous Communities in Revolution and Counterrevolution
Piero Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, Chapters 11, 13-Epilogue
"Sabotage for Liberty," in Greg Grandin et. al., eds., *Guatemala Reader* (2011), 238-241
"Arealista to Counterrevolutionary," in Greg Grandin et. al., eds., *Guatemala Reader* (2011), 221-225
Archbishop Mariano Rossell y Arrellano, "Enemies of Christ," in Greg Grandin et. al., eds., *Guatemala Reader* (2011), 226-229
- Nov. 3 The Alliance for Progress
Nov. 5 Religion and Dirty War
John F. Kennedy, "The Alliance for Progress"
Deborah Levenson-Estrada, *Trade Unionists Against Terror*, pp. 1-104
- Nov. 10 War, Immigration, and the Remaking of the US Labor Movement
Deborah Levenson-Estrada, *Trade Unionists Against Terror*, pp. 105-234
Voz y Acción, "Christ, Worker," in Greg Grandin et. al., eds., *Guatemala Reader* (2011), 309-310

Part 3: A Cuban Story

- Nov. 12 Why A Revolution in Cuba?

- Fidel Castro, "History Will Absolve Me," in *The Cuba Reader*, ed. Aviva Chomsky et. al. (2003), 306-314
- Nov. 17 Turning to Communism
Second paper due in class
- Nov. 19 The Search for a Communist Economic Strategy
Louis A. Perez, *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution*, pp. 219-290
Lee Lockwood, *Castro's Cuba, Cuba's Fidel* (1967), pp. 87-104
- Nov. 24 Racism and Anti-Racism in the Cuban Revolution
Alejandro de la Fuente, *A Nation for All*, chapter 7
Van Gosse, *Where the Boys Are*, chapter 5
- Nov. 26 Thanksgiving: No Class
- Dec. 1 The Cuban Revolution on a World Stage
- Dec. 3 Communism, Fidelismo, and Political Participation
Lillian Guerra, *Visions of Power in Cuba*, chapters 1, 2, 4, 5
Che Guevara, "Reminiscences of the Cuban Revolutionary War"
- Film screening to be scheduled: "Memories of Underdevelopment"*
- Dec. 8 Conclusion