FALL 2021 COURSES

LAS 312 / HIS 313 REVOLUTION IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY LATIN AMERICA

Over the course of the twentieth century Latin America was transformed by a cascade of revolutions. We will use these upheavals as a red thread for understanding the region’s history, from the dismantling of slavery in Cuba to the turmoil of Mexico in the 1910s, and from Cold War coups in Guatemala and Chile to guerrilla insurgency in 1980s Peru. Using primary sources alongside a range of secondary literature, we will explore the varied causes and consequences of revolution as well as the social dynamics and motivating ideas they had in common. We will also analyze the new political systems and cultural developments that emerged in their wake.

Tony Wood S01 11:00 am - 12:20 pm MW

LAS 324 / ANT 324 Battling Borders in the Americas

In this course we will study borders, literal and imagined, and those who contest and enforce them. From internal, invisible gang borders in Central America, to the externalization of the US border, to barriers to belonging, we will look at movements that challenge borders (migrant caravans, immigrants’ rights activism, coyote networks) and the enforcers of borders (the regional migration regime, the asylum system, and non-state actors who police mobility.) Tying together migration, deportation, and resistance, this course asks: how are borders maintained? What does transgressing them mean for those in power and for those who do the crossing?

Amelia Frank-Vitale S01 1:30 pm - 4:20 pm T

LAS 325 / ART 381 / ANT 325 / SPA 397 MUERTOS: ART AND MORTALITY IN MEXICO

For two millennia, the peoples of Mexico have lived in close proximity with the dead. When in the 16th century uninvited Europeans arrived in Tenochtitlan, the watery Mexican underworld, to learn from artworks an ancient, alternate approach to understanding the social construction of death. Three quarters today Mexico City, offering a path to “eternal life”, Mexicans were decidedly uninterested. In this course, students will journey down the road to Mictlan, the watery Mexican underworld.

Marcelo Medeiros S01 1:30 pm - 4:20 pm Th

LAS 326 / ART 391 / ART 325 / SPA 397 POLITICAL NATURES: THE POLITICS OF NATURE AND DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA

Popular imaginaries depict Latin America as both brimming with pristine nature and afflicted with devastating environmental degradation. This lecture explores Latin American nature as an ecological, political and cultural creation, asking: where do these imaginaries of pristine/despoiled nature come from? How are they used, perpetuated or debunked by scientists, Indigenous peoples, politicians and NGOs? We apply these questions to an array of environmental issues, including climate change, deforestation and ecotourism, to analyze the effects of these imaginaries on people’s lived experiences of nature, conservation and economic development.

Marian A. Thorpe L01 11:00 am - 12:20 pm ThTh

LAS 390 / ANT 392 / GHP 390 Multispecies Worlding and Global Health Politics

This course focuses on the politics of health, environment, interspecies relations, and scientific/biomedical interventions in Latin America. We examine pandemics, diseases, and other public health concerns through the lens of interspecies/multispecies entanglements to analyze the ongoing effects of ecological and environmental changes in the Latin American region and the practices of world-making that drive new imaginings and becomeings of naturcure. We analyze the rise of global health and examine the role of experts and recent projects of securitization, containment, and biotechnological control.

Alberto Eduardo Morales L01 11:00 am - 12:20 pm MW

Meet Our Lecturers

Marcelo Medeiros (Ph.D., University of Brasilia). Medeiros is a visiting research scholar with PIIRS. He is a professor at the University of Brasilia and senior researcher at the Brazilian Institute for Applied Economic Research.

Tony Wood (Ph.D., New York University). Wood is a postdoctoral research associate and lecturer with PLAS. He is a political and social historian of modern Latin America.

Marian Ahn Thorpe (Ph.D., Rutgers University). Thorpe is a postdoctoral research associate and lecturer with PLAS. She is an environmental and political anthropologist who studies Indigenous rights and development in Latin America.

Amelia Frank-Vitale (Ph.D., University of Michigan). Frank-Vitale is an anthropologist of migration, deportation, and violence in Central American and Mexico. Her current research project examines how Hondurans navigate life after being deported back to neighborhoods labeled as one of the world’s most violent.

Trent Barnes (Ph.D., Harvard University). Barnes is a postdoctoral research associate and lecturer with PLAS. He is a scholar of the Indigenous Americas, and specializes in the art and architectural history of the ancient Central Mexican and Maya cultures.

Alberto Eduardo Morales (Ph.D., University of California, Irvine). Morales is an anthropologist of medicine, science, and technology specializing in multimodal and multispecies ethnography. Morales’ research interests lie at the intersections of biocinema, biotech sciences, global health equity, and the geopolitics of knowledge production.

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