



Department of Political Studies
Queen's University
Pols 442
SEMINAR IN LATIN AMERICAN POLITICS
Fall 2010
Wednesday, 11:30-2:20
MC 508

INSTRUCTOR: Professor Catherine Conaghan
EMAIL ADDRESS: conaghan@queensu.ca / <http://www.queensu.ca/politics>
OFFICE LOCATION: C-401 Mac-Corry Hall
TELEPHONE: 613-533-6248
OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday 12:00-2:00 or by appointment
COURSE SITE: Login at www.moodle.queensu.ca
[NET ID and password required]

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(See http://www.academicintegrity.org/fundamental_values_project/index.php).

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Students are advised that incomplete standing will be granted only with the permission of the chair of undergraduate or graduate studies (as appropriate) and only where there is a clear demonstration of need. Applications for "Incomplete" standing must be made in the first instance to the instructor on the form available in the General Office. The simple fact of non-submission of work does not constitute an application and will result in a grade of zero for that assignment.

Students who feel that there are reasons to have their grades reviewed should follow the steps set out in the Faculty of Arts and Science's Regulation 13, "Review of Grades and Examinations."

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Course Description

Exploring Citizenship and Democracy in Latin America through Ethnography

Over the last three decades, Latin America has made great progress in consolidating electoral democracies. For the most part, countries have conducted free and fair elections. Leaders rotate power when defeated and the military has refrained from directly intervening into political life (although recent events in Honduras certainly are an exception worth noting). At the same time, previously marginalized groups have enjoyed some success in putting new issues on the political agenda, including the claims of indigenous peoples and women's rights. Recent elections of Leftist governments across the region have also held out the promise that greater reforms may be on the way.

Despite these advances, however, many Latin Americans are disappointed with the performance of their political systems. Pervasive poverty, crime, violence and persistent human rights violations continue to mar the quality of the democracy; these problems make the exercise of citizenship virtually impossible for a wide swathe of the population.

Our seminar in Latin American politics focuses on understanding this complex political landscape where formal democratic practices and institutions co-exist with the informal, often illegal, and authoritarian forces that structure day to day life in Latin American society. Our aim is to examine this hybrid reality, as much as possible, "through the eyes" of Latin Americans themselves. In order to accomplish this, a good portion (although not all) of our class reading is drawn from studies employing ethnography---a methodological approach often used by sociologists and anthropologists who engage in fieldwork involving close contact with and direct observations of human subjects.

Readings

Two excellent ethnographies are part of the required reading for the course. The books are available for purchase in the bookstore. One copy of each book is also available on three-hour reserve in Stauffer Library

Javier Auyero and Debora Swistun, *Flammable: Environmental Suffering in an Argentine Shantytown* (Oxford University Press, 2009)

Teresa Caldeira, *City of Walls: Crime, Segregation and Citizenship in São Paulo* (University of California Press, 2000)

In addition to these books, students are required to download and read the journal articles and other materials indicated on this syllabus. All of these are available through the Electronic Journals collection on the library website. Unless otherwise designated, all readings listed in the syllabus are required readings.

Assignments and Assessment

The final grade in the course will be computed with the percentages shown below. For further descriptions of the assignments, see the sections below.

- 1) Electronic Discussion Forum participation=10%
- 2) General Class participation (including newsroom)=15%
- 3) Participation in Ethnographic Review Discussion=5%
- 4) Ethnographic review essay=30%
- 4) Final Ethnography proposal=40%

Class Participation and Conduct

Attendance and participation in the seminar is an important part of the course and will account for 15 percent of the final grade. Attendance will be taken at some point in every class. To receive full credit for participation, students are expected to attend the entire session. Participation involves informed engagement in the course---asking questions about the readings, answering questions, exchanging ideas with fellow students during our discussions. Participation will also include our weekly “newsroom” assignment.

You are also expected to participate in the Discussion Forum available on the Moodle site. A new question or topic will be posted each week; the time frame for making a contribution is Monday-Sunday evening. Keep in mind that you cannot post anonymous messages on the Discussion Forum (or in Chat). Your posts should be written in language that is appropriate for a class discussion. Write in grammatically correct, complete sentences. You are free to disagree or challenge the views of classmates (and the instructor!), but the tone must be civil and respectful. The course instructor can track all the user activity in the site.

You are advised **NOT** to use the “blog” function in moodle – your blogging in moodle can be read by all moodle users in the university; it is not restricted to our class.

Courtesy toward fellow students and the instructors is our standard. You should arrive for class on time. In the event of a late arrival, you should make every effort not to disrupt the ongoing class. Talking privately with fellow students or engaging in non-class activity during the session is annoying and disruptive to the persons around you, so please refrain from doing so.

While class is underway, **students must turn off and store cell phones and laptop computers. NO electronic recording** of any kind may be made during class lectures or discussions without consent of the instructor. Because discussion and the exchange of ideas is the paramount goal of any seminar, laptop computers should NOT be used when the seminar is in session. You should be prepared to take handwritten notes and refer to their notes when necessary in a hard copy form. The seminar format is an opportunity to improve your public speaking skills --- this means learning to speak extemporaneously (or perhaps with the aid of an outline) rather than reading texts line-by-line from photocopies or a laptop screen.

E-mail and Class Mail List. When sending e-mail to Prof. Conaghan, you should include the designation “Pols 442” or “442” in the subject line. Unidentified email may not be answered. The course moodle site will be used for news and important announcements. Make it a habit to check the site every week. The mailing list operates through your Queen’s University email account. Students should check their e-mail regularly to receive their messages and materials. “Pols 442” will appear in the subject line of all email communications from the instructor.

Special Needs. Students with disabilities should advise the instructor of any special needs for accommodation. Students can find seek further information on accommodations from the Disability Services Office (533-6467), <http://www.queensu-hcds.org>

University policy allows accommodations for special religious observances. Students with such a request should advise the instructor in advance of the date and arrange for making up any missed work. Students seeking accommodations for other reasons (illness, etc.) are expected to provide adequate documentation of special circumstances.

Class Participation/The Weekly Newsroom Exercise

In addition to participating in our weekly discussion of the required readings, you will also be asked to make a contribution to class in our newsroom exercise. The newsroom exercise is vehicle for keeping abreast of the latest developments in Latin America and becoming familiar with Internet sources on Latin America.

Every week we will begin class with a short simulation (about the first 20 minutes or class). Our imaginary scenario is that our class is the newsroom of a Latin American magazine. Each week we will decide on what our cover story for the magazine is. Thus, we will review the major news stories from the region and decide which one merits prime coverage.

At the beginning of every class, students who have been designated (a week in advance in the previous class session) to act as the week's "editors," will pitch their stories to the newsroom (that is, briefly summarize their top story choice, make a case as to why it should be the cover story and offer a catchy title). After these brief (no more than 3 minutes per editor) presentations, the class will be asked to vote on the editors' choices and select the top story of the week. Editors should note that they are free to be creative --- cover stories may focus on significant events, people, or important trends. However, the story should focus on issues that would be of interest to a politically-attentive audience (readers equivalent to those who might read a publication like *The Economist*). Students can expect to act as editors at least two times during the course of the term.

Writing Assignments

1. Review of Ethnographic Research: Your Own Recommended Reading (Due Oct 22)

The Assignment

Ethnography is defined as "social research based on the close-up, on-the-ground observation of people and institutions in real space and time in which the investigator embeds herself near (or within) the phenomenon so as to detect how and why agents on the scene act, think and feel the way they do" (See Loic Wacquant, "Ethnografeast: A Progress Report on the Practice and Promise of Ethnography," *Ethnography* 4 (2003), 5.)

In this exercise you will identify and select a piece of ethnographically-based research from an academic journal that speaks to an important issue (or issues) related to the quality of democracy in Latin America. The selected piece must be a work that does NOT already appear on the syllabus as a required reading. Your selection should be one published sometime over the last decade (since 2000). You should provide a review of the work in which you reflect on how the work illustrates or speaks to the problematic "quality of democracy" in the region. The text of the review should be in the range of 5-7 pages of text (double-spaced, 12 pt. font). Bibliographical citations can be included an additional page.

To begin, you should reviewing the following: Larry Diamond and Leonardo Molino, "The Quality of Democracy: An Overview," *Journal of Democracy* 15, 4 (2004): 20-31 at

http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_democracy/v015/15.4diamond.html#authbio2

You should then identify an appropriate work for your analysis. For the most part, standard political science journals are unlikely to feature many articles based on ethnographic approaches. The bibliographies of our required books in the courses are good places to begin your search for authors and related topics. Another good way to identify an article would be to browse through multi-disciplinary area studies journals (*European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, *The Latin Americanist*, *Latin American Research Review*, *Journal of Latin American Studies*, *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, *Latin American Politics and Society*, *Latin American Perspectives*) along with journals in the fields of sociology or anthropology. Here's some examples: *American Ethnologist*, *Ethnography*, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *Journal of Anthropology*, *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*, *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review*, *Qualitative Sociology*, *Critique of Anthropology*, *Current Anthropology*. Keep in mind that this is not an exhaustive list and you may find other academic journals (in areas ranging from medical anthropology to gender studies) that feature ethnographic works.

Contents and Submission

Each review should contain the following elements:

- 1) Summary of the major findings of the research (Do this in your own words---avoid loading up this brief paper with direct quotations).
- 2) Reflection on the methodology – can you identify its strengths and/or weaknesses?
- 3) Discussion of how the research relates or applies to issues related to the quality of democracy (Broadly speaking, what do the research results reveal about the quality of democracy and the state of citizenship in Latin America? Does the research confirm or contradict findings from any of our class readings? Does it suggest important new themes or ways of approaching/studying quality of democracy issues?). In short, make an argument as to why the work is relevant for our understanding of current Latin American democracy.

Everyone is required to consult with Professor Conaghan to insure that the work selected is an appropriate one for the assignment. Set up an appointment to consult with Professor Conaghan, or at a minimum, communicate by email in advance of beginning work on the paper.

Prior to the submission of the final draft, you must provide Prof Conaghan with a hard copy of your selected article (NO LATER THAN OCT 20) along with an email that contains the title and complete citation (including electronic address) of your journal article.

You can submit your work at any time during the term up until the final deadline of Friday, October 22. Essays submitted after the date will be subject to a substantial penalty. Essays completed in advance of the final date can be handed in during class, delivered during office hours, or deposited in the departmental essay mailbox in the

main office of the Political Studies department. Essays deposited in the dept. mailbox must be received no later than 4:00 pm on October 23 in order to be properly stamped with the date. A late penalty will be applied if the deadline is missed.

2. Final Essay Assignment—Your Imagined Ethnography (Due No Later than December 21)

The Assignment

Your research paper in this course will be an exercise in informed “imagining.” Your task in this assignment is to formulate an ethnographic research project that you would like to undertake (or at least can imagine undertaking) in Latin America. The challenge is to develop a project proposal.

Assumptions of the Assignment

The research project should be of a caliber appropriate for a fourth-year Honours thesis or perhaps a Master’s thesis. For the purpose of this exercise, it will be assumed that you have acquired at least working knowledge of the dominant language (Spanish or Portuguese) used in the country or countries that you are investigating. We will also assume that you have a modest but viable travel budget that would allow you to spend time living in the field.

Content and Submission

Proposal Abstract—Due no later than Dec 1.

You are required to submit the tentative title of your project along with an abstract (no more than 200 words) in the last class on December 1. You are required to submit a final essay on the topic outlined in your abstract – so you need to think carefully in advance and do some preliminary research on the topic you have selected.

The Proposal---Due no later than Dec 21.

The research project proposal should contain the following elements:

- 1) A project title (that clearly communicates what the research is about) and a list of keywords (no more than eight) that could be used to catalogue your research. The title and keywords should appear on your cover sheet along with your name and the course number.
- 2) A discussion of the subject of your research, the theoretical concerns addressed in your research, and the original empirical contribution that you plan to make (In short, make a case for your research project by explaining your topic, its importance and its relation to current debate(s) in Latin American politics.)
- 2) A description of your methodological approach and data collection techniques.
- 3) An assessment of possible barriers to research and how you plan to address them.

4) A list of relevant bibliographical sources (Your sources should include books and articles from academic journals. When relevant, journalistic sources can be included but they should not be the exclusive sources for the project. Keep in mind that you need to situate your project within a framework of current scholarly debate.) The bibliography and all citations in the text should follow Chicago style.

In preparing your essay, you may find it useful to do more background reading on qualitative research, ethnography and political anthropology. There are many excellent books on these topics. The following books may help you formulate some ideas; they are on 3-hr. reserve for our course in the Stauffer Library.

David M. Fetterman, *Ethnography: Step by Step* (2009)

Julie Scott Jones and Sal Wat, eds. *Ethnography in Social Science Practice* (2010)

Edward Schatz, ed. *Political Ethnography: What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power* (2010)

Criteria for Assessment of Assignment

The research proposals will be graded on the basis of the following components:

1) originality/creativity in subject or approach; 2) significance of theoretical / empirical contribution; 3) feasibility of project within parameters of assumptions outlined above; 4) “fit” between topic and methods; 5) quality of writing; 4) demonstrable background research on subject and methods; 5) “fit” between bibliography and project.

Your essay should be no longer than 10-12 pages of text (double spaced, 12 pt. type). You can add several additional pages for your bibliography. Be very sparing in your use of direct quotations from authors. You should be able to paraphrase and summarize the key arguments of authors in your own words. Be as specific as possible in your formulation of policy recommendations.

ALL essays must be submitted in hard copy. NO electronic attachments or faxes will be accepted. Students who plan to mail the essay from an out-of-town location should do so well in advance to insure that it is received in the Political Studies department by the deadline. A late penalty will be applied if the deadline is missed.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

PART 1: BARRIERS TO CITIZENSHIP AND DEMOCRACY

1. Looking Ahead: Class Introduction and Organization (Sept. 15)

We take a look at the key themes in the course and discuss how our sessions will be organized. We set the stage for our first newsroom exercise.

Reading: Read the syllabus in its entirety and get acquainted with our Moodle course site. Make a contribution to our first Discussion Forum.

2. Exploring Citizenship in the Urban Landscape (Sept 22)

We examine Latin American social structure and how class and geography intersect in Latin American cities.

Readings:

Alejandro Portes and Kelly Hoffman, "Latin American Class Structures: Their Composition and Change during the Neoliberal Era," *Latin American Research Review* 38, 1 (2003): 41-77 at

http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/latin_american_research_review/v038/38.1portes.html

Javier Auyero and Debora Swistun, *Flammable* (Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2)

3. Citizenship in the Urban Landscape (continued): The Production of Apathy and Confusion (Sept 29)

We examine how impoverished residents grapple with the experience of environmental degradation and state inaction in Argentina. What obstacles make collective action difficult?

Reading: Javier Auyero and Debora Swistun, *Flammable* (rest of the book)

4. Everyday Life in Fortress Brazil: The Architecture of Disjunctive Democracy (Oct 6)

We examine how urban design and architecture intersects with the widespread fear of crime in Latin America to produce radically different experiences of daily life and citizenship.

Readings: Teresa Caldeira, *City of Walls*, Chapters 2, and 6-8.

5. Violence and the Body in Latin American Democracies (Oct 13)

We look at the public and private perpetrators of violence: its impact on the "body" of citizens and the body politic.

Readings: Caldeira, *City of Walls*, Chapters 3-5, and 9

And select one of the following:

Angelina Godoy Snodgrass, "When 'Justice' is Criminal: Lynchings in Contemporary Latin America," *Theory and Society* 33 (2004): 621-651.

Daniel M. Goldstein, "Flexible Justice: Neoliberal Violence and 'Self-help' Security in Bolivia," *Critique of Anthropology* 25, 4 (December 2005) at

<http://coa.sagepub.com/content/25/4/389.full.pdf+html>

6. No class held (Oct 20)– but you must submit the hard copy of your selected article to Prof Conaghan by this date along with email containing full citation of article and its electronic citation address.

The ethnographic review is due no later than Friday, Oct 22 at 4:00 pm in the main office of the Political Studies Department.

You will receive the schedule for our first discussion class no later than Saturday, Oct 23. Everyone will be assigned at least one article to discuss.

7 and 8. Discussion Classes on Ethnographic Reviews (Oct 27 and Nov 3)

Students will have the opportunity to discuss their selected ethnographic articles. Each student will also act as discussant of at least one article. Discussants will be designated in advance of class. This exercise will allow us to survey a wide variety of ethnographic studies and should be useful for developing ideas for your final essay in the course.

**PART II---CHALLENGING THE STATUS QUO:
CHANGING LIVES AND SECURING RIGHTS**

Despite numerous obstacles, previously excluded groups across Latin America have demonstrated a capacity to organize and make demands on the political system. We examine the factors that shape the success or failures of these new movements.

9. Contentious Politics in Urban Life (November 10)

We examine how networks and organizational strategies affect capacities for collective action.

Readings:

Javier Auyero, Pablo Lapegna and Fernanda Page Poma, "Patronage Politics and Contentious Collective Action: A Recursive Relationship," *Latin American Politics and Society* 51, 3 (Fall 2009): 1-31 at

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1548-2456.2009.00054.x/pdf>

Paul Dosh, "Tactical Innovation, Democratic Governance and Mixed Motives: Popular Movement Resilience in Peru and Ecuador," *Latin American Politics and Society* 51, 1 (Spring 2009) at

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1548-2456.2009.00041.x/abstract>

Recommended Viewing: See the Photo Essay by Paul Dosh and James Lerager, "Demanding the Land: Urban Social Movements in Peru and Ecuador." At

<http://www.webphotoessay.com/dlcontent.html>

10. Identity and Indigenous Politics (Nov 17)

We examine the construction of indigenous identity(ies) and its impact on national politics.

Readings:

Mark Goodale, "Reclaiming Modernity: Indigenous Cosmopolitanism and the Coming of the Second Revolution in Bolivia," *American Ethnologist* 33, 4 (November 2006)

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1525/ae.2006.33.4.634/pdf>

Nancy Postero, "Morales's MAS Government: Building Indigenous Popular Hegemony in Bolivia," *Latin American Perspectives* 37, 3 (May 2010) at

http://journals1.scholarsportal.info/details.xqy?uri=/0094582x/v37i0003/18_mmg.xml

11. Explaining Breakthroughs: New Claimants in the Policy Process (Nov 18)

We consider how policy breakthroughs are being made in new areas of social policy.

Jordi Diez, "The Importance of Policy Frames in Contentious Politics: Mexico's Antihomophobic Campaign," *Latin American Research Review* 45, 1 (2010) at

http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/latin_american_research_review/v045/45.1.diez.html

And select one of the following:

Merike Blofield, "Feudal Enclaves and Political Reforms: Domestic Workers in Latin America," *Latin American Research Review* 44, 1 (2009) at

http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/latin_american_research_review/v044/44.1.blofield.html

Merike Blofield and Liesel Haas, "Defining Democracy: Reforming Laws on Women's Rights in Chile, 1990-2002," *Latin American Politics and Society* 47, 3 (2005) at

http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/latin_american_politics_and_society/v047/47.3blofield.html

12. Your Imagined Ethnographies (Dec. 1)

We will use our final class to discuss the topics that you have selected for your proposed ethnographic research. Your abstract is due in class.



News and Research

The Internet and Queen's library resources offer a wide range of materials that can help you keep up with current events in Latin America. The following resources offer English-language materials. Readers of Spanish and Portuguese will find even more outlets for current events coverage, including daily newspapers from the country of your choice. For a daily round-up of news from a variety of sources, you can execute news searches by topics in the University of Texas, LANIC, <http://www1.lanic.utexas.edu/la/region/news/>. The websites of major North American newspapers also features coverage of the region. Among the sites to keep in mind are *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Miami Herald*, and the *Christian Science Monitor*. Searches of newspapers from Latin America (in English translation) can be conducted by using the *World News Connection*, *Factiva*, and *Lexis/Nexis* on-line services. These are available through the library website.

One of the best sources for consolidated news coverage is the *Latin American Weekly Report*. The newsletter features weekly news updates along with monthly regional reports. Access to the report is available by logging through the Electronic Journal Collection of the Library. Institutional sties often offer news and analyses. For example, news on human rights issues in the region can be found in Human Rights Watch Americas (www.hrw.org/americas). The Organization of American States documents its own activities (www.oas.org). For political data, consult the Political Database of the Americas at Georgetown University(www.georgetown.edu/pdba). Economic data and research reports can be found on the site of the Inter-American Development Bank (www.iadb.org/idbanamerica) and the U.N. Economic Commission on Latin America and the Caribbean (www.eclac.org). Other venues for research on Latin America include the Kellogg Institute of Notre Dame,(<http://www.nd.edu/~kellogg/publications/workingpapers/index.shtml>); The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, http://wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=topics.home&topic_id=1425 The Center for International Policy, (<http://www.ciponline.org/>), and The Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL),(www.focal.ca).

Students can search scholarly literature by using the research database for Latin American studies, PRISMA which is available through the library website at <http://primsa.chadwyck.com/home.do> English-language journals on Latin America include the following sources: *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, *Latin American Politics and Society*, *Latin American Perspectives*, *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*, *Journal of Latin American Geography*, *Journal of Latin American Studies*, *Latin American Research Review*, and *NACLA Report on the Americas*.

Suggestions for Further Reading

If you enjoy the ethnographic approach to understanding Latin America, here is a list of more books in this genre.

Auyero, Javier. *Poor People's Politics: Peronist Survival Networks and the Legacy of Evita*.

Cabezas, Amalia. *Economies of Desire: Sex and Tourism in the Dominican Republic and Cuba*.

Desmond Arias, Enrique. *Drugs and Democracy in Rio de Janeiro*

Colloredo-Mansfeld, Rudi. *Fighting Like a Community: Andean Civil Society in an Era of Indian Uprisings*.

Farmer, Paul. *Aids and Accusation: Haiti and the Geography of Blame*

Gill, Leslie. *The School of the Americas: Military Training and Political Violence in the Americas*.

Goldstein, Daniel. *The Spectacular City: Violence and Performance in Urban Bolivia*

Goldstein, Donna. *Laughter Out of Place: Race, Class, Violence and Sexuality in a Rio Shantytown*

Gómez-Burns, Macarena. *Where Memory Dwells: Culture and State Violence in Chile*

Gregory, Steven. *The Devil Behind the Mirror: Globalization and Politics in the Dominican Republic*

Gutman, Matthew. *Romance of Democracy: Compliant Defiance in Mexico*

Nelly, Patty. *Lydia's Open Door: Inside Mexico's Most Modern Brothel*

Lazar, Sian. *El Alto, Rebel City: Self and Citizenship in Andean Bolivia*

Nelson, Diane. *A Finger in the Wound: Body Politics in Quincentennial Guatemala*

Paley, Julia. *Marketing Democracy: Power and Social Movements in Post-Dictatorial Chile*.

Pine, Adrienne. *Working Hard, Drinking Hard: On Violence and Survival in Honduras*.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. *Death without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil*

Taussig, Michael. *Law in a Lawless Land: Diary of a Limpieza in Colombia*

Tate, Winifred. *Counting the Dead: The Culture and Politics of Human Rights Activism in Colombia*.