

HIS 209  
Rhodes College  
Spring, 1999

**Contemporary Latin American History**  
MWF 10:20-11:20

Instructor: Mike LaRosa  
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Hours: 8-10 am, MWF and by appointment  
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**Description:**

This course will survey the history of Modern Latin America from the period of Independence (about 1810-1824) to the present. The course will address the economic and social development of the Latin American region. Certain themes, such as religion, poverty, violence and culture will be explored in depth.

**Books:**

There are five required books for purchase at the college bookstore.

Braun, Herbert, *Our Guerrillas, Our Sidewalks: A Journey into the Violence of Colombia.*  
Bushnell, David and Macaulay, Neill. *The Emergence of Latin America in the Nineteenth Century.*  
Eakin, Marshall. *Brazil: The Once and Future Country.*  
García Márquez, Gabriel. *Three Novellas.*  
Levine, Robert M., and Sebe Bom Meihy, Jose Carlos. *The Life and Death of Carolina Maria de Jesus.*

**Grading and Attendance:**

The final course grade will be based on four assignments: Each student is required to take a standard, in-class mid-term and final exam, write a critical essay on one of the required texts and take weekly quizzes based on the reading and class material. Students who wish to do well in this course will want to attend class on a regular basis.

**Viernes Social:**

LaRosa will lecture on MW and Fridays, basically, will be dedicated to quizzes, discussions and video presentations. Each student will be paired with one other student to prepare the Friday quiz. Additionally, three films will be shown out-of-class during the semester; students are expected to attend.

### **Extra Credit:**

Students can earn extra credit in this course by doing extra work. There are three possible areas (but I'm always open to student suggestions):

1. Kidnapping project: read Gabriel García Márquez's *News of a Kidnapping* and compare it to the Braun text.
2. Carolina Project: read *Child of the Dark* and compare it to Levine and Sebe's book.
3. Soccer project: read essays, chapters or articles by one North American and one Brazilian who have written about soccer comparing their styles and interests. (Choices here would be Pelé and Roberto da Matta versus Janet Lever, Joseph Page, Robert M. Levine or Tony King.)

### **Lecture, reading and exam schedule:**

Week 1: Wednesday 13 Jan.

Introduction to Course and a kind of independence (Friday).

Reading: Read "Chronicle of a Death Foretold" by Monday; also, chapters 1-3 from BAM.

Week 2: Monday 18 Jan.

Early National Period: Chaos, *Caudillos* and Church.

No class on Monday--Martin Luther King Birthday.

2-page summary due of "chronicle" (550 words)

Film: Burn! By Gilo Pontecorvo

Week 3: Monday 25 Jan.

Export-led economics in early 19th century Latin America

Reading: BAM, chapters 4-7

Week 4: Monday 1 Feb.

The Emergence of the State in Colombia, Argentina and Mexico...

Reading: BAM 7-9

Week 5: Monday 8 Feb.

The Caribbean

Reading: BAM, Chapters 12-13

Week 6: Monday 15 Feb.

1898: Cuba, Colombia and the Invention of Panama.

Mid-term exam: Friday 19 Feb (in class).

Week 7: Monday 22 Feb.

The Mexican Revolution.

Film: "Viva Zapata."

Week 8: Monday 1 March.

Indigenismo: The Forging of a Latin American Cultural Identity.

Video on Friday: The Americas: "Builders of Images."

Week 9: Monday 8 March.

No Class--Spring Break

Week 10: Monday 15 March

Brazil

Reading: Eakin (entire text; but especially chapters 3-5 plus conclusion)

Week 11: Monday 22 March

Some Revolutions in Latin America: Guatemala and Cuba.

Week 12: Monday 29 March

Latin American Literature.

Reading: García Márquez: read the three novellas in *Three Novellas*.

No class on Friday: Easter Recess.

Week 13: Monday 6 April

Violence in Contemporary Latin America.

Reading: Braun--entire text

Film: "Men With Guns"

No class on Friday--Easter Recess.

Week 14: Monday 13 April

Women in Contemporary Latin America: The Case of Carolina Maria de Jesus in Brazil.  
Reading: Levine and Sebe Bom Meihy.

Week 15: Monday 15 April

The History of Liberation Theology in Latin America.

Week 16: Monday 22 April

Popular Culture in Latin America: Fútbol, samba, candomblé and vallenatos.

Reading: From Page on Brazilian soccer.

Review paper due on last day of class.