

Pop Culture in Latin America
Anthropology 390-0-29
Latin American Studies 391-0-28

Dr. Nell Haynes

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Fall 2017

Class: Monday 2:00-4:50

Office Hours: M/W by appointment



Course Description

Popular culture is an arena in which Latin Americans make cultural offerings their own through creativity and reappropriation, and functions as a resource in the practices of everyday life. Pop culture forms can be key sites for the formation of identities, for the ways in which people make sense of the world, and understand their location within it. This course looks at a variety of pop culture forms from Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America, and South America, including music, dance, sport, television and film, social media, art, beauty, and consumer products. Taking an anthropological approach to this subject, we will interrogate the ways that pop culture draws from, comments upon, and at times resists political issues, notions of authenticity, social problems, and inequalities. In the context of Latin America, race, gender, and class are important conceptual frameworks from which to begin. In this course we will ask the following questions: How do understandings of gender, class, and race shape the ways they are represented and experienced in popular culture forms? Why are gender and race such frequent themes in popular culture? and How does comparison between different contexts enrich our understanding of the key concepts of this course? We will read both theoretical discussions of pop culture as well as ethnographic and historical examples, following these readings with careful discussion. Students will explore these relationships by way of individual research projects, culminating in both an academic paper as well as a creative project that translates the student's conclusions for an audience of non-academics. Students will leave the course with an increased understanding of the concepts of spectacle, popular politics, race/ethnicity, and gender/sexuality that exceed 'normative' definitions, and the ways in which they articulate with discussions of popular culture representations and identifications.

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to

1. Define pop culture in contrast to folk culture, high culture, popular culture, mass culture, etc.
2. relate pop culture to key issues in anthropology, the social sciences, and humanities
3. critically engage with pop culture as it relates to issues of social inequality
4. understand the relationship between pop culture and politics—local, regional, national, and global
5. critique some approaches to the study of pop culture
6. broaden and deepen their knowledge of Latin America while thinking critically about regional studies approaches
7. enhance their creative, critical, and informed thinking about pop culture
8. write scholarly work that is understandable to a non-academic audience

Requirements

Participation	15%	Ongoing
Discussion Questions	15%	Ongoing
Country Presentation	15%	Ongoing
Discussion Leadership	10%	Ongoing
Project Proposal	10%	30 October
Project Presentation	10%	20 November
Project	25%	6 December

Details about each requirement may be found after the course schedule

About Attendance and Participation

Anthropology is constantly in motion, building off old ideas and incorporating new ones, so questions, discussion, and critique are welcome. We practice applying the ideas of the authors we read to new situations and contexts. Students are expected to offer opinions and examples, and pose challenges to what we discuss. Stereotypes and prejudices often exist in reference to material that is new, unusual, and foreign. Our challenge is to become aware of these stereotypes and question assumptions so that we may analyze and understand new material unimpaired by biases. Because this is an important time to explore ideas and learn new ways of understanding the world, participation is not only part of the final grade, but is necessary to build the kind of understanding required to successfully complete assignments. To make sure you are in the best possible position to get a good participation grade:

1. Complete the required reading. Don't worry about understanding absolutely everything, but take notes about parts that strike you as especially intriguing, important, or disconnected. Think about how it relates to things you have experienced in different contexts. Think about when it was written and by whom. Think about whether you agree or disagree and why.

2. Be prepared to ask questions. Whether they are about something you don't understand in the reading, or are simply about how other people reacted to a specific detail, questions help move class discussion along.

3. Be open to new ideas. Anthropology often challenges our assumptions about the world. Newer readings in anthropology often challenge older ideas that were common in anthropology. And hopefully, you will even challenge some of the readings that you think miss the point. You don't have to agree with everything that you read or hear, but take the time to think about it carefully before you decide. Or allow yourself to not decide. But most importantly, be respectful to all the opinions offered in class, and think about why someone might agree or disagree with them.

4. Participate in ways that are productive. Please remember that you may have a funny story related to the class discussion, but unless it advances our thinking on an anthropological topic, your anecdote might not move discussion in a productive manner.

5. Be respectful. Perhaps most importantly, respecting the classroom, your fellow classmates, and the instructor will help you succeed. Paying attention to the discussion and finding thoughtful ways to contribute will make everyone's experience more pleasant.

*Students are responsible for all material in the readings, lectures, and audiovisual presentations in class. Readings should be completed before the day for which they are assigned. It is crucial to link the ideas in readings to those in lectures and discussions.

*In the case of any major medical or other type of attendance issue, please speak with the professor during office hours if at all possible. If not possible, please communicate by email. Be advised that doing so early is key to creating a workable solution to problems. Last-minute emails will not be met with sympathy.

Grading Standards

- A Superior: Student shows excellent critical analysis in oral contributions and writing; all assignments turned in on time. 90-100 (A 93-100, A- 90-92)
- B Very Good: Solid work evidenced by careful synthesis of reading, timely contributions to class discussion, and clear, logical writing; all assignments turned in on time. 80-90 (B+ 87-89, B 83-86, B- 80-82)
- C Satisfactory: Work demonstrates some understanding of materials and an average performance in written assignments and class discussion; all assignments turned in on time. 70-80 (C+ 77-79, C 73-76, C- 70-72)
- D Inconsistent: Meager performance in all assignments and class discussion; late in turning in written work. 60-70
- F Failing: Student makes minimal effort, shows little understanding of assignments, and turns in incomplete or unacceptable work. Below 60

If you have a major medical problem or family concern that requires you to miss several classes, please provide documentation and we will do our best to help you stay involved. Additionally, please make every effort to come to class on time so as not to disrupt discussion once it has begun. Leaving early is also disruptive, so please limit bathroom breaks and leave class early only when absolutely necessary, providing a reason beforehand.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism is strictly forbidden. All work you turn in must be your own. This means no borrowing of ideas or wording from friends' work, other author's work, or the Internet. Any time another person's work is used, it absolutely **MUST** be cited properly. Suspected violations of academic integrity will be reported to the Dean's office. For more information on Northwestern's academic integrity policies see www.weinberg.northwestern.edu/handbook/integrity. Student work may also be checked using electronic databases.

Academic Accommodations

Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to register with AccessibleNU (accessiblenu@northwestern.edu; 847-467-5530) and provide professors with an accommodation notification from AccessibleNU, preferably within the first two weeks of class. All information will remain confidential.

Laptop Policy

To be negotiated

Required Readings

All readings are available on Canvas

If you encounter a problem with a file or link, please email the professor as soon as possible.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: No Class

- Please prepare for week 2 by reading “Introduction” from *Pop Culture Latin America!*

WEEK 2: 25 September *Pop Culture*

Reading Due

- “Introduction” from *Pop Culture Latin America!*

In Class

- Introductions
- Definitions of Important Terms and Approaches
- Discussion of Pop Culture forms
- Review Syllabus

Presentation

- Colombia: Prof Haynes

WEEK 3: 2 October *Class, Consumption, and Globalization*

Readings Due

- *El Mall*, Arlene Davila (Chapters Introduction, 4, 5, and Conclusion)
- *Distinction*, Pierre Bourdieu
- “Modernity, identity, and neoliberalism in the 1990s,” in *Identity and Modernity in Latin America*, Jorge Larain

Presentations

Costa Rica _____
Argentina _____

WEEK 4: 9 October *Sport, Class, and Nationalism*

Readings Due

- “Fútbol, Politicians, and the People: Populism and Politics in Argentina,” *Sport in Latin American Society: Past and Present*, Vic Duke and Liz Crolley
- “The Place of Women in Argentinian Football,” *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, María Graciela-Rodríguez
- “Football: Forging Nationhood and Masculinities in Costa Rica,” *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, Carlos Sandoval García
- *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson (Chapters 1 and 4)
- *Sport and Social Class*, Pierre Bourdieu

In Class

Discuss Projects

Presentation

Bolivia _____
Mexico _____

WEEK 5: 16 October *Social Inequalities and Performance*

Readings Due

- “Wrestling with Lucha Libre,” Nell Haynes

- “Kiss with a Fist,” *Journal of Language and Sexuality*, Nell Haynes
- “The Staging of the Popular,” and “The Popular and Popularity: From Political to Theatrical Representation,” in *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity*, Nestor Garcia Canclini
- “From Superhero to National Hero: The Populist Myth of El Santo,” *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture*, Kerry T. Hegarty
- Strategic Framing, Emotions, And *Superbarrio*—Mexico City's Masked Crusader, *Mobilization: An International Quarterly*, Jorge Cadena-Roa

Presentation

Venezuela _____

Peru _____

WEEK 6: 23 October *Music and Revolution*

Readings Due

- “The Venezuelan government’s newest opponent is a state-funded orchestra,” *The Conversation*, Yana Genchova Stainova <https://theconversation.com/the-venezuelan-governments-newest-opponent-is-a-state-funded-orchestra-79975>
- “Mambo! A First Glimpse of El Sistema,” in *Changing Lives: Gustavo Dudamel, El Sistema, and the Transformative Power of Music*, Tricia Tunstall
- *Punk and Revolution*, Shane Greene (Warning, Interpretations 1 and 7)
- “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Culture Economy,” *Media and Cultural Studies: Keywords*, Arjun Appadurai

Presentation

Honduras _____

WEEK 7: 30 October *The Politics of Eating and Drinking*

Readings Due

- *Working Hard, Drinking Hard*, Adrienne Pine (Chapters)
- “Going Bananas,” in *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*, Cynthia Enloe

In Class

Bananas is my Business film

Presentation

Nicaragua _____

Chile _____

DUE: Project Proposal

WEEK 8: 6 November *Media and the Public Sphere*

Readings Due

- “Spectacles of Sexuality: Televisionary Activism in Nicaragua,” in *Cultural Anthropology*, Cymene Howe
- “Our Telenovela, Ourselves,” *ReVista: Harvard Review of Latin America*, Omar Rincón
- *Social Media in Northern Chile: Posting the Extraordinarily Ordinary*, Nell Haynes (Chapters 1 and 6)
- *The Public Sphere*, Jürgen Habermas
- *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, Walter Benjamin

- “The Curation of the Self in the Age of the Internet,” Erin Taylor

In Class

Films from Northern Chile

Presentation

Brazil _____

WEEK 9: 13 November *Festival & Ritual, Space & Place*

Readings Due

- “Night Becomes Day: Carnival, Contested Spaces, and the Black Movement in Bahia” *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*, Kenneth Williamson
- “From Brazilians to Latinos? Racialization and Latinidad in the Making of Brazilian Carnival in Los Angeles,” *Latino Studies*, Bernadete Beserra
- “Images and Reflections: Ritual, Drama, Carnival, Film, and Spectacle in Cultural Performance,” *The Anthropology of Performance*, Victor Turner
- *Society of the Spectacle*, Guy Debord

In Class

Wrapping Up Discussion

WEEK 10: 20 November

In Class

Project presentations

FINAL PAPER DUE: 6 December

By email, 11:59pm

ASSIGNMENTS

Discussion Questions (15%)

Throughout the quarter, each student should submit 7 questions/thoughts/provocations for class discussion. Each is worth 2 points (everyone gets a free point if they complete all 7). Ideal questions relate topics from the reading to larger issues in the social sciences and humanities (social inequality, globalization, etc.) and may draw on current issues. These questions may also draw from previous readings in the course or other courses (provided adequate context is available). Questions must be **emailed** to the professor by midnight the evening before class (Sunday night, in this case). These questions are graded separately from discussion questions required as a discussion leader (see below).

Country Presentation (15%)

Each student will provide their classmates with relevant contextual information about the history, politics, and current events of a country about which we are reading. Students should prepare an oral presentation accompanied by a handout for their classmates (if emailed to the professor by midnight the evening before, copies will be provided). The handout should include at least three book, chapter, or article sources that aided in the presentation or for further reading. You may also include online sources (CIA factbook, blogs, popular news, etc.), but these do not count towards the 3 sources. The presentation may include audio-visual aids, but this is not required. Students will present on their chosen country the week *before* the reading about the country is due. This means you will have to at least skim the chapter or article a week in advance.

Discussion Leadership (10%)

Students, after presenting to their classmates about the history of a particular country, are then responsible for leading discussion based on the article(s) or chapter(s) relating to that country. Students should prepare 3 discussion questions for their classmates (these do not count toward the 7 discussion questions required on other readings). These questions should follow the same standards outlined above. Please email these questions to the professor before class begins.

Project Proposal (10%)

Students should submit **by email** a 2-3 page paper in “proposal” format to introduce the topic of their final project. The proposal should include:

- topic to be studied
- relationship to pop culture
- contexts of importance (historical, political, issues of social inequality, etc.)
- related theoretical issues (globalization, nationalism, hegemony, etc.)
- method of study (ethnographic, archival, etc.)

Project Presentation (10%)

Each student on the last day of class will give a 15-minute presentation about their project. Audio-visual aids are encouraged!

Final Project (25%)

Students will fulfill the final course requirement by writing a 7-10 page research paper that explores in depth a form of pop culture in a specific Latin American context. Contexts including

the Caribbean, Latin American diaspora in other world regions, and cross-cultural comparisons are admissible. These papers should parallel many of the readings of this course and relate the chosen form of pop culture to deeper social issues at play in the specific context. For inspiration, the themes and key works listed below may be helpful. **Submission by email**

IMPORTANT THEMES AND FURTHER READINGS

Popular Culture

Pop Culture Latin America! Media, Arts, and Lifestyle

Inventing Popular Culture: From Folklore to Globalization, John Storey

Rethinking Popular Culture: Contemporary Perspectives in Cultural Studies, Chandra Mukerji, Michael Schudson

Hop on Pop: The Politics and Pleasures of Popular Culture, Henry Jenkins, Jane Shattuc, and Tara McPherson

Understanding Popular Culture, John Fiske

Pop Culture: The Culture of Everyday Life, Shirley Fedorak

PopAnth.com, “Hot Buttery Culture”

Pop Culture in Latin America

Pop Culture Latin America! Media, Arts, and Lifestyle, Lisa Shaw and Stephanie Dennison

Latin American Popular Culture, Arthur A. Natella, Jr.

Memory and Modernity: Popular Culture in Latin America, William Rowe and Vivian Schelling

Popular Culture Forms

Consumption

Stuff, Daniel Miller

Consumer Culture in Latin America, John Sinclair and Anna Cristina Pertierra

“The Dream World of Mass Consumption,” in *Rethinking Popular Culture*, Rosalind Williams

“The Rapid Rise of Supermarkets in Latin America: Challenges and Opportunities for Development,” *Development Policy Review*, Thomas Reardon and Julio A. Berdegúe

Salvadoran Imaginaries: Mediated Identities and Cultures of Consumption, Cecilia Rivas

Fashion

“All Together, Now: Producing Fashion at the Global Level,” *The Society Pages*, Claudio E. Benzecry <https://thesocietypages.org/papers/all-together-now/>

Blue Jeans: The art of the ordinary, Daniel Miller and Sophie Woodward

Beauty

Pretty Modern: Beauty, Sex, and Plastic Surgery in Brazil, Alexander Edmonds

Making Up the Difference: Women, Beauty, and Direct Selling in Ecuador, Erynn Masi de Casanova

“Risks and strategies of Amazonian households: Retail sales and mass-market consumption among *caboclo* women,” in *Economic Anthropology*, Jessica Andrea Chelekis

Queen for a Day: Transformistas, Beauty Queens, and the Performance of Femininity in Venezuela, Marcia Ochoa

Music

Music in the Andes: Experiencing Music, Expressing Culture, Thomas Turino
The City of Musical Memory: Salsa, Record Grooves and Popular Culture in Cali, Colombia, LA Waxer

“Embracing Hip Hop as Their Own: Hip Hop and Black Racial Identity in Brazil” *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture*, Bernd Reiter and Gladys L. Mitchell

“Mexican or Chilean: Mexican Ranchera Music and Nationalism in Chile,” *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture*, Jedrek Putta Mularski

“Subversive Instruments: Protest and Politics of MPB and the Nueva Canción,” *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture*, Krista Brune

Performance, Theater, and Dance

Holy Terrors: Latin American Women Perform, Diana Taylor and Roselyn Costantino

“Moscow Learns the Mambo: Latin America and Internationalism in Soviet Popular Culture,” in *Soviet Internationalism after Stalin: Interaction and Exchange between the USSR and Latin America during the Cold War*, Tobias Rupprecht

“Japanese Perceptions of Argentine Tango: Cultural and Gender Differences,” *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture*, Etsuko Toyoda

“Social Dramas and Ritual Metaphors,” *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors*, Victor Turner

Literature

The New Novel in Latin America: Politics and Popular Culture After the Boom, Philip Swanson

“Pop culture and literature in Latin America,” Review: Literature and Arts of the Americas, Carlos Monsiváis

“Intoxicated Writing: Onda Writers and the Drug Experience in 1960s Mexico,” *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture*, Hugo M. Viera

“The ‘Dual’-ing Images of la Malinche and la Virgen de Guadalupe in Cisneros's *The House on Mango Street*,” *MELUS*, Leslie Petty

Comic Books

“From Cult to Comics: The Representation of Gonzalo Guerrero as a Cultural Hero in Mexican Popular Culture,” *A Twice-Told Tale: Reinventing the Encounter in Iberian/Iberian American Literature and Film*, Roseanna Mueller

“El santos vs tetona mendoza: Wrestling with Mexico's experimental comic book narratives,” *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture*, Daniel Ribot

Film & Cinema

“The Melodrama in Latin American Films, Telenovelas and the Currency of a Popular Form,” in *Wide Angle*, Ana M. Lopez

Remaking Brazil: Contested National Identities in Contemporary Brazilian Cinema, Tatiana Signorelli Heise

Television

“Media and Culture in Latin America,” in *International Media Research: A Critical Survey*, Elizabeth Fox

Drugs, Thugs, and Divas: Telenovelas and Narco-Dramas in Latin America, O. Hugo Benavides

“Gender, Class, and Suffering in the Argentinean *Telenovela Milagros*, An Italian Perspective,” *Women and the Media: Diverse Perspectives*, Giovanna del Negro

Radio

“Culture, neo-liberalism and citizen communication: the case of Radio Tierra in Chile” in *Global Media and Communication*, Juan Poblete

Latin American Broadcasting: From Tango to Telenovela, Elizabeth Fox

“Violeta Parra, Radio Chilena, and the 'Battle in Defense of the Authentic' during the 1950s in Chile,” *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture*, Ericka Verba

Social Media

How the World Changed Social Media, Daniel Miller, Elisabetta Costa, Nell Haynes, Tom McDonald, Razvan Nicolescu, Jolynna Sinanan, Juliano Spyer, Shriram Venkatraman, and XinYuan Wang

Visual Art & Architecture

Miniature Messages: The Semiotics and Politics of Latin American Postage Stamps, Jack Childs

The Maya of Modernism: Art, Architecture, and Film, Jesse Lerner

“Of Populists and Mutants: Populism Rising,” *Anthropology News*, Agnes Mondragón and Steven Schwartz

Food

Banana Cultures: Agriculture, Consumption, and Environmental Change in Honduras and the United States, John Soluri

Alcohol

Alcohol in Latin America: A Social and Cultural History, Gretchen Pierce and Aurea Toxqui

“The Rise of the Saloon,” *Rethinking Popular Culture*, Roy Rosenzweig

Sport

Sport in Latin American Society: Past and Present, Lamartine DaCosta and J A Mangan

Football in Sun and Shadow, Eduardo Galeano

Sport, Culture & Media: The Unruly Trinity, David Rowe

“The Ambiguities of Football, Politics, Culture, and Social Transformation in Latin America” in *Sociological Research Online*, T. Bar-On, <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/2/4/2.html>

Festivals

Brazil, Carnival of the Oppressed: Lula and the Brazilian Workers' Party, S Branford, B Kucinski

“The ludic body: Ritual, desire, and cultural identity in the American Super Bowl and the carnival of Rio,” *Public Worlds*, L. Langman

Religion

Pentecostalism in Latin America: Characteristics and Controversies” in *Social Compass*, Paul Freston

“The Religious Factor,” in *Identity and Modernity in Latin America*, Jorge Larain

Jesus and the Gang: Youth Violence and Christianity in Urban Honduras, Jon Wolseth

“Goddess of the Américas in the Decolonial Imaginary: Beyond the Virtuous Virgen/Pagan Puta Dichotomy,” *Feminist Studies*, Irene Lara

“Transnational meanings of *La Virgen de Guadalupe*: Religiosity, space and culture at Plaza Mexico,” *Culture and Religion*, Macarena Gómez-Barris

Key Issues

Base & Superstructure

The Essential Frankfurt School Reader, Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt
Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory, Raymond Williams
Modern Culture and Critical Theory: Art, Politics, and the Legacy of the Frankfurt School, Russel A. Berman

Globalization

Modernity at Large, Arjun Appadurai
Production of Culture/Cultures of Production, Paul Du Gay

Modernity

Identity and Modernity in Latin America, Jorge Larrain
Modernity Bluff
Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity, Néstor García Canclini

Class

Distinction, Pierre Bourdieu

Race

Critical Race Theory: An Introduction, Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic
Critical Race Feminism: A Reader, Adrienne Katherine Wing
Mestizo Genomics: Race Mixture, Nation, & Science in Latin America, Peter Wade, et al.
Race and Ethnicity in Latin America, Peter Wade

Gender & Sexuality

Race and Sex in Latin America, Peter Wade
Cholas and Pishtacos: Tales of Race and Sex in the Andes, Mary Weismantel

Social Inequality/Subalternism

“The Promise and Dilemma of Subaltern Studies: Perspectives from Latin American History,” *The American Historical Review*, Florencia E. Mallon
“Can the Subaltern Speak?” *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, Gayatri Spivak
Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Freire, Paulo

Nationalism

Imagined Communities, Benedict Anderson
Mexican National Identity: Memory, Innuendo, and Popular Culture, William H. Beezley

Citizenship

Citizenship: Comparison and Perspectives, T.A. Aleinikoff and D. Klusmeyer

Transnationalism/Migration

Beyond El Barrio: Everyday Life in Latina/o America, Gina M. Pérez, Frank Guridy, and Adrian Burgos
“Inventing Latinismo: The Creation of ‘Hispanic’ Panethnicity in the United States,” *Journal of American Folklore*, Laurie Kay Sommers

Conflict

“Pop Culture and Latin America’s Conflicts,” in *E-International Relations*, W. Alejandro Sanchez, <http://www.e-ir.info/2016/12/03/pop-culture-and-latin-americas-conflicts/>

Hegemony

Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci, Antonio Gramsci

Spectacle

“The Anthropology of Theater and Spectacle,” *Annual Review of Anthropology*, William O. Beaman

Art Exhibits of Interest

Tarsila do Amaral: Inventing Modern Art in Brazil

Art Institute of Chicago, October 8, 2017–January 7, 2018 (free Thursdays from 5:00-8:00 with Illinois ID)

Museum of Mexican Art

(free)

Race: Are We So Different? (An Exhibition created by the American Anthropological Association)

Chicago History Museum, Beginning November 11 (free Tuesdays from 12:30-7:30)

Edra Soto: Open 24 Hours

Museum of Contemporary Art, Beginning October 21 (free Tuesdays with Illinois ID)

The Block Museum also has some excellent exhibitions this fall, some of which intersect with course themes.