

LAS 6938/4935

ANG 6930

Latin American Elites: Critical Perspectives Gained from “Studying Up”

Fall 2022

Tuesdays 1:55-4:55

Instructor: Dr. Carmen Martínez Novo

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Preferred method to contact instructor is via e-mail. Please, make appointment for office hours too.

Course description:

This course examines Latin American elites, a group of people who by virtue of position (enjoying economic, political, social and/or cultural advantages) exercise influence in society, paying special attention to what defines them as power holders, their sub-cultures, histories, strategies of class (and racial) reproduction, and relations to racialized groups and the poor. The course has a gender component as it gives special attention to elite women who often are in charge of maintaining the social networks, class culture, and the relations with the vulnerable. Anthropologists have argued that in order to understand power scholars need to investigate ethnographically not only marginalized groups, but also those who exercise authority. This class will explore the critical perspectives gained from “studying up,” as well as the theoretical and methodological difficulties of doing this kind of work.

Course Goals

- Teach about the cultures of power and privilege in Latin America in historical and comparative perspective.
- Teach about the methodological difficulties of conducting research on the powerful due to problems of access and issues of representation.
- Teach how the study of the powerful can contribute to social justice and social change goals.
- Teach an approach that conceptualizes power as being embodied in particular individuals, groups and institutions and as emerging from the agency of these individuals and collectives.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Students read and critique classic and more recent scholarship on Latin American elites.
2. Students discuss the perspectives gained from the study of those who hold power and influence in society as well as the theoretical and methodological difficulties of doing this kind of work.

3. Students learn the differences and similarities between national Latin American elites.
4. Students learn to critically review a body of literature and to identify the main debates on a particular theme. This skill helps with proposal, dissertation and article writing.
5. Students present their group work in class orally and with the help of multi-media technology (power point, filmed interviews, photography, music, etc.). This activity helps create group and social skills as well as communication skills.

Materials:

Larissa Lomnitz and Marisol Pérez-Lizaur. 1987. *A Mexican Elite Family*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Hugo Cerón-Anaya. 2019. *Privilege at Play: Class, Race, Gender and Golf in Mexico*. Oxford University Press.

Ana Ramos-Zayas. 2020. *Parenting Empires: Class, Whiteness and the Moral Economy of Privilege in Latin America*. Duke University Press.

Students may purchase some books, particularly those that have been published more recently (Ceron-Anaya and Ramos-Zayas). **All books are available at Smather's Library's Automatic Reserves (ARES)**. We are reading selections of the books instead of whole books. The articles and chapters that are not listed above but are listed in the schedule will be available in canvas under the files section.

Components of course grade and value of each activity:

For undergraduate students taking this class:

1. Class attendance and participation 10 % (7% attendance and class exercises, 3 % participation (participation must be **informed** by the readings for the day)
2. Group presentation of the readings for one session 20 % (groups of 2 to 3 students present on the readings of a day of their choice)
3. Mid-term paper 35 % (essay analyzing the readings)
4. Final Paper 35 % (essay analyzing the readings of the second part of the semester. Students may also opt for a research paper on a particular elite group or an elite related issue)
5. Total: 100%

For graduate students taking this class:

1. Attendance and participation 10 % (5% attendance and class exercises 5% participation which must be **informed** by readings)
2. Group presentation on readings for one session 20 % (groups of 2 to 3 students present on the readings of a day of their choice)
3. Mid-term paper 30 % (essay on readings)
4. Research Paper 40 % (bibliographic review on a particular Latin American elite or Latin American elite related issue or problem, or paper based on ethnographic and bibliographic research that involves “studying up” in a Latino/Latin American context)
5. Total: 100 %

GRADING SCALE

A 93-100

A- 90-93

B+ 87-90

B 83-87

B- 80-83

C+ 77-80

C 73-77

C- 70-73

D+ 67-70 1.33

D 63-67

D- 60-63

E 0-60

Course Schedule:

8/30 Introduction to the class.

Why and How Should Social Scientists “Study Up”? Classic theoretical and methodological perspectives

9/6 Studying up and the concept of elite

Laura Nader. 1972. “Up the Anthropologist” In D. Hymes (ed.) *Reinventing Anthropology*. New York: Vintage Books.

George Marcus. 1983. "Part 1: Introduction" in *Elites: Ethnographic Issues*. Albuquerque: School of American Research Press.

-Discussion: Who are the elites? Why should we study elites? How could we study elites?

Elite networks, cultures and strategies of class reproduction

9/13

Larissa Lomnitz and Marisol Pérez-Lizaur. 1987. *A Mexican Elite Family*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

"Introduction," Chapter 3 "Family and Enterprise," Chapter 5 "Rituals as a Way of Life."

-Exercise: discuss the importance of networks and rituals for the reproduction of privilege.

Class and Race

9/20

Edward Telles and René Flores. 2013. "Not just color. Whiteness, Nation and Status in Latin America. *HAHR* 93:3.

Mara Loveman. 2009. "Whiteness in Latin America: Measurement and Meaning in National Censuses." *Journal de la Société des Americanistes* 95:2.

Colonial Privileges

9/27

Shannon Speed. 2017. Structures of Settler Capitalism in Abya Yala. *American Quarterly* 69:4.

Pablo González Casanova. Internal Colonialism and National Development. (from *Sociedad Plural, Colonialismo Interno y Desarrollo*. UNESCO, 1963)

Cultures of inequality

10/04

Luis Reygadas. 2010. "The Construction of Latin American Inequality." In *Indelible Inequalities in Latin America*, edited by Paul Gootenberg and Luis Reygadas.

Roberto da Matta. 1991. Do you Know Who You are Talking to? The Distinction Between Individual and Person in Brazil. In *Carnivals, Rogues and Heroes: An Interpretation of the Brazilian Dilemma*. Notre Dame: Univ. of Notre Dame Press.

Paternalism as Social Control

10/11

Carmen Martinez Novo. 2006. "Race, Maternalism and Community Development." In *Who Defines Indigenous?*, Martinez Novo, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Carmen Martínez Novo. 2018. "Ventriloquism, Racism and the Politics of Decoloniality in Ecuador." *Cultural Studies* 32:3.

Questions for first essay distributed

10/18

First essay due

Urban Segregation

10/25

Teresa Caldeira. 2000. *City of Walls*. Chapter 7 "Fortified Enclaves."

Zaire Dinzey-Flores. 2017. Spatially Polarized Landscapes and a New Approach to Urban Inequality. *LARR* 52:2.

1 page proposal for final paper due for those who choose the option

Class culture/networks/spaces

11/1

Hugo Cerón-Anaya. 2019. *Privilege at Play: Class, Race, Gender and Golf in Mexico*. Introduction and chapter 2

11/8

Cerón-Anaya, chapters 3 and 4
(Conversation with author?)

Class and Race in Brazil and the Caribbean

11/15

Ana Ramos-Zayas. 2020. *Parenting Empires: Class, Whiteness and the Moral Economy of Privilege in Latin America*. Duke University Press. Chapters 1 and 4

Bibliography proposal for final paper for those who choose the option due.

11/22

Ramos-Zayas, Chapters 5 and 7

Economic elites

11/29

Consuelo Fernandez and Michael Hill. 2022. "Becoming Modern and Inclusive: Getting Rid of Status and Tradition in an Ecuadorean Bank." *Human Organization*. 81:1.

Thomas Chiason Le-Bell. 2019. "Neoliberalism in Ecuador after Correa: A surprise turn according to economic elites' plan?" *ERLAC* 108.

(Conversation with authors?)

Elites and Religion

12/6

Maria Thumala. 2012. "The Aristocracy of the Will. A Critique of Pierre Bourdieu with Illustrations from Chile." Social Compass.

Maria Thumala. 2007. "Notions of Evil, the Devil and Sin Among Chilean Bussinessmen." Social Compass.

12/12

Final paper due.

COURSE POLICIES

-Students should be familiar with canvas and should check their UF e-mail for instructor's messages. Instructor will be sending announcements and distributing texts through the canvas system.

-Students should read the texts assigned for the day before attending that class. This is very important because we intend to have a participatory class with an inviting academic environment in which all feel free to express their **informed** opinions. Students should be ready to participate, ask questions, engage in group discussion, based on the assigned readings for that day and on readings from previous days.

-Attendance is extremely important in this class. Students are allowed up to one unexcused absence without a repercussion in grades. Each additional absence will be reflected in a deduction of a point from the class attendance and participation component of the final grade.

-Unexcused tardiness of 15 minutes or more or leaving class early will be counted as an unexcused absence unless the student has a documented reason for starting late or leaving early. This includes online classes.

Excused Absences:

Students need to notify the professor of absences prior to class when possible. The following are acceptable reasons for excused absences: (a) serious illness, (b) illness or death of family member, (c) University-related trips, (d) major religious holidays, and (e) other circumstances found to fit "reasonable cause for nonattendance" by the professor.

Students anticipating an absence for a major religious holiday are responsible for notifying the instructor of anticipated absences due to their observance of such holidays.

-Students should hand their assignments according to the instructions and by the deadline. Students may be given extra time to complete assignments after they

provide documentation of justified cause for the delay. If there is no justified cause for delay, 5 points will be deducted from the assignment per day of delay.

-While differences of opinion are valued and encouraged, discussion and debate must take place in a civil and respectful manner. Personal attacks or other acts of denigration will not be tolerated in this class.

UF POLICIES

- **Students with Disabilities Act:** The Dean of Students Office coordinates needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes the registration of disabilities, academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services, and mediating faculty-student disability related issues. *Dean of Students Office, 202 Peabody Hall, 392-7066.*
- **Software Use:** All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator.
- **Academic Misconduct:** Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Work submitted for credit by UF students should not include any form of plagiarism, cheating or unauthorized aid. Unless an assignment is explicitly identified as collaborative, all work should be completed independently. Students should understand and follow the [Student Honor Code](#) that they signed upon enrollment at the University of Florida: *"I understand the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University."*

UF HELPING RESOURCES

- **Latin American and Caribbean Collection at UF Libraries:** Specialized staff support use and enjoyment of the 500,000 volumes, 50,000 microforms, thousands of current and historical serial titles and digital resources in [this world-class collection](#). LACC library staff provide expert help in online searches for research and study materials.
- **Academic Writing, Grammar and Style:** The [UF Writing Studio](#) is committed to helping University of Florida students and faculty meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. We support independent learning and scholarship by providing one-on-one consultations, workshops tailored to specific classes (graduate and undergraduate), and faculty retreats focusing on publishing original research. Students and faculty at all levels and in every discipline are welcome!

- **Technical difficulties with E-learning in CANVAS:** Contact the [UF Help Desk](mailto:Learning-support@ufl.edu) at Learning-support@ufl.edu or (352) 392-HELP, then select option 2.
- **Personal Challenges:** Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with general wellbeing are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. The Counseling Center and Student Mental Health both provide confidential counseling services at no cost for enrolled students. Resources are also available for students seeking to clarify career and academic goals and to deal with academic challenges.
 - [University Counseling Center](#), 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575; personal and career counseling.
 - Student Mental Health, [Student Health Care Center](#), 392-1171, personal counseling.
 - Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.
 - Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling.

THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITH NOTICE

Disclaimer: This course does not espouse, promote, advance, inculcate or compel students to believe any specific ideas or concepts. The course and its lectures and discussions analyze debates in the academic community on a particular topic and students are free to reach their own conclusions or keep or change their own beliefs.

APENDIX

INSTRUCTIONS FOR IN CLASS PRESENTATION OF A CLASS READING

Student groups will be responsible for **presenting and discussing the reading assigned for one day of their choice**. The presentation should be visual, written (in a power point or other presentation technology), and oral. ALL students in the group should read **the whole text or texts** that are the basis for their presentation.

The presentation should contain the following elements:

1. Context for the reading:
2. A) Information on the author
B) General information on the topic or geographical location of the reading
3. Brief summary of the main points of the reading
4. Discussion of points in the reading that need further explanation
5. What is significant or interesting from this reading? What have we learned from this reading that can be of value to us?
6. Criticisms of the reading: What is unclear in the reading? Point to inconsistencies and contradictions in the argument. What do you disagree with and why?
7. Connect the reading to the student's own background if appropriate. How is what is described in the reading similar or different from the students' personal experience?
8. Questions for class discussion.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESEARCH PAPER

1. Students choose a topic in consultation with the instructor. The topic should be relevant to the theme of the class: should focus on a particular elite, compare elites, or focus on one problem or perspective that pertains to elites. Should focus on Latin America or its diaspora. They write a 1-page proposal immediately after the mid-term and receive comments on its relevance and feasibility from the instructor. They write a 1-2 page bibliography proposal and receive feedback from instructor on it.
2. Students review an instructor's approved bibliography on their chosen topic. Students who decide to do ethnography conduct interviews and participant observation with their subjects-collaborators.
3. Students combine the debates in the bibliography with their ethnographic findings (if appropriate) in a final research paper. The paper should be 10-15 pages long.