

**(PALAS 444) Human Rights & Cultural Representations Professor
Alejandro Manara**

Program in Argentine and Latin American Studies

Universidad de Belgrano

syllabus 2025-1

Course Information

T-TH 2:30-4.00 PM
Instruction in English

Contact

alejandromanara@gmail.com

Course Description

Through the study of visual culture, this course will provide an introduction to the values, ideologies and representations that have shaped the human rights discourse in Latin America since mid XX Century. The abuse of human rights has left its imprint on the culture of the region. We will examine the aspects which constitute human rights in Latin America in order to understand how political, social, economic and environmental forces have created a society where the systematic neglect of those rights has become the norm. The use of visual, oral and audio material will allow us to discover how human rights have been represented, challenged and negotiated at a popular and cultural level.

Eventually, we will realise how historical thinking can institute a valuable context for considering ethical issues in the past and present.

Course Requirements

Each class is based on a specific topic with associated mandatory readings which will be discussed weekly. The course is organized around the engagement and participation of the students and it is expected that they will have read all of the material before class. There will be class presentations, a Midterm Exam and a Final Exam.

Grading Policy

Participation: 30%

Oral presentation: 20%

Midterm exam 20%

Final exam: 30%

Class schedule

Week 1 March 6

Introduction. What are Human Rights?

Required readings:

United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>, Bartolomé de las Casas. Power in violence in the Conquest of America.

Week 2 March 11-13

The history of Human Rights in Latin America. 1968 student protests in different countries. Paris & Mexico. Memorializing human rights victims: the Parque de la Memoria, the Monument of the victims of Tlateloco.

Required reading

The Tlatelolco massacre: <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB99/>

Ma Teresa Gramuglio and Nicolas Rosa: Tucuman is Burning

Week 3 March 18-20

Political and civic rights I. Chile and human rights under Pinochet.

Film: Nostalgia of the Light, Patricio Guzman

Required readings:

Nostalgia for the Light: A 'Documemory' and The Conflict between History and Memory by Didem Durak.

Irma Muller, Marjorie Agosin, in *The Human tradition in Latin America* Paula

Thorrington Cronovitch, *Out of the Blackout and into the Light*

<https://journals.iai.spk-berlin.de/index.php/iberoamericana/article/view/385/69>,

Week 4 March 25-27

Political and civic rights II THE CONDOR YEARS How Pinochet and His Allies Brought Terrorism to Three Continents, John Dinges (2004) Argentina and the Madres de Plaza de Mayo.

Required readings: Margaret E Burchianti, *Building Bridges of Memory*. State

Terrorism on Film: *Argentine Cinema during the First Years of Democracy (1983–*

1990) Mario Ranalletti.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CnTPJ6kmB0s&ab_channel=lachambreverte

Week 5 April 1-3

The Condor Years: Chile & Argentina.

The Argentine & Chilean Coups. The return of Perón and the presidency of Allende.

Week 6 April 8-10

Human Rights and the kidnapping of children.

La historia oficial (1985) film by Luis Puenzo.

Class Debate: Student feedback on the film. Students will share their notes & impressions about the film from the view point of all characters. The class will be divided into groups and students will take positions by standing on the feet of Alicia (main character), Roberto (husband), Gaby (daughter), Professor Benítez (at school), Ana (Alicia's close friend), and Sara (member of Madres de Plaza de Mayo)

Week 7 April 15-17

Indigenous peoples and human rights I. Amerindian Rights. Film: The Embrace of the Serpent, (2015) Ciro Guerra. The German Tradition in Latin American Anthropology.

Week 8 April 22 Midterm 24

Indigenous peoples and human rights II. The rights of children: *Los Herederos* by Eugenio Polgovsky, is a documentary about peasant children who work in the fields and the mountains of Mexico.

Week 9 April 29

Indigenous peoples and human rights III. The Zapatistas in Mexico and the EZLN.

Required readings: Zapatista manifesto, The revolutionary law of women,

Tijen Tunali, Zapatista Voice, Visibility and Vision, *Revista de Estudios Globales y Arte Contemporáneo* | Vol. 7 | Núm. 1 | 2020 Visual: Manu Chao, Clandestino

Week 10 May 6-8 Environmental rights

Mujeres de la Mina (2014) documentary by [Malena Bystrowicz](#) and [Loreley Unamuno](#).

Women and grassroots activism. Anti-mining resistance in the Andes Required readings:
Kate Jenkins, Unearthing Women's Anti-Mining Activism in the Andes: Pachamama and the
"Mad Old Women" *Antipode* 47: 2 (2015)

[https://www.academia.edu/4856109/The_Inheritance_of_Resistance_Indigenous
_Women_Leadership_in_Ecuador](https://www.academia.edu/4856109/The_Inheritance_of_Resistance_Indigenous_Women_Leadership_in_Ecuador)

Week 11 May 13-15 Indigenous rights IV

The Pearl Button: film by Patricio Guzman about the extermination of the Fuegian Indians

Required readings: *Metaphors, Dreams, and History*: Patricio Guzmán, Renate Sachse and
Declan McGrath <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26891906>

Week 12 May 20-22 Human rights and corporations

The maquiladoras

Required Readings William Langewiesche, *Las Maquiladoras*

<http://inside.sfuhs.org/dept/history/Mexicoreader/Chapter6/lamaquiladoras.pdf>

Week 13 May 27-29 Gender, violence and sexual rights.

Required readings:

[https://reframe.sussex.ac.uk/mediatico/files/2014/01/Becoming-Arturo-
Ripstein-GRANT-Mediatico-JANUARY-2014-1.pdf](https://reframe.sussex.ac.uk/mediatico/files/2014/01/Becoming-Arturo-Ripstein-GRANT-Mediatico-JANUARY-2014-1.pdf) Catherine Grant.

'Becoming 'Arturo Ripstein'? On Collaboration and the 'Author Function' in
the Transnational Film Adaptation of *El lugar sin límites*' by Arturo Ripstein. Also

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/20464580> *Our Lady of the Assassins The Man without a Past*

by: Bert Cardullo FILM: *La virgen de los sicarios*, (2000) directed by Barbet Schroeder
and based on the novel by Fernando Vallejo.

Week 14 June 3-5 The rights of children.

Film *The Devil's Mine*, Richard Ladkani and Kief Davidson,

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZlpBQh_0jc, Required

readings:

<https://nacla.org/article/devil%27s-miner-film-kief-davidson-and-richard-ladkani>

Week 15 June 10-12 Final exam

Note: Students holding a tourist visa will NOT be allowed to take final exams, they must to go to the 17 Floor to clear the hold.

Bibliography

Barbara Sutton, Contesting Racism: Democratic Citizenship, Human Rights and Anti-Racist Policies in Argentina, *LAP*, 35:6 (Nov.2008) Prieto, Pequeno, Cominal, et al, Respect, Discrimination, Violence: Indigenous Women in Ecuador 1990-2007 in *Women's Activism in Latin America* (2010)

Elizabeth Jelin, Public Memorialization in Perspective: Truth, Justice and Memory of Past Repression in the Southern Cone of South America, *The International Journal of Transitional Justice*, Vol. 1, 2007

Paula Thorrington Cronovitch, Out of the Blackout and into the Light <https://journals.iai.spk-berlin.de/index.php/iberoamericana/article/view/385/69> Katy Jenkins, Unearthing Women's Anti-Mining Activism in the Andes: Pachamama and the "Mad Old Women" *Antipode* 47: 2 (2015)

Tijen Tunali, Zapatista Voice, Visibility and Vision, *Revista de Estudios Globales y Arte Contemporáneo* | Vol. 7 | Núm. 1 | 2020

Margaret E Burchianti, Building Bridges of Memory, *History and Anthropology* 15 (2004) United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Ma Teresa Gramuglio and Nicolas Rosa, Tucuman is Burning, *The Argentina Reader* Zapatista manifesto and The revolutionary law of women, *The Mexico Reader*

William Langewiesche, Las Maquiladoras, *The Mexico Reader*

Irma Muller, Marjorie Agosin, in *The Human tradition in Latin America*

Testimonios

Rigoberta Menchu, *I Rigoberta* (1983)

Maria Teresa Tula, *Hear my testimony* (1996)

Films

Nostalgia for the Light, Patricio Guzman (2010)

Salvador: Oliver Stone (1986)

Mbya: Tierra en rojo, Phillip Cox (2005)

The Devil's Mine, Richard Ladkani and Kief Davidson (2005) The Embrace of the Serpent, Ciro Guerra, (2015).

