HIST-293: DIRTY WARS & DEMOCRACY

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Class: King 337
Tu, Th 9:30-10:50

"THE ANTONYM OF FORGETTING IS NOT REMEMBERING, IT IS JUSTICE,"
YOSEF HAYIM YERUSHALMI

Between 1964 and 1976, nearly all of Latin America fell under military rule, including the four countries that make up South America’s “Southern Cone”: Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile. This course will focus primarily on two of these, Chile (which took pride in its democratic past), and Argentina (where military officers leapfrogged with civilian leaders from the 1930s). The course is organized around a set of central questions: Why did these states that (at least) aspired to democracy succumb to repressive dictatorships? What were the goals of those who instituted the dictatorships, how did they organize their regimes and for what purposes, and how were these “dirty war” dictatorships different from other periods of military rule in Latin America? And, what challenges, particularly to history and memory, have these dictatorships left in their wake?

We will be examining these questions from three different perspectives: the more abstract level of the collective (the state or social order); the concrete level of the individual affected by these events (the personal or family order); and the perspective of an outsider (you) who tries to imagine what these events both felt like and meant.
Studying the history of the Southern Cone is not straightforward nor easy. It requires a commitment to explore difficult and unsettling questions, to absorb both selfless and highly disturbing historical narratives, and to be prepared to engage not just intellectually, but emotionally with course materials and class discussions. Course Goals and Objectives:

Content Goals:

From a social or collective perspective:

- To understand why political orders abandon democratic institutions;
- To understand how authoritarian leaders and regimes think about, reflect on; and narrativize their purpose and goals;
- To understand the organization of authoritarianism;
- To understand what brought about the end of these specific authoritarian regimes;
- To understand the complex post-history of such regimes, specifically through the perspective of collective memory and the way in which the present remains responsible to and contingent on the past.

From an individual/family perspective:

- To understand individual decision-making carried out within a state of crisis and repression, specifically how individuals understood their actions in a moment of state crisis, and the nature of individual responsibility/accountability during the periods of repression that characterized these states:
  - From the perspective of those in charge of repression;
  - From the perspective of those who carry out repression;
  - From the perspective of those who suffered repression;
  - From the perspective of “bystanders” to repression.

- To understand individual decision-making after the authoritarian state ended:
  - From the perspective of those who suffered;
  - From the perspective of those who participated in or benefited from the repression;
  - From the perspective of those who remained “outsiders” to the events.

From an outside observer (student) perspective:

- To think about where we position ourselves (as observers) vis-à-vis the torturer and the tortured, the repressor and the repressed;
- To think about our responsibilities as students of history and as citizens in the world.

Skill Development:

- To develop analytic (reading) and communication (writing, discussion, and presentation) skills;
- To develop a greater capacity to work collaboratively and cooperatively;
- To learn further how to apply historical lessons to the challenges of local and global citizenship.

Organization of Class: Readings and Videos

Although this is a fairly large class, it is designed to be discussion centered, but these will only be productive if you come prepared to discuss. That means that you must keep up with the reading assignments, and that you have watched the available videocasts before the class. I know that not everyone will watch every single video lecture in a timely fashion, but my expectation is that in any given week, most of you will – which will allow us to discuss the main questions raised that week.

Assignments, Grading, Your Responsibilities

Your primary responsibility in this class, then, is to play an active role in it. That means that you will have done the reading,
In terms of other projects (written and multimedia), you will have three papers/projects and an ongoing (Avatar) project that will last the entire semester. I will provide more information on all of these assignments later.

**Avatar Project** ([http://hist293f14-syllabus.weebly.com/avatar-project.html](http://hist293f14-syllabus.weebly.com/avatar-project.html)) Posts to the Avatar Blog will be due from September 22 to the end of the semester. At the beginning of the semester, you will all draw a slip of paper from a box. On it, you will find a few details about a person (your avatar) you will create. These will include your birth gender, birthplace, year of birth, current location, your parents’ occupations and birthplace (if different from their current location), and their religion (if not Catholic). Over the course of the semester, through weekly diary/journal entries, you will report on the lived experience of that person during the period that we are covering in class (essentially, the past 40 years). Half of you will be Argentine, the other half Chilean. You will be formed into groups of 6 (3 from each country) for the purpose of reading and commenting on each other’s posts. In the syllabus, under each week that you are writing an Avatar entry, you will see the date or date-range that you will be writing from. You will get further information on the project before you start.

**Other Assignments and Percent of Your Final Grade:**
- **Reflection Paper:** September 8: Learning Goals (1-2 pages) - not graded
- **First Paper:** September 29: Arguing from Evidence (3-5 pages) - 15%
- **Second Paper:** November 10: Understanding Repressive Regimes (4-6 pages) - 25%
- **Third Paper (or Project):** December 18, 11:00 AM: The Post-Dictatorship (6-8 pages) - 30%
- **Avatar Project:** 30%

The point ranges I use for grading are as follows:

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Late papers turned in without prior permission — you must request an extension before the due date of the paper — will be reduced by one grade-step for each day that an assignment is late. For example, a paper due on Tuesday, Nov. 10 turned in on Nov. 11 will get a “B-” instead of the “B” that it merited; if it is turned in on Nov. 12, it will get a “C+”, etc.

You may request an Incomplete in the class ONLY to complete the final paper/project. To be counted, all other work which had yet to be turned in must be submitted by 4:30 PM on the last day of the Reading Period, December 15. That includes your Avatar posts.

**Plagiarism and the Honor Code:**
All students must sign an “Honor Code” for all assignments. This pledge states: “I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment.” For further information, see the student Honor Code ([https://new.oberlin.edu/conservatory/academic-resources-and-support/honor-code.dot](https://new.oberlin.edu/conservatory/academic-resources-and-support/honor-code.dot)). If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, particularly in the context of joint or collective work, please see me or raise it in class.

**Attendance, Tardiness, Class Behavior, Laptop Use, Accommodation**
I expect that you will attend the class regularly because you want to, because you understand that you can’t fully participate in
You are expected to come to class prepared; you understand that in a class of this nature you have a responsibility to help your classmates to contribute. I also understand that you may have to miss an occasional class. I take attendance every day as a way to learn your names and to keep track of absences. While I don’t have a specific policy on absences (i.e., only "x" number of absences are allowed), I do reserve the right to factor excessive absence from class into your final grade and will let you know if you’re in the danger zone.

As for coming in late, texting in class, surfing the internet, loudly slurping your morning coffee, etc., I have one central rule: be considerate to those around you and to me.

Considerable research has shown that taking notes on your laptop is not as good for your learning as taking them by hand. Considerable practice has shown that when you use your laptop to see what’s new on your Instagram account or buy shoes from Zappos, you both distract and annoy those around you. So plan your laptop use accordingly.

Finally, if you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact me as soon as possible.

Books Recommended for Purchase [NOTE: You can buy these at the bookstore or through any on-line bookseller; one copy of each book is on reserve at the library; you can also request via OhioLink. I’ve linked to eBook editions of books.]


Finding the Readings: Books recommended for purchase will be on reserve in Mudd; other materials will either be linked directly (just click on the link) or can be found in BLACKBOARD under “readings,” which will be organized by weeks. If you can’t find the reading, or if something is wrong with the pdf that I’ve put on Blackboard, please let me know so I can fix it.

SYLLABUS

Sept. 1, 3: Introduction: Studying the past
Sept. 1: Introduction: Goals and Methods: Communities of Practice

Sept. 3: Why Study the Past?

Readings:


Think about what history is in the slide show below - click play to start.
REFLECTION DUE, SEPT. 8: LEARNING GOALS. Please hand in, at the beginning of class on Sept. 8, a short reflection on your personal learning goals for this course: What goals do you have for this course? What do you want to learn? Think not just about content but more broadly: skills, approaches, types of interactions. Try to be specific and detailed (not just “Chilean history”, for example). Include anything you plan to do to meet your goals (e.g. weekly objectives; time schedules, periodic meetings with the teacher, etc.). 1-2 pages (no grade).

Four different narratives about the state, the relationship of citizens to the state, and the nature of the economy contended for dominance in the early 1970s: Revolutionary Left, Parliamentary Left, Parliamentary Right; and Authoritarian Right. Besides understanding what each represented, the central question we want to answer is what shaped the eventual outcome, a military coup.

Video Assignments:
Everyone should watch the following video:
  Chile: The Election of Salvador Allende (http://vimeo.com/14855577) (11:00)

Students who have not taken HIST 110 should watch the following three videocasts:
  Chile in the Nineteenth Century (http://vimeo.com/11103541) (29:44);
  Chile: Nitrate Mining and the Labor Movement (http://vimeo.com/11135804) (26:30);
  Chile: The Roots of Labor and Left Militancy (http://vimeo.com/11148727) (22:35)

Week of Sept. 8: Avatars
  Pick slips on Sept. 10; return pseudonyms by Sept. 15.

Sept. 8: Chile to 1970

Readings:


Sept. 10: The Elections of 1970 & The Popular Unity in Office

Readings:
*The Chile Reader*: 353-379; 386-405.


The audio below is of a phone conversation captured by President Richard Nixon's secret Oval Office taping system. Nixon is speaking to his press secretary, Ron Zeigler, were made on March 23, 1972. Zeigler was informing Nixon of a press conference that took place after the secret International Telephone & Telegraph (ITT) documents were leaked to Jack Anderson, a journalist. One ITT document said that Nixon had given instructions to then U.S. Ambassador Edward Korry, to do "all possible short of a Dominican Republic-type action [i.e. a full military invasion, which the U.S. carried out in that country in 1965] to keep Allende from taking power." Nixon expressed his anger at Korry, saying "he just failed, the son of a bitch.... He should have kept Allende from getting in."

For more, go to the National Security Archive (http://www.gwu.edu/%7Ensarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB110/Index.htm)

Week of Sept. 15: Avatars

Hand in pseudonyms along with biographical data from the slip you picked by Tuesday, Sept. 15; bring computer to class Sept. 17 for set-up instructions.

Sept. 15: The Role of the United States

Readings:


Documents from Kornbluh, *The Pinochet File*

Sept. 17: The End of the Peaceful Road

Readings:

*The Chile Reader*, 406-421; 426-432.


Allende's last speech: Sept. 11, 1973 (Spanish)
Video Assignment: Everyone should watch the following video:


Students who have not taken HIST 110 should watch the following two videocasts:

Argentina: The Rise & Fall of Peronism (http://vimeo.com/10670748) (36:02)

Week of Sept. 22: Avatars

First post: (Both Chile and Argentina): Late 1960s or early 1970s: Introduce yourselves. If you are still young (under 15), you may chose to have your parents introduce you.

Sept. 22: Peron and Peronism

Readings:


Sept. 24: Descent into Chaos

Readings:

Robben, Political Violence (http://site.ebrary.com.ezproxy.oberlin.edu/lib/oberlin/detail.action?docID=10491952), Chapters 4-8 (pp. 64-168).

First Paper: September 29: Arguing from Evidence (3-5 pages)

Sept 29: Chile - Organizing the Dictatorship [NOTE: I will be giving a lecture in Los Angeles on Oct 1 – continue with the reading but there will be no class.]

The military intervened in 1973 responding to its own sense of state crisis. The fact of its intervention only answered one question, whether the Popular Unity experiment would be allowed to continue until its mandated constitutional end in 1976. With military intervention, we now need to account for how it was that Pinochet was able to centralize power in his own circle and why he ultimately chose the governing model he did. The main questions are what were the emerging goals of Pinochet’s government and how did he organize his rule to get them.
Week of Sept. 29: Avatars
Chile: Anytime from Sept. 12, 1973 to early 1974
Argentina: Anytime from March 25, 1976 to the end of 1976

Sept 29: Organizing Repression

Readings:

The Chile Reader, pp. 433-467.


Oct 1: NO CLASS -- Continue Reading on "Pinochet's Revolution"

Readings:

The Chile Reader, pp. 468-473, 498-511.


Oct. 6, 8: Argentina: The Dirty War

By most accounts, when the military ousted Isabel Perón in March 1976, they had already largely completed the task of hunting down and killing/capturing most of the militant Left. The central questions for this week, then, are how we understand the goals, procedures, and ideology of the Junta leaders in Argentina. What did they want to accomplish and to what extent were their enemies real or imaginary?

Video Assignment:

Argentina: Institutionalizing the Military State - The Economic Objectives (http://vimec.com/16225577) (34:33);
Argentina: The Dirty Wars (http://vimeo.com/16249493) (18:51)

Week of Oct. 6: Avatars
Chile: Anytime from 1975-1982
Argentina: Around or shortly after June 25, 1978 (when Argentina wins the World Cup)

Oct. 6 The "Proceso" and the Military Perspective

Readings:


9 of 17

Readings:


Víctor Manetta, "Disappeared/Missing." Flicker CC. Stepping stone in pavement in Buenos Aires; "Here lived Eduardo Goldar Parodi, activist in public health issues, arrested and disappeared by state terrorism, Sept. 9, 1977... Memory and Justice.

Oct 13, 15: Reading Trauma/Traumatic Narratives

Over the next few weeks we will be reading and discussing some of the most disturbing aspects of the military dictatorships. We will use this week to prepare.

Week of Oct. 13: Avatars

Chile: Anytime from 1982-1986
Argentina: Anytime from 1978-1980

Oct 13: Confronting Violence: Visit to the Allen Memorial Art Museum (meet in the courtyard behind the museum at 9:30 AM)

Readings:


Oct 15: Discussion

FALL BREAK

Oct 27, 29: Understanding state terror

We come to one of the most difficult parts of the course: understanding the decision to employ a policy of state terrorism and
We will focus in particular not just on those states where the policies were actually carried out these policies (we have already heard from some of them), but on the real targets of state terrorism: the individual and civil society, those who might be called either “innocent bystanders” or the “silent majority” (to borrow a U.S. phrase).

Video Assignment:

Week of Oct. 27: Avatars
Chile: Anytime in 1986 to mid-1988
Argentina: Anytime from 1980 to 1982

Oct. 27: Moral Authority or Obedience to Authority? What we know (or don’t) from the Milgram and Zimbardo experiments

Reading:
Feitlowitz, A Lexicon of Terror, Ch. 2 (pp. 73-102), and 5 (173-223).

Oct. 29: Personal testimony

Readings:

"Interrogating a Torturer" (People and Power, Al Jazeera, English; September 30, 2009 (video below):

People & Power: Interrogating a tortu...

Optional: (Spanish)
"El fotógrafo," by Clara Ibarra y Alexandra Hall (24:00), Radio Ambulante (http://radioambulante.org/transcripcion/transcripcion-el-fotografo) (audio to the left; click on link for transcript)

Optional: (English Podcast):
Video Assignment:
Opposition to the Dictatorships: The Role of Women and Gender (http://vimeo.com/16563194) (37:19)

Week of Nov. 3: Avatars
Chile: October 6, 1988 (the day after the plebiscite)
Argentina: June 14, 1982 (Argentina surrenders to the UK in the Falklands/Malvinas War)

Nov. 3: Organizing the Opposition

Readings:
The Chile Reader, pp. 474-492, 512-519.


Nov. 5: The Plebiscite: Just Say No

Reading:

Chile, la alegría ya viene (promotion for "No" campaign)
Chile, la alegría ya viene (artistas)

Second Paper: November 10: Understanding Repressive Regimes (4-6 pages)

Nov. 10, 12: Contesting the Dictatorship - Argentina

In looking at the nature of the opposition in Argentina, we will want to focus on two particular features: gender and the role of the Church.

Week of Nov. 10: Avatars
Chile: March 11, 1990 (the day that Patricio Aylwin is sworn in)
Argentina: Dec. 10, 1983 (the day Raul Alfonsín is sworn in)

Nov. 10: The Madres de la Plaza de Mayo

Readings:

**Nov. 12: The Role of the Church**

Readings:
- Patricia Marchak, *God’s Assassins: State Terrorism in Argentina in the 1970s* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill University Press, 1999), Chs. 13-14 (pp. 235-265);

![Madres de la Plaza de Mayo](image)

**Nov. 17, 19: The Difficult Transition: Chile**

The next two weeks will focus on how these countries leave their dictatorships and the struggle to address questions of justice, truth, and reconciliation in the post-dictatorial regimes. Our critical questions will ponder the issue of justice and ask both what it is and how or whether it can be achieved in post-conflict societies.
Nov. 17: Chile’s Road Out: Truth and Reconciliation

Readings:

*The Chile Reader*, 521-546.


Nov. 19: What is Justice?

Reading:


Nov. 24: Trials and Denials (No class Nov. 26)

Week of Nov. 24: Avatars

Chile: Dec. 10, 2006 (Pinochet dies)
Argentina: April 19, 2005 (Adolfo Scilingo is found guilty)

Readings:


Dec. 1, 3: Memory Work

In the next two weeks, we explore issues of the relationship between history and memory, and attempt to answer how (or if) post-conflict societies can agree on what happened in their countries. At stake is more than the ability (or inability) to fashion new national historical narratives. Rather, the questions raised concerns what happens when societies don’t agree on their pasts and how (personal and collective) memory re-figures that past.
Week of Dec. 1: Avatars

Chile and Argentina: Final reflection in voice of avatar. Look back at your life over the past 40 years.

Dec. 1: Memory and History: Understanding Collective Memory

Readings:

*The Chile Reader*, 547-567.


Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror*, Ch. 6 (pp. 225-297).


Dec. 3: The Politics of Memorialization

"The past sits so deep in your soul, you can never be free of it." Ruth Wallage-Binheim (Auschwitz survivor, interview 1998)

Readings:


Dec. 8, 10: Going Home

William Faulkner wrote in Requiem for a Nun: *The past never dead; it's not even past.* As a conclusion, we will explore the ways that the past lives on as the present in post-dictatorial countries, asking whether there are better ways to deal with a difficult past.

Week of Dec. 8: Avatars

Chile and Argentina: Final reflection in in your own voice and in the context of your overall learning for course.

Dec. 8: Can You Go Home?

Reading:

Dec. 10: Pinochet’s Funeral

Readings:
*The Chile Reader*, 555-603.


Third Paper (or Project): December 18, 11:00 AM: The Post-Dictatorship (6-8 pages)

Please note that I will not accept or read papers turned in after this time unless you have an official INCOMPLETE in the course. Please see me (and the assignment) for more information about this.
Hi, Kathy:

I'm only doing online syllabi:

HIST 293: http://hist293f15.weebly.com/
HIST 485: http://hist485f15.weebly.com/

My office hours for the fall: Tuesdays, 11-noon; Wednesdays 2-3; Thursdays 2-3, and by appointment. (All in Mudd 052)

Thanks,
Steve

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