

McGill University

INTD 497: Memory Practices in the Transition to Democracy

Winter 2023

Instructor: Celina Van Dembroucke
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TA: TBD

Class meets: Tu & Ths 10:05-11:25 am
Class location: BURN 306
Office hrs: Tu & Ths. 11.30-12.30am

Course Description:

This course presents an introduction to the topic of memory and democracy, particularly—but not exclusively—in contexts where the process of democratic transition is marked by the memorialization of a traumatic past. Coping with recent past violence and state terrorism was one of the challenges that transitional governments in South America had to face after dictatorial governments. They did so by a series of institutional processes: Truth Commissions, trials, official reparations, and memorialization practices. Besides constant demands for specific policies, the human rights movements, as well as other societal actors, developed a variety of cultural and symbolic initiatives. In this course, we will examine those initiatives, their role in the consolidation of democracy, and the legacies of authoritarian rule in twentieth-century Latin America.

The course will be organized under two broad thematic categories: 1) **Transitional democracy and Human Rights**, that will lay the theoretical and contextual foundations to reflect on transitional democracy, the human right framework that has shaped South American transitional processes and how it was constructed differently depending on context; the struggles to dominate the State's official discourse after a traumatic past, among others; and 2) **Memory Markers**; where we will discuss concrete memorial practices carried out by different social actors as well as critical issues having to do with intergenerational transmission.

This course proposes to think about memories in the plural, about the disputes around certain memories, their social construction and their claim to 'truth', the role of oblivion, etc. While most of the examples and cases will be from Latin America, many of these memorializing efforts are fruitful for thinking about the disputes and negotiations about the past in societies across the globe.

The reading load is quite light, so your main task is to keep up and engage critically with the assignments!

Course Requirements:

The final grade will be determined as follows:

Reading Responses	10%
In Class Midterm	40%
Final Assignment Proposal	5%
Final Assignment (Video/Podcast)	35%
Attendance	10%

Readings: Most readings will be available through a link on the syllabus. Others will be available through Mycourses.

Reading Discussion Posts (10%, 10 responses total, on MyCourses): You are required to contribute to our class with a short reading response of 100- 150 words and post it to MyCourses under the Reading Discussion Posts forum created for each week. This response should be posted by noon on Monday (that is, if your response is on a reading for the week of January 17 and 19, it should be posted before noon on Monday January 16).

The goal is not to write a summary of the readings but to reflect upon them and share your thoughts with your classmates. Some of your responses will be part of the lectures and you will be asked to develop them further in class. Responses will not be graded but they are required. You may schedule your responses as you wish, as long as you complete a total of **ten** of these. Each response should be centered in a single reading, so it is possible to write two responses in the same week, each addressing a different reading.

In class Midterm (40%), on February 23. The midterm will consist of a set of essay questions based on the readings, the film that we are going to watch in class, and topics covered in Part I of the course. Each answer will have a word limit, which is not to be exceeded. Submissions are individual. There will be a Q&A session for the Midterm on February 21.

If a student misses the Midterm exam, there will be a make-up exam, which will be scheduled by the instructor. In order to be able to take the make-up exam, the absence to the midterm must be documented. In case of illness or other medical issues, students must present a doctor's note with explicit statement about the impossibility to show up for the date and time of the exam. The note must be presented within 5 days of the date of the midterm. In case of a family emergency, students must provide documentation.

Final Group Project: Video or Podcast (Due on April 15th at midnight on Mycourses): The final assignment for this class is to prepare an informative and analytical 15 to 20-minute video or podcast introducing a site or expression of memory of a country that has gone through a transitional justice process but that was not thoroughly covered in class. You will team up in groups of 4 students in order to carry out research and tie the analysis with the theoretical issues discussed and studied in class. You can record the video or podcast in the software of your choosing and post it on Mycourses towards the end of the term. Along with the podcast or video, you should submit a full written transcript with a separate bibliography. In order to get the topic of the final project

approved by the instructor, each group should submit a 1-page **Final Group Project Proposal**, **due on March 20 at noon**, on MyCourses.

All assignments will be graded using letter grades (A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, D, F).

Late submission policy. Late assignments will be deducted 1/3 of a letter grade if they are turned in within 24 hours, and an additional 1/3 of a grade for every 24 hours thereafter. Assignments will not be accepted after 72 hours. **Documented illnesses or emergencies will be the only grounds for exceptions or extensions.**

Course and University Policies:

Integrity: McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/integrity for more information).

Land acknowledgement McGill is situated on land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations. You are asked to honour and respect the diverse Indigenous peoples connected to this territory on which we gather today.

Special Needs: As the instructor of this course I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with Student Accessibility and Achievement (<https://www.mcgill.ca/access-achieve/>).

Language: "In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded." (approved by Senate on 21 January 2009 - see also the section in this document on Assignments and evaluation.)/ "Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté."

Course-Evaluations: End-of-course evaluations are one of the ways that McGill works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student's learning experience. You will be notified by e-mail when the evaluations are available. Please note that a minimum number of responses must be received for results to be available to students.

Note: In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

PART I: Transitional Democracy and Human Rights

WEEK 1

No class!

WEEK 2:

No class!

WEEK 3: Intro. Transitional Democracy and Human Rights Framework. Jan 17-19

(End of Add Drop January 17th)

Introduction and overview of the course

Readings:

Acuña, C. and C. Smulovitz (1996). Adjusting the Armed Forces to Democracy. Successes, Failures and Ambiguities of the Southern Cone Experiences. In *Constructing Democracy. Human Rights, Citizenship and Society in Latin America*. E Jelin and E Hershberg; eds. Boulder, Colorado: Westview P. 13-38 (On myCourses)

Jelin, E. and C. Van Dembroucke (2020). "Human Rights and Memory Politics under Shifting Political Orientations" *Legacies of the Left Turn in Latin America. The Promise of Inclusive Citizenship*. F Montambeault and M Balán; eds. Notre Dame U P. 185 – 210

https://muse-jhu-edu.proxy3.library.mcgill.ca/pub/200/edited_volume/chapter/2484024

<https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1135815042>

Further Readings for this week:

Bickford, L. (1999). "The Archival Imperative: Human Rights and Historical Memory in Latin America's Southern Cone." *Human Rights Quarterly* 21, no. 4: 1097-1122.

<https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/5183512341>

Arthur, P. (2018). 'How "Transitions" Reshaped Human Rights: A Conceptual History of Transitional Justice". *Human Rights Quarterly* 31:2 (2009), 321-367.

<https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/5790574017>

Kelly, P. W. *Sovereign Emergencies: Latin America and the Making of Global Human Rights Politics*. Cambridge U P, 2018.

<https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1007508691>

WEEK 4: Truth Commissions and Justice. Jan 24-26

Readings:

Lutz, E and K. Sikkink (2001). "The Justice Cascade: The Evolution and Impact of Foreign Human Rights Trials in Latin America". *Chicago Journal of International Law* Vol. 2, No. 1. 1-33. v

<https://proxy.library.mcgill.ca/login?url=https://heinonline.org/HOL/P?h=hein.journals/cjil2&i=9>

Grandin, G (2005). "The Instruction of Great Catastrophe: Truth Commissions, National History, and State Formation in Argentina, Chile, and Guatemala." *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 110, No. 1. 46-67.

<https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/5546091390>

Further Readings for this week:

Milton, C.E. (2015). "The Truth Ten Years On: The CVR in Peru". Allier-Montaño, E. and E. Crenzel; eds. *The Struggle for Memory in Latin America. Memory Politics and Transitional Justice*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York. 111-128.

<https://rdcu.be/c2too>

WEEK 5: Argentina 1985. Jan 31-Feb 2

In-class Movie. The movie lasts 2h:20, which runs over our time slot, so we will watch it in two sittings, on Tuesday and Thursday, during class time.

Argentina, 1985 (2022). Directed by Santiago Mitre. Performances by R. Darín, G. Mastronicola, P. Lanzani, among others.

No readings assigned for this week

No reading responses assigned for this week.

WEEK 6: Contested Memories. Feb 7-Feb 9

Readings:

Jelin, E. "Political Struggles for Memory". State Repression and *the Labors of Memory*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2003. 26-45

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/mcgill/reader.action?docID=367974&ppg=47>

Further Readings for this Week:

Theidon, K. (2013). "Chapter 5. Speaking of Silences." *Intimate Enemies: Violence and Reconciliation in Peru*. U of P. 103-42

<https://muse-jhu-edu.proxy3.library.mcgill.ca/pub/56/monograph/chapter/661756>

Stern, S. J (2013). "Foreword." Collins, C, K. Hite and A. Joignant; eds. *The Politics of Memory in Chile. From Pinochet to Bachelet*. Boulder, USA: Lynne Rienner Publishers. vii-xviii.

<https://doi-org.proxy3.library.mcgill.ca/10.1515/9781685854232-001>

WEEK 7: Gender and Memory and Overview of Part I- Feb 14-Feb 16

Readings:

Arditti, Rita (2002). "The Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo and the Struggle against Impunity in Argentina." *Meridians*. 3 (1). 19-41.

<https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/6006459724>

Further Readings for this week:

Sánchez-Blake, E. (2018). "Memory and Peace-building: Womens' resistance in Latin America." *Latin American Perspectives on Global Development*. Masaeli M. et al.; eds. Cambridge Scholars Publishing. 69-88.

<https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1083217850>

Di Marco, Graciela (2010). "The Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo Speak". Maier, E. and N. Lebon, eds. *Women's Activism in Latin America and the Caribbean:: Engendering Social Justice, Democratizing Citizenship*. Rutgers U P. 95-110

<https://www-degruyter-com.proxy3.library.mcgill.ca/document/doi/10.36019/9780813549514-009/html>

WEEK 8: Midterm week

Tuesday February 21

Q&A about the Midterm. No readings.

Thursday February 23

MIDTERM EXAM, IN CLASS

WEEK 9: Winter Reading Break. Feb 28-March 2

No class!

PART II: Memory Markers

WEEK 10: The Memory Boom. March 7-March 9

Readings:

Huyssen, A. (2003). "1. Present Pasts: Media, Politics, Amnesia". *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory*. Redwood City: Stanford U P. 11-29.

<https://doi-org.proxy3.library.mcgill.ca/10.1515/9781503620308-003>

Kaiser, S. (2019). "Memoria and Human Rights: 500 Years of Resistance and Memory Activism". Pertierra, A.C. and J.F. Salazar; eds. *Media Cultures in Latin America: Key Concepts and New Debates*. Routledge. 90-109

<https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1119391474>

Further Readings for this week:

Vich, V. and A. Hibbett. (2022). "The Political Art of Memory in Latin America". Trans L. Urbain. De Ferrari, G, and M Siskind, eds. *The Routledge Companion to Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Latin American Literary and Cultural Forms*. Routledge. 105-13.

<https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1328002952>

WEEK 11: Sites of Memory- March 14-March 16

Readings:

Nora, P. (1989). "Between memory and history: Les lieux de mémoire." *Representations* 26: 7-24.

<https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/5972439575>

Andermann, J. (2015). "Placing Latin American memory: Sites and the politics of mourning". *Memory Studies*, 8(1), 3-8

<https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/5733702070>

Jelin, E. (2021). "Markers of Memory: Dates, Places, Archives". *The Struggles for the Past: How we construct social memories*. New York : Berghahn. (On my courses)

Further readings for this week:

Lisovsky, M., and L. Leite e Aguiar, A. (2015). "The Brazilian dictatorship and the battle of images". *Memory Studies*, 8(1), 22-37.

<https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/5733698706>

WEEK 12: Photography and Memory. March 21-March 23

Readings:

Didi-Huberman, G. (2008) [2003]. "Four pieces snatched from Hell". *Images in Spite of All: Four Photographs from Auschwitz*. Trans. Shane B. Lillis. Chicago: U of Chicago P. 3-18.

<http://users.clas.ufl.edu/burt/deathsentences/imagesinspiteofall.pdf>

Longoni, A.(2010). "Photographs and Silhouettes: Visual Politics in The Human Rights Movement of Argentina". *Afterall: A Journal of Art, Context and Enquiry*. 25 (25), 5-17

<https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/6822226604>

Further Readings for this week:

Van Dembroucke, C. (2010). "The absence made visible: The case of Ausencias, Gustavo Germano's photographic exhibition." *InTensions*, (4), 1-26.

<https://intensions.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/intensions/article/view/37351/1794>

Sturken, M (1999). "The image as memorial. Personal photographs in cultural memory". M. Hirsch, ed. *The familial gaze*. Hanover: U P of New England. 178-95

<http://www.maritasturken.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Sturken-ImageasMemorial.pdf>

Final Group Project Proposal (1 page) due on March 20, on MyCourses at Noon

WEEK 13: Activists' Legacies and Democracy. March 28-March 30

Readings:

Sutton, B and N.L. Vacarezza (2021). "Abortion Rights and Democracy." Sutton, B. and N.L. Vacarezza, eds. *Abortion and Democracy: Contentious Body Politics in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay*. Routledge. 1-25

<https://www-taylorfrancis-com.proxy3.library.mcgill.ca/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781003079903-101/abortion-rights-democracy-barbara-sutton-nayla-luz-vacarezza?context=ubx&refId=c8f62069-fi66-4b8e-b1e4-cd6607e5431a>

Thursday March 30

Guest Lecturer: Rose Chabot, Phd Candidate in Political Science at McGill University.

WEEK 14: Postmemory and Transmission. April 4-April 6

Readings:

Hirsch, M (2012). "Introduction." *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust*. Columbia U P. 1-26.

<https://www-jstor-org.proxy3.library.mcgill.ca/stable/10.7312/hirs15652.3?socuid=7b21be8b-fb88-4254-b929-4b60d31b4e67>

Sutton, B. (2018). "Transmitting Memory, Reclaiming Utopia." *Surviving State Terror: Women's Testimonies of Repression and Resistance in Argentina*. New York U P. 180-228.

<https://muse-jhu-edu.proxy3.library.mcgill.ca/pub/193/monograph/chapter/2568596>

Further readings for this week:

Hiner, H., M. Badilla, A. López, A. Zúñiga-Fajuri, F. Hatibovic (2022). "Patriarchy is a Judge: Young Feminists and LGBTQ+ Activists Performing Transitional Justice in Chile." *International Journal of Transitional Justice*. 16 (1). 66-81.

<https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/9545711522>

WEEK 15: Conclusions

Tuesday April 11:

Conclusions

No Readings!

Thursday April 13:

No class (Thursday Apr 13 follows a Friday schedule).

Final Projects due on April 15th on MyCourses. By Midnight.