HISTORY 340G
The Minority Experience in Latin America

Dr. Jeff H. Lesser
Telephone: 439-2229
Winthrop 110
Class Meetings: Tuesday and Thursday, 10:05 - 11:20
Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 2:30 - 4:00 or by appointment

Latin America, contrary to popular belief, has a diverse racial and ethnic population. Although biological and cultural mixing has created seemingly new cultures, many continue to feel as if they were "others," and somehow not part of dominant Latin American society.

The Minority Experience in Latin America will analyze the complex societies of Latin America by examining the African, Asian and Jewish experiences in the region. By concentrating on four distinctly different countries, Brazil, Cuba, Mexico and Argentina, students will study the historical role of these groups on the development of Latin America. Furthermore, the complex process of accommodation, integration and acculturation will be examined from a historical perspective.

The course will begin with an overview of key concepts such as minority, ethnicity, and race from a Latin American perspective. We will also discuss the concept of "ethnic history" and how it differs from other types of historical analysis. We will then proceed to examine each of the three different groups within a national perspective so that we may closely analyze how ethnic and racial groups affect and relate to national interests and historical change.

Although this is not an introductory seminar, no prior knowledge of Latin America, or its languages, is assumed. Students who are able to speak or read Portuguese, Spanish, or any other Latin American language should inform me immediately. Race, culture, ethnicity and religion will be examined from theoretical, economic, social, political and policy perspectives. We will use different types of documents in order to examine these topics including monographs, films, videos, oral histories and photographs.

Since interaction is crucial to the learning process, and since this is a seminar, classes will be generally student-led. Seminar participation will be worth 20% of the final grade. Students will be expected to participate in all discussions and keep up with the weekly reading assignments, which will average about 200 pages per week. Two five page analytical papers will be due and the average of these papers will be worth 40 per cent of the final grade. A final research paper will be worth 40%.

Required Readings: All available at the Connecticut College Bookstore. Readings packet available from Dr. Lesser.

2) Moacyr Scliar, *The Centaur in the Garden*

3) Nicolás Guillén, *¡Patria o Muerte!: The Great Zoo and other poems.* [NG]

5) Readings Packet [RP]


**SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS, READINGS AND EVALUATIONS:**

**JAN**

21 **Introduction**

23 **What is Race, What is Ethnicity?**
READ: Pierre L. van den Berghe, "Introduction" from *Race and Racism.* [RP]

28 **What is a Minority?**
READ: Yinger, J. Milton. "Intersecting Strands in the theorisation of race and ethnic relations." [RP]

30 **Historical Theories of Race and Ethnicity I**

**FEB**

4 **Historical Theories of Race and Ethnicity II**
READ: Van den Berghe, Pierre L. "Ethnicity and Other Bases of Sociality" and "The Dynamics of Ethnicity." from *The Ethnic Phenomenon.* [RP]

6 **Race and Ethnicity in Latin American and Caribbean History**

BRAZIL-------------------BRAZIL-------------------BRAZIL------

FEB. 11 A Brazilian Perspective on Race
READ: Gilberto Freyre "Brazilian Melting Pot" [RP]
The Americas [RP]
VIDEO: Robert Levine, The Faces of Slavery

13 The Idea of Race in Brazil
READ: Skidmore, Thomas E. "Racial Ideas and Social Policy in Brazil, 1870-1940." [RG]
READ: Van den Berghe, Pierre L. "Brazil" Ch. 3 in Race and Racism: A Comparative Perspective. [RP]
BEGIN READING: Moacyr Scliar, The Centaur in the Garden

18 African Experience in Brazil
READ: Mahomman G. Baquaqua, "Recollections of a Slave's Life" [RP]
READ: Author unknown "Who shall be a slave and why?" [RP]

20 Minority Experience in Brazil
READ: Jeff Lesser, "Continuity and Change in an Immigrant Community: The Jews of São Paulo, " Luso-Brazilian Review [RP]
READ: Anani Dzidzienyo, "The Position of Blacks in Brazilian Society."

25 Library Research in History
Have Moacyr Scliar, The Centaur in the Garden finished.

27 The racial definition of ethnicity II
READ: Jeff Lesser, Exodus to the Land of the Future: Brazil and the Jewish Question, 1900-1945, chapter 7 "The Pope, The Dictator and The Refugees who never came."

Mexico-------------------Mexico-------------------Mexico------

MAR 3 Who is the Other in a bi-racial society? - Old Views
READ: Van den Berghe, Pierre L. Mexico. Ch. 2 in Race and Racism [RP]
Who is the Other in a bi-racial society? - New Views
READ: Knight, Alan. "Racism, Revolution and Indigenismo: Mexico, 1910-1940 [RG]

SPRING BREAK -- SPRING BREAK --SPRING BREAK --

MAR 24 Coolies or Chinese???

MAR 26 The Colonial Experience
READ: Stanley M. Hordes, "The Inquisition as Economic and Political Agent: The Campaign of the Mexican Holy Office Against the Crypto-Jews in the Mid-Seventeenth Century." The Americas. [RP]

30 FILM: El Otro Francisco
Begin reading Nicolás Guillén, ¡Patria o Muerte!

APR 2 FILM: El Otro Francisco

7 Revolution and Minority Society I

9 Revolution and Minority Society II
VIDEO: Hotel Cuba
Finish reading Nicolás Guillén, ¡Patria o Muerte!

14 Gobernar es poplar, to govern is to populate
READ: Aline Helg, "Race in Argentina and Cuba, 1880-1930" (RG)

16 A European Other: Jewish Argentina
VIDEO: Mark Freeman, The Yidishe Gauchos

121 Afro-Argentina
READ: G. Reid Andrews. "Race versus class association: the Afro-
Argentines of Buenos Aires, 1850-1900" Journal of Latin American
Studies [RP]

April 23  Class Presentations
         28  Class Presentations
         30  Class Presentations

MAY  2  Class Presentations
      7  Class Presentations