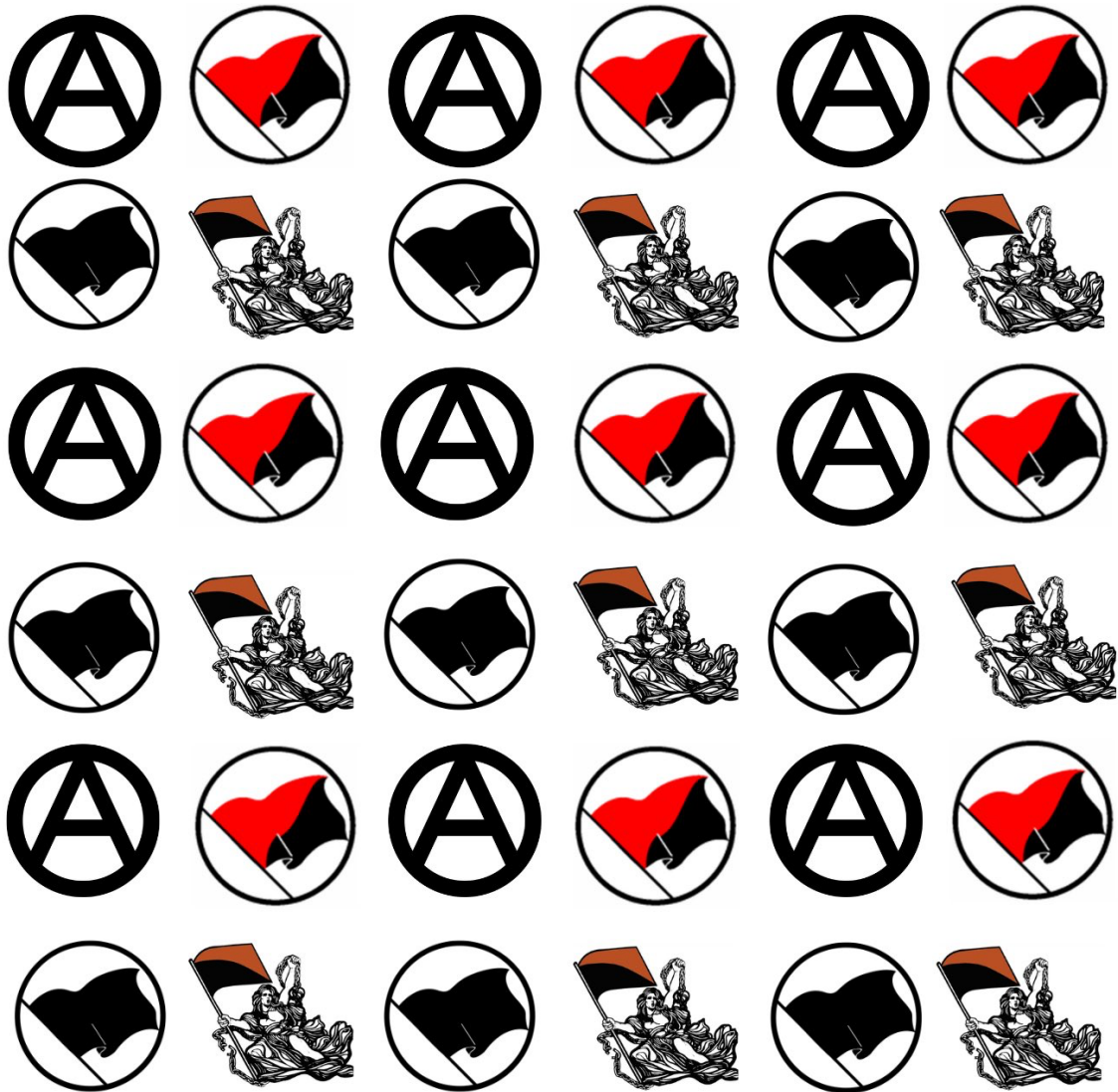




TRANSNATIONAL UTOPIAS



ANARCHISM IN THE AMERICAS
PROFE MELÉNDEZ-BADILLO

HIST 500
SPRING 2023
READING SEMINAR

WEDNESDAYS
8:50-10:45 AM



Transnational Utopias: Anarchism Across the Americas



HIST 500
Spring 2023
Professor Jorell Meléndez-Badillo

“The real history of modern thought is not about 1820, but of present-day social movements. History is not about parliaments, governments, laws, etc., but about the world of labor and its revolutionary direction.”

- Diego Abad de Santillán,
Argentina, 1933

Class Time: Wednesdays, 8:50-10:45am.

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 12:00-2:00pm.

Office: 4113 Mosse Humanities Building

Contact: melendezbadi@wisc.edu

Course Description

The first heyday of anarchism took place at the turn of the twentieth century. While anarchists never accomplished their desired social revolution, they succeeded in setting the cultural, intellectual, and material foundations for a global counter-republic of letters. That is, they created a vibrant transnational intellectual community with nodes across the world. In this course, we will unearth how those interactions took place in Latin America and the US Borderlands, and how they shaped anarchists' worldviews, conceptions of self, and political discourses.

In a world that seemed to be coming together through the invention of the telegraph, the proliferation of steamships, and massive migrations across oceans, the workers, anarchists, and intellectuals we will study in this course sustained transnational radical networks through friendships, the circulation of information, and social events. But who were the people that dedicated their nights to writing articles, stained their hands in printshops, and oftentimes risked imprisonment for circulating what authorities considered to be subversive ideas? And, perhaps more importantly, why did they do it? Throughout this course, students we will explore how a ragtag group of working-class intellectuals across the Americas profoundly shaped local labor movements, sustained far-flung regional activist networks, and collaborated transnationally.

While anarchism was a global phenomenon, we will focus in how it developed in the Americas at the turn of the twentieth century. The course begins with a brief historical and historiographical introduction to the idea of anarchism and its beginnings in Latin America. Using the city of Buenos Aires as a case study, the course moves to study the role of culture in the creation of working-class intellectual communities. We will then explore the materiality of the transnational networks that operated in the Caribbean region. The course will then move to explore how workers in Puerto Rico formed working-class intellectual communities in the margins of the country's cultural and intellectual elite. The class ends by exploring the legacy of anarchism in the US-Mexican Borderlands.

Learning Outcomes

Students in this seminar will learn to:

- Identify major trends and debates in the historical studies of Latin American anarchism
- Explain how workers, anarchists, and intellectuals created and sustained transnational networks
- Analyze the Eurocentric and colonial dimensions of some anarchist practices and discourses
- Compare and contrast the development of anarchist's development in rural and urban centers, or in Andean regions and Caribbean contexts

- Develop an understanding of the lives of working people that were not affiliated to any labor organization
- Recognize the legacy of working-class activism, politics, and intellectual production in contemporary Latin American societies

Class Assignments

Class Participation	Ongoing	15 points
Reading Responses	Ongoing	15 points
Leading Discussion	Ongoing	10 points
Essay 1	March 3	15 points
Essay 2	March 24	15 points
Final Paper (and presentation)	May 3	30 points

Total: 100 points

Class Participation:

As a seminar, you're expected to fully participate in classroom discussion. Please note that you are required to attend our meetings every week. Your grade will not only depend on attendance but will also take into consideration your engagement with the classroom materials. Please bring your reading responses to class as this will facilitate our discussions.

Reading Responses:

Students will submit their reading responses through Canvas twenty-four hours before our class meetings. The response will be your blueprint for discussion and will allow you to engage with the course's readings critically before each meeting. You can find more detailed instructions in the Appendix #1.

Leading Discussion:

Starting in week 7, two students will lead discussion in every class meeting. One student will focus on secondary sources and the other will focus on primary sources. This will be a two-part assignment. You are expected to lead the class discussion. The format is entirely up to you, but you are required to engage the class with at least 50 minutes of class discussion. You are expected to facilitate and ensure the class understands and engages with the larger questions and themes of the readings.

Teaching something to someone else is one of the best ways to test your knowledge on a subject. Thus, the point of this assignment is to ensure you thoroughly understand the reading material and can facilitate class discussion so that the entire class also understands the material. You must send your class discussion outline/plan two days *before* your scheduled discussion.

Some questions to keep in mind when preparing your discussion are:

- How does this source fit into the broader class topic?
- Who wrote it?
- If the source has an introduction, what is the author saying?
- How is the source structured?
- Who is the audience?
- What are the silences in the text?
- What can this reading tell us about imperialism, class, and gender?
- What can this reading tell you about the history of the Caribbean or the specific country covered?
- What are your thoughts and opinions about the source?

Essays:

These essays will be 4-5 pages long and are designed for students to engage with the classroom material. I will hand out the prompts for the first paper on Week 4, and students will have two weeks to submit it. I will hand out the second paper's prompts week 8 and students will have two weeks to work on it.

Final Paper:

For the final paper, students will explore a topic related to anarchism in Latin America. Students will meet with Prof. Meléndez-Badillo to identify an appropriate topic on week 8. The seven-to-ten page essay should be submitted in Word format and should include both primary and secondary sources. It should be submitted as a Word document and in 'zine format.

Credit Hours and Student Workload:

This three-credit class carries the expectation that students will work on course learning activities (reading, writing, problem sets, studying, among others) for about 3 hours out of the classroom for every class period (6 hours total). Below you will find more information about expectations for undergraduate and graduate student work.

Grades:

Grades on assignments and exams are recorded as numerical scores out of a total of 100 points (these scores are later weighted to arrive at a final composite course grade). The table for converting your final composite (weighted) numerical grade into final letter grades is as follows:

Points	<60	60-68.9	69-74.9	75-80.9	81-86.9	87-92.9	93 and above
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Grade	F	D	C	BC	B	AB	A
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- Students must submit all assignments and complete all essays to pass this course.
- Students may **not** elect to opt out of an assignment and receive an F on it.
- Any non-emergency extensions must be requested prior to the due date.

Main Readings

These readings will be complemented with articles and chapters available in the course's Canvas page.

- Capetillo, Luisa. *Escalando la tribuna. Edición bilingüe de Ensayos libertarios y Humanidad en el futuro*. Edited by Nancy Bird and Translated by Amy Olen. Mayagüez: Editora Educación Emergente, 2022. (Available on-line through Editora Educación Emergente)
- Fernández, Frank. *Anarchism in Cuba: The History of a Movement*. Translated by Charles Bufé. Tucson: See Sharp Press, 2001. (Available on-line through The Internet Archive)
- Kelly Lytle Hernández. *Bad Mexicans: Race, Empire, and Revolution in the Borderlands*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2022.
- Shaffer, Kirwin. *Anarchists of the Caribbean: Countercultural Politics and Transnational Networks in the Age of US Expansion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020.
- Shaffer, Kirwin and Geoffroy de Laforcade. *In Defiance of Boundaries: Anarchism in Latin America History*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2015. (Available through the UW Library System)
- Suriano, Juan. *Paradoxes of Utopia: Anarchist Culture and Politics in Buenos Aires*. Oakland: AK Press, 2010. (Available on-line through The Internet Archive)

Course Website and Digital Instructional Tools

This course will use Canvas. You can find all the readings that are not part of the required books in the Canvas page.

General Information About the Course

1. Use office hours if you have any questions, comments, or doubts about the readings, lectures, assignments, or discussions. If you cannot attend office hours, you can contact me to schedule an appointment.
2. If you have any other question that can be answered with a few sentences and that is not answered in this syllabus, feel free to email me. If I have not replied within two (2) weekdays, please follow up with me.
3. Students are expected to read all the assigned material. Regular attendance to class and active, engaging participation is also expected from every student.
4. If, for some reason, you cannot meet a major assignment deadline, please contact me **before the assignment is due**. If you have not contacted me and you have to miss a deadline, you have **one** opportunity to hand it in **the NEXT DAY** (not the next class). There will be a 10% tardiness reduction to your grade for each day that goes by (except for those students that present a valid medical excuse). The second time you cannot submit your assignment late except with a valid medical excuse.
5. Check your email and Canvas periodically to check for any announcement, posting, changes in the readings, or any other information pertaining the class.

Course Policies:

Teaching and Learning Data Transparency Statement

The privacy and security of faculty, staff and students' personal information is a top priority for UW-Madison. The university carefully reviews and vets all campus-supported digital tools used to support teaching and learning, to help support success through [learning analytics](#), and to enable proctoring capabilities. View the university's full teaching and learning [data transparency statement](#).

Privacy of Student Records and the Use of Audio Recorded Lectures Statement

Lecture materials and recordings for this course are protected intellectual property at UW-Madison. Students in courses may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in class. Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, students are not authorized to record lectures without permission unless they are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability who has an approved accommodation that includes recording. [Regent Policy Document 4-1] Students may not copy or have lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities, with the exception of sharing copies of personal notes as a notetaker through the McBurney

disability resource center. Students are otherwise prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the instructor's express written permission. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university's policies, UW's chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct. View [more information about ferpa](#).

Campus Resources for Academic Success

- [University Health Services](#)
- [Undergraduate Academic Advising And Career Services](#)
- [Office Of The Registrar](#)
- [Office Of Student Financial Aid](#)
- [Dean Of Students Office](#)
- [Graduate Student Services](#)

Course Evaluations

Students will be provided with an opportunity to evaluate their enrolled courses and their learning experience. Student participation is an integral component of course development, and confidential feedback is important to the institution. UW-Madison strongly encourages student participation in course evaluations.

Digital Course Evaluation

UW-Madison uses a [digital course evaluation](#) survey tool. In most instances, students receive an official email two weeks prior to the end of the semester, notifying them that course evaluations are available. Students receive an email with a link to log into the course evaluation with their netid. Evaluations are anonymous. Student participation is an integral component of course development, and feedback is important. UW-Madison strongly encourages student participation in course evaluations.

Students' Rules, Rights & Responsibilities

[Rights & Responsibilities](#)

Diversity & inclusion statement

[Diversity](#) is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.

Academic integrity statement

By virtue of enrollment, each student agrees to uphold the high academic standards of the University of Wisconsin-Madison; academic misconduct is behavior that negatively impacts the integrity of the institution. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these previously listed acts are examples of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action. Examples of disciplinary [sanctions](#) include, but are not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion.

Accommodations for students with disabilities

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin state statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy ([uw-855](#)) require the university to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities to access and participate in its academic programs and educational services. Faculty and students share responsibility in the accommodation process. Students are expected to inform faculty of their need for instructional accommodations during the beginning of the semester, or as soon as possible after being approved for accommodations. Faculty will work either directly with the student or in coordination with the mcburney center to provide reasonable instructional and course-related accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA. (see: [mcburney disability resource center](#))

Academic calendar & religious observances

[Academic Calendar & Religious Observances](#)

Course Schedule

Week 1: What is Anarchism?

1. Wednesday, January 25

Topics: *Building Community and Creating a Safe Space; What is anarchism?*

Optional Readings:

- i. Errico Malatesta, “Anarchy” (Canvas)
 - ii. Emma Goldman, *Anarchism: What It Really Stands For* (Canvas)
 - iii. Jesse Cohn, “Of Tunnels and Theaters” and “The Reader in the Factory,” in *Underground Passages: Anarchist Resistance Culture, 1848-2011* (Oakland: AK Press, 2014), 1-63. (Canvas)
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Week 2: Beginning Our Imaginary Journey

2. Wednesday, February 1, 2023

Topic: *Anarchism in Latin America: An Introduction*

Readings:

- i. Romina Akemi and Javier Sethness-Castro, “Introduction: Anarchism in Latin America,” in *Anarchism in Latin America* by Ángel Cappelletti (Oakland: AK Press, 2017).
 - ii. Jorell Meléndez-Badillo “The Anarchist Imaginary: Max Nettlau and Latin America, 1890-1934,” in *Writing Revolution: Hispanic Anarchist Print Culture and the United States*, edited by Montse Feu-López and Chris J. Castañeda (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2019), 177-193. (Canvas)
 - iii. Jorell Meléndez-Badillo, “Radical Genealogies: The Beginnings of Anarchism in Nineteenth-Century Latin America, 1860-1890” in *Routledge Handbook for Nineteenth-Century Latin America*, edited by Graciela Montaldo and Agnes Lugo (New York: Routledge, forthcoming). (Canvas)
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Week 3: The Cultural Dimensions of Anarchism: Buenos Aires as a Case Study

3. Wednesday, February 8, 2023:

Topic: *Anarchism in Buenos Aires*

a. Readings:

- i. Suriano, *Paradoxes of Utopia*, pp. 1-142
-

Week 4: The Power of *La Idea*: Buenos Aires as a Case Study

4. **Wednesday, February 15, 2023:**

Topic: *Anarchism in Buenos Aires*

- a. Readings:
 - i. Suriano, *Paradoxes of Utopia*, pp. 143-231
 - ii. *La protesta*, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 13 June 1903 (Canvas)
 - iii. *Le Questionne Sociale*, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 4 October 1885 (Canvas)
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Week 5: Anarchism Across Latin America

5. **Wednesday, February 22, 2023:**

- a. Readings:
 - i. Shaffer and de LaForcade, *In Defiance of Borders*, pp. 1-162
-

Week 6: Anarchism Across Latin America

6. **Wednesday, March 1, 2023:**

- a. Readings:
 - i. Shaffer and de LaForcade, *In Defiance of Borders*, pp. 163-335.

*****Essay #1 Due on Friday March 3, 2023*****

Week 7: Transnational Networks in the Caribbean

7. **Wednesday, March 8, 2023 (International Workingwomen's Day):**

- a. Readings:
 - i. Shaffer, *Anarchists of the Caribbean*, Introduction and chapters 1-3, pp. 11-154.
-

Week 8: Spring Recess

8. **Wednesday, March 15, 2023:**
a. No class meeting
-

Week 9: Transnational Networks in the Caribbean

9. **Wednesday, March 22, 2023:**
a. Readings:
i. Shaffer, *Anarchists of the Caribbean*, Chapters 4-7, pp. 155-272.
-

Week 10: Traditional Historiographies: The Case of Cuba

10. **Wednesday, March 22, 2023:**
a. Readings:
i. Frank Fernández, *Anarchism in Cuba*, pp. 1-128.

*****Essay #2 Due on Friday March 24, 2023*****

Week 11: Engendering Anarchism

11. **Wednesday, March 29, 2023:**
a. Readings:
i. Capetillo, *Escalando la tribuna*, Introduction and Libertarian Essays, pp. 111-177.
ii. Jorell Meléndez-Badillo, “Luisa Capetillo and the Caribbean’s Counter-Republic of Letters,” *Small Axe* 69 (Nov. 2022).
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Week 12: Engendering Anarchism

12. **Wednesday, April 5, 2023:**
a. Readings:
i. Capetillo, *Escalando la tribuna*, Humanity in the Future and Epilogue, pp. 178-197.
ii. Maxine Molyneux, “‘No Gods, No Boss, No Husband,’ Anarchist Feminism in Nineteenth-Century Argentina,” in *Women’s Movements in International Perspective* (Canvas)
iii. Sonia Hernández, “Catirina Piña and Anarcho-syndicalism: Labor Activism in the Greater Mexican Borderlands, 1910-1930,” in *Writing*

Revolution: Hispanic Anarchism in the United States (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2019), 136-152.

Week 13: Anarchism in the Borderlands

13. Wednesday, April 12, 2023:

- a. Readings:
 - i. Kelly Lytle Hernández, *Bad Mexicans*, parts 1-2.
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Week 14: Anarchism in the Borderlands

14. Wednesday, April 19, 2023:

- a. Readings:
 - i. Kelly Lytle Hernández, *Bad Mexicans*, parts 3-4.
-

Week 15: Zine-Building Workshop

15. Wednesday, April 26, 2023

- a. Classroom activity.
-

Week 16: Our (Classroom) Social Study Center

16. Wednesday, May 3, 2023

- a. Classroom activity.

*****Final Paper Due in Class*****



Image: Centro Social C.C.C.,
Santurce Puerto Rico, c.2013.

Appendix #1:

Reading Responses Guideline

You are expected to prepare a very brief discussion preparation sheet or, simply put, a reading response for each class meeting. It should not take more than half to three-quarters of page to complete the assignment, depending on the length of your quotations. Make sure that you demonstrate having read and being familiar with **all** the readings assigned for that week.

Each reading response should include the following **three** components:

1. **Lexicon:** Write three words you found relevant to the material discussed in class. Each word should be accompanied by a page number indicating the place where the words appears. When there are more than one reading assigned, you should include at least one word for each reading. These words are not necessarily words you do not know and had to look their meaning but, instead, words you consider of upmost critical importance to understand the topics discussed.
2. **Selection of quote:** Identify a quote you think is important or significant to understand that week's material discussed in class. To get full credit in this part you need to: 1) quote directly and exactly (including page number or line of reference); 2) add a sentence that explains its meaning **in your words**; and 3) finish by adding a sentence or two of why you think the quote is important to explain the material discussed in class.
3. **Critical Inquiry:** Write down two questions that might help you think of the larger themes being discussed, or that might introduce new insights we have not yet considered in class. Instead of broad ended questions—i.e., “Why are Latin Americans festive?” or “Why is populism bad?”— a deeper analysis would help us think of the topics more broadly or in new ways. For example: How might have the events that took place on May 2, 1808 in Spain influenced Latin American revolutionaries? What role might have emotions and honor played in the construction nation-states? What can the text's omission of women tell us about the state of the literature nowadays?”).