

## HIST 525 001/615 001: The Transnational History of the Americas

M, 7:20-10:00 PM  
Hanover Hall L003  
Spring 2017

Prof. Matt Karush  
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Office Hours: M, 3:00-5:00  
and by appt.

In the last couple of decades, a “transnational turn” has begun to rewrite the history of the United States and of Latin America. For some scholars, transnational history entails mining archives in multiple countries in order to write histories that span national borders. For others, it means applying Atlantic or even global frames to the study of topics that have long featured in national historiographies. This course will explore the new transnational history of the modern Americas, focusing on such topics as independence, migration, race, imperialism, movies, and music.

### Required Books:

Jerry Dávila, *Hotel Trópico: Brazil and the Challenge of African Decolonization, 1950–1980* (Duke, 2010)

Ada Ferrer, *Freedom’s Mirror: Cuba and Haiti in the Age of Revolution* (Cambridge, 2014)

Eileen Findlay, *We Are Left without a Father Here: Masculinity, Domesticity, and Migration in Postwar Puerto Rico* (Duke, 2014)

Caitlin Fitz, *Our Sister Republics: The United States in the Age of American Revolutions* (Norton, 2016)

Michel Gobat, *Confronting the American Dream: Nicaragua under U.S. Imperial Rule* (Duke, 2005)

Jesse Hoffnung-Garskof, *A Tale of Two Cities: Santo Domingo and New York after 1950* (Princeton, 2010)

Matthew Karush, *Musicians in Transit: Argentina and the Globalization of Popular Music* (Duke, 2017)

Lara Putnam, *Radical Moves: Caribbean Migrants and the Politics of Race in the Jazz Age* (UNC, 2013)

Ricardo Salvatore, *Disciplinary Conquest: US Scholars in South America* (Duke, 2016)

Micol Seigel, *Uneven Encounters: Making Race and Nation in Brazil and the United States* (Duke, 2009)

Laura Isabel Serna, *Making Cinelandia: American Film and Mexican Film Culture before the Golden Age* (Duke, 2014)

Heidi Tinsman, *Buying into the Regime: Grapes and Consumption in Cold War Chile and the United States* (Duke, 2014)

Ian Tyrrell, *Reforming the World: The Creation of America’s Moral Empire* (Princeton, 2013)

Note: These books are available at the campus bookstore, though you are free to access them in any way you prefer. Other readings listed below (1/23, 2/6) are also required. Please access them through the journal databases on the GMU library website.

**Course Requirements:**

1) Class Participation. The class will function as a seminar in which all students are expected to participate actively. If students fail to come to class prepared to discuss the required reading, the result will be torture for all of us. Therefore, your contributions to class discussion will constitute a significant portion of your final grade.

2) Blog. The blog for this course is at <http://matthewkarush.net/hist-525615-transnational-history/hist-525615-course-blog/>. I will create a username and password for each registered student; to log on and change your password, simply follow the link in the email you've received from WordPress. Each week, students are required to make at least **two** posts to the class blog. These can be new posts or comments to posts made by classmates. These blog entries need not be long, nor formally written. But you will be graded on how substantively and creatively you engage with the material. Do NOT use the blog as a forum for voicing your preferences (ie – “I hate this book”). Feel free to share those opinions with me, but the blog is for more substantive discussion. I will give you a midterm blog grade so that you know how you are doing.

3) Book Reviews. Each student must select **two** of the books we are reading and write an analytical book review of 4-5 pages for each. Your review must summarize the main argument of the book and assess the author's methodology (use of evidence, theoretical perspective, etc). Comparison with the arguments made in any of our other readings is welcome. The reviews are due before class time on the day we are discussing the book you are reviewing. Please submit them to me via email as attached Word docs.

4) Final Essay. In an essay of 12-15 pages, examine the multiple approaches to transnational history that we have considered in this class. How are these approaches different from each other? How have they reshaped scholarly understanding of the history of the Americas? [Note: if you remain skeptical of the transnational turn, feel free to make that case.] Your final essay is due by 7:00 PM on May 8. Again, please submit it to me via email as an attached Word document.

**Grade Breakdown**

|                |          |
|----------------|----------|
| Participation  | 20%      |
| Blog           | 20%      |
| 2 Book Reviews | 15% each |
| Final Essay    | 30%      |

**Class Schedule**

1/23 Micol Seigel, “Beyond Compare: Comparative Method after the Transnational Turn,” *Radical History Review* 91 (Winter 2005), 62–90;

Ian Tyrrell, “Reflections on the transnational turn in United States history: theory and practice,” *Journal of Global History* 4 (2009), 453–474.

**I. Revolution**

1/30 Ada Ferrer, *Freedom's Mirror: Cuba and Haiti in the Age of Revolution*

2/6 Caitlin Fitz, *Our Sister Republics: The United States in the Age of American Revolutions*  
 Rosemarie Zagari, "The Significance of the 'Global Turn' for the Early American  
 Republic: Globalization in the Age of Nation-Building," *Journal of the Early  
 Republic*, 31:1 (Spring 2011), 1-37.

## **II. Empire**

2/13 Michel Gobat, *Confronting the American Dream: Nicaragua under U.S. Imperial Rule*

2/20 Ian Tyrrell, *Reforming the World: The Creation of America's Moral Empire*

2/27 Ricardo Salvatore, *Disciplinary Conquest: US Scholars in South America*

## **III. Migrations**

3/6 Lara Putnam, *Radical Moves: Caribbean Migrants and the Politics of Race in the Jazz  
 Age*

## **Spring Break**

3/20 Eileen Findlay, *We Are Left without a Father Here: Masculinity, Domesticity, and  
 Migration in Postwar Puerto Rico*

3/27 Jesse Hoffnung-Garskof, *A Tale of Two Cities: Santo Domingo and New York after  
 1950*

## **IV. Race: The Brazilian Case**

4/3 Micol Seigel, *Uneven Encounters: Making Race and Nation in Brazil and the United  
 States*

4/10 Jerry Dávila, *Hotel Trópico: Brazil and the Challenge of African Decolonization, 1950–  
 1980*

## **V. Mass Culture**

4/17 Laura Isabel Serna, *Making Cinelandia: American Film and Mexican Film Culture  
 before the Golden Age*

4/24 Matthew Karush, *Musicians in Transit: Argentina and the Globalization of Popular  
 Music*

5/1 Heidi Tinsman, *Buying into the Regime: Grapes and Consumption in Cold War Chile  
 and the United States*

5/8 Final Essays due

### ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in this class.

Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes.

(Deadlines each semester are published in the Schedule of Classes available from the Registrar's Website, registrar.gmu.edu.)

Last day to add a class: 1/30

Last day to drop a class: 2/24

After the last day to drop a class, withdrawing from this class requires the approval of the dean and is only allowed for nonacademic reasons.

Undergraduate students may choose to exercise a selective withdrawal. See the Schedule of Classes for selective withdrawal procedures.

### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Mason is an Honor Code university; please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. For the purposes of this course, make sure that you understand what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. You may not present anyone else's words or ideas as if they were yours. If I suspect that you have, I will immediately turn your case over to the Honor Committee.

### MASON EMAIL ACCOUNTS

Students must use their MasonLIVE email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See <http://masonlive.gmu.edu> for more information.

### OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. <http://ods.gmu.edu>

### WRITING CENTER

For help with your writing, please use the services of the Writing Center: A114 Robinson Hall; (703) 993-1200; <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>; [wcenter@gmu.edu](mailto:wcenter@gmu.edu)

### COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS)

(703) 993-2380;

<http://caps.gmu.edu>

### UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.