

## Eric Gettig

### Recommended Resources for Latin America and the Cold War

#### ***Interpretive overviews of Latin America during the Cold War – accessible to teachers and probably also to many students:***

Thomas C. Wright, *Latin America in the Era of the Cuban Revolution and Beyond* 3rd. ed. (Praeger, 2018)

Stephen G. Rabe, *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America* (Oxford UP, 2012)

---> contrast Rabe's interpretation with Hal Brands, *Latin America's Cold War* (Harvard UP, 2012)

#### ***State-of-the-field essays with reading recommendations and useful interpretive frameworks:***

Andrew J. Kirkendall, "Cold War Latin America: The State of the Field," H-Diplo Essay 119, November 14, 2014 < <https://networks.h-net.org/node/28443/discussions/52148/h-diplo-essay-119-cold-war-latin-america-state-field-h-diplo-state>>

*Still useful:* Max Paul Friedman, "Retiring the Puppets, Bringing Latin America Back In: Recent Scholarship on United States-Latin American Relations" *Diplomatic History* 27:5 (November 2003).

#### ***Edited volumes with new frameworks and interesting chapter-length essays:***

Greg Grandin and Gilbert M. Joseph, eds., *A Century of Revolution: Insurgent and Counter-Insurgent Violence in Latin America's Long Cold War* (Duke UP, 2010)

Gilbert M. Joseph and Daniela Spenser, eds., *In from the Cold: Latin America's New Encounter with the Cold War* (Duke UP, 2008).

#### ***A few country-specific monographs with region-wide implications:***

Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War* (U Chicago Press, 2004) (Guatemala)

Kirsten Weld, *Paper Cadavers: The Archives of Dictatorship in Guatemala* (Harvard UP, 2016)

Patrick Iber, *Neither Peace nor Freedom: The Cultural Cold War in Latin America* (Harvard, 2015) (Mexico)

Tanya Harmer, *Allende's Chile and the Inter-American Cold War* (UNC Press, 2011) (Southern Cone)

Renata Keller, *Mexico's Cold War: Cuba, the United States, and the Legacies of the Mexican Revolution* (Cambridge UP, 2015)  
**English-language primary sources**

***In Print:***

Duke University Press publishes a series of country readers – *The Cuba Reader*, *The Guatemala Reader*, *The Brazil Reader*, etc. – that are fantastic teaching resources for Latin American history and culture in general, not just for this period.

Michelle Getchell, *The Cuban Missile Crisis and the Cold War: A Short History with Documents* (Hackett, 2018).

***Online:***

**US Department of State, Historian's Office, *Foreign Relations of the United States*.**  
<<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments>>

Declassified US government documents (mostly State and White House NSC) organized by administration and then by country or region or theme. 30-year declassification target + bureaucratic inertia means they are currently putting out volumes from the Reagan administration.

**National Security Archive** <<https://nsarchive.gwu.edu>>

NGO hosted at George Washington University that files Freedom of Information Act requests and then collects, edits, and publishes declassified US government documents, mostly Cold War-era and mostly with an eye toward nuclear, military, human-rights, and foreign-intervention issues.

**Cold War International History Project**

<<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/program/cold-war-international-history-project>>

Another nonprofit, affiliated with the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars here in DC. Their focus is more on obtaining, translating, and publishing non-US government sources, chiefly from the Communist bloc and also the Third World.

***Database (library subscription):***

**World Scholar: Latin America and the Caribbean**

Combines short introductory articles with primary sources, images, etc. and also scholarly articles on all periods of LatAm history.

***Films (fictional)***

*La Historia Oficial (The Official Story)*

On the children of people who were "disappeared" by the military regime between 1976 and 1982, and the pro-regime families who took them as their own.

*No.* On the 1990 referendum that ended Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship in Chile. Starring Gael García Bernal.

*Voces Inocentes (Innocent Voices)* On El Salvador's civil war.

*Che.* Steven Soderbergh's sympathetic, two-part adaptation of Che Guevara's various diaries of his exploits in Cuba and across Latin America. Benicio del Toro as Che.

### ***New Interpretations of the Cuban Revolution***

Luís Martínez-Fernández, *Revolutionary Cuba: A History* (U of Florida Press, 2014).  
Single-volume overview of the revolution and its aftermath from 1952 to c. 2013.  
Accessible, balanced, and pretty comprehensive.

Lillian Guerra, *Heroes, Martyrs, and Political Messiahs in Revolutionary Cuba, 1948-1958* (Yale UP, 2016)  
and Lillian Guerra, *Visions of Power in Cuba: Revolution, Redemption, and Resistance, 1959-1971* (UNC Press, 2011)  
Definitely not written with students in mind, but very powerful arguments about the revolution that was and the revolutions that might have been.

Devyn Spense Benson, *Antiracism in Cuba: The Unfinished Revolution* (UNCP, 2016)  
Michelle Chase, *Revolution Within the Revolution: Women and Gender Politics in Cuba, 1952-1962* (UNC Press, 2015)  
In similar vein, perhaps a chapter or two could work with older students.

#### **Documentary films:**

*Cuba: The Forgotten Revolution* (American Public Television, 2015)  
<<https://www.aptonline.org/offer/CUBA-THE-FORGOTTEN-REVOLUTION>>  
On the urban underground resistance to the Batista dictatorship, and how Fidel Castro gradually gained control of the diverse opposition movements and later helped erase their contributions to consolidate his own power.

*Cuba: An African Odyssey* (on YouTube). BBC film on Cuba's military operations in central and southern Africa, which failed to bring revolution to the Congo but succeeded in shoring up the revolution in Angola and defeating Apartheid South Africa in Namibia.