



A Class that Does (not) Matter:

Rethinking Cold War Latin America from the Middle

Dr. A. Ricardo López-Pedrerros, Western Washington University

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18 • 2:00 PM • Register to attend at: <https://bit.ly/3IJTwEy>

Join the LAll for a presentation with Dr. A. Ricardo López-Pedrerros, professor of History at Western Washington University. This presentation seeks to bring together recent interdisciplinary scholarship to initiate a critical conversation on how to rethink the historical formation of the middle classes—as a social category, a political project, a subjectivity, and a material reality—in Latin America during the second half of the twentieth century.

The presentation proceeds in two ways. First, it offers a transnational genealogy of the idea of the middle class in the Americas to explain why, despite scholarly commitment to its study, the middle class appears as vestigial—that is, as a class that does not matter—in what is considered a “proper” analysis of power relationships. Second, by drawing on the Colombian case in a transitional framework, it demonstrates how the study of the historical formation of the middle classes during the Cold War opens up a multiplicity of questions to rethink the meanings of citizenship, the relationships between state and society, experiences of (counter) revolutionary change, the growth of affective labor, the naturalization of different forms of material inequality, and democracy as a method of domination. This is thus an effort to stimulate a broader discussion the role of interdisciplinary work to study the middle classes in our current neoliberal order, now that scholars and policy makers alike have yet again sacralized the middle classes as the solution to the “crisis” of democracy, the unequal distribution of wealth, and the political repercussions of neoliberalism across the world.

This lecture is presented as part of the Fall 2020 LAll Lecture Series and the Department of History’s 2020-2021 History Colloquium. For more information, visit lail.unm.edu or contact [lailioutreach@unm.edu](mailto:laiioutreach@unm.edu).

*A. Ricardo López-Pedrerros is Professor of History at Western Washington University. He is the author of *Makers of Democracy. A Transnational History of the Middle Classes in Colombia* (Duke, 2019) and co-editor of *The Middle Classes in Latin America: Subjectivities, Practices, and Genealogies* (Routledge, 2021). He is the president of United Faculty of Western Washington.*



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