

## University of South Florida Humanities Institute Faculty Fellowship Program

2024 - 2025 Cohort

### Research Theme: Conference on Democratic Violence in Latin America

The Humanities Institute welcomes its fourth cohort of Faculty Fellows for a year-long collaborative research experience. This year's cohort will study the social, cultural, and political relationship between Latin America and the United States, with a particular focus on "democratic violence." While it may appear contradictory (peace and safety should be the result of democracy), the use of violence in democratic nations has often been seen in the West as necessary to bring about a humanistic age through revolutionary movements.

These scholars will explore how political violence in Latin American countries can serve as a warning for democratic institutions, while also drawing on effective, practical examples in Latin American nations that further a robust, democratic culture. Their fellowship year will culminate in a three-day Conference on Democratic Violence in Latin America March 12-14, 2025.



**Diana León-Boys** | Assistant Professor | Communication

Diana León-Boys is the author of *Elena, Princess of the Periphery: Disney's Flexible Latina Girl*. Her research and teaching interests are in critical media and cultural studies, Latinx studies, and girlhood studies. She is a leader and developer of the subfield of Latina girls' media studies. *How long have you been a faculty member at USF?* I have worked at USF for 15 years, and been a faculty member for 10.

- *How long have you been a faculty member at USF?* 4 years
- *What are you currently reading?* *Her Body and Other Parties* by Carmen Maria Machado *El Invencible Verano de Liliana* by Cristina Rivera Garza



**José Ángel Maldonado** | Assistant Professor | English

José Ángel Maldonado specializes in rhetorical theory and criticism. His work on geopolitics, indigeneity, and deadly violence appears in journals like *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, and *Southern Communication Journal*. *How long have you been a faculty member at USF?* I've been a faculty member at USF since August 2013

- *How long have you been a faculty member at USF?* 4 years
- *What are you currently reading?* *La Revolución Imaginaria: El Obradorismo y el Futuro de la Izquierda en México* by Carlos Illades, *banana []* by Paul Hlava Ceballos, and *Data Grab: The New Colonialism of Big Tech and How to Fight Back* by Ulises Mejías and Nick Couldry



**Alejandro Márquez** | Assistant Professor | Sociology and ISS

Alejandro Márquez is a political sociologist interested in social movements, borders, migration, emotions, and care work. His current project is an ethnography on the practice of solidarity in the immigrant rights movement. It highlights the role of emotions and resources in the everyday life of movement organizations on the US Mexico border providing crucial services to migrants and asylum seekers.

- *How long have you been a faculty member at USF?* 2 years
- *What are you currently reading?* *Temporada de huracanes* by Fernanda Melchor and *Interaction Ritual Chains* by Randall Collins

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## 2025 Conference on Democratic Violence in Latin America

<https://www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/institutes/humanities/faculty-resources/conference-on-democratic-violence-latin-america.aspx>

March 12-14, 2025 | USF Marshall Student Center

### Panels | Plenary Talks | Professionalization Workshops

This conference focuses on the role of “violence” within Latin American democratic contexts. The participants define “violence” broadly and address a wide array of issues by analyzing some of the following topics: environmentalism, drug trafficking, militarization, collective and public memory, political corruption, borders, popular culture, advocacy, migration, tourism, and many others.

Violence, the intentional use of force to cause harm and, thus, the phenomenon democratic regimes attempt to eliminate, appears at odds with democracy. Yet, we continue to see violence exist within democratic contexts time and time again. The participants’ analysis of Latin American political culture provides visions into what the future may hold for democratic governance.

Our participants represent universities from across Latin America, the United States, and Canada, showcasing concerns over the development of democracy and violence in the following transnational contexts: Argentina, Colombia, Mexico, Haiti, Brazil, El Salvador, Chile, Puerto Rico, Perú, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Ecuador, Jamaica, and Bolivia.

The conference will conclude with professionalization workshops on Friday, March 14 led by each one of the plenary speakers. The workshops are open to all participants:

- Writing a Humanities Dissertation
- Publishing an Academic Article
- The Academic Job Market
- Dissertation to Book

[Conference Program](#)

## Plenary Speakers



**Nathalie Batrville, Ph.D.** | *Concordia University*

**"Haiti, The United Nations, and the Hegemony Peace as Containment"**



**Ralph Cintrón, Ph.D.** | *University of Illinois Chicago*

**"Democratic Violence and Dependency Theory"**



**Stacey K. Sowards, Ph.D.** | *The University of Texas at Austin*

**"Documenting Violence: Presence and Absence in Memories/Re-membering as Democratic Worldmaking"**



**Celeste Wagner, Ph.D.** | *Rutgers University*

**"State Violence, Gender Justice, and Social Activism: Lessons from Latin America"**

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Publication coming