

# INTERRUPTED SILENCE

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Autumn 2012

Actively Engaged Intellectuals ~ Intellectually Engaged Activists

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## FROM YOUR EDITORS

We're back. The year is well underway, and we at *INTerrupted Silence* are proud to present the first issue of our second volume. This quarter, we bring you bits from our friends across the world, from Spain to Jordan, and back to Chicago. For us, this newsletter is a loud reminder that when the world seems hopelessly lost, that when we question our own roles in perpetuating suffering across the world, we are not alone.

We fight our way through Bavaria. We endure through Ghana. And while we aren't ever really sure why do, we know that at the end of the day we will have accomplished something. We engage with history, entrench ourselves so deeply in it that sometimes it's hard to find our way out. We work diligently and have the unique opportunity to make sense of ourselves, where we fit in, and where we don't.

As the quarter draws to an end, we leave you with this newsletter as a token of your place in INT. We encourage you to connect with your communities actively over the coming intercession, and to exercise your intellectual capacities. If this is your first quarter as an INT student, reflect upon Bavaria and Ghana as you look ahead to the future. (We think it takes about a year for those ones to make sense.) Use the theoretical frameworks you've learned. Apply them to current events. If you were a student fifty years from now, how would you research and think about a project that placed you in the shoes of students in the tumultuous present?

*INTerrupted Silence* is here for you, to help you think about these questions as you move forward through your classes. To every student, we hope this newsletter finds you well and reminds you that you aren't alone.

Cheers.

Presented by:  
The Department of International Studies,  
College of LAS

# a solution to sweatshops?: hope for the global apparel industry

By Keavy McFadden

It has been decades since sweatshop conditions abroad first made national headlines, but garment workers have still seen no real improvement in working conditions. In fact, conditions are now worse than ever. A huge part of this occurs because of subcontracting, the idea that brands like Nike and Adidas do not actually produce their garments themselves. Instead, the corporations contract their work out to thousands of supplier factories abroad. This allows the brands to wash their hands of responsibility to the workers and ensures that relationships between workers and brands can be ended at any minute. The system allows brands to search for the cheapest possible labor and forces suppliers to compete against each other for orders. Factories offer lower and lower prices to brands, pressured to keep costs low to get business. In this process, known as the global race to the bottom, workers are forced to accept lower wages and worsening work environments.

Another large part of deteriorating working conditions has to do with the expiration of the Multi-Fibre Arrangement in 2005. The Multi-Fibre Arrangement (MFA) was established in 1974 by the World Trade Organization to regulate the global garment industry. The MFA was essentially a system of import quotas that spread out apparel production across many countries around the world and made certain that jobs in newly industrialized countries would stay in place. When the quotas were lifted, brands were suddenly given free reign to move their production anywhere in the world. Since 2005, companies have shifted their production to countries where conditions are the worst and workers are paid close to nothing. This creates a system in which brands can search for the cheapest labor without making any long-term commitments to workers, speeding up the race to the bottom.

Unfortunately, collegiate apparel is a big contributor to this system and its continued existence. Big brands have multimillion-dollar contracts with DePaul to produce t-shirts and sweaters with the Blue Demon logo. Our universities lend their names to Adidas, Nike, and the like, and in turn give the brands access to an extremely lucrative and sought after market. Because of this relationship, our universities are indirectly involved in the brands' exploitation of workers and violation of basic rights. It would seem that students and universities are helpless against huge corporate brands and the unchecked power of capital, but there is hope.

A program called the Designated Suppliers Program (DSP) holds the key for effectively ending the use of sweatshop labor in college apparel production. The DSP, created by the student-run organization United Students Against Sweatshops, would force brands to put an increasing number of their orders in factories where the right to organize is protected and wages are steady and fair. The rules of the DSP would be written into the contracts between universities and brands, establishing worker representation and respect as a prerequisite for business. Leveraging their buyer power, students and universities have the ability to hold brands accountable and change the way that the global garment industry functions. Any solution to ending sweatshop labor across the board would need to restructure the way business is done, and the DSP does just that. The time has come for universities across the nation to implement the DSP and end sweatshop labor for good.

## working in spain: an outsider on the inside

By Alex Johnson

This year I'm working for the Ministry of Education in Madrid, Spain, as an English language assistant in a public primary school. Spain has made a significant effort to provide bilingual education in all public schools. Subjects such as science, art, and music are taught strictly in English. Although the intention of this bilingual program is to create a more internationally competitive workforce, the English language occupies a politically contentious space in Spanish society. Students with difficulty in English comprehension have a hard time acquiring basic English communication skills, resulting in a lack of understanding of the subject matter itself, and giving them no opportunity to develop their Spanish vocabulary in these subject areas. The politics of education reform are constricted by a complex economic situation. The government continues to cut back on school spending, provoking large protests in the education sector.



Parents participate in speaking out against these measures by not taking their children to school as a form of protest. Spain, like other European countries, is experiencing the imposition of austerity measures. Sales taxes have risen from 16% to 18-21%, labor hours in many private sector jobs have been reduced by 25%, and the youth unemployment rate remains above 50%. At this time in Spanish

history, my position as an English teacher lends me a unique perspective into the education policy of a changing economic climate. As an INT alumni, I continue to use my critical perspective to evaluate my position and participation as an English teacher in Spain, allowing me to 'walk a tight rope' of larger and more complex issues I must manage everyday as a foreign resident of Madrid.

## W.W.Y.F.D.? (what would your faculty do?)

By: Gabriela Polo

We asked our professors for some words of advice. Here's what they said:

*Dr. Shiera Malik:*

"First, for reading efficiency, outline the books and articles by heading and subheadings before reading to get a sense of the text as a whole. Second, invest in your intellectual community. Third, prioritize sleep and good meals."

*Dr. Heidi J. Nast:*

"The best writers are those who read creative works of fiction. The best fiction is based on countless hours of research. The best fiction writing is that which entrains readers through simplicity and flow, providing nonfiction writers with a model of how to use language in a way that engages readers and inspires."

*Dr. Antonio Morales-Pita:*

"Your aim should be to learn, and not simply to pass. If you learn, the evaluations become enjoyable exercises where students prove to themselves how much their knowledge has increased...also, remember to keep your books!"



Call for undergraduate papers!

**Deadline: NOVEMBER 30**

***The 71st Annual MPSA  
Conference***

The Midwest Political Science Association was founded in 1939 and is dedicated to the advancement of scholarship in all areas of political science.

*Last year, a number of INT students presented posters at the MPSA. I thought I might share my experience with you, and invite you to join me and other INT students at the next conference in April...*

By: Kevin Doherty

The MPSA gave me a lot to absorb. As my first exposure to the political science proper, this conference took me by surprise. Political Scientists draw results from recorded surveys, mathematical analyses, and present their conclusions as statistical correlations justified by rigorously sound methodology. Certainly fruitful, these analyses reveal previously clouded relationships between people and their political environments. The emphasis on numbers, to me, suggests that the scholars at this meeting work at a level somewhat removed from reality. Their discussions quantify behavior, and remove the human element from the equations. The conversations, furthermore, veer from analyzing stunning results and their societal implications by instead “zeroing in” on numbers and methodology. Their conversations can dehumanize the people about whom, and on whose behalf, the studies exist. From this first experience, I don’t think I’ll pursue any further degrees limited by the single discipline of political science. (But I definitely see merit in fields that *encompass* the political science discipline!)

My initial shock subsided, and I attended three moderately interesting panels, with one paper that caught my interest. They were titled “Organized Violence in Latin America: Origins and Solutions” (it presented neither), “Social Capital and Civic Engagement in Latin America” (which had a surprisingly negative take on vigilantes), and “Crime, Violence, and Political Attitudes in Latin America”. The last of these three sessions included one paper entitled “The Unexpected Effects of Crime and Violence in

Mexico”. This last paper suggested that the dramatic increase in crime led to increased political participation, in local communities. The panels all shared one stark similarity in their presentations: the all talked about the numbers and survey data. Though a little unsatisfied, I learned a thing (or two) about Latin America that I might have overlooked had I not attended the presentations.

Next came the poster sessions. I left my own presentation session feeling nothing if not disillusioned. I realized that the conversations I had allowed me to figure out where to go next with my paper. Of the various passersby, a few stood out: one graduate student who recommended that I bring Putnam’s work into my own, another woman (who turned out to work for the World Bank) asked me where my data was, and a third, after noting that my poster didn’t much belong at a political science conference, recommended that I take a constructivist stance in my rhetoric. The most substantive person I met came from the University of Hawaii, she seemed particularly taken with my proposal. I took down all of their info, and sent them thank-you emails within the next few days. After a while, after reflecting the conversations that I had, I realized that I had nothing to feel disappointed about, but instead felt reaffirmed, even validated in my work (and brain).

Think you might be interested? Apply online at <http://mpsanet.org>!



# the end of american psychosis?

## notes on Chris Hayes' *Twilight of the Elites*

By: Richard Reinhardt

In the 2000 film *American Psycho* (based on the 1991 book by Bret Easton Ellis) an investment banker and serial killer tears through the streets of 80's New York, leaving a seemingly endless number of corpses in his wake. Masked by extreme narcissism, an upper class style, and running in the "right" circles, Patrick Bateman's blatant and carelessly executed crimes enjoy almost complete impunity. Because of the power and privilege evoked by his image, no one thinks twice. People seem to presume that there's a reason he's in this powerful position, so his actions – as blatant and violent as they may be – shouldn't be questioned.

After the past decade of American life and politics, such politically potent satire might seem misplaced. Something has changed, perhaps, and, if Occupy is an indication of anything, it's – at the very least – that Wall Street investment bankers are no longer off the hook. Chris Hayes' new book *Twilight of the Elites* tries to explain why this is the case by exploring American meritocracy and recently intensified public distrust in institutions and authority. As Glenn Greenwald has pointed out, Hayes' creative analysis and originality make for an enticing, relevant, and worthwhile read that is difficult to pin down ideologically or otherwise.

Exploring realities as seemingly divergent as the Enron collapse, subprime mortgage crisis, the Catholic Church's sex abuse scandal, performance enhancing drug use in major league baseball, and standardized testing, Hayes argues that "our near-religious fidelity to the meritocratic model comes with huge costs. We overestimate the advantages of meritocracy and underappreciate its costs, because we don't think hard enough about the consequences of the inequality it produces."

*Twilight of the Elites* also attempts to work beyond the left-right binaries of American politics, instead wondering if an institutionalist-insurrectionist binary might prove more helpful in understanding and re-thinking our contemporary political spectrum. Hayes cites the fervor around the election of Barack Obama and subsequent disappointment with the actions of his administration as rooted in the tension of the candidate who campaigns with an insurrectionary agenda and governs with an institutionalist one. At almost every level, Hayes argues, Americans feel a widespread distrust in public institutions: "The foundation of our shared life as Americans – where we worship, where we deposit our paychecks, the teams we root for, the people who do our business in Washington – seems to be cracking before our very eyes."

The author argues that the source of this collapse comes from substituting hierarchies of race, gender, and sexual orientation with a meritocratic one whose costs we have yet to sufficiently consider. After the 1970's, various forms of discrimination became less acceptable, so meritocracy became a way to level the playing field. I wonder if this might be one significant oversight for Hayes. While I think Hayes is right to show the ways meritocracy creates inequalities of its own, oppression based on identity categories is still, of course, writ deep in the American psyche and enforced by the state through violence. Though Hayes alludes to this, at times he seems to blot it over by leaning a bit too much on a "post-race," "post-identity politics" kind of rhetoric and agenda. He doesn't always sufficiently scrutinize ongoing linkages between race (as one example) and various forms of race-based structural oppression. It seems like he overlooks the fact that meritocracy could just be the curtain behind which the white supremacist now stands.

Hayes' populist tone might also raise a few problems. While I think the Occupy Movement and perhaps even (as Hayes argues) the Tea Party reveal something significant about the state of American politics, and while it might be true that there is widespread public distrust, this does not mean that the majority of Americans are willing to work to change the state of things – as Hayes' narrative seems to hope.

While *Twilight of the Elites* makes for an original and interesting read, there might also be major takeaways for INT majors beyond some intriguing political analysis. As students who will likely go on to make decisions about our professional lives in the next few years – if we're not already doing so – Hayes offers us a few moments of critical reflection.

For those considering futures in law, non-profit work, political work, or who just aren't sure if writing that paper about linkages between structural adjustment programs and increasing rates of tuberculosis in Eastern Europe will help them get that dream job at the IMF in a few years, Hayes' book will probably make for a good, reflective read. Not so much because it will tell us what to do – but because it will help us think about our roles in meritocratic systems, about privilege, choosing sides effectively, and how much we're willing to compromise. If American psychosis is dead or dying – and I might not be as convinced of this as Hayes – do we want to find ourselves cashing in on its resuscitation or nailing its coffin shut?

# electing not to vote: thoughts from two non-voters

## part one

By: Subuk Hasnain

I grew up knowing that when elections came around, I was going to spend a lot of time at home. Schools would close down because of constant strikes. You'd get your three day ration in case the local grocery stores shut down; have your flashlights ready and your power generators filled up with gas in case the electricity went out for more than just a few hours. It reminded us that politics was king. I grew up hearing that the government was corrupt and you couldn't trust any political party. It was all just a game. For some reason, anyone above 18 was still urged to vote within communities. It was a right and we were to take advantage of it even if it resulted in another hopeless term.

Every four years voting came around, and we would wait and predict the winner. Votes weren't really counted. If you went in to vote, they'd tell you that your vote was already in. And you'd just leave. We already knew that each district belonged to a specific party. The winner was already decided. So what was the point of voting?

This question was never that simple to answer. I didn't want to vote when I grew older. I didn't care. I never saw how one vote would make a difference to an entire country that established its democracy through corruption and violence. I simply did not care because nobody fought for basic necessities. False promises were humiliating. People lived under \$2 a day and it never seemed to change.

Will this time be any different? Former Cricket captains, dictators, and men who invest in hair transplants are running for candidacy. Elections are around the corner. There is a sense of being trapped, yet there's excitement. Will we finally get to vote for a candidate who understands the younger generation's passion to succeed? Or even understand what it means to lead a country like Pakistan? The recent shooting of Malala Yousafzai, a 15-year-old activist who supported girl's education in Northern Pakistan made me realize that maybe it is time to take matters into our own hands, interrupt the chaos and charge the voting booths.

## part two

By: Sam Masi

### Childhood

I grew up knowing that we had to pick the most religious president we could find. At church or during dinner it was OK to talk about who was the godliest candidate. But never their tax policy, which was inappropriate and did nothing more than to make everyone else at the table feel uncomfortable.

In elementary school, I listened to my teachers describe the candidates, and joke about the weird electoral college and the

Whigs. We always talked about the Whigs. And I was scared every time we talked about prisoners. What if I somehow got arrested? I'd lose the right to vote! And if I couldn't vote, it meant I couldn't be a good citizen. Every good person votes.

We were encouraged to vote when we were old enough, and respect each other's politics, that is, which candidate was the most religious. I was awkwardly restrained when I wanted to ask challenging questions. As it turns out, our polite



politics were nothing more than shrugging off the inconveniences parts of every candidate, and replacing them with religiosity.

I was too young to vote in 2004, but I waved a flag a few times after 9/11. I voted in 2008, lit fireworks every fourth of July, and recited the pledge of allegiance, under God, daily. I was growing up to be good citizen.

### **How does it impact us?**

I tossed my half-hearted patriotism at the door of INT 201 a few years ago and I'm just not that into voting for the next fearless leader. I don't care who they pray to, or if one time they smoked a joint in college. Isn't it more shocking that they listen to people with money before the rest of us, with our ideas and concerns? How do they feel about people who live in this country but don't feel like they belong?

And what about the politics of being busy? Those who are too tired to cook or visit family or even watch TV? Not just the I-volunteer-and-have-three-internships-and-dance-all-night busy, but the slave-all-day struggle-all-night sort of people who earn minimum wage and don't have time to worry about elections because all they can think about is when the next bill is due, when the rent is due, how much they can spend on groceries this week, whether or not the heat will get shut off tonight, on top of the fact

that they have families who need supporting and mothers and fathers who need visiting, and how are they supposed to even think about an election when they get off work after midnight and the bus is coming and the next shift starts at six which is in ten minutes and who cares if its voting day or not because this shift starts right now and the next one ends long after polls close.

What about them? Who has time for voting with a life so demanding?

### **So what?**

I dread the process of preparation: get a card, watch debates, don't trust debates, research, lose the card, forget my voting location for the fifth time.

I can read each candidate's platform but I can't sit through "you're wrong because I'm right" primetime debates.

Let's look at what works and what doesn't work, and start paying attention to all of the people who to live here.

Polite politics is for those who would rather perpetuate the cogs that benefit them best, and inconvenience them the least. I cast my non-vote for a more ideal future, for a place where polite politics are taboo and the conversations we have address, rather than ignore, the challenges we face today.

# LATIN AMERICAN AND LATINO STUDIES

*Every quarter we feature a department and highlight the work our affiliated faculty do. This quarter we are featuring the Latin American and Latino Studies Program along with a piece on Dr. José Soltero. The following is taken from the Latin American and Latino Studies website at <http://las.depaul.edu/lals/>:*

The Latin American and Latino Studies Program explores the cultural contributions of Latin Americans to the global community and highlights perspectives and traditions that have

developed in the region. It analyzes the multicultural character of the peoples of Latin America by calling attention to the complex interplay among Indigenous, European, Semitic, Arab, Asian and African societies in the region. It explores the profound linkage that has emerged between Latin America and the United States, particularly through the construction of Latino communities in the U.S.

## meet int faculty extraordinaire: josé soltero

By: Vierelina Fernández

One of the must-take faculty members affiliated with INT (as well as with the Latin American and Latino Studies department) is Professor José Soltero. Dr. Soltero teaches in DePaul's department of Sociology and is a native of the southern region of the Mexican state of Chihuahua. His résumé boasts an impressive array of some of the most prestigious university names in the world. For example, Dr. Soltero completed his studies in economics at the graduate level at the UNAM (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México), the top ranked university in Mexico. He also obtained his doctorate in sociology at the University of Arizona and then went on to complete post-doctoral work in sociology, public policy, and economics at the University of Chicago. Professor Soltero served

as the editor of the 2011 issue of DePaul's bilingual Latin American Studies journal *Diálogo*, and among his many published articles is one titled "Determinants of Remittances to Mexico Among Mexican Born Immigrants in Chicago." Some of his other research interests include Mexican immigration to the U.S., religious affiliation among Mexican immigrants, high school drop out trends among Latinos, and Latino culture in the U.S. When asked what advice he thought most important to pass on to his students, he emphasized the importance of not only reading as much as we possibly can but learning to do so in an analytical, in-depth manner. He also emphasized the importance of students getting out and seeing the world – he maintains that there is

no better teacher than travel. Such a recommendation to his students should come as no surprise given his own impressive record of travel experiences throughout Asia, Europe, Southeast Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. This fall quarter I was fortunate enough to be in his Peasant Rebellions and Revolutions class (cross-listed with Latino Studies and Sociology), a class that will be offered again this upcoming winter quarter. Though it is a three hour night class on Tuesday nights, Professor Soltero makes it one well worth staying late for. He will also be teaching Sociological Theory (SOC 331) this winter.



# third culture kids, round two

By: Thiago Marques

I was introduced to the concept of Third Culture Kids (TCK) last spring quarter, and for the past 4 months I have been struggling to think about anything else. I now feel incredibly comfortable knowing there are people out there who have been through the same struggles and positive experiences that I have.

Third Culture Kids are individuals who have been raised in several different cultures throughout different stages of their personal development. TCKs are known for having certain characteristics that either makes them intolerably annoying or astoundingly easy to get along with. Being a TCK myself, I probably fit the first definition, but have been attempting to progressively work my way towards the latter.

Moving to several different countries greatly impacts the formation of an individual's character. When you do not have control – or even an idea – of where you are going to live next week, next month, or next year, you become skeptical of everything and everyone. Skepticism, in this case, leads TCKs to form either a self-destructive personality, or an analytical mindset. The formation of a self-destructive character is filled with uncertainties, self-conscious thoughts, and dark feelings of detachment from your surroundings. It becomes hard to identify with those who have a fixed cultural identity, since TCKs cannot identify themselves with any single culture.

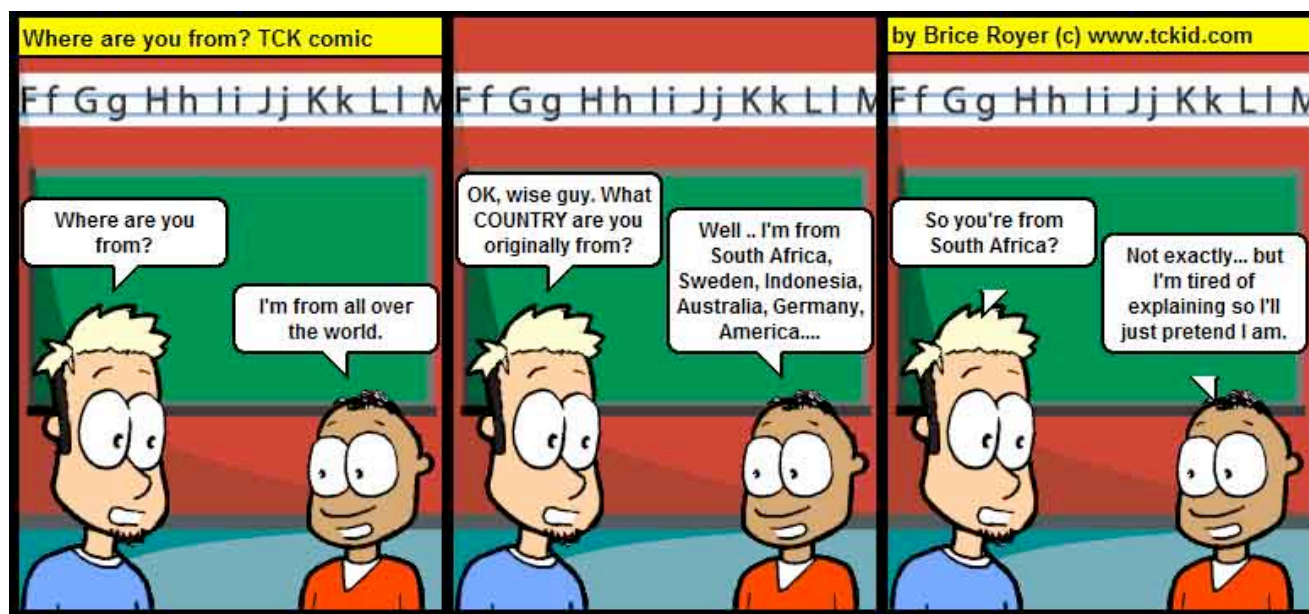
When I first moved to the US, I enrolled in a mostly white high school in Washington DC. During my first years at Walt Whitman High, my English pronunciation was despicable and my grammar primordially dull. When attempting to socialize with US kids, I was often ignored due to the fact that I barely spoke with the typical “DC swag”. I suddenly became very shy and very introverted. Not only did I start losing my ability to socialize, I also started losing my ability to

speak. The lack of confidence I had with the English language eventually led me to stutter more than King George VI of Britain.

I eventually left DC two years later and moved to Port-au-Prince, Haiti for my senior year at an international high school. I thought attending a primarily non-white school would be a better fit. But not only was I then the ‘new foreign kid’, I was also nicknamed the Brazilian *Blanc* (literally white in French). As well, I did not speak French or Creole, the local Haitian dialect. Every so often, I visited Rio de Janeiro, my hometown. Upon my arrivals, though, I realized that my compatriots continuously saw me as a foreigner too. I was stuck in a conundrum of identity and felt the need to figure out who I really was and where I was really from.

Throughout my INT courses, I've been able to study TCKs and where they fit. Today, I know that as a TCK, for example, I can appreciate the structured, punctual character of Americans, because I understand that such character enhances efficiency and keeps things ‘in order’. I also understand, however, that since I was raised in Brazil, where punctuality and order are not as important as the mental wellness of the worker or the quality and creativity of the work, I often rationalize procrastination as a way of clearing the mind for the entrance of more creative ideas, hence increasing the quality of the work. (*INT professors: I'm not just using this as an excuse for my late paper, I swear.*)

Studying nation-states and national consciousness has allowed me to place myself within American society, at the same time that I place myself outside of it. Ultimately, TCKs have an identity that is in-between cultures. While we have issues of our own, we have the unique opportunity to see into others' worlds and learn from them.



# 2013 Winter Quarter Class List

## INT 150 - Global Connections

- Mallory Warner - TuTh 11:20am-12:50pm

## INT 202 - International Conflict and Cooperation

- Gil Gott - MW 9:40am-11:10am

- Larisa Kurtovic - MW 11:20am-12:50pm

- Larisa Kurtovic - MW 4:20pm-5:50pm

## INT 204 - Cultural Analysis

- Heidi J. Nast - TuTh 4:20pm-5:50pm

## INT 205 - International Political Economy

- Antonio Morales-Pita - TuTh 9:40am-11:10am

## INT 206 - Identities and Boundaries

- Heidi J. Nast - TuTh 2:40pm-4:10pm

## INT 301 - Senior Seminar

- Gil Gott - MW 1:00pm-2:30pm

## INT 350 - Latin American Area Studies I:

### Contested Urban Spaces

- Carolina Sternberg - TuTh 2:40pm-4:10pm

## INT 360 - Development/Anti-

### Development: Revolution and

### Peasant Rebellions

- Jose Soltero - Tu 6:00pm-9:15pm

## INT 364/502 - Topics in International Political

### Economy: Europe's Economic Crisis and the Future of the EU

- Antonio Morales-Pita - TuTh 1:00pm-2:30pm

## INT 365/490 - Topics in War and Peace:

### Thucydides and International Relations

- Michael McIntyre - MW 4:20pm-5:50pm

## INT 368/500 Topics in Global Culture: The City

- Alex Papadopoulos - Tu 6:00-9:15pm

## INT 388 - Pan-Africanism

- Amore Kohli - MW 1:00pm-2:30pm

## INT 388 - Middle East-Latin American Relations

John Karam - TuTh 9:40am-11:10am

## INT 388/490 Comparative Urbanism

- Alex Papadopoulos - TuTh 2:40pm-4:10pm

## INT 404 Cultures in the International Context

- Shailja Sharma - Tu 6:00pm-9:15pm

## INT 405 Economies in the International Context

- Antonio Morales-Pita - Th 6:00pm-9:15pm

# DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION



*"We are interested students working for student interests!"*

The Student Government Association is an active body that acts on your behalf. SGA is committed to promoting and advocating the student voice and opinion. Comprised of 35 members, SGA is an excellent resources for students on campus who have questions about the university, or want to get involved in their community.

Look them up at **[sga.depaul.edu](http://sga.depaul.edu)**!

*Brought to you by the*  
*Department of International Studies*  
990 West Fullerton, Suite 4100  
Chicago, IL 60614



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Get involved with *Interrupted Silence* next quarter! Look for an announcement via intstuds in the *Winter*.