

Que vivan los estudiantes:
Cycles of Contention and the Chilean Student Movement (1906-present)
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In 2011, Chilean students took to the streets to perform a flash mob of Michael Jackson's "Thriller," a "kiss in," and a "Beach for Lavín," a theatrical mid-winter beach scene protesting Secretary of Education Joaquín Lavín's efforts to combat student strikes by ending the semester prematurely.¹ These protests, popularly known as the "Chilean Winter," demanded that Sebastián Piñera's government eliminate school tuition by renationalizing the copper mines, decreasing military spending, and enacting major tax reform.² Although focused primarily on educational reforms, the student movement also criticized the massive socioeconomic disparities resulting from the neoliberal order put in place under Pinochet's dictatorship. In this way, the movement's leadership sought to renew longstanding ties with Chile's working class.

The Chilean Winter emerged from a long tradition of student and working class activism. Student-worker synergy dates back to the early 1920s, when students at the Universidad de Chile found common cause with a burgeoning anarchist labor movement. What makes the most recent protests distinctive, however, was that they occurred amidst widespread indigenous, environmental, and feminist demonstrations throughout the country. Additionally, the 2011 movement was preceded by the Penguin Revolution, a wave of strikes led by high school students in 2006.

My research examines the student movement from its roots in 1906 up to the present, with particular focus on the 2006 and 2011 mobilizations. In particular, I examined the ways in which the demands, tactics, and public reception of the mobilizations changed between the Penguin Revolution in 2006 and the Chilean Winter in 2011. I also examined the movement's historical roots, focusing on the activist history of the Federation of Students of the University of Chile (FECh) and the intersection of student and working class politics, as evidenced in student participation in the movement NO +AFP, a national movement against the country's pension fund system.

With the support of the Grua/O'Connell Research Award, I spent three weeks conducting archival research in Chile. I primarily consulted the Archive of the FECh, which holds an incredible collection of newspaper clippings, magazines, posters, and other documents. I also conducted an interview with a former student leader, adding to other semi-structured interviews that I had previously conducted in Chile. This research formed the basis of the main body chapters of my honors thesis in Latin American Studies. In April, I also received a Grua/O'Connell mini-grant to present my research at Binghamton University's Undergraduate Conference in Latin American and Caribbean Area Studies.

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¹ Alicia del Campo, "Theatricalities of Dissent: Human Rights, Memory, and the Student Movement in Chile," *Radical History Review* 2016, no. 124 (2016): 177-191, doi: 10.1215/01636545-3160051.

² Jody McIntyre, "How to grow a student movement, Chilean style." *New Internationalist* no. 456 (2012): 26-26, *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost, <http://connection.ebscohost.com/c/articles/79920994/how-grow-student-movement-chilean-style>.