Major Latin American Revolutions:

- The Mexican Revolution
- The Bolivian Revolution
- The Cuban Revolution
- The Chilean Revolution
- The Nicaraguan Revolution
The Mexican Revolution
1910-1920
Porfirio Diaz:

Assumed control of Mexico in 1876.

“Order and Progress” - Change Mexico’s image and create stability to get foreign investment/loans for the country.

In the beginning, Diaz was almost ideal and had great intentions for Mexico.

- Stable/strong government
- Less crime/better quality of life
- Better army/police force
- Aristocratic advisors

Foreign investment paid for:

- Highways
- Railroads
- Telegraph lines
- Oil fields
- Rejuvenated the mining industry
- New industries were also created
Factors leading to the destruction of Diaz:

People in power wealthy, but the rest remained impoverished

No one wanted the dependence on foreign investments

New generation of Mexicans who wanted political involvement

Diaz stated that Mexico could handle free elections, but he became afraid to do so

Election of 1910:

Francisco I. Madero was a strong believer in democracy

Thought Diaz should step down from his monopoly of power

Diaz threw Madero in jail just prior to the elections

Diaz won the election of 1910
Madero was released and fled to Texas

He stated that the elections were illegitimate and that he was the President Pro-Temp until new elections could be held.

He called for revolution in a written document (Nov. 20, 1910) – marks the start of the Mexican Revolution.

Other Revolutionary groups that contributed to the rise and fall of several leaders:

- Emiliano Zapata: From the South (Took control of Cuautla and cut off the road to Mexico City)
- Francisco “Pancho Villa: From the North (Combined with Orozco to capture Ciudad Juarez)
- Pacual Orozco: From the North (Began taking control of cities in the northern areas)

These events combined convinced Diaz to resign and forced him to flee to Europe.

Even though he fled, Diaz left a large army under the command of General Victoriano Huerta and a provisional president.

Soon after, Zapata rode into Mexico City where he met up with Madero. Madero was then declared president.
The Overthrow of Diaz:

- Mexico City: Mexico City
- Morelos: Morelos
- Zumpango: Zapata
- 25 May 1911: Diaz resigns
- 8-10 May 1911: Revolution begins

Diaz Regime
Emiliano Zapata
Pascual Orozco:
Francisco “Pancho” Villa:
Madero’s presidency short lived though

- He tried to please everyone (ineffective)
- His inaction turned Zapata, Villa, and Orozco against him.
- US did not support Madero (Felt he was too closely related to the revolutionaries.) Met with Huerta.
- Huerta overthrew Madero and became president in 1913.
  - Killed President Madero and Vice President Suarez.

Under Huerta, revolutionary violence exploded.

- North: Pancho Villa, Alvaro Obregón, and Venustiano Carranza continue the fight.
- South: Zapata still fighting.
- Throughout 1913 and 1914, Huerta suffered one defeat after another and in the summer of 1914 all four revolutionary forces came together in Mexico City to defeat Huerta.
- Huerta, realizing that he was beat, fled from the city.
- In August of 1914 Carranza declared himself president.
Huerta vs. the Constitutionalists:

- **New Mexico**
  - Ciudad Juárez: 15 Nov. 1913
- **Texas**
  - Ojinaga: 10 Jan. 1914
- **Sonora**
  - Hermosillo: 23-25 Nov. 1913
  - Chihuahua: 5-7 Nov. 1913
  - Capt.: 8 Dec. 1913
- **Coahuila**
  - Torreón to Villa: 2 Oct. 1913
  - to Huerta: Nov. 1913
  - to Villa: 2 Apr. 1914
  - Paredon: 17 May 1913
- **Zacatecas**
  - 23 June 1914
- **Guadalajara**
  - 6 July 1914
- **Mexico City**
  - Huerta resigns: 15 July 1914
  - Obregón arrives: 15 Aug. 1914
- **Tampico**
  - 14 May 1914
- **Veracruz**
  - US occupation: 21 April 1914

**Constitutionalist:**
- 1 Jan. 1914
- 1 June 1914

**Huerta Regime**
Victoriano Huerta:  

Venustiano Carranza:
Soon after Carranza declared himself president Villa began fighting against him.

Villa built up his forces – pushed South to kick Carranza out of Mexico. Zapata took Mexico City.

Temporary Solution:

Villa, Zapata, and Obregon met – put Eulalio Guitierrez as president and Zapata agreed to move out of Mexico City.

Villa and Zapata stayed loyal to each other and to Guitierrez as president.

Obregon and Carranza came together and worked to get Carranza back.

In 1915 Villa’s and Obregon’s forces came together in a battle where Obregon was victorious. Because of Villa’s forces being badly wounded, Carranza was able to reclaim the presidency. Fighting continued.

Villa, Zapata, and Obregon met once again – named Guitierrez as president.

Later, Obregon united with Carranza again and in late 1915 Zapata and Villa suffered incredible losses at the hands of Obregon and Carranza.

In 1919, Zapata tricked by one of Carranza’s generals – was shot and killed. Carranza lost all support. He attempted to flee, but was killed outside of Mexico City.
Carranza vs. the Conventionists:

- **Agua Prieta**: 1-3 Nov. 1915
- **Hermosillo**: 22-23 Nov. 1915
- **Villa's retreat**
- **Chihuahua**
- **Villa**
- **Aguascalientes**: 10 Oct.-13 Nov. 1914
- **Leon**: June 1915
- **Guadalajara**: 17-18 Jan. 1915
- **Huentitán**: 18 Jan. 1915
- **Celaya**: Apr. 1915
- **Veracruz**: 23 Nov. 1914
- **Interregnum**
  - Zapata, Villa: 6 Dec. 1914
  - Obregón: 28 Jan. 1915
  - Zapata: 11 March 1915
  - Carranza: 11 July 1915
- **Mexico City**: US evacuation
- **Carranza**
- **Zapata**
- **Puebla**: 5 Jan. 1915
- **GT**
- **HN**
Adolfo de la Huerta was put in as president until elections could be held. At elections Obregon won and most of the revolutionary violence ceased. (1920)

Distributed 3 million acres to peasants.
Expanded educational opportunities.
Plutarco Elias Calles became president in 1924.
Obregon re-elected in 1928, but was assassinated by a religious fanatic before he could take office.

Calles founded the National Revolutionary Party (PNR) and continued to dominate politics. (Reorganized as the PRM and later the PRI) PNR candidates remained in office for the next 70 years – until the election of Vincente Fox in 2000.

1934- Lazaro Cardenas elected president. (Through 1940)
Results of the Mexican Revolution:

Almost 900,000 Mexican immigrants came to the United States between 1910-1920.

Total destruction:

Cost more than a million lives.

Men, women, and children fought in the revolution.

No major bank or newspaper survived.

It ruined many agrarian, ranching, and mining economies.

Constitution of 1917:

Land reform/restrictions on foreign economic control.

Labor codes: minimum wage, maximum hours, accident insurance, pensions, right to unionize, etc.

Church: Could not hold office, own property, etc.

New social consciousness:

Pride in their own identity – Nationalism

Unique literature, music, dance, art, architecture, etc. (Return to the past)
Lazaro Cardenas:

Culmination of the Revolution

Land Reform:

Handed out 45 million acres

Nationalized railroads and oil industry

First Latin American President to shift the power base to the masses.

Became a national hero

Last strong man to dominate Mexico

Middle class grew in size and importance
STAGES OF THE REVOLUTION:

1st stage
1910-1913: MADERO’s REVOLUTION
May 1911 Díaz resigns
Nov 1911- Feb 1913 Madero president.

1913-1914 COUNTERREVOLUTION: Huerta

2nd stage
1914- THE “REAL” REVOLUTION
July: Constitucionalistas (Carranza, Villa, Obregón) and Zapatistas overthrow Huerta
Oct: Constitutionalists split
Nov: Zapata & Villa occupy Mex. City

3rd stage
1914-1917: CIVIL WAR
Obregón, Carranza vs. Villa & Zapata / Triumph of Carranza

4th stage
1917-1920 CARRANZA government, Constitution of 1917
1919 Zapata killed in ambush
1920 Villa surrenders in Chihuahua
1920 OBREGON government

Post Revolution:
1924 CALLES’ government
1928 OBREGON assassinated
1934 CARRENZA government
The Bolivian Revolution
1952-1964
Characteristics of the Bolivian Revolution:
Least influential of the Latin American Revolutions in the second half of the 20th Century.

No active U.S. opposition (Not much investment there)
Population characterized by illiteracy, undernourishment, sickness, low per capita income, and short life expectancy.
Dependency on tin as an export: only 3 families owned the mines.
Only 7% of the population could vote (literacy requirements)
Served as an example to the rest of Latin America of a revolution that had imploded.
Minimal impact – little changed.
Events of the Bolivian Revolution:

The National Revolutionary Movement (MNR) was organized by Victor Paz Estensoro:

- Nationalize tin mines
- Combat international imperialism

Although Estensoro won the presidential election in 1952, the government and army refused to allow him to take power.

The MNR seized power by force aided by U.S. funds and technical aid.

- Able to nationalize the mines. Miners received new political power.
- Gave universal suffrage (went from 200,000 eligible voters to about 1 million.)
  
  Agrarian Reform Law – Abolished forced labor/redistributed land to Indians. Could not enforce – peasants took land on their own.

1956- Hernan Siles won the presidency (MNR)

1960 – Estensoro won the presidency a second time and changed the Constitution so that he could run again. Opposition disappeared.

Ernesto “Che” Guevara attempted to restart this revolution. It ended with his death.
The Cuban Revolution
1952-1958
The Cuban Revolution became the model for revolutionary change throughout Latin America. Havana etc. had a relatively large middle class. However, in the countryside:

- 43% illiterate
- 60% had dirt floors and palm roofs
- 66% had no toilet
- 86% had no electricity

The U.S. was Cuba’s most important market - sugar. (Platt Amendment…)

The government, under Gerardo Machado, was very corrupt. He was overthrown by Sgt. Fulgencio Batista and replaced by Ramon Grau San Martin in 1933.

U.S. officials were worried about Machado and asked Batista to take over.

He ruled from 1934-40 through puppet governments

From 1940-44 directly, then retired to Miami

Returned in 1948 and served in the Cuban Senate

organized a successful coup in 1952 and ruled until 1959
Fidel Castro failed at overthrowing Batista’s government at first: Filed a lawsuit against Batista – charging him with violating the constitution. 
1953: Failed to overthrow of the government in an armed uprising and was sent to jail.
1956: Che Guevarra joined up with Castro. They were to invade Cuba, but only 12 survived and they went into the Sierra Maestra mountains to regroup.
1958: Castro’s forces began their offensive. Che Guevara and Camilo Cienfuegos each led a column of rebels towards the capital of Havana. When the two met up in Havan and took over the military base, Batista fled to the Dominican Republic. A day later, the rebels occupied both Havana and Santiago.
Main goals under Castro:
- Land reform
- Limiting of foreign ownership
- The establishment of cooperatives
- Nationalization of public services
- Social legislation (women’s rights)

The spread of education now 98% literacy rate
Health care socialization
Industrialization/sugar industry
Nationalism
Castro did attempt to initiate good relations with the United States. He sought to increase Cuba’s sugar quotas and welcomed U.S. investment. However, U.S. officials offered no aid. The U.S. was seeing it as a Communist Revolution. This pushed Fidel to the Soviet Union.

The CIA trained anti-Castro exiles for an invasion at the Bay of Pigs. It was a disaster and Fidel was there at the beach head to fend them off. It was at this time that Castro announced that his revolution was socialist.

The Cuban Film Institute created. (Uplifted National History/Propaganda) Political Dissent is not allowed.

Castro was extremely successful in education, healthcare, and housing – even though the U.S. imposed sanctions against Cuba. (And still does today.) Castro was successful because the Soviet Union was paying above market prices for sugar while charging below market prices for oil. Castro became a heroic symbol of anti-imperialism. Castro became the target of all sorts of American plots to get rid of him.

The fall of the Soviet Union created new challenges for Castro and some tourism and private enterprise has began. It remains to be seen what will happen to the country upon Castro’s death...
The Chilean Revolution

1952-1964

Augusto Pinochet
Chile had enjoyed uncommon power and wealth in Latin America. (nitrates) A showcase for the Alliance for Progress.

- 30-35% of the population was upper or middle class.
- 70% urban
- 90% literate

However, gross inequity occurred in the lower 50% of the population.

President Eduardo Frei (1964-1970)
- Christian Democrat
- Did make substantial changes: land reform, nationalization of copper mines, unionization of labor, minimum wage, etc.
- Some felt he had not done enough
- Others felt he had done too much

1970: Salvador Allende won the presidency with 36.6% of the votes

A Medical doctor and Marxist. (Unidad Popular Party)
Chile thought that they had proved that a socialist revolution could be made without violence.

Expropriation of foreign business so that the government could redistribute income.

Agrarian reform for efficiency (low cost food)

Low interest housing, daycare, health and welfare programs, etc.

Overstepped the Chilean Constitution

Results:

Originally did well, but world prices dropped. Economy in trouble.

U.S. President Nixon gave orders to make their economy scream. Loans were cut off and the CIA paid to instigate strikes as well as to get newspapers to blame Allende for Chile’s economic problems.

Unrest developed within the public – marches. The presidential palace was bombed, Allende committed suicide, and the nation became under military control.

Gen. Augusto Pinochet took over as dictator until 1989.

Pinochet murdered between 3,000 and 10,000 prisoners. All opposition was outlawed.

Chileans shocked.
The Nicaraguan Revolution
1978-1979

Anastasio Somoza García
The U.S. created, trained, and funded the Guardia Nacional and appointed Anastasio Somoza Garcia as its commander. It was to maintain order and stability in the country. They destroyed any opposition to the Somozas.

The Somoza dynasty ruled from the mid-1930s to 1979. They stole from the country and ended up owning the national airline and maritime fleet, and many of the businesses/industries in Nicaragua.

They received backing from the U.S. and, in return, they voted for U.S. positions in the Organization of American States and the United Nations and the Bay of Pigs invasion was launched from their coast.
Sandinista Front for National Liberation (FSLN) emerged in 1961. Inspired by Augusto Cesar Sandino and the Cuban Revolution.

- Agrarian/Land Reform (Cooperative Farming)
- National Unity
- Emancipation of women
- Establishment of Social Justice
- Independent Foreign Policy
- Literacy Campaigns

The Fight:

In the 1960’s and 1970’s – Guerilla Warfare against the Samoza Dynasty.

All social class levels as well as the church took part in the revolution – but became divided again when it came to the reconstruction phase.

Women played an important role – Made up 30% of the people bearing arms.

Despite overwhelming odds, the National Guard became demoralized and disintegrated, Somoza fled to Paraguay – where he was assassinated.

FSLN received help and advice from Cuba.
Major Problems:

- Country in Ruins
- 1.6 Billion Dollars in Debt
- Approximately 50,000 dead and 600,000 homeless

Nicaragua became a model country for others as their standard of living rose.

BUT....

The U.S. distrusted the Sandinistas and worried they were going to turn the country to communism (like Cuba).

In 1981, the CIA financed, trained, and armed counterrevolutionaries for war with the Sandinistas, placed a full trade embargo against Nicaragua, and mined Nicaraguan waters illegally.

The Reagan Administration was forced to label the Contras as terrorists by 1982 due to pressure from Congress. After Congress prohibited federal funding of the Contras, the Reagan Administration continued to support them by secretly selling arms to Iran. That money was channeled to the Contra’s. Lt. Col. Oliver North and the Security Council took most of the blame for this – not Pres. Reagan.
1986: Nicaragua v. United States. World Court ruled that the U.S. was wrong. The U.S. ignored ruling and refused to pay damages. It was

The FSLN was voted out in 1990 due to U.S. support of the National Opposition Union (21 parties united), but still remains politically active today.