

**Fall 2015**  
**PHIL 4451, Section 01**  
**First Paper Assignment**  
**Prof. Douglas Ficek**

*Write a paper, at least ten pages in length, on one of the following topics – preferably the one that you find the most interesting. Revise your work carefully, and remember to cite your sources correctly using APA, MLA, or Chicago guidelines. Your typed and stapled essay is due at the beginning of class on Thursday, October 29th.*

1. Bartolomé de Las Casas, the “Protector of the Indians,” defended the indigenous peoples of the “New World” against exploitation, oppression, dehumanization, and genocide. Write a paper on Las Casas, paying special attention to his debate with Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, and use at least ten additional sources in your discussion.
2. Liberation theology developed in Latin America as a critical response to the lived realities of the oppressed. Write a paper about liberation theology, paying special attention to the work of Gustavo Gutiérrez, and use at least ten additional sources in your discussion. What do you make of this radical theological movement, and do you think that it has a place in the twenty-first century?
3. Paulo Freire believed that education and critical literacy were essential aspects of the liberation project. Write a paper about Freire, paying special attention to the important concept of “conscientization,” and use at least ten additional sources in your discussion. What do you make of this approach to education, and do you think that it could be effective?
4. Enrique Dussel is sometimes referred to as the “father of liberation philosophy.” What is the philosophy of liberation, according to Dussel, and how does it relate to the “underside of modernity”? Write a paper about this unique philosophical perspective, paying special attention to the notion of “transmodernity,” and use at least ten additional sources in your discussion.
5. Walter Mignolo explores the “darker side” of modernity in his work, and he also talks about the “idea” of Latin America. Write a paper on Mignolo, paying special attention to his critical analysis of Latin America as an “idea,” and use at least ten additional sources in your discussion. What do you make of his assessment, and how does it relate to the theme of liberation?
6. In *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, Gloria Anzaldúa writes about the borders that divide us as embodied human beings. Write a paper about this book, paying special attention to the importance of “hybridity,” and use at least ten additional sources in your discussion. What do you make of her argument, and how could it be applied today?

7. The Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) declared war against the state of Mexico in 1994. Their main spokesman, Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos, explained why in both speeches and essays. Write a paper on the EZLN, paying special attention to its uncompromising critique of modernity, and use at least ten additional sources in your discussion.