

# Latin American Studies Expert Dr. Nicolas Shumway to be Featured on CUTV News Radio

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EINPresswire.com/ -- Much of our thinking is through comparisons. By studying the history and literature of other cultures, we develop a frame of references for making such comparisons and thereby learn to understand our own culture better. By imagining the world through the eyes of other people, we can access knowledge that is otherwise unavailable to us.

Dr. Nicolas Shumway is a professor of Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies. Throughout his 43-year career, he has gained wide recognition as a leader in international studies and foreign language education. For 11 years, Dr. Shumway served as director of the Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. He recently completed a seven-year appointment as Dean of Humanities at Rice University. He continues to hold the Frances Moody Newman Chair of Humanities, also at Rice.



Dr. Shumway's scholarship explores Latin American history and culture with an emphasis on Argentina, Brazil and Mexico.

"I spent some time in Mexico when I was an undergraduate, I learned Spanish and decided to pursue literature. In all my work, of course, language has been key. If I hadn't learned Spanish as a young man, my life and scholarship would have followed a very different course. I very quickly strayed from pure literature to the intellectual history of Latin American cultures.

"Of course," Shumway adds, 'the term 'Latin America' is itself problematic, as anything that seems to equate Brazil to Honduras must be. Latin American countries are very different from one another, with different histories, different national narratives, different ethnicities. No two have evolved in exactly the same way. The term 'Latin America' is useful for identifying a geographical region, but we need to be careful about assuming that all societies south of the US border somehow form a homogenous culture just because they are all called Latin American."

Dr. Shumway has published two books on Argentina: *The Invention of Argentina* and *Historia Personal De Una Pasión Argentina*. "These books have shown me that we don't choose our

subjects; our subjects choose us. I've been in a dialogue with Argentina since my first visit there in 1975," says Dr. Shumway, "and I continue thinking and writing about the country."

Shumway is also a tireless defender of the humanities. "The humanities are unlike other disciplines on campus in that everything humanists do is historicized: a degree in English literature is also a degree in the history of English literature; if you study philosophy or art, you're also studying the history of philosophy or the history of art. Obsolescence doesn't really exist in the humanities.

"I love teaching, but I think a teacher's goal is to become unnecessary," says Dr. Shumway. "The teacher is the catalyst, but at some point, the subject has to take over, motivating students to continue studying because the subject itself is interesting, and not because some teacher has assigned it."

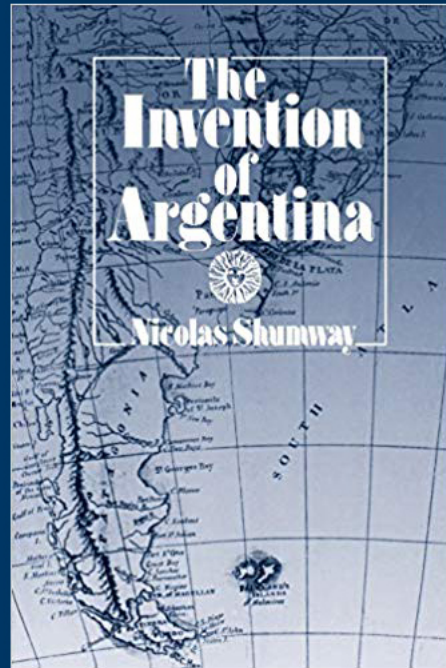
Dr. Shumway is currently writing a third book that will explore contemporary problems in Latin America.

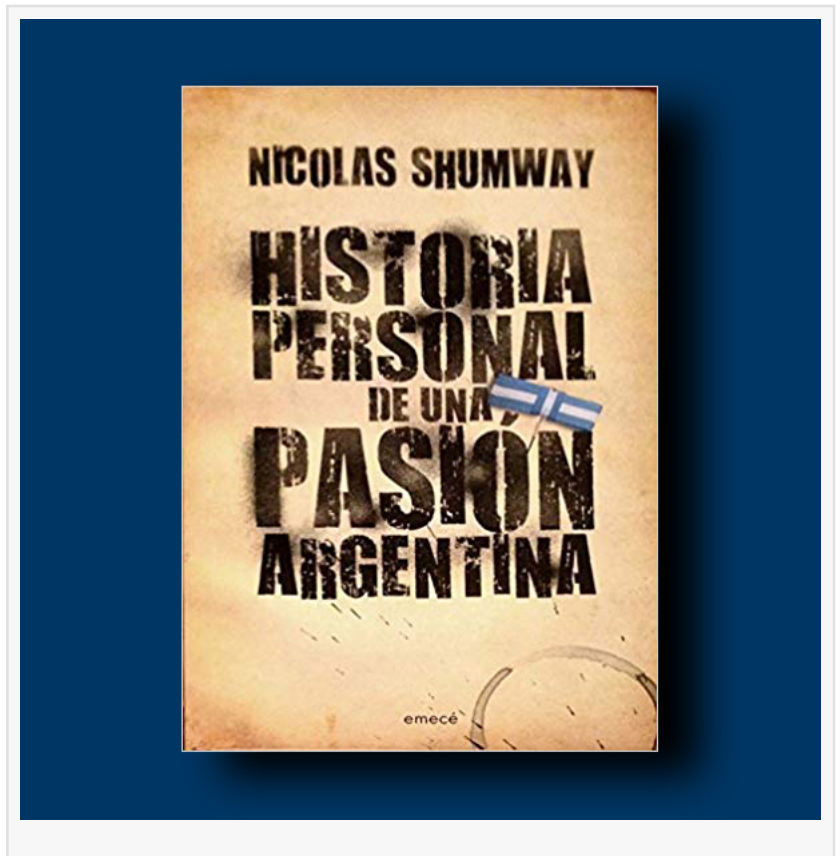
CUTV News Radio will feature Dr. Nicolas Shumway in an interview with Jim Masters on September 18th and September 25th at 3pm EDT.

Listen to the show on [BlogTalkRadio](#).

If you have a question for our guest, call (347) 996-3389.

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