

**UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL BULLETIN  
ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Florida International University**  
University Graduate School

Doctoral Dissertation Defense

**Abstract**

Reading Spaces: Nation and Popular Learning in Nineteenth-Century Lima

by

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My dissertation examines the transformation of reading practices and ideas about the functions of alphabetic literacy in nineteenth-century Lima. Scholars of Latin America have attributed improvements in literacy rates to the rise of the "Teaching State" in the twentieth century, however, as I show, literacy and reading culture spread decades earlier in the Peruvian capital, at a time when the state lacked the stability and resources to develop a public system of education. "Reading Spaces" argues that during the second half of the nineteenth century, private educational enterprise from a diverse group of booksellers, writers, and educators established key institutions of the modern Teaching State, including a national textbook industry, as well as pedagogical newspapers, associations and conferences. They did so in a process that promoted new pedagogical methods and helped spread alphabetic literacy and reading practices.

Developments in the disciplines of book history, the cultural history of education, and the history of reading informed my methodological approach to a variety of previously unexamined sources including books, textbooks, pedagogical periodicals, as well as bookstore newspaper organs and catalogues. Both the intellectual content and *paratext* of published sources provided a wealth of information regarding the circulation of the texts, their reception among state authorities and influential members of Lima's society, and the relationship of book and textbook authors to their publishers and readers. My dissertation reveals that textbook standardization and the proliferation of pedagogical newspapers were processes firmly rooted in the development of Peru's private educational enterprise, publishing industry and educational legislation of the nineteenth century. These processes expanded Lima's "public sphere," where booksellers, editors, writers, and teachers debated modern pedagogies and promoted broad engagement in educational matters. Their activity is evident in the organization of pedagogical conferences, intellectual competitions, national expositions and reorganization of civic festivities. The presence of a "pedagogical" public sphere, which directed the course of institutions of the modern nation state in Peru, encourages a reassessment of our traditional narratives of the relationship between education and nation in Latin America and beyond.

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**Time:** 1:00 p.m.

**Place:** Florida International University

Modesto Maidique Campus , DM 353

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Dr. Victor Uribe