



GUERRILLA MARKETING

COUNTERINSURGENCY AND CAPITALISM
IN COLOMBIA ALEXANDER L. FATTAL

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O.

PERO EN CASA.
D TODO ES POSIBLE.



MinDefensa
Ministerio de Defensa Nacional

ESTA NAVIDAD TE ESPERO EN CASA.
DESMOVLIZATE. EN NAVIDAD TODO ES POSIBLE.

ANTES DE SER GUERRILLERA,
ERES MI HIJA.

PROFESSOR'S GUIDE

Dear Professor,

I have developed this study guide as a resource to help you teaching of *Guerrilla Marketing* in your course advanced undergraduate or graduate course. It contains a mixture of discussion questions, reading comprehension questions, visuals from the book, and complementary resources available online. Additionally, if you would like me to Skype into your class to discuss the book, I would be happy to do that.

Thanks for your interest and please do let me know how your experience has been if you do teach *Guerrilla Marketing*.

Best wishes,
Alex Fattal

GUERRILLA MARKETING: COUNTERINSURGENCY AND CAPITALISM IN COLOMBIA

by Alexander L. Fattal

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PREFACE: “Before Being a Guerrilla, You Are My Child”

Discussion Questions:

On p. xi the author writes, “Behind the unexpected creativity of campaigns such as ‘You Are My Child’ lies an ideological axis ready to embrace the idea that the world’s most intractable problems can be branded away.” *What do you think the author means by “ideological axis”?*

Do you think branding can solve complex political and military problems? Why or why not?

Does the author feel that US-based media programs such as CBS and This American Life give the full picture of the partnership between the marketing firm and the Colombian military?

Read the paragraph on p. xi–xii that begins with “In this book I examine....” *What do you imagine the rest of the book is going to be like based on this paragraph?*

Analyze this image. *What do you see in it? What does the author have to say about it? Why does he feel that it is so emblematic of the subjects in the book?*



Photo courtesy of Colombian Ministry of Defense, 2013.

Reading Comprehension Questions:

What marketing firm worked for the Colombian government?

Who is Miguel Sokoloff?

The propaganda campaigns focused on which holiday? Why?

What is the time period that the book largely focuses on?

What were some of the issues addressed by the 2016 peace agreement between the Colombian government and the FARC?

What was the result of the plebiscite on the 2016 peace agreement? What were some of the dynamics at play in that historic vote?

Related Links:

- Articles
 - “Colombia Just Voted No On Its Referendum For Peace, Here’s Why and What It Means” https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/10/03/colombia-just-voted-no-on-its-referendum-for-peace-heres-why-and-what-it-means/?utm_term=.4677b9b1d3d2
 - “How Unconventional Thinking Transformed A War-Torn Colombia” <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/60-minutes-colombia-after-civil-war-lara-logan/>
- Videos
 - “The Colombia-FARC Peace Deal Explained” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VFU9La5MFe4&t=40s>
 - “Creativity Fights Back - Lowe SSP3” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ebpIP517gR4>

###

INTRODUCTION: GUERRILLA MARKETING

Discussion Questions:

Fattal sees the Program for Humanitarian Attention to the Demobilized (PAHD) as part of what he calls the “post-conflict state.” *What do you think he means by that?* (p. 2–4)

Describe former President Uribe’s democratic security policy. How did the “virtuous circle” play a part in it? Why is the author critical of this policy framework? (p. 9–12)

How does the idea of “brand warfare” fit within a longer history of “total mobilization”? (p. 11–18)

Why is the author critical of the idea of “individual demobilization”?

What do you think are the consequences of blurring war and peace — for Colombia and more broadly as part of the broader Global War on Terror?

What did you think of the author’s analysis of Figure 0.3 (p. 19)?

How did Fattal get access to the PAHD? What were some of the ethical challenges he faced over the course of his research?

For advanced undergraduate or graduate students:

How does Fattal theorize affect in his discussion of consumer culture and military propaganda coming together? (p. 12–16)

Why does the author position himself politically? How do you think that influences his book?

What is the author's analysis of this image?



Photo by author, 2011.

Reading Comprehension Questions:

90% of FARC members come from the countryside. True or False?

When did the FARC begin? How does it define itself ideologically?

List 3 reasons that people join FARC.

How does the FARC finance its revolution?

What does “paramilitary” mean? What were three successor groups of the AUC? (p. 7)

What does DDR stand for?

What is Plan Colombia?

Why was Fighters and Lovers selling t-shirts and CDs in Scandinavia? Why was that ruled illegal by the Danish Supreme Court?

Related Links:

- Articles
 - “Antonio Caro” <http://artofthemooc.org/wiki/antonio-caro/>
 - A Cautionary Tale: Plan Colombia’s Lessons for U.S. Policy Toward Mexico and Beyond <https://www.wola.org/analysis/a-cautionary-tale-plan-colombias-lessons-for-us-policy-toward-mexico-and-beyond/>
 - “Ethical Challenges in Participant Observation: A Reflection on Ethnographic Fieldwork” <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol13/iss1/8>
- Videos
 - “Who Are the FARC Rebels of Colombia?”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRwj43i53-U>
 - “The War on Drugs” Documentary
- Interactive Materials
 - “Mapping Militant Groups: Colombia”
<http://web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/maps/view/colombia>
- Books
 - “Drugs, Thugs and Diplomats” by Winifred Tate (p.14-18)
<https://www.sup.org/books/title/?id=24179>

###

CHAPTER ONE: AN ARCHAEOLOGY OF MEDIA SPECTACLE, 1974-2008

Discussion Questions:

Should the media lavish attention on the actions of illegal armed groups? Why or why not?

What was the relationship between the M19 and Alternativa magazine? How do you understand that relationship in light of this photograph? (p. 48)



Photograph featured in *Alternativa*, Feb. 15–28, first issue, page 24. The caption reads, "Bolívar's sword appeared. It is in Latin America!" Image scanned from print edition.

What argument is the author making about the relationship between the propaganda strategies of the different actors: M19, Medellín Cartel, FARC, Colombian government?

Do you think the strategies of M19, the Extraditables and the FARC would have been successful without television coming to Colombia? (p.55-56) How do you think the Internet changed the propaganda war in the country?

Why do you think some people developed an admiration for the M19 or the Extraditables? (p.62) Why do you think a similar affinity hasn't taken root for the FARC?

Which of the FARC's actions contributed to its delegitimization? (p 61–63)

Find one example of armed propaganda in a different country. To what extent do you think the author's concept of "brand warfare" that he develops in the introduction is applicable to other contexts.

Reading Comprehension Questions:

Where did agitprop originally come from?

What strategy was M19 famous for? Describe it.

What was stealing Simón Bolívar's sword so significant?

M19's most successful campaigns were ones that resulted in the loss of life. True or False?

Who is infamous for the slogan: "We prefer a grave in Colombia to a jail cell in the United States?"

What kind of people did the Extraditables kidnap? Why did they choose those individuals specifically?

The FARC has consistently made propaganda its top priority. True or False?

What was “the miraculous catch?”

How did the FARC kidnap 12 council members from the Valle de Cauca’s departmental assembly?

In 2008, after being on the receiving end of embarrassing media events, the Colombian military pulls off a spectacular media act akin to the M19’s armed propaganda. What is that event?

Related Links:

- Articles
 - “Colombia’s Vice President on the Freeing of the FARC Hostages”
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/colombia-s-vice-president-on-the-freing-of-the-farc-hostages-1.697991>
 - Drug Traffickers in Colombia Start a Counterattack
<https://www.nytimes.com/1989/08/25/world/drug-traffickers-in-colombia-start-a-counterattack.html>
- Videos
 - “Betancourt Memoir Recounts FARC Kidnapping, Captivity in Colombian Jungle” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IM14-hS0IAo>
 - “How this drug lord created a hippo problem in Colombia by Vox Borders”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R_ViOLgvsuY
 - “FARC Hostages Rescue Video” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TuVtzZL_dfc
 - ESPN Films 30 for 30: “The Two Escobars”

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CHAPTER TWO: OPERATION CHRISTMAS

Discussion Questions:

Fattal describes how Miguel Sokoloff compares the act of demobilizing to buying a new car. Is this a fair comparison? (p.81)

How does Maslow's hierarchy of needs (a psychological theory) influence marketers? (p.83)

How does this image relate to Juan Felipe Hoyos's interpretation of the demobilized as prodigal sons (and daughters)?



PAHD flyer distributed during Christmas 2012. The text reads "Your family is still waiting to celebrate Christmas. Image courtesy of Ministerio de Defensa Nacional.

Compare and contrast Operation Christmas and Operation Rivers of Light. Which one do you feel was more effective, why?

Research plays a crucial role in advertising and public relations. What role did research play in the campaigns discussed in this chapter?

The Ministry of Defense only transported a limited number of flood-relief kits and presented the people of La Gabarra with “a symbolic aid package.” What point does the author make about the “gift” of this aid? (p.96-99)

On p.104, Fattal describes how the government counterfeited its own currency and printed messages urging rebels to defect on the back. Why did they do this? What are the implications of the government counterfeiting its own currency?

Is a “humanitarian counterinsurgency” a contradiction? (p.108)

Reading Comprehension Questions:

List some of the tactics Lowe/SSP3 used to brand the military and demobilization.

What slogan did Lowe/SSP3 decide upon after its research?

What was the premise of the original Operation Christmas (2010)?

What three publics did the Operation Christmas campaign target?

What medium was most effective for reaching guerrillas?

Who was Alfonso Cano?

Fattal describes a campaign that involved Colombian troops throwing soccer balls out of helicopters. What was the name of this campaign?

The author describes two elaborate events to promote Operation Rivers of Light campaign. What were those two events? How were they similar and different?

What happened to foreign investment and tourism in Colombia in the late 2000s and 2010s?

Related Links:

- Articles
 - “Colombian military’s newest weapon against rebels: Christmas Trees”
<http://www.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/americas/12/20/colombia.operation.christmas/index.html>
- Videos
 - “Jose Miguel Sokoloff: How we used Christmas lights to fight a war” (TED Talk)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Fi83BHQsMA>
 - “Rivers of Light” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RpTDPTaOdVk>
 - “Top FARC Leader Killed in Colombia” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ef-gD0h-Y08>
 - Mazda Commercial <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kiT-wzngNE>

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CHAPTER THREE: OPERATION GENUINE

Discussion Questions:

Compare and contrast Nicolas and Marcela: their strategies, personalities and how their roles fit into the larger goals of the Colombian counterinsurgency.

What were some moral conundrums posed by Operation Genuine?

Were you surprised about the sadness at the RIME the day the peace talks were announced? (p.144)

Nicolás tells Fattal in hushed tones that he agrees with some of the guerrillas critiques. Why do you think he is so careful about the way he says this?

Is it fair to pardon or reduce sentences for former guerrillas? (p.147)

Why do you think Fattal juxtaposed the chapters "Operation Christmas" and "Operation Genuine"?

What is the author's argument about the relationship between torture and demobilization? (p. 152–154)

How does the United States figure in the stories developed in this chapter?



Photograph of demobilized rebels in the Colombian coast in 2012. Photo courtesy Colombian Ministry of Defense.

Reading Comprehension Questions:

What is Nicolás's job?

What phrase does Nicolás have hung above his doorway?

How did the RIME pitch demobilization to Pablo?

What are the three axes of Nicolás's demobilization strategy?

What is the purpose of Directive 300-28?

Are captured rebels less likely to help the government than those that demobilize?

What is the difference between demobilization and capture? (p.143)

What happened in the “operation of confrontation” discussed in this chapter?

Related Links:

- Articles
 - “She Was Colombia’s Most-Feared Female Revolutionary. Can She Help It Find Peace?” <https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2018/08/colombia-civil-war-farc-female-revolutionary>
 - “Colombia’s Cash-For-Kills Victims Could Number 10,000 Civilians” <http://theconversation.com/colombias-cash-for-kills-victims-could-number-10-000-civilians-96316>
 - “The Murder of Pardoned FARC Members in Colombia” <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/democraciaabierta/murder-of-pardoned-farc-members-in-colombia/>

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CHAPTER FOUR: THE GOOD LIFE DEFERRED AND RISKS OF DEMOBILIZATION

Discussion Questions:

On page 167, Fattal discusses how many former guerrillas end up in “high risk” neighborhoods. *How does the precarity of that context contribute to the demobilization/remobilization cycle?*

Why are neoliberalism and political violence referred to as “the evil twins,” to quote Lesley Gill, on page 168?

Why do former guerrillas have difficulties creating NGOs? (p.178)

Do you agree with Fattal’s analysis of this image, on page 182-183, of the Chance fashion show?



Models stride down the runway wearing the Chance fashion line designed by my ex-combatants with the help of fashion designer Sandra Cabrales. Photo by author, 2012.

Watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uwvAgDCOdU4&t=14s> (“Live For Now” Pepsi Commercial) and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fq2CvmgoO7I> (“Dream Crazy” Nike Commercial).

What connects these campaigns to the Chance fashion industry event described on page 180–189?

Do you agree with Fattal that “ethical capitalism” is an inherently contradictory term? (p. 186)

What did you think of Luisa’s story?

*Fattal wants to find a success story and hones in on *Ciro*, one of the ex-combatants who participated in *Chance*. What makes *Ciro* relatively successful? (p. 193-194)*

How does “the good life” as a cultural idiom operate in Colombia? What, if anything, do you think is uniquely Colombian about it? (p.194)

Reading Comprehension Questions:

What is the ACR’s mission?

Colombia saw a large increase in the number of malls and credit cards from 2003 to 2014. What does the author say about what kind of consumers retailers and credit card companies were targeting?

Why is the recidivism rate for former guerrillas likely higher than the government reports?

What is ACR’s reasoning behind encouraging former guerrillas to be entrepreneurs?

According to Fattal, what might be Coca-Cola Femsa ulterior motive to hire former combatants?

Does the ACR want former guerrillas to be politically active?

What factors led Ciro to be more successful than the average former guerrilla?

Why do former guerrillas remobilize and join another armed group?

What did the USAID sponsored report say about the ACR's reintegration strategy?

Related Links:

- Videos
 - “Full Pepsi Commercial Starring Kendal Jenner” (“Live For Now” Pepsi Commercial) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uwvAgDCOdU4&t=14s>
 - “Nike: Dream Crazy” (Nike Commercial) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fq2CvmgoO7I>
 - “The Century of the Self Part 1: Happiness Machines by Adam Curtis” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DnPmg0R1M04>
 - “Former Colombian guerrillas launch designer clothing” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdzS9IS5fxY>

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CONCLUSION: THE COLOMBIAN MODEL

Discussion Questions:

How did redefining demobilization work to the Colombian government's advantage?

Is Colombia's redefinition of demobilization catching on internationally? (p. 208–209, endnote 18 and 19 of the Conclusion, p. 279)

On page 212, Fattal describes how the Congolese representative said, "you can't give it to the UN- it's always a failure." Why do you think he said this?

At the after party the author is seated next to Abdul Hakim Mujahid (a scene pictured in the photo below). He is a member of the Afghan high peace council and is a former spokesperson of the Taliban. He says, "the cultures are so different." How does Fattal interpret this comment?



A celebration at the end of the ACR'S "South- South Tour." At left, deputy director of Afghanistan's High Peace Council and former Taliban militant Abdul Hakim Mujahid. Photo by author, 2012.

What does the author think about the way branding is moving to the center of governance? (p. 215–216)

Fattal describes D-D-R as a ritual, one that in Colombia is predestined to fail. Why does he think this and what does he think is the consequence of that failure?

What point is Fattal making about Marxism in the early twenty-first century by quoting Jacques Derrida? (p. 219–220).

Reading Comprehension Questions:

Are Colombia and the US allies?

How is the Global War on Terror different from more “traditional” wars?

How does the United Nations define demobilization?

Why did the State Department send two ambassadors from Bogota to Washington to Kabul?

Who participated in the ACR’s weeklong tour in Colombia?

What did the delegate from Somalia think that a similar demobilization program would not work in her country?

What were some of the policy recommendations that the delegates made at the end of the tour?

Related Links:

- Articles
 - “Can Military Force Create Peace? Lessons for Afghanistan from Colombia”
<https://www.ausa.org/articles/can-military-force-create-peace-lessons-afghanistan-colombia>
- Videos
 - Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bXozZ620PfY>
 - “How Effective Is The United Nations?”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ATkJe8iADhc>

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EPILOGUE: TARGET INTIMACY

Discussion Questions:

Timochenko, the FARC's commander, stated, "Our horizon has always been a political solution." Do you think this is true?

Fattal writes of "late liberal capitalism's proven ability to engulf the individual and co-opt its ideological challengers" on page 234. What does he mean by this? Can you think of an example?

On page 235, Fattal describes a former guerrilla reuniting with his family. How does this fit in with the PAHD's initiative discussed in previous chapters?

"Lovemarks," according to Kevin Roberts, "are brands that are not simply respected and trusted, but loved." How did PAHD harness love to demobilize guerrillas?

Analyze this image, figure E.5 on page 241 (with text on page 242). What feeling are its creators trying to evoke? What are some problems with the "advertisement"? Why does the author refer to the image as a cryptogram?



Image courtesy of Ivon Salazar.

Reading Comprehension Questions:

The epilogue opens with preparations for a celebratory concert. What was the concert celebrating?

Who is James and why was he at the Decima conference?

James implies that guerrillas will opt for individual reintegration as opposed to the collective reintegration model. What is his reasoning?

Who won the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize?

What is an ECOMUN?

If the vast majority of guerrillas chose ECOMUN, what does Fattal propose they might be capable of?

How were former FARC rebels using Facebook at the end of the negotiating period?

In the 2016 plebiscite, what appeal did the No campaign make to the poor?

Why were people so surprised that Colombians rejected the peace deal?

Did women in the FARC wear makeup?

Related Links:

- Videos
 - “Colombians Welcome Nobel Peace Prize for President Santos”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L1-n9v5zyU4>
 - Lovemarks: Kevin Roberts at TEDxNavigli
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bOIbEKA7kzU>
 - “Colombia’s Ex-President Eyes Tougher FARC Peace Deal”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=loGcOMVF_S0

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TESTIMONIALS

Discussion Questions:

*How do the interviews with former guerrillas reinforce what the author discusses in the book?
How do they differ?*

Other than being former guerrillas, what do the people interviewed have in common?

Do you think ideology was a larger driver for the people interviewed joining the FARC?

How did the FARC's policies surrounding relationships and families potentially hurt the organization?

Based off these stories, how is the illegal coca industry intertwined with the conflict in Colombia?

Why might former guerrillas avoid telling people about their past?

On page 227, Diego says, "What they are doing is taking off one set of camouflage and putting on another." Analyze the potential problems with guerrillas being remobilized by the Colombian military.

Reading Comprehension Questions:

OMAR (p.34-38)

What was the first thing Omar did for the FARC?

Why did Omar decide to turn himself in?

JUANA (p.69-77)

How old was Juana when she joined the FARC?

What was "Operation Pistol?"

GABRIEL (p.111-122)

Who taught Gabriel to be a cocaine chemist?

On page 118, Gabriel says, "They are caring for an empire, for eighteen families." What does he mean by this?

CLAUDIA (p.155-161)

Why did Claudia join the FARC?

How did Claudia convince the commander to let her formally leave the FARC?

SERGIO (p.198-203)

What did members of the FARC tell Sergio to convince him to join?

Where did Sergio hear about the demobilization program?

DIEGO (p.222-227)

What international organization helped Diego?

What does Diego say is the state's only interest with the demobilization program?

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