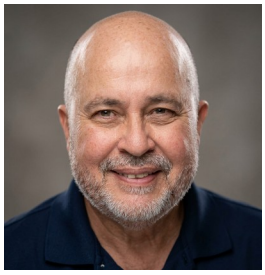
CURRICULUM VITAE
ALEXANDER J. ("ALEX") AVILA, PhD

Independent Filmmaker | Screenwriter | Producer | Editor | Journalist
Professor of Mass Communication



Alex Avila
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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Dr. Alexander J. Avila is an award-winning filmmaker, screenwriter, producer, editor, journalist, and educator whose career spans more than thirty years across higher education, public media, independent filmmaking, and digital storytelling. A former producer with *NPR's Latino USA* and a longtime university professor, Avila has taught journalism, media studies, film, digital storytelling, communication law, screenwriting, journalism, public speaking, and multimedia production at institutions throughout Texas while simultaneously developing a significant body of cinematic work.

His creative portfolio includes award-winning feature films, nationally recognized screenplays, documentary production, and journalistic storytelling. His films and screenplays have received honors from WorldFest-Houston, Cine Las Americas, Austin Film Festival, Austin Indie Fest, Berlin International Screenplay Festival, Oxford Sreenplay Awards, Scriptapalooza, the Mexico International Film Festival, the San Antonio Film Festival, and numerous screenplay competitions throughout the United States.

As founder of TexMex FilmWorks and Adelante Communications, Avila's creative mission has focused on producing sophisticated stories that portray Latinos as multidimensional protagonists while addressing universal themes of family, identity, redemption, technology, faith, and psychological transformation.

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Journalism

The University of Texas at Austin (2017)

DISSERTATION: *Ethnic newspapers and journalistic advocacy in the 21st Century: A content analysis using immigration frames.*

NOTE: Official transcript will show 21 credit hours of graduate-level RTF academic work.

M.A., Journalism

The University of Texas at Austin (2009)

THESIS: *Exploring a New Radio Audience: A Podcast Case Study in Public Radio's Conversion from Analog to Digital Audiences*

B.S., Radio-Television-Film
(Film Major)

The University of Texas at Austin (1993)

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Visiting Professor of Mass Communication (& Adjunct)

Huston-Tillotson University (2019 – present)

Courses taught include:
- Media Studies
- Enterprise Journalism
- Digital Storytelling
- Screenwriting
- Mass Communication Theory
- Multimedia Journalism
- Media Law
- Social Media and Society
- News Reporting and Writing
- Media Ethics
- Public Speaking

Lecturer

Texas State University (2024 – present)

Courses taught:
- Multimedia Journalism

Assistant Professor of Mass Communications

Sam Houston State University (2016 – 2019)

Courses taught:
- Mass Communication
- Journalism
- Screenplay Writing
- Media Writing
- Broadcast News Production
- Digital Media Production

Visiting Professor of Mass Communication

University of Mary Hardin-Baylor (2014 – 2015)

Courses taught:

- Communication Studies
- News Writing
- Media Literacy
- Scriptwriting
- Journalism

Adjunct Faculty

Texas A&M University-Commerce (2013 – 2014)

Courses taught:
- Online Journalism
- Media Studies
- Mass Communication
- Speaking for Broadcast

Adjunct Faculty

San Antonio College (2009 – 2011)

Courses taught:
- Introduction to Mass Communication
- News Writing
- Media Literacy
- Radio Production

Adjunct Faculty

St. Edward's University (2008 – 2011)

Courses taught:
- Journalism
- Communication Theory
- Digital Storytelling
- Podcast Production

Graduate Instructor

The University of Texas at Austin (2009-2013)

Courses taught while completing doctoral studies:
- Journalism
- Media Writing
- Radio Production
- Communication Research
- Introduction to Mass Communication

PROFESSIONAL MEDIA EXPERIENCE

Senior Producer / Deputy Producer / Online Producer

NPR's Latino USA

Austin, Texas / National Distribution

1998–2010

Served in multiple editorial and production leadership roles for *Latino USA*, the nation's longest-running Latino-focused public radio program distributed by the National Public Radio (NPR) network.

Responsibilities

- Long-form documentary production
- Investigative journalism
- National radio feature production
- Editorial planning and management
- Audio storytelling
- Digital media production
- Web content development
- Audience engagement initiatives
- Multimedia journalism

Major Journalism Honors

- Edward R. Murrow Award
- Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award
- National Journalism Award (Scripps Howard Foundation)
- Gabriel Award
- Gracie Allen Award
- National Federation of Community Broadcasters Awards
- Numerous regional and national journalism recognitions

Notable Contributions

Produced stories examining:

- Immigration and border issues
- Latino politics and civic engagement
- Education policy
- Arts and culture
- Community development
- Social justice
- Public affairs

Associate Editor / Staff Writer

Hispanic Magazine

Austin, Texas

1990s

Worked as reporter, writer, and editor for one of the nation's leading magazines serving Hispanic professionals and consumers.

Responsibilities

- Feature writing
- Investigative reporting
- Copy editing

- Magazine production
- Cover story development
- Business and public affairs reporting

Coverage Areas

- Politics
- Business
- Education
- Arts and Culture
- Hispanic Leadership
- Public Policy

Managing Editor / Staff Writer

Arriba Art & Business News

Austin, Texas

Early Career

Reported on business, entrepreneurship, economic development, and Latino-owned enterprises throughout Texas.

Responsibilities

- Business reporting
- Feature writing
- Interviewing
- Community journalism
- Economic development coverage

Editor / Digital Asset Specialist

Image Bank

New York, New York

Early Professional Experience

Worked within one of the world's leading stock photography and visual licensing companies prior to its acquisition by Getty Images.

Responsibilities

- Visual asset management
- Image cataloging
- Photography licensing support

- Digital archive management
- Editorial image research

Significance

This position provided foundational experience in visual storytelling, photography, image composition, and media production that would later influence Avila's filmmaking and multimedia journalism work.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE SUMMARY

Journalism

- NPR's *Latino USA*
- Hispanic Magazine
- Arriba Art & Business News

Higher Education

- Huston-Tillotson University
- Texas State University
- Sam Houston State University
- University of Mary Hardin-Baylor
- Texas A&M University-Commerce
- San Antonio College
- St. Edward's University
- The University of Texas at Austin

Film Production

- TexMex FilmWorks (Founder)
- Adelante Communications (Founder)
- Chicano/Latino Film Forum (Co-Founder)

Creative Roles

- Screenwriter
- Film Director
- Producer
- Editor
- Journalist
- Professor
- Multimedia Storyteller

CREATIVE WORKS
PRODUCED FEATURE FILMS

CEREBRAL (2026)

Roles

- Writer
- Director
- Producer
- Editor

Genre

Psychological Thriller

Logline

After a college professor is brutally attacked while saving a student, his traumatic brain injury unleashes a dark, uncontrollable side of his personality, forcing his wife to fight for his soul while protecting their family from the monster he is becoming.

Screenplay Recognitions

- 13 screenplay competition awards and placements
- Top 10 Thriller Screenplay
    - Table Read My Screenplay Genre Competition
- Multiple Finalist Placements
- Multiple Semifinalist Placements
- Multiple Quarterfinalist Placements

Film Festival Selections *(– Awards, if any)*

- Mexican-American Film & Television Festival – *Finalist*
- Austin Lift-Off Film Festival

TRAILER LINK: https://vimeo.com/985353370

VECINOS: LOVE THY NEIGHBOR (2021)

Roles

- Director
- Co-Producer
- Post-Production Editor

Genre

Romantic Comedy

Logline

A grouchy widower's life turns upside down when a sweet-natured widow moves down the hall in this heart-warming romantic comedy.

Film Awards

- Cine Las Americas – *Tejas Audience Award*
- Oklahoma Latino Film Festival – *Best in Festival*
- WorldFest-Houston International Film Festival – *Remi Award*
- Paris Awards Film Festival – *Award Winner*
- XicanIndie Film Fest – *Outstanding Comedy (Mictoc)*

- Oaxaca Film Fest – *Finalist*
- Falcon International Film Festival – *Quarter-finalist*

Other Festival Selections

- Hollywood First-Time Filmmakers Showcase
- CineFestival San Antonio
- LETNetworks AmLatino Film Festival
- Georgia Latino International Film Festival
- Latino Film Market
- Mexican American Film & Televisión Festival
- Vegas Cinefest International Film Festival
- Orlando International Film Festival

TRAILER LINK: https://vimeo.com/386547395/0603308251

CLOSER TO BOTTOM (2017)

Roles

- Screenwriter
- Producer
- Editor

Genre

Drama, Coming-of-Age

Film Awards

- Austin Indie Fest – *Best Texas Feature*
- Mexico International Film Festival – *Palma de Oro*
- International Independent Film Awards – *Silver Medal*

Other Festival Selections

- San Antonio Film Festival (SAFILM)
- Cinefestival
- XicanIndie International Film Festival
- Barcelona Planet Film Festival
- Ocean City Film Festival
- Paris Awards Film Festival
- LETNetworks AmLatino Film Festival

TRAILER LINK: https://vimeo.com/206530235

FEATURE SCREENPLAYS

A.I. DAD

Genre

Science Fiction Drama

Logline

After a grieving college student uses her late father's massive digital archive to create an interactive A.I. version of him, she must navigate the boundaries between technology and humanity while fighting to preserve their unique connection against academic and legal forces who see her father's digital echo as nothing more than intellectual property.

Awards & Accolades

Best Screenplay

- San Antonio Film Festival (2025)

Finalist

- Berlin International Screenwriting Festival (Spr 2026)
- Oxford Script Awards (Sum 2026)

This screenplay was written and polished as part of my 2025 participation in the Master Filmmaker fellowship through the Mexican American Cultural Education Foundation working directly with mentor Jesús Treviño.

THE RESERVE

Genre

Family Sports Drama

Logline

After leukemia ends his promising football career, a former college kicking star turned groundskeeper is unexpectedly called into an NFL playoff game as an emergency replacement, forcing him to confront his legendary soccer-player father's disapproval, the sacrifices that shaped his life, and one final chance to define his own legacy.

Recognitions & Accolades

- Austin Film Festival – *Second Round*
- Oxford Script Awards – *Finalist*
- Scriptapalooza – *Semifinalist*
- Creative Screenwriting Unique Voices – *Quarterfinalist*
- ISA Competition – *Semifinalist*
- Santa Barbara International Screenplay Awards – *Semifinalist*
- Chicago Screenplay Awards – *Quarterfinalist*
- Miami Screenplay Awards – *Quarterfinalist*

THE BAPTIZER

Genre

Religious Epic

Recognition

- Faith & Film International Screenplay Competition – *Quarterfinalist*
- Big Apple Film Festival Screenplay Competition – *Honorable Mention*
- WideScreen Film & Music Video Festival

SCREENWRITING HONORS

Total Screenplay Recognition

Cerebral

- 13 screenplay awards and placements

A.I. Dad

- Best Screenplay Winner
- Three Finals Recognition

The Reserve

- Eight major screenplay competition placements

The Baptizer

- National screenplay honors

Closer to Bottom

- Produced award-winning feature screenplay

Academic Research

Published Research Articles:

Avila, A. J. (2014). Bienvenido a Miami y Más: Immigration Frames in English and Spanish Newspapers During the 2012 Florida Republican Primary. *# ISOJ Journal*, *4*(1).

Chadha, M., Avila, A., & Gil de Zúñiga, H. (2012). Listening In: Building a Profile of Podcast Users and Analyzing Their Political Participation. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics*, *9*(4), 388-401.

Conference Papers:

Avila, A. (2014, April 14) *Bienvenido a Miami y Mas: Immigration Frames in English and Spanish Newspapers During the 2012 Florida Republican Primary* at the International Symposium on Online Journalism held in Austin, Texas and online.

Avila, A. (2012, August 10) *Beyond Uses and Gratifications: How Context Affects Communicative Decision-making in the Texting Generation*, poster presentation at AEJMC Conference in Chicago, IL, Mass Communication & Society Division.

Avila, A. (2011, December 2) The Texting Generation: Decision-making, Context and Digital Media Use Beyond Uses and Gratifications, paper presentation at AEJMC Mid-Winter Conference at the University of Oklahoma, Communication Technology Division.

Chadha, M., Avila, A., and Gil de Zúñiga, H. University of Texas at Austin (2010) *Listening in: Profiling podcast users and their political participation*, conference paper presented to the Mass Communication & Society division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC).

Chadha, M., Avila, A., and Gil de Zúñiga, H. University of Texas at Austin (2010) *Plugged in: Predicting podcast audiences and their political participation* conference paper presented at the International Symposium on Online Journalism (ISOJ).

Avila, Alex, (2010) "*Radio Podcast Audiences,*" conference paper presented to the Radio Interests Section of the 2010 National Popular Culture & American Culture Associations Annual Conference April 1, 2010 in St. Louis

Avila, Alex, (2007) "*Exploring A New Radio Audience: A study of early adopters of Latino podcast media,*" juried paper presented at the Eighth International Symposium on Online Journalism at the University of Texas at Austin (Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas) Austin, TX.

Avila, Alex (2004) panel presentation at the National Association of Latino Independent Producers annual conference, "Making Pitches to News Gatekeepers."

Avila, Alex (2003) panel presentation at the National Association of Hispanic Journalists Conference "Freelance Pitching to Networks."

Invited Lectures:

Class Lecture titled "Journalism in an Era of Media Convergence," delivered March 24, 2010 to COMM 1306 Introduction to Communication, St. Edward's University, Austin, Texas, Dr. Shannan Butler, instructor.

Class Lecture on Latino USA and podcasting delivered November 20, 2008 to RTF 337 RADIO FUNDAMENTALS, University of Texas at Austin, Maria Emilia Martin, instructor.

Class Lecture titled "Journalism in an Era of Media Convergence," delivered March 24, 2010 to COMM 1306 Introduction to Communication, St. Edward's University, Austin, Texas, Dr. Shannon Butler, instructor.

Class Lecture on Latino USA and podcasting delivered November 20, 2008 to RTF 337 RADIO FUNDAMENTALS, University of Texas at Austin, Maria Emilia Martin, instructor.

Class Lecture on journalism careers delivered October 18, 2007 to COMM 1306 (two classes), St. Edward's University, Austin, Texas, Dr. Lori A. Peterson, instructor.

Class Lecture on Latino USA and ethnic media delivered April 18, 2006 to J 340C LEADRSHP, MANAGMNT, THE MEDIA, University of Texas at Austin, Dr. Paula Poindexter, instructor.

Class Lecture on Immigration and Media delivered April 12, 2006 to J 349T COVERING US LATINO COMMUNITY, University of Texas at Austin, Dr. Maggie Rivas Rodriguez, instructor.

Class Lecture on Latino USA in the Public Radio realm delivered November 15, 2005 to RTF 365 RACE, CLASS, AND MEDIA-W, University of Texas at Austin, Dr. America Rodriguez, instructor.

Lecture on Latino Immigration and the Changing Religious Landscape, delivered May 2002 to the "Oblates in Border Migrant Ministry Workshop" in Houston, Texas. Story on p. 10 of www.omiusajpic.org/docs/newsletter/July2002.pdf (as of April 17, 2007).

Radio Journalism:

Avila, Alex "Conjunto Legend Issues First CD in 18 Years," NPR's Latino USA March 19, 2010.

Avila, Alex "Más Club," NPR's Weekend All Things Considered, August 22, 2009. http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=112141941

Avila, Alex "No Rules: The Life and Music of Esteban 'Steve' Jordan," NPR's Latino USA and PRX.ORG, September 15, 2008.

Avila, Alex "PBS, Latinos & Ken Burns," NPR's Latino USA, April 6, 2007.

Avila, Alex "Latinos in Mainstream Culture," Epicentro, Hispanic Radio Network, October 12, 2006.

Avila, Alex "Language Debate," Epicentro, Hispanic Radio Network, September 20, 2006.

Avila, Alex "Tejano Music Legends," NPR's Latino USA, April 28, 2006.

Avila, Alex "WWII Play: Voices of Valor," NPR's Latino USA, March 31, 2006.

Avila, Alex "Los Grandes de Mexico: Lola Beltran," NPR's Latino USA, November 25, 2005.

Avila, Alex "Soldier/Politician," NPR's Latino USA, January 21, 2005.

Avila, Alex "Alamo Myth Explored," NPR's Latino USA, April 9, 2004.

Avila, Alex "Border Patrol Ride Along," NPR's Latino USA, January 30, 2004.

Avila, Alex "Bilingual Musical Educator Jose Luis Orozco," NPR's Latino USA, November 14, 2003.

Avila, Alex "Baldo Comic Strip," NPR's Latino USA, February 21, 2003.

Avila, Alex "Border Security," NPR's Latino USA, September 14, 2001.

Avila, Alex "Latinos in the Negro Major Leagues," NPR's Latino USA, July 30, 1999.

Print Journalism:

Avila, Alex, (June 3, 2024) “Bastards of Soul” *Fredericksburg Standard Radio Post*, (v108), p1 (Cultural Features section).

Avila, Alex, (May 22, 2024) “Rural areas face 9-1-1 cell phone emergencies” *Fredericksburg Standard Radio Post*, (v108), p1 (lead story).

Avila, Alex, (May 8, 2024) “Childcare crisis hits more than families” *Fredericksburg Standard Radio Post*, (v108), p1 (lead story).

Avila, Alex, (April 24, 2024) “Wine for the People” *Fredericksburg Standard Radio Post*, (v108), p7 (Business Feature).

Avila, Alex, (April 17, 2024) “Smaller eclipse crowds stayed longer say local businesses” *Fredericksburg Standard Radio Post*, (v108), p1 (lead story).

Avila, Alex, (April 3, 2024) “Visitors urged to take advantage of preparations” *Fredericksburg Standard Radio Post*, (v108), p1 (multi-lead story).

Avila, Alex, (April 3, 2024) “Residents urged to prepare early for rare eclipse event” *Fredericksburg Standard Radio Post*, (v108), p1 (multi-lead story).

Avila, Alex, (April 3, 2024) “30 Years of Fastball: Austin pop trio launches new tour with album” *Fredericksburg Standard Radio Post*, (v108), p1 (Cultural Features section).

Avila, Alex, (Nov 1997) “Does Jesse Jackson mean business?” *Hispanic*, 10, p38(5).

Avila, Alex (Oct 1997) “Cine movimiento: across the country, Latino film festivals take off” *Hispanic*, 10, p61(3).

Avila, Alex. “HTV to penetrate Mexican cable,” *Hispanic*, Sep1997, Vol. 10 Issue 9, p84, 3/8p.

Avila, Alex. “State-of-the-art Latino print company,” *Hispanic*, Jul/Aug1997, Vol. 10 Issue 7/8, p88, 2/5p.

Avila, Alex. “HACR touts new ‘Hispanic-owned media’ seal.” *Hispanic*, Jul/Aug1997, Vol. 10 Issue 7/8, p88,

Avila, Alex. "Taken for a ride: Hispanic filmmakers experience the ups and downs of Hollywood and ask, ‘What's next?’" *Hispanic* 10.n6 (June 1997): 34(5).

Avila, Alex. "Morales takes Hopwood heat" *Hispanic* 10.n4 (April 1997): 10(2).

Avila, Alex. "Trading punches: Spanish-language television pounds the competition in the fight for Hispanic advertising dollars." *Hispanic* 10.n1-2 (Jan-Feb 1997): 38(5).

Avila, Alex. "Latino influence felt in elections," *Hispanic* 9.n12 (Dec 1996): 8(2).

Avila, Alex. "Political stability comes to Central America. (Guatemala and Nicaragua)." *Hispanic* 9.n12 (Dec 1996): 10(2).

Avila, Alex. "Soledad O'Brien, host of MSNBC's The Site, tackles interactive news." *Hispanic* 9.n10 (Oct 1996): 9(2)

Avila, Alex. "New show on ABC features Giraldo," *Hispanic* 9.n10 (Oct 1996): 16(1).

Avila, Alex. "High-tech Hispanics: LatINNs excel at mINNr computer companies. (Cover Story)." *Hispanic* 9.n10 (Oct 1996): 42(4).

Avila, Alex. "The new Hispanic Congress." *Hispanic* 9.n9 (Sept 1996): 24(1).

Avila, Alex. “Rodriguez back in Texas,” Sep1996, *Hispanic* Vol. 9 Issue 9, p14.

Avila, Alex. "School defends diversity programs.(Hispanic Journal)." *Hispanic* 9.n7 (July 1996): 8(2).

Cantu, Tony, and Alex Avila. "Cashing in on Selena: how the Tejano queen's murder caused an economic phenomenon. (Cover story)." *Hispanic* 9.n6 (June 1996): 18(5).

Avila, Alex. “Lago Entertainment recaptures Tejano music history,” *Hispanic*, Jun1996, Vol. 9 Issue 6, p37.

Avila, Alex. "25 most powerful Hispanics in Hollywood. (Cover Story)." *Hispanic* 9.n4 (April 1996): 20(7).

Avila, Alex. “English-Plus Initiative,” *Hispanic*, Mar1996, Vol. 9 Issue 3, p9, 2p.

Avila, Alex. "Freedom fighter. (profile of Dr. Hector P. Garcia, founder of the American G.I. Forum)." *Hispanic* 9.n2 (Jan-Feb 1996): 18(3).

Avila, Alex. “Tune in to Songs of the Homeland,” *Hispanic*, Sep1995, Vol. 8 Issue 8, p8, 2p.

Avila, Alex. “Documenting Tejano: Hector Galan’s Songs of the Homeland,” *Austin Chronicle*, Sep. 15, 1995 available at http://www.austinchronicle.com/issues/vol15/issue3/arts.film.html (as of 4/17/2007).

Other Academic Awards/Honors:

Avila, Alex (2005) “Outstanding Mentor” St. Edward’s University School of Humanities.

Latino USA, (2003) “Edward R. Murrow Award “ Radio Award by the RTNDA (Radio, Television News Directors Association) for Latino USA’s body of work.

Avila, Alex & Martin, Maria, (2002) “Golden Reel,” National News/Public Affairs Programming, “World Trade Center Special Report,” National Federation of Community Broadcasters.

Avila, Alex, “Texas Achievement Award” scholarship given by the University of Texas at Austin (1983).

Avila, Alex “Thom Prentice Award” given by the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund (1983).

Professional Associations/Memberships:

Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) 2013 – 2019.

National Association of Hispanic Journalists, 1998 – 2011; 2017 – 2019.

Investigative Reporters & Editors, 2004 – 2009.

National Federation of Community Broadcasters, 1998 – 2008.

National Association of Latino Independent Producers, 2006 – 2011.

Association of Independent Reporters (AIR), 1999 – 2003, 2006-08.

RESEARCH AND CREATIVE INTERESTS

Academic Areas

- Digital Media and Society
- Multimedia Production
- Journalism Innovation
- Media Literacy
- Latino Media Representation
- Digital Storytelling Pedagogy
- Media Ethics
- Communication Law
- Screenwriting
- Community-based storytelling

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL DISTINCTIONS

- Ph.D. in Journalism
- Award-winning NPR Producer
- Founder of TexMex FilmWorks
- Founder of Adelante Communications
- Co-Founder of the Chicano/Latino Film Forum
- Director of Award-Winning Feature Film *Vecinos: Love Thy Neighbor*
- Writer/Director of *Cerebral*
- Winner, Best Screenplay (*A.I. Dad*)
- Winner, Best Texas Feature (*Closer to Bottom*)
- Winner, Gold Remi Award (*Vecinos: Love Thy Neighbor*)
- Recipient of National Journalism Honors Including the Edward R. Murrow Award and Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award

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CAREER OVERVIEW

Dr. Alexander J. Avila has built a unique career at the intersection of academia, journalism, and filmmaking. Across appointments at eight Texas institutions of higher education, a distinguished career with NPR, and a growing body of award-winning narrative films and screenplays, his work reflects a lifelong commitment to storytelling as both an artistic practice and a form of public scholarship. Through teaching, filmmaking, and research, Avila continues to explore how stories shape identity, culture, and human understanding.