The Latin American and Latino Studies Institute (LALSI) is home to an interdisciplinary program that brings together faculty members from nine different departments. Originally founded as the Puerto Rican Studies Institute, the program expanded in the early 1990s and changed its name. Today, LALSI faculty work on all major areas of Latin America, including the Caribbean, and on U.S. Latino issues.

From its inception, Fordham has educated students coming from Latin America, and today many of them belong to Spanish speaking communities in New York City. Fostering intercultural dialogue between Latin American, Peninsular and Latino Studies has made LALSI distinctive among other similar programs in the New York metropolitan area.

With its interdisciplinary approach, LALSI aims to expose students to the methods, materials and tools of various disciplines while addressing two of the program's and the university's interrelated goals: to foster understanding of New York's local immigrant or diasporic communities and effective, international, global citizenship through learning and service.

LALSI provides an intellectual home for both students and faculty interested in Latin America and U.S. Latinos. It also acts as a clearinghouse for information, organizes conferences, hosts distinguished scholars, sponsors film series and mentors students.

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letter from the director
I write just a few weeks from the end of a very busy academic year for Latin American and Latino Studies. While the country struggles with issues of discrimination, exclusion, and hate, we have aimed to foster meaningful dialogue and multicultural exchange through our courses and events this year. Courses like Professor Miguel García’s *Spanish American Literature and Culture Survey*, which invited Dr. Osvaldo Zavala to speak on the relationship between drug trafficking and contemporary literature. Or Professor Cruz-Malavé’s course *New York in Latinx Literature and Film*, which welcomed Fordham’s own Dr. Mark Naison to speak on the development of salsa and hip hop music in the Bronx.

On the following pages, you’ll see writings from students in a few of our LALS courses. Some of our student contributors explored New York City neighborhoods and then described them through the eyes and language of a chronicler. Others attended a musical performance-lecture and then reviewed it from the standpoint of multicultural awareness. In addition to our student authors, we also recognize and congratulate our fifteen graduating seniors. Among them are students entering graduate school in Latin American and Latino Studies, others headed abroad for work, some who just completed independent research projects, and a Fulbright Fellowship winner. Please join us in congratulating them. You’ll also see write-ups and images from many of LALSI’s events over the year, including several invited lectures and three outstanding musical performances.

Through these events, LALS has enjoyed partnerships with the Office of the Chief Diversity Officer, the Deans’ Offices, the Notre Dame Club of New York City, the Fordham Digital Scholarship Collaborative, and the departments or programs of English, African and African American Studies, American Studies, Art History and Music, Communications and Media Studies, Comparative Literature, History, Medieval Studies, Modern Languages and Literatures, Philosophy, Sociology and Anthropology, Theology, and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. We count these collaborations with organizations both within and outside of Fordham University as among the most important things we do, especially as interdisciplinarity is increasingly one of the priorities of our students and our university, and arguably the only approach to solving the global challenges of our world.

Finally, we want to salute our two LALS-affiliated faculty members who are retiring this year, Dr. Héctor Lindo-Fuentes of History and Dr. Gioconda Marún of Modern Languages and Literatures. We thank them for their immense contributions and participation in LALSI over the years and will miss them very much. We also want to recognize the support of our staff and administrators at both Lincoln Center and Rose Hill, including Natasha Obeng, Isaac Tercero, our student worker Luis Rodríguez who worked on our new Internships webpage, and LALS alumna and freelance graphic designer Rossy Fernández whose work you are enjoying right now. Wishing all LALS students, staff, faculty, partners, and friends of the program a restful summer and a productive, creative, and collaborative year to come.

Sara Lehman

Director, LALSI
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Brazil Between Past and Present

“Eu sou uma japonesa do Japão.” I am a Japanese person from Japan. That is how I start most of my talks, whether in English or Portuguese, because I can see the question on people’s faces wherever I go: Where is she from? It’s an understandable question, given that Brazil is home to the largest diasporic Japanese community in the world, so people presume I am Japanese Brazilian. But underlying their question is also another presumption: that there is no other reason why an Asian person would study the history of Brazil, slavery, and indigenous peoples. It was certainly not what I had come to study in the US when I arrived as an eighteen-year-old international student from Tokyo with only minimal knowledge about Latin America. All this to say, life takes some unexpected turns, and I feel incredibly fortunate that I have been able to dedicate my work to the study of Latin America.

In February 2018 I published my first book, *Frontiers of Citizenship: A Black and Indigenous History of Postcolonial Brazil*, from Cambridge University Press (just released in paperback in February 2019). The book is a history of race, nation, and citizenship in nineteenth-century Brazil told through the interconnected histories of black and indigenous people. I challenge a foundational idea in Brazilian and Latin American history, which claims that indigenous people simply “disappeared” soon after conquest and were “replaced” by African slaves. In fact there was nothing natural about indigenous disappearance. Brazil’s postcolonial history was marked by extravagant anti-indigenous violence and the astonishing expansion of African-based slavery, much of it illegal. They took place at the same time that the national elite was promoting an inclusive, “mixed” national racial identity that celebrated its Portuguese, indigenous, and African origins. However, amidst this violence, black and indigenous people, whom the elite dismissed as unfit for citizenship, contested these forms of violence and exclusion and expressed their own ideas about rights and ways of living.

Starting with a book launch event generously hosted by Fordham’s History Department, I have been giving talks about my book and scholarship at various universities in the U.S. and Brazil. It has been especially meaningful to be able to share my work with friends, colleagues, students, and the broader public in Brazil. In late October and early November of 2018, I traveled to three Brazilian states (Bahia, Rio de Janeiro, and São Paulo) to speak about my book and deliver a keynote address at a conference on the Indigenous Americas. The conference brought together indigenous and non-indigenous educators, scholars, and activists from across the Americas. While in Brazil, I witnessed the election of the far-right candidate Jair Bolsonaro to the presidency. Bolsonaro has been actively promoting the persecution of women, black, indigenous, and LGBTQ+ communities. Educators who teach about democracy, race, and gender are under attack. It was a profoundly tragic moment for many, and at first I wondered whether it was even right to be speaking of the nineteenth century amidst the present crisis. However, sharing my work and exchanging ideas and reflections with colleagues, students, and activists have reaffirmed the importance of understanding the past for critiquing inequality and addressing social justice in the present. This has been one of the greatest gifts of studying Latin American history—including for a japonesa do Japão.

As Associate Director of LALSI, I look forward to supporting an engaged and inclusive community at Fordham and beyond.

Headshot Credit: Margarita Corporan Photography.

Prof. Miki with some of the participants of the Indigenous Americas Symposium at the Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
Today I have the distinct honor of introducing the poetry of someone whom I have long admired, Renato Rosaldo. One of the major voices of modern anthropology and a founding figure of Latinx studies, Renato is the author of a book on indigenous Filipino culture, *Ilongot Headhunting, 1883-1974: A Study in Society and History* (1980), the classic *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis* (1989), and multiple essays and edited volumes on Latino cultural citizenship and globalization. Renato had written many pages of dense ethnographic prose when, as he recovered from a stroke in 1996, he began to write—perhaps not surprisingly—with his left hand and out came pouring in English and Spanish uncanny strings of poetic phrases and images. He has called this multilingual outburst of poetic language and images that would populate his first book, *Prayer to Spider Woman/Rezo a la mujer araña*, which received the American Book Award (2004), his anthropoetry or antropoesía. And while the term may evoke a continuity with the practice of anthropology, it is in many ways its opposite—its undoing. In a beautiful postscript to his haunting third book, *The Day of Shelly’s Death*, a book of mourning on the tragic death of his first wife, the anthropologist Michelle Rosaldo, Renato writes that anthropology requires a self-contained subject and object.

Yet poetry is for him an event, an irruption, both a disruption and eruption, a shattering of time and self that leaves in its wake, as a scaffolding, the network of social relations that kept the subject in place. For him, the poet is she or he who falls into that vortex of vanishing where the scaffolding nevertheless still stands, fragile yet persistent, in order to listen and let others speak. One would imagine then that for a poet such as Renato, the practice of poetry wouldn’t be healing, that it would indeed be an immersion into the maelstrom of abject dissolution and vanishing. Yet far from it, for Renato’s poetry is reparative and healing precisely because it shatters us, liberating us from the anthropos constructed for us by Western man-centered humanism, opening us up to the encounter with others, with the truly unvarnished human and the every day. “Every day I write a poem, he remarks, the day gets less gray, and it’s like walking in my neighborhood in Brooklyn and realizing all of a sudden that a group of rowdy teenagers are following me and imitating my limp. You got some swagger, pop, they say.” And Renato surely does, for poetry is for him that quotidian encounter with the other, that lilting walk, the much-persecuted and hard-won simplicity of just being in the world. Today Renato will be reading to us from *The Day of Shelly’s Death* and from his forthcoming book from Duke University Press about his childhood as a member of a Mexican-American band or boy club, aptly named after its boundary-breaking aspirations in 1950s racially-segregated Tucson, *The Chasers*. Please help me give Renato a warm welcome.
Dr. Mark Naison

Dr. Naison presented a version of this paper to Dr. Cruz-Malavé’s New York City Latinx Literature and Film class in the fall.

“The Patterson Houses, at night, were alive with activity and alive with sound... Music was everywhere, coming out of people’s apartments and on project benches. On one side of the street, you would have people who brought out portable turntables with the two big speakers... and on the other side of the street you could here some brother singing a Frankie Lymon song "Why Do Fools Fall in Love.” But the one constant, every night without fail, was the sound of Puerto Ricans playing their bongos in local parks and playgrounds. The steady beat of those drums, “Bomm, Bamm, Bom Bamm, Bamm Boom,” was background music to my living reality”

Allen Jones The Rat That Got Away, chapter 3, [to be published Fall 2008 by Fordham University Press]

“I will say this. Wherever we were, the Puerto Ricans was there. I don’t like to get into when we call them Puerto Ricans. They are Africans just like we are. . . We got to remember that our Puerto Rican brothers are the ones that kept Africa alive. They are the Africans that kept the drum. They kept the Gods of Santeria alive. In the Sixties, Blacks and Puerto Ricans were always playing the Conga. Always had the rhythms”


“Well after I got to play the conga drums... I had a bunch of friends that were all interested in playing the congas, the Puerto Rican kids in my area... We started to jam on the roof. It was like every Saturday and every Sunday. Everybody would go to the roof with their conga drums and we would
be playing all kinds of rhythms... it was like a big party with the drums. But meanwhile, down in the bottom, down on the street, we had these black people or whites and they were into doo wop... You know, the Caribbean, they never took our drum away. The black folk here, they took their drums away... so they had to invent something and they invented that doo wop stuff... They were doo wopping and we were rhythm. African rhythms, we were playing them because thank God they never took our drum away."


Hip Hip today is international music. Thanks to global commerce and communication, you can hear MC’s rhyming over beats in Dakar, Paris, Berlin, Dacca and Johannesburg as much as you can in Los Angeles, Memphis, New Orleans or the Bronx, and the words used, and melodies sampled reflect a dizzying array of languages and cultural traditions.

But the young people who created hip hop in the Bronx in the 1970’s, and the neighborhood they held the first jams in, were hardly mono cultural. Descendants of families who came to the Bronx from Puerto Rico and the Anglophone Caribbean as well as the American South, they grew up with a wide variety of languages, accents, dialects and musical traditions, all of which, to use one writers phrase, became part of the “Sound Track of Their Lives.” From the mid 1940’s on, when African Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Anglophone Caribbeans began moving from Harlem and East Harlem into Bronx neighborhoods and housing projects, public spaces in the South Bronx became places where different musical traditions clashed, fused and became transformed by people trying to reinvent their identities in settings different than any their families had ever lived in. Hip Hop emerged among young people who had experienced a level of sonic diversity unmatched in any neighborhood in the US and possibly in the world. Not only did residents of the Bronx bring musical traditions from many portions of the African diaspora, they used those musical forms, on a daily basis to worship, to mark territory, to celebrate, to evoke memories of ancestral homelands, to bring in needed income, to escape the pressures of poverty and scarcity and to show their defiance to forces rendering them powerless and invisible.

And they did so, both intentionally and unintentionally, IN PUBLIC SPACE, turning Bronx neighborhoods into a giant, sometimes melodious, sometimes cacophonous soundstage. When we began doing interviews for the Bronx African American History Project four years ago, we were struck at how many of our informants mentioned being exposed to different musical traditions when walking down the street, sitting by their apartment window, or trying to escape the summer heat by sitting on a fire escape, hanging out on their stoop, going up to their tenement roof, or sitting on a project bench.

In communities where the overwhelming majority of people lived in five story tenements and high rise public housing, and where air conditioning was unaffordable, people tended to do much of their socializing in public spaces, and whatever music they used to build community amongst friends and family inevitably was inevitably heard by the entire neighborhood.

But even when people gathered indoors, whether in apartments, community centers, churches, or clubs, the music they played was often overheard, especially in summer months, because they kept doors and windows open to combat the heat. Gene Norman, whose Afro-Caribbean family moved from Harlem to the South Bronx in the early 1940’s, recalled how the sounds of Latin music captured his imagination when he sat on the fire escape of his apartment on Kelly Street off Westchester Avenue, the same block Colin Powell grew up on.:

“There was this nightclub on Westchester Avenue not far from us called the Tropicana club...named after the Tropicana Club in Havana Cuba. I remember as a kid twelve years old or so, on a summer night, hearing the...
 trumpet riffs of the mambo band floating through the air like a pied piper’s tale. . . . as the neighborhood became more and more Hispanic, music took on a greater and more engulfing place in your life. Music seemed to be everywhere.” [Interview with Gene Norman, Bronx African American History Project, July 12, 2004]

Norman, an architect who served as Landmarks Commissioner of the City of New York, said his lifelong love of Latin music grew out of that experience and ended up marrying a Puerto Rican woman he met in his neighborhood.

Arthur Jenkins, an African American pianist and composer who spent most of his career playing Latin music, also attributed his immersion in Latin music to the sounds of ensembles playing in a neighborhood club around the corner from his house in the Morrisania section of the Bronx, less than a mile from where Norman lived. “When I was five years old, we moved to Union Avenue in the Bronx. . . . we lived around the corner from what was known as the Royal Mansion Ballroom. And during the summer time, when the window was open, we would hear this music coming out of the road . . . . Machito was one of the main bands that played there.” [Interview with Arthur Jenkins, Bronx African American History Project, December 14, 2005]

Jenkins spoke of his little corner of the Morrisania community, which produced a large number of successful musicians (including the singing group The Chords, pianist Valerie Capers and her brother, saxophonist Bobby Capers, who played for eight years with Mongo Santamaria)—as a place where live music from many traditions could be heard in the streets “I’ll tell you another thing that’s interesting. On the corner, you had Boston Road and Union Avenue kind of curved into it. You had Jennings street that end there . . . the corner of Boston Road and Union Avenue on the side where I lived . . . usually had a fundamentalist church where a lot of music was played. I used to stop and listen to it. They had trombone players. You know it was sort of like church music, but with a New Orleans type flavor. So there was a lot of music going on in that area” During his high school years, Jenkins honed his skills in playing Latin jazz in jam sessions at his apartment and later became a fixture in neighborhood clubs on Boston Road like Freddie’s and the Blue Morocco, where he backed up singers like Irene Reid and Sir Harvel and performed with African American ensembles who played Latin music.

The experiences that Norman and Jenkins described, which took place in the late 40’s and early 50’s, were repeated when the first public housing projects opened in the Bronx in the early and middle 1950’s. People who grew up in the Patterson Houses, a huge public housing complex that opened in 1950, describe a extraordinary profusion of sounds coming out of apartments, hallways, schoolyards, and on project grounds that united Patterson’s Black and Latino residents as much as it marked their cultural differences. Victoria Archibald, a social worker who grew up in the Patterson houses in the 1950’s and 1960’s, described how Latin music became a powerful force in the life of her Black friends and neighbors: “Frankie Lymon was one of my favorites. But I loved all kinds of music, including Latin music. It was in sixth grade when I was first introduced to Latin music. Before then I’d heard it because there were a lot of Latinos in the building, but I didn’t really dance to it. But as I got older, I began to notice more and more black people dancing to Latin music and they were good! They used to dance semiprofessionally at the Palladium and places like that. And we watched these folks who also lived in Patterson, who were maybe high school age, and we just fell in love with the music”. To emphasize the Bronx’s uniqueness as a site of Black/Latino sociability and cultural exchange, Archibald asked the interviewer “whether he had ever heard the term ‘Bootarican’,” and told the following story: “my husband Harry, when he and I first met, would hear my friends and I talk about the ‘Bootaricans in the Bronx’ and he’d say ‘Now what is a Bootarican?’ And I said “You can’t have lived in New York and be black and not know what a
Bootarican is! . . . But he lived in a neighborhood where . . . . there was hardly any cultural diversity. . . . Now I don’t know where the term comes from, but it describes somebody who is both black and Puerto Rican. So we’d be somewhere, and we’d hear somebody speaking Spanish, somebody who looks just like us and we’d say ‘Uh Bootarican’ Harry and I just recently went to a dance where Eddie Palmieri was playing. I love him and I’ll go wherever he is performing. And there was a women singer there named ‘La India’. . . . And when she said ‘And all you Bootaricans out there,’ Harry turned to me and said. ‘You weren’t lying.’ I said ‘Why do you think I would lie? This may not be in the dictionary, but there is such a word.”


Nathan Dukes, an African American teacher and social worker who grew up in the same project building as Archibald, had equally powerful memories of events where African American and Latin music traditions mingled, from “grind em up parties” where songs by the Temptations and the Four Tops alternated with songs by Joe Bataan and Eddie Palmieri, to the annual outdoor concert organized by Clark JHS music teacher and jazz pianist Eddie Bonamere, which featured timbale player Willie Bobo. .Dukes lovingly recalled impromptu musical performances by local “doo wop groups,” on project benches

“You had Bobo Johnson and James Johnson. They had their doo wop groups. . . When they were doing their little doo wops in the hallway, or in the summertime, especially in the summertime, they would always get a big crowd because they would do . . . little Anthony tunes and would also do Frankie Lymon and the Teenagers tunes.”

But his most intriguing commentary was reserved for Puerto Rican conga players, whose pounding beats captured the imagination of African American youngsters and in Dukes eyes, reconnected them with their African origins.

“You had Hector. He would be across the street from the Patterson; he would be across the street with his conga drums. He would start at 5 PM and wouldn’t finish till maybe 2:30 in the morning. As I got older, I realized what he was doing was basically just giving signals, letting people know that all was well in the village. That’s what the conga drums were for, to let people know that all was well.” ( Interview with Nathan Dukes, Bronx African American History Project, April 25, 2003)

To be sure, not everyone living in Bronx neighborhoods interpreted late night conga playing as a sign of social health . Renee Scroggins, one of four African American sisters who formed the women’s funk/punk band ESG, recalled how some of her neighbors in the Moore Houses threw eggs at the Latin percussionists who played till wee hours of the morning

“We lived in the projects. . . . Behind us there was a park, St Mary’s Park. And every summer in St Mary’s Park. . . . you would have some Latin gentlemen in the park with some coke bottles, a cow bell and a set of congas playing the same thing “boom boom boom, tata ta boom, boom boom” you know, and it was our summer sound. Plus they were singing . . . . You would go to sleep by it, okay . . . and be it one or two o’clock in the morning, you’re still hearing this roll. . . . Eggs started going out the window.”

( Interview With Renee Scroggins, Bronx African American History Project, February 3, 2006)

But there is no questions that many Bronx residents who lived in high rise housing projects and crowded tenements used music to help humanize their environment and put their personal stamp on public space.

Often, they were quite creative in how they did this. Well before Bronx hip hop dj’s started hooking up their sound systems to panels at the bottom of light poles, small Puerto Rican bands called “Kikirikis” (in imitation of the sound of roosters) were doing the same thing with their amplifiers when they played in parks in Hunts Point. (Interview with Angel Rodriguez, Bronx African American
But not only Puerto Ricans brought amplified music to the streets. From the early 60’s on, it was extremely common for African American as well as Latino Bronx residents to bring their portable record players outside and dance on sidewalks and stoops during hot summer nights. Talibah Roberts, a Bronx school teacher whose father was African American and whose mother was Puerto Rican, recalls how people entertained themselves outside her apartment building on Crotona Park East during summer months:

“In my building... It was a norm for people to bring their equipment outside... whoever would have the best equipment or a good stereo, they would bring their radio right from the living room and bring it outside and play it. Or sometimes, people would put their speakers in the window, with the dj working the system, and we're standing outside in front of the building and we would dance” (interview With Bronx African American History Project, March 15, 2005)

Given experiences like this, and it is not surprising that the outdoor jams held in schoolyards, parks and public housing projects by dj’s like Kool Herc, Grandmaster Flash, and Afrika Bambatta seemed more familiar, than revolutionary to Bronx residents. While the use of two turntables and mixing equipment might have been new, the pounding percussive rhythms, and use of powerful amplification, had been fixtures of music on the streets of the Bronx for more than twenty years. So was the fusion of Latin music with soul and funk. When Grandmaster Flash would mix Jimmy Castor’s “It’s Only Just Begun” into James Brown’s “Give It Up and Turn It Loose” and the Incredible Bongo Band’s “Apache,” he was affirming a multicultural, multinational sonic community that gave Bronx neighborhoods a distinctive flavor, inspiring his audiences to celebrate who they were at a time when most of the outside world had written them off as gang ridden, drug ridden predators.

The following description of outdoor musical activities in the Millbrook houses in the late 70's captures the air of excitement those gatherings generated. Matthew Swain, who was only 11 at the time his family moved to the Millbrook Houses from a neighborhood devastated by fires, remember thinking: “this is so cool man.” Right there on my block and they just played. It was a live DJ out there and they would set up two metal garbage cans. They turned them upside down and put this big board to set the turn tables on, run the watts to somebody’s second story apartment straight through and it was just on. It would go all night and it was just a cool thing... they had two turntables, giant speakers... Pioneer and Kenwood mixers... It was a lot of freestyle rappers... the crown was just galvanized by this one mc. He's just rapping. He had the whole crowd going.” (February 2, 2006)

But the mc’s and the dj’s did not have project airspace entirely to themselves. Even though Puerto Rican adolescents were an important part of the crowd at the hip hop jams, older Puerto Ricans in the community made sure the music they listened to was played loud enough for everyone to hear. Swain recalled:

“We had a lot of Spanish people around then. Especially summertime, they would have a stage set up right there off 137th Street, right in front of the bodega. A little stand at night. They’d have their live jam session from the bongos and playing music, have a mike and go out there singing.”

Swain, like many other people who grew up in Bronx neighborhoods and housing projects from the mid 40’s through the late 70’s, remembers the melodies and rhythms that surrounded them in their daily lives with extraordinary vividness and fondness. Whether it was doo wop or mambo, funk or salsa, Motown or the scratching of early hip hop dj’s, they saw appropriation of diverse musical traditions as something that gave their life added joy and made their upbringing rich and distinctive. If Hip Hop was in some measure a gesture of defiance in the face of arson, disinvestment, and the closing of public services, it was also an affirmation of an extraordinarily rich and diverse set of musical traditions that had found a home in Bronx neighborhoods for more than thirty years. If Hip Hop DJ’s were, in the words of Afrika Bambatta, “looking for the perfect beat” they were also, to paraphrase Nathan Dukes “letting people know that all was well in the village.”

Images: The National Museum of American History
On February 13, 2019, Fordham’s HIST1400: UHC Latin America class welcomed Professor Aldair Rodrigues, a historian from University of Campinas (UNICAMP) in São Paulo, Brazil to give a talk entitled “Deciphering Scarification in West Africa and Brazil During the Eighteenth Century: Evidence from Diasporic Archives.” His research looks at how people’s bodies can be read as archives about a person’s identity, memories, and history during the era of the slave trade in which many Africans were forced to Brazil. In particular, scarification practices illuminate histories about migration and memory in the interior of West Africa, while in colonial Brazil, slave traders “read” scarification to form ideas about ethnicity and race.

The slave trade displaced about 6 million Africans to Brazil, making it the largest black country outside of Africa. Brazil imported African slaves since the Portuguese established the first colony because of the fertile lands that were able to produce large amounts of sugar cane, but it peaked in the 18th century when they were used in mining operations, especially gold mines. This is where Professor Rodrigues’ talk makes a significant departure from previous historical research of the era, because he draws attention to what’s happening in Africa during this period. Academic research from this period often focuses on what Europeans did in Africa and the Americas, while only paying attention to the latter two regions when their populations interacted with Europeans. The Kingdom of Dahomey, which is in modern-day Benin, was in southern West Africa. In the early eighteenth century it expanded towards the Atlantic coast to engage in the slave trade. The Africans it sold to the Europeans were from further inland and became categorized as a single ethnic group because...
they came from the same region. This engendered the misconception that Western Africa was a homogenous and stagnant society, which Professor Rodrigues suggests is not the case if we pay attention to the different scarification traditions of the region. Many of the Africans had scars on their bodies that identified their status within their places of origin. Professor Rodrigues suggests that the scars in themselves are historical. They tell a history of an individual and provides a narrative for the culture of a community. There were unique scars for various events, e.g. rites of passage, religious ceremonies and affiliations, individual achievement, and protection from supernatural forces. These practices continued in Brazil, but the Portuguese didn’t understand what the scarifications meant so they redefined African ethnicities in terms of the specific labors they performed (e.g. some “ethnicities” were preferred for mining, others for cattle-herding or sugarcane cultivation). After the talk, Professor Rodrigues was asked a few questions by Professor Yuko Miki, Associate Director of LALSI, about his personal story in the context of Brazilian society and history. Asked why he decided to study African history, he responded that much of his grade-school education had reflected the perspective of the colonizer and invader, which portrayed Africans negatively in history textbooks by reducing them to slaves. He felt that he had to reconsider the events and interactions that led to such an understanding of race and slavery in Brazil. He said “felt,” but it sounded more like it was his duty to heal the racial animosity that has plagued Brazil since its creation. This is especially important now, as educators who address race and gender in classrooms are under serious attack by people who believe that only European history should be taught—in Brazil!

The complexities of racial relations and categorizations in Brazil are mind-boggling. For example, the mixed-race Prof. Rodrigues would be considered “white” in his home town because he has a college education and is a professor; however, in a more cosmopolitan city like São Paulo he would be considered “black” (or “dark”) because of his physical characteristics. With all of this considered it is easy to see why “black” or African ancestry isn’t openly talked about in Brazil, because Afro-Brazilians are looked down upon and lighter, more European-looking people tend to enjoy greater social mobility. Finally, he also spoke about the importance of education. Prof. Rodrigues comes from farming family in rural Brazil; his parents are barely literate. A teacher in his high school recognized his potential and encouraged him to maintain his studies. He eventually entered one of Brazil’s best doctoral programs in History at the University of São Paulo and now teaches at UNICAMP, another top-ranked university. As a teenager Prof. Rodrigues loved studying and dreaded school breaks, for during those times he had to work in the fields all day with his family under the scorching sun. His passion for learning brought him back to the US. To deepen his knowledge of African history, he has been spending his “summer break” as a visiting scholar at Northwestern University, happy amidst the polar vortex.
The Impact of Latinx Culture on U.S. Culture

Dr. Melissa Castillo Planes visits Fordham

On December 5, 2018, we welcomed Fordham grad, Dr. Melissa Castillo Planas, an author, poet and expert on the Mexican American experience as part of a “Culture Series” created by the Notre Dame Club of NYC. Dr. Castillo Planas lent her perspective as a Latina who grew up in NYC to speak about relevant issues that impact the Latino community at large. Current Fordham students, alumni and Notre Dame alums gathered to learn more about topics that included: unique challenges for US born Latinos vs foreign born, the definition of Latinx/Latin@/Hispanic and the impact of Mexican culture on the U.S.
On November 28, 2018 Ilse Logie, Associate Professor of Latin American Literature at Ghent University (Belgium), gave the talk, “The Paradoxes and Pitfalls of Multilingualism in Latin@ Writers.” Professor Logie examined contemporary texts that could be described as “intercultural autobiographies” (Jan Hokenson), to shed light on the often paradoxical narrative and linguistic strategies that Spanish-speaking authors employ in the U.S. to shape their struggle toward literary expression and voice their identities. The event was co-sponsored by Modern Languages and Literatures and LALS. Professor Logie visited Fordham in the fall as part of the Fordham-University of Ghent faculty exchange. In addition to conducting research, she taught Spanish Language and Literature and a course on “Foreignness and Translation” on the Rose Hill campus.

Ilse Logie is a Visiting Scholar at Fordham. Her area of study is Latin-American literature, with a special interest in the representation of violence. She has published extensively on contemporary Argentinian and Chilean narrative. Her current research focuses on translation issues, more particularly on multilingualism and (self)translation as principles of identity construction in a corpus of Latin-American and Latino writers. Since 2008, she has directed the Centre for Literature in Translation, based in Ghent and Brussels (VUB).
On November 19, 2018, Carl Fischer invited Dr. Cecily Raynor of McGill University to Fordham to give a talk entitled “Digital Transhispania: Reading and Writing Towards Other Worlds.” Dr. Raynor’s specialty bridges Latin American cultural studies and the digital humanities, and in her talk she focused on how the cultural supplements of two major Spanish-language newspapers—La Tercera, in Chile, and Babelia, a section of Spain’s El País—have developed a leadership over time from across the Spanish-speaking world. Using Google Analytics and other digital tools, Dr. Raynor showed how these newspapers are a ductile point of encounter for an international readership, with writers, readers, and subjects that span the entire Spanish-speaking world. In this way, per Dr. Raynor’s analysis, a new form of reading can be identified in “Digital Transhispania,” with cyberspace allowing for the old divisions of nation to gradually diminish.
Students and faculty celebrated Chile’s independence day on September 18 by attending a talk by Constanza Vergara, a professor of literature at the Universidad Alberto Hurtado in Santiago, Chile. Vergara, who is the co-editor of two books, titled *Documentales autobiográficos chilenos* [Chilean Autobiographical Documentaries] and *Profundidad de campo: Des/encuentros cine-literatura en Latinoamérica* [Depth of Field: Encountering Film and Literature in Latin America], spoke about two documentaries from Chile: *Perdidos en Japón* [Lost in Japan] by Vivienne Barry, and *Genoveva* by Paola Castillo. In the films, both directed by women, the filmmakers narrate in the first person about their respective quests to recover, and re-signify, aspects of their families’ pasts. Vergara’s talk came in the context of a speaker series on Chilean feminisms organized this fall by Carl Fischer, entitled “Scenes of Rebellion.”

Anti-Marxist women wave white handkerchiefs in Santiago, Chile, September 5, 1973, as they demand the resignation of President Salvador Allende. Credit: The Nation.
Bobby Sanabria brings the Music of the Bronx to Fordham

On Friday, February 22, the Rose Hill campus hosted celebrated Bronx composer, bandleader, and arranger Bobby Sanabria in two separate events open to the public. In the morning, he lectured to a group of over forty students from music, African and African American Studies, LALS, and Spanish on the African influences of Latin musical rhythms and the mechanisms by which the development of these rhythms occurred. As a bonus, while Mr. Sanabria was setting up his equipment, he educated students and faculty on the racial history of the Bronx and the socio-political factors that combined to divide the borough but then unite it through the Music that emerged from these troubled times.

In the evening, Mr. Sanabria was joined by eight other musicians to form the ensemble Ascensión, which gave an exuberant performance to over 250 sometimes-dancing audience members. As one of the early organizers of the event later wrote, “For one day at least, with your help, Bobby Sanabria turned Fordham into an extension of the Bronx! Fear was replaced with joy, indifference was replaced with enlightenment, a new community was built, and memories were created which may last a lifetime. I have been at Fordham for 48 years. Never have I been part of a day of musical and cultural creativity at Fordham more inspiring than this” (Dr. Mark Naison, AFAM).

Both events were organized and sponsored by LALS, MUSC, the offices of the Deans of FRCH and FCLC, and the Office of Diversity.

Dr. Sara Lehman had the pleasure of introducing the band that night, and her remarks are printed below:

Good evening and thank you for coming! Buenas tardes!! Bienvenidos! I’m Sara Lehman, Director of Latin American and Latino Studies here at Fordham. Welcome to this exciting night, when Latin American and Latino Studies, the Department of Art History and Music, the Deans of Fordham College at Rose Hill and Lincoln Center, and the Office of Diversity join together to bring you the amazing music of Bobby Sanabria and his jazz ensemble Ascensión! Before I go on, I want to thank my co-organizers: Eric Bianchi, Nathan Lincoln-DeCusatis, Mark Naison, Isaac Tercero, and Brian Reynolds.

Since you’re here, you probably already know that Mr. Sanabria’s reputation precedes him, but I’ll run through a few highlights before we let him take the stage. Of Puerto Rican descent and born and raised in the South Bronx, Mr. Sanabria is a Bronx Walk of Fame Inductee, a 7-time Grammy-nominee, a PHENOMENAL drummer, and a celebrated composer, arranger, conductor, producer, educator, documentary film maker, and bandleader!

Mr. Sanabria’s most recent Grammy nomination came in 2018 for his monumental Latin jazz reworking of the entire score of West Side Story entitled West Side Story Reimagined, in celebration of Leonard Bernstein’s centennial. I had the opportunity to hear this score performed live at the National Museum of Mathematics in December, and the band performed the work just last month at...The Kennedy Center! Please note that if you want to hear it live, too, I see that Bobby’s Multiverse Big Band is performing it on June 2 in the Bronx, so check out his web site.

In short, Mr. Sanabria has performed and held clinics all around the world, including one this morning right here at Fordham, which was very exciting and informative for our students.

There is so much more I could say, but how about we let the music speak for itself? I introduce, then, Bobby Sanabria and his nonet Ascensión!
Este viernes como parte de la clase fuimos a la presentación de Bobby Sanabria, quien es un artista y del Bronx. Como yo soy del Bronx también, pude conectarme como muchos de sus anécdotas. Aunque mucha de la información de la presentación ya lo sabía por causa de mi familia, la forma en que él explica la historia de Cristóbal Colón y la colonización me impactó. También me interesé en su explicación de la injusticias de los dueños de edificios. No tenía idea que algunos dueños quemaban los edificios porque no tenían el dinero para repararlos. Siempre he oído la frase “The Bronx is Burning”, pero nunca supe en verde que está pasando para que esa frase se formará. Oyendo el desarrollo de la música africana y hispana me hizo entender cómo estas diferentes culturas son conectadas y cómo están conectadas con otras culturas.

Magdalin Peña

Disfruté de la clase de Bobby Sanabria mucho. Estoy escuchando su música ahora mismo. Mi parte favorita de la clase fue como incorporó la historia de la música a su propia historia. También, cómo usó su instrumento cuando estaba contando su historia. Aprendí mucho sobre el Bronx que no conocía antes. Por ejemplo, el concepto de “planned shrinkage” era muy triste. A pesar de esto, es muy interesante cómo los Bronxites hicieron su propio tipo de cultura y música a pesar de estas luchas. Además, su información me hace querer explorar más el Bronx y aprender más sobre su historia. No pienso mucho en la suerte que tengo de vivir aquí. Porque soy de Nueva Orleans, disfruté especialmente su corta historia y su música de la ciudad. Cuando nos levantamos para aplaudir y bailar, me sentí muy nostálgico por Nueva Orleans. Nunca he pensado en cómo vivo en do de los lugares más famosos del mundo para la música. En general, su clase me hizo apreciar esto.

Casey Franklin

“Every moment in your life can be a learning moment” -- Bobby Sanabria

Primero, escuchamos al discurso que dio el famoso músico del Bronx, Bobby Sanabria. Habló de las experiencias de su niñez en el Bronx, y una cosa que aprendí fue el poder que tiene la música para unir a la gente. Sanabria se crió en el Bronx en los años setenta, una década llena de la pobreza y programas del gobierno que desplazaron a muchas personas. A pesar de los problemas, la música era una salida para los inmigrantes del Bronx, y dejó que las personas de diferentes países se unieran. El efecto de eso era una nueva cultura del Bronx. Sanabria dijo específicamente en su discurso que cuando unas culturas se mezclan, aparece una nueva cultura. Eso es algo de que yo nunca habla pensado ante de su discurso. En sus propias palabras “Music kept the culture alive”. Otra cosa importante que noté fue la diferencia entre el color y la cultura. En este mundo típicamente consideramos al color y a la cultura juntos, y aunque son relacionados, no es que el color del piel sea la cultura. Sanabria habló de las personas como Elvis y Sinatra, los cuales cruzaban la línea de la raza y la cultura en su música. Después de todo, aunque aprendí mucho más, para mí (un music minor), me interesó escuchar el poder que tenía la música en crear la paz, y el poder que sigue tener hoy día.

Antonio Rivoli
Marimba de Chonta: Identidad y Libertad

Hugo Candelario Brings Colombia’s Marimba and Rhythms to Fordham LC
On Wednesday, February 13th, Fordham welcomed Hugo Candelario, one of the most renowned players of the marimba, a type of xylophone of African descent found in southwestern Colombia and northwestern Ecuador. While in town for a concert with his ensemble Grupo Bahia and singer Nidia Góngora, members of Fordham’s Afro-Latin music ensemble and LALSI worked swiftly in order to secure Candelario for a one-hour lecture/demonstration about the marimba and its importance to the history of the region. While many of the event’s attendees spoke Spanish, two Fordham students—Lea Naisberg and Kevin Quiah—translated Candelario’s presentation into English.

Without speaking to the audience, Candelario walked onto the stage, stood behind the marimba, and began to play a **bambuco viejo**, one of the region’s foundational genres. After moving up and down the instrument, playing melodies, and twisting around rhythms, he looked up and asked the audience what kinds of emotions the music evoked, segueing into his first points of the lecture. He described the connections of the marimba to the local natural environment, with its keys made from the wood of the chonta palm tree and its resonating tubes of caña guadúa bamboo. He spoke of the marimba’s African origins, how its name is of Bantu origin, how genre names sound like towns in West Africa, and how the rhythms and musical forms are closely related to music that is performed there today.

Drawing parallels between musical form and the history of resistance to slavery in the region, Candelario made some of his most compelling points as to why marimba music is so important. He explained that the emphasis in much of the music highlights the off-beat, making the music syncopated, as opposed to emphasizing the downbeat, which he calls “a tierra” [grounded]. But this wasn’t just a metaphor of the music representing how slavery uprooted people from their homes, he explained, this was a manifestation of resistance to norms and control forced upon people of African descent in the region. Rather than having a sense of a fixed position to the ground [a tierra], a sense of not having control or independence, marimba music allows people to internalize a sense of freedom and self-liberation, something that Candelario clearly illustrated as he played through various pieces on the instrument. Moreover, this music is structured in such a way to facilitate participation, and people of all levels are encouraged to play instruments, clap, sing, and dance, all of which creates a sense of solidarity among participants, within small communities, and throughout Afro-Colombian and Afro-Ecuadorian populations.

In the Spring semester of 2018, Fordham opened an Afro-Latin music ensemble that focuses on the music that Hugo Candelario shared this winter. Co-directed by New York-based Afro-Ecuadorian musician José Juan Paredes and ethnomusicologist Dr. Jud Wellington, students with any level of musical experience are welcomed in this ensemble, where they can learn to play instruments and practice their Spanish through song. Hugo Candelario, his Grupo Bahia, and Colombian anthropologist Raúl Nieto hope to return to New York next Fall for more presentations, with a special focus on environmental conservation projects focused on the region where this music can be heard daily.
Students Chronicle New York City Neighborhoods
LALS-affiliated professor and previous Director Arnaldo Cruz-Malavé’s students this past fall visited some of the many neighborhoods of New York city and wrote chronicles of the neighborhoods, inspired by literary models they had studied in his New York Latino Literature and Film class. Following are a selection of them relating to different parts of town.
Ashley Chenery

Un paseo por las calles del Sur del Bronx

Yo camino en las calles del Sur del Bronx un sábado por la mañana. El aire está lleno de neblina, y el aroma a comida frita me abraza. Entro en el parque Joyce Kilmer, donde oigo el sonido de las llamadas de aves felices. Es uno de los sonidos más fuertes que yo he oído en mi vida. Tal vez, las llamadas son tan fuertes aquí porque fuera del parque el ambiente no es bueno para las aves. Fuera del parque, no hay muchos árboles donde una ave puede hacer un nido. Sin embargo, dentro del parque las aves pueden prosperar en los árboles juntos. En todas partes del parque hay carteles que dicen “asar a la parrilla está prohibido,” lo que indica que muchas personas han tratado tener una barbacoa en este lugar. Evidentemente, el parque es un punto de reunión para los vecinos de la comunidad, como lo es para las aves.

En el parque, toda la gente está comunicándose con alguien. Yo miro a las personas que pasean sus perros mientras ellos hablan por teléfono con sus amigos o sus miembros de familia. Las otras personas se sientan en los bancos y hablan con la gente que pasa por delante de ellos. Hay grupos de amigos viejos y jóvenes que caminan juntos, y hay la gente sola que saluda a sus vecinos con la mano. La música, que toda la gente reproduce de sus teléfonos celulares y otros dispositivos tecnológicos, se mueve a través del parque por el viento.

A mí me interesan las ardillas de colores diferentes que corren entre los árboles y las matas. Mientras yo estoy mirando a una rata que persigue a una ardilla negra, una señora mayor adonde mí. “¡Mucho pipí! ¡Mucho pipí!” dice ella. Yo le digo “Yo velaré por otras personas,” y ella comienza a orinar en la mata detrás de mí. Ella termina de orinar y dice “¡Gracias!” y yo respondo “¡Buenos días!” y la interacción termina. Entonces, un sentido de la confianza me golpea. Me doy cuenta de que esta interacción probablemente no ocurriría en el parque Central. Pero, este barrio tiene un sentido de comunidad especial.

Aunque la gente del Sur del Bronx tiene menos dinero que las personas que caminan en las calles del distrito financiero, ellos tienen conexiones reales con sus vecinos. Hay un sentido del parentesco, el entendimiento, y la igualdad dentro de la comunidad. En el Sur del Bronx, toda la gente intercambia sonrisas, las personas se paran en la calle para hablar con sus vecinos, y los amigos pasan tiempo en la calle juntos. Parece que ellos pueden compartir estos momentos especiales porque este barrio es un barrio de personas, no es un barrio de máquinas. Aquí, el tiempo no significa el dinero. En lugar, el tiempo significa la oportunidad de conversar con sus queridos seres humanos. Como las aves que cantan muy fuertes, las personas latinas pueden celebrar su cultura de la conexión humana profunda en el Sur del Bronx. Federico García Lorca escribió que en Harlem, hay calidez humana, mientras el mundo financiero es frío y cruel (Conferencia: El Poeta En Nueva York). Yo pienso que la comunidad del Sur del Bronx similarmente tiene calidez humana. Aunque hay muchos negocios en este barrio, es un lugar donde las relaciones entre las personas no están privatizadas. En las calles del distrito financiero, nadie saluda el uno al otro. Pero aquí, las personas se abrazan en las calles. Por lo tanto, la cultura y el espíritu de la gente existe en las calles, en lugar de detrás de las puertas cerradas. Aunque las personas en el Sur del Bronx no son muy ricas, las vidas de ellos están llenas del regalo de la conexión humana. Así, ellos son las personas más ricas de la ciudad.
Aunque he vivido en Nueva York por tres años, nunca había visitado El Barrio, o Spanish Harlem. En realidad, creo que no me di cuenta dónde está. Sabía que estaba en el norte de Upper East Side, pero mi percepción de Upper East Side en general es más como la ubicación de muchos museos, calles más quietas con personas ricas que nunca necesitaron usar el metro - porque la línea de la segunda avenida fue construida muy recientemente. No pude reconciliar en mi mente la proximidad de este barrio de inmigrantes con el área donde he imaginado las viven personas del "dinero viejo.” Al fin de mi visita al Barrio, descubrí que es un lugar completamente distinto con una cultura que ha permanecido intacto, incluso en la cara de cambios en la población e intentos de aburguesamiento en El Barrio y también en otros barrios con muchos inmigrantes.

Cuando llegamos, fuimos al Museo del Barrio, un sitio con colecciones de arte que conectan a la cultura e historia del Barrio, y más generalmente a la cultura e historia de los grupos latinos que viven allí. El museo estaba unido a una cafetería así que si quisieras pasar un día entero allí fácilmente podrías conseguir el almuerzo. Desafortunadamente, hay partes del museo que están en construcción. Estábamos un poco confundidos - un empleado nos dijo que necesitamos comprar nuestras entradas en el lado con la tienda, no de la cabina de entradas al otro lado, y no pudimos usar el ascensor, solo pudimos ir a las dos galerías a la izquierda. El arte fue muy interesante. Cada obra tuvo un letrero en inglés y otro en español. Las obras son de artistas latinoamericanos, y porque están en este contexto, este barrio, tienen algo inherente latino, pero no hay ningún sentido de exclusividad. En mi opinión, es arte que todo el mundo puede disfrutar, incluso si no tienen mucho conocimiento sobre la cultura latina.

Después, todavía sentía que necesitaba ver más del barrio, fuera del entorno cultivado del museo. En la calle, escuchamos música y cuando la seguimos nos encontramos con una fiesta con gente bailando y un grupo musical tocando diferentes estilos de música latina. Me parecía una comunidad de personas que todos se conocían a los otros, pero nadie fue molestado por nosotros. No pasamos mucho tiempo allí porque necesitábamos ir a la celebración por el día de la independencia mexicana. Fue mucho más grande que la otra fiesta, con una banda de mariachi en un escenario y una cantante con voz muy fuerte. Vendedores habían puesto cabinas para sus comidas y mercancías. Con todas las comidas diferentes, dulce y salado, el olor en el aire fue delicioso. Algunas personas hablaban en español a los vendedores, pero no todas. Hable hablado en español toda mi estancia en España, y he tenido conversaciones con personas en Nueva York en las que he usado el español, pero no he vivido en un lugar en el que es completamente normal usar cualquier idioma con la misma cantidad de comprensión en la otra persona. Pedi mi comida en español y me recordó que feliz estoy que hablo español, aunque no lo he usado fuera de la clase en los últimos meses.

Al fin, esta fiesta fue mi parte favorita del paseo. Había sentido un poco perdida este año porque no he pasado mucho tiempo en mi hogar con mis padres. Pasé solo unas horas allí cuando volví de España, y entonces vine aquí para trabajar durante el verano. Todas las familias que están enseñando a sus niños sobre su historia, idioma y cultura, me dan esperanza que nunca puedas olvidar tus raíces si vienes de una familia que te ama. El Barrio es uno de los partes de la ciudad en la que comunidad todavía existe en las calles, y espero que esto no cambie.
En Jackson Heights, es imposible no darse cuenta de la cultura latinoamericana y sus influencias en la gente que forma el barrio. Desde el principio de llegar allí, se puede notar la humildad que tiene la gente en un paseo diario. Fui a Jackson Heights en esperanzas de encontrar y descubrir que mezclas de culturas están presentes y cómo se ve la presencia de la cultura latinoamericana en Jackson Heights y encontré mucho más que eso: encontré la apreciación que la gente tiene por la educación de la comunidad.

En una librería pequeña a unas cuadras de la estación “82 St-Jackson Hts.” que se llama “Barco de Papel,” se puede sentir un de intimidad que casi nunca se siente en una ciudad tan grande como Nueva York. Caminé dentro de la librería con unos amigos míos para aprender un poco sobre la identidad latina presente en Jackson Heights. Una mujer colombiana que se llama Paula nos recibió de forma muy cordial a entrar. Decidimos mirar los libros primero para ver qué selección de escritura española tenían disponible al público. Había una gama de libros de escritores puertorriqueños, dominicanos, cubanos, españoles, colombianos, etc. Era increíble darnos cuenta de la variedad de culturas latinoamericanas e hispanas que estaban presentes en un espacio tan chiquito y escondida en la mitad del barrio. Después, nos acercamos a Paula para preguntarle sobre la librería y cuales eran las intenciones de incentivar la cultura latinoamericana entre la gente de la comunidad. Nos explicó en términos concisos y claros que Jackson Heights no sería lo que es sin la cultura latinoamericana guiándolo.

Lo que me impresionó sobre todo en mi visita a la librería pasó cuando ya estábamos yéndonos. Siempre he tenido un amor por la educación infantil y especialmente por la educación bilingüe para niños entonces le pregunté a Paula qué libro me recomendaría para comprar y usar en el futuro con mis estudiantes para llevármelo como un recuerdo de este tesorito de librería en Jackson Heights. En todos los libros que estaban en las perchas, seleccionó un libro que se llama Julia de una autora que se llama Georgina Lázaro. Paula me contó que la librería sigue existiendo gracias a donaciones dado por la comunidad al centro cultural y que la meta de la librería es a la vez promover a los autores locales que han ido creciendo su reputación en los años. Lázaro es uno de ellos y su libro Julia es sobre una niña que va a estudiar en un barrio lejos de que le pertenecía a ella y al final se hizo maestra para los niños en su pueblo que querían expandir su sabiduría. No me di cuenta de que se trataba después de que lo llevé a casa y lo leí. En el momento cuando me dio el libro para que la podría comprar, me dijo que no tenía que pagar nada. Me dijo en palabras entrañables que quería regalarme el libro porque se podía dar cuenta lo importante que era para mí y también porque es una mujer que quiere promover la educación bilingüe en la comunidad y además el mundo.

El hecho de que me regaló el libro sin preguntas ni dudas es representativo de lo amable y humilde que son la gente en la comunidad de Jackson Heights. Yo soy ecuatoriana y siempre he querido desde adolescente poder hacer una diferencia en los niños en ambos lenguajes (inglés e español). La única forma en la cual le puedo agradecer por el libro que me dio es que cuando me convierta profesora en el futuro, voy a enseñar ese libro cuando esté enseñando mis clases de primaria en español. La educación bilingüe para niños es sumamente importante para niños hoy en día, especialmente en un barrio como Jackson Heights que mayormente habla español y donde los letreros realmente solo están escritos en español. Sin la cultura latinoamericana, mitad de los barrios en Nueva York no serían lo que son ahora y eso aplica a Jackson Heights especialmente. Encontré, o más bien descubrí, un amor mío, la educación bilingüe para niños, metido en un espacio pequeño en comparación con el resto de Nueva York que representa un microcosmo de los valores lingüísticos que sugirieron a la expansión de la gente latinoamericana en los Estados Unidos.
Llego a la calle 200, Dyckman. Subo las escaleras de la estación oscura, en medio del aire húmedo lleno de olor a orina y basura. Salgo, donde el aroma de una mezcla de comida rica que se vende por las calles me saluda a la nariz. Inhalo y se me hace agua la boca por la tentación de comerme un pastelito... o chimichurri... o tostones... o los tres, con jugo fresco y yun-yun.

La acera se pintó “Residente, 22 de Septiembre, Hulu Theater.” Levanto mi cabeza, y veo carteles promocionando otros conciertos cubriendo las paredes de Albert’s Mofongo como un mural para honrar a los músicos latinos más famosos. Veo docenas de las mismas caras, como la de Romeo Santos, Ozuna, y Bad Bunny. Como si fuera una señal, oigo “bebé yo te botéeee, yo te boté...” a todo volumen desde las bocinas de un carro, haciéndose más y más fuerte y lentamente saliendo del tono mientras el carro se aleja.

Empiezo a caminar por Dyckman. Los vendedores me ofrecen flores, globos, libros, rosarios, ropa, joyas, zapatos, frutas y vegetales, folletos sobre Jesucristo, y toda la comida que quería cuando subí del subway. Oigo los chismes en los salones y huelo el aroma limpio de las barberías. Un niño y su hermana que todavía llevan ropa de iglesia corren a mi lado, su mamá persiguiéndolos con el bebé en sus brazos, rezando que ellos eviten el agua que se lanza del bomba de agua. Los hombres fuman cigarros y juegan al dominó. En el parque cercano, cinco familias están celebrando unos cumpleaños, o embarazos, o bodas, los padres compitiendo para hacer la mejor barbacoa, las canciones unas sobre las otras, todas mezclándose en una canción de Romeo y Drake y Juan Luis Guerra. La familia más cerca de las canchas tienen que estar atenta a las pelotas de béisbol... y las de tenis... y baloncesto... y balonmano.

Anochece. Subo las colinas de Fort Tryon Park y llego a un mirador donde se puede ver a todo el alto Manhattan. Las farolas iluminan mientras que los bares abren sus puertas para invitar a los amigos y amantes de la calle a bailar. Los sonidos de bachata, merengue, y salsa rezuman desde las puertas abiertas. Las sirenas suenan más altas. La música aumenta aún más. En el centro, veo Dyckman. La calle de luces y comida y música es la vena por la que corre la sangre dominicana entre los barrios de Washington Heights e Inwood.

El bosque a mi alrededor me recuerda al bosque de la Alhambra de Granada. En Granada, la gente escribía sobre el zumbido del subterráneo, el duende de los sueños, el espíritu oculto bajo el manto de quietud que envuelve la ciudad... De repente, una explosión me trae de vuelta al barrio, y veo fuegos artificiales en una de las calles abajo. No hay manto aquí, no se necesita manto para un barrio que siempre está despierto, vivo, bailando, gritando, hirviendo, explotando.
Crónica sobre Loisaida

En esta crónica se centrará en el Lower East Side, también conocido en versión Spanglish como “Loisaida”. Aunque Harlem y el sur del Bronx son lugares interesantes y llenos de historia, captó mi atención el Lower East Side. Había escuchado sobre la gran cantidad de puertorriqueños que viven en esta área y quería aprender más sobre la vida “nuyorquina”. Mi búsqueda de información comenzó caminando por la calle hasta llegar a la Avenida Loisaida. Quería tomarme tiempo y mirar a mi alrededor para poder captar la influencia hispana. Antes de llegar a la Avenida Loisaida, pasé por una plaza llamada en honor al gran líder político puertorriqueño, Pedro Albizu Campos. Al llegar a la Avenida Loisaida, me sorprendió ver tanta diversidad racial. Gente blanca paseaban sus hijos y charlaban con sus amistades en los bares que estaban al aire libre. Gente de descendencia china trabajaban fuera de estos negocios, mientras charlaban con gente afro-americana. Había muchos restaurantes, algunas bodegas, y edificios de vivienda.

Mi primera parada fue el Loisaida Center, localizado en la calle nueve Oeste. La exhibición inaugurada esa noche se llamaba “Documents of Resistance: Our Time” por el artista mexicano-americano, Antonio Serna. Serna acumuló fotografías de los años sesenta a los ochenta. Estas fotografías eran de diferentes movimientos sociales como, por ejemplo, los Young Lords y el movimiento chicano de los sesenta. En el centro había una pared donde los visitantes podían dedicar mensajes de apoyo a las víctimas del Huracán María, que pasó por Puerto Rico en septiembre del 2017. También en el centro había arte reciclado listo para ser expuesto el día siguiente, en una exhibición que se iba a llamar “Garbagia”. Después del centro, pasé por un muro donde se había pintado el alfabeto, que estaba dedicado a Loisaida conocida también como “Alphabet City”. Luego pasé por una iglesia hispana y pude apreciar que todavía había una gran influencia hispana en el área. A su lado, estaba el Nuyorican Poets Café, un lugar histórico donde empezaron los escritores nuyorican afro-latino, latino, y afro-americanos a presentar su poesía. Mi visita terminó con una taza de café auténtico de Puerto Rico en el restaurante, Casa Adela. Casa Adela fue fundado en el 1976 por Doña Adela Fargas, y hoy lo maneja su familia. Aquí se sirve comida puertorriqueña como mofongo, sancocho, y su famoso pollo asado.

De todos los lugares que visité, el más interesante para mi fue el Loisaida Center. La razón por la cual lo encontré interesante es porque provee un espacio para los artistas hispanos/latinos, para poder enseñar a través del arte los problemas sociales y económicos que han afectado la ciudad en Nueva York. El centro fue fundado en los años setenta y también fue fundado para poder evitar los efectos de las drogas, la pobreza, y la violencia (“Our History”). Admiro este lugar por poder darle representación a los problemas que muchas veces en las noticias o en periódicos no se ven. En fin, mi experiencia en Loisaida fue una de aprendizaje y de diversión. El lugar que seguiré frecuentando es el Loisaida Center por su historia y los trabajos que exhiben en su centro.
Un Paseo por el Sur del Bronx

Unos globos gigantes y dorados bailan contra el cielo gris. “Mami, compré mis balloons y ya nos vamos a casa. I’m getting on the bus right now.” Con el “1” y el “6” flotando sobre su cabeza, presumió que era su cumpleaños. Que raro, comprarse los globos, subirse al bus con unas amigas, y regresar a la casa para celebrar, yo pensé, y seguí caminando, pensando en todos los años que me sorprendieron mis padres con una torta con velitas. Pero por todo el South Bronx, me fijé en cosas así. Había niños en todas partes, riéndose, poniendo música en sus celulares, discutiendo sobre los mejores jugadores de basketball y de las chicas en sus clases. Todos gozaron del simple placer de saber que no tenían que regresar a la escuela por un long weekend. Por la gran parte, se quedaban de pie, reposando contra un muro en una esquina, charlando sin ningún sentido de urgencia. Cuando yo era niño, tenía quince minutos para llegar a mi casa después de la escuela, o llamar del teléfono de alguien más si me tardaba. Me hubiera encantado esta independencia, tener la libertad de contonearme por toda la ciudad más grande del país.

También me fijé en los jubilados, los viejos. Sus conferencias de calle eran más formales. Se habían formado en círculos, con una mesa al centro, sobre la cual siempre hay algo que hacer con las manos, sea tarjetas, dominó, o fruta para comer. Caminé desde la calle 171 hasta la 170 en Jerome Ave sin dejar de escuchar las carcajadas de los ancianos omnipresentes, pasando de un grupo a otro. Entendí mejor que sus palabras esa risa y las expresiones en sus caras, junto con la voz debilitada como la de mi propio abuelo. Cerca de mi casa hay una mesa así, cada día. Uno de ellos toca muy bien la guitarra. Juegan las tarjetas cada noche hasta las dos, a veces quedándose despiertos más tarde que yo.

Me di cuenta de las instituciones y establecimientos también. En cada cruce, hay por lo menos dos bodegas. Paré en dos de ellas para comprar un té helado, y luego porque me gustó la música que la otra tenía puesta. Dentro de unas, vi hombres fumando puros y hablando de la diferencia entre los dominicanos y los puertorriqueños. Tanto como las bodegas había salones de belleza, de los cuales salían más risas y gritos. Luego vi unos tribunales, uno de la familia y el otro de la vivienda. Entre los dos había una comisaría. Parecían inminentes e imponentes, fuera de contexto. Sus muros gruesos de cemento, sin textura, casi militares, interrumpieron bruscamente la sucesión de edificios residenciales, de ladrillo suave y erosionado. En frente, había policía, vigilando sin ofrecer ni una palabra a todos aquellos que pasaron. No parecen a nadie que he visto por acá. Me alegro mucho de que no tenga que entrar en ninguno de esos castillos. Mira, hasta la gente cruza la calle para no acercarse demasiado.

Cuando llegué al tren, el barrio se había transformado, un poquito. Todo empezó a abrirse; las calles se convirtieron más amplias, los edificios más altos y espaciados, y me encontré con turistas, fanáticos de los Yankees, y muchos demás llegando de o en camino a Manhattan. Sentí una punzada de lástima. Sabía que mucha de la gente en frente de mi solo había venido para sacar una foto frente al estadio icónico y ver el partido, solo para bajarse al tren de nuevo sin enterarse que existía otro mundo a dos cuadras de la estación. Pero la gente de este barrio no quiere ser una atracción turística. Los enlaces que atan esta comunidad no son vistos, ni comprados, ni consumidos. El sentido de pertenencia a la colectividad es algo único y fuerte, lo cual no se encuentra en muchos lugares.
Mi Barrio: Washington Heights

Washington Heights se extiende hacia el norte desde la calle 155 hasta la calle Dyckman, y se extiende por Manhattan desde el río Hudson al río de Harlem. El nombre fue adoptado en la década de 1870. Washington Heights es mi barrio. Está lleno de diferentes culturas latinas, pero con una población predominantemente Dominicana. Honestamente una persona puede sobrevivir en Washington sin tener que aprender un poco de inglés. Para mi proyecto decidí quedarme local, no porque soy vaga sino porque estoy orgulloso de mi comunidad. También fue una oportunidad para aprender más Washington Heights. Visité la Sociedad de los Hispanos en América para ver cómo una pieza histórica de la comunidad interactúa con el residente, que son principalmente latinos. También entrevisté a mi madre y su amiga Margarita, que está relacionado con Adriano Espaillat. Él es un miembro del Senado del Estado de Nueva York y un ex miembro de la Asamblea del Estado de Nueva York.


La Sociedad de los Hispanos en América fue fundada en 1904 como museo y biblioteca de investigación, es bendecido con participaciones de clase mundial: grandes pinturas de Goya, Velázquez y El Greco, miles de obras de artes decorativas y manuscritos importantes, grabados y fotografías. Pero durante décadas ha tenido muy pocos visitantes. Su ubicación Washington Heights es fuera de lo común, su comercialización ha sido malo, y sus galerías no son con aire acondicionado. Y aunque su nombre sugiere una conexión con los latinos, el museo celebra principalmente las culturas del Viejo Mundo de España y Portugal, no las artes y las tradiciones de las tierras del Nuevo Mundo que colonizaron. Los funcionarios están considerando activamente el cambio de nombre del museo, en nombre de su fundador, Archer Milton Huntington, heredero de una inmensa fortuna del ferrocarril y un erudito, coleccionista y filántropo.

El cambio se aplicaría sólo para el museo, no la institución de gobierno. “Crea paralelismos con otras instituciones – el Morgan, la Frick”, dijo Mitchell A. Codding, el director de la Hispanic Society. “En serio, creo que sería beneficioso”. El cambio de nombre sería el último esfuerzo para elevar el perfil del museo, ampliar su edificio, apuntalar sus finanzas y llegar a su comunidad. “Estructuralmente hemos estado tratando en los últimos 10 años para hacer todo lo posible”, dijo el Sr. Codding, quien se convirtió en director en 1995. Una cosa que la sociedad no va a hacer, sin embargo, es abandonar la misión de su fundador simplemente a ser popular. Deseo de Huntington era para mostrar el arte y artefactos que capturan “el alma de España” en un momento en el término hispano se asocia típicamente con la Península Ibérica, no a los pueblos de América Latina. Sr. Codding dijo que si bien el museo ha ampliado sus tenencias de América Latina, no puede transformarse en algo diferente sólo para conectar más con su vecindario. “Nuestras colecciones son nuestras colecciones”, agregó. “Estamos adquiriendo arte latinoamericano más, pero de un período anterior que se base en la colección anterior. Hay otro museo que aborda esa población, el Museo del Barrio. No estamos buscando competir con ellos. La colección es diferente. La base de esta colección es viejo maestro y el arte del siglo 19 “. 
En mi opinión, el museo puede hacer más para interactuar con la comunidad. El hecho de que quieren preservar la cultura de la vieja España en su museo no quiere decir que no pueden llegar e interactuar con los latinos. Los latinos son conscientes de que sus raíces proceden de España así que por supuesto que estarán interesados en aprender sobre el arte y artefactos españoles. Es lamentable que el Sr. Codding no le importa a interactuar más con el barrio porque teme que arruinará la visión del fundador. Veo el museo como un tesoro escondido, porque en realidad nadie lo sabe, pero una vez que lo visite se quedan con la boca abierta por la belleza que contiene. Si pudiera cambiar una cosa que cambiaría la forma en que se ejecuta. El museo es pequeño pero tiene por lo menos un guía turístico sería hacer la experiencia más agradable. Aparte de la falta de interacción con el museo, los nativos a Washington están experimentando algo más, la gentrificación.


Un paseo por Williamsburg

La primera parada del barrio de Williamsburg, Brooklyn te deja en la Avenida de Bedford. Cuando pases por esta calle y las que rodear, miras un montón de tiendas y restaurantes que se consideraban “trendy”, como Whole Foods, Urban Outfitters, Starbucks, Sweetgreen, y más. La población consiste de la gente “hipster”, vestido en botas de cuero y llevando cafés con hielo. Las calles son llenas de gente, paseando por los restaurantes, cafés y bares vivos que son decorados con lamparitas de Edison y señales guayes en las paredes. Así se sabe el barrio de Williamsburg.

Todas estas características hacen evidente la gentrificación en el barrio. Desde los años 60, el barrio era mayormente poblado por inmigrantes hispanohablantes y judíos jasídicos. En los años 90, muchos artistas se mudaron al barrio por los precios bajos de apartamentos. Se abrieron nuevos restaurantes y negocios por estos nuevos residentes. Los precios de los apartamentos subieron y los residentes originales tuvieron que mudarse. Y el barrio cambió.

Luego, vayas más sureste de la Avenida de Bedford. Esta parte de Williamsburg es menos gentrificada y consiste de la gente del barrio de los 60. Caminando por la calle Roebling, los edificios se vuelven más residenciales. Murales cubren las paredes de algunos edificios. En la esquina de la calle 4 y la calle Roebling, hay un centro de comunidad que se llama El Puente. El lado de El Puente muestra un gran mural colorido que cuenta la historia del barrio. Este centro trabaja para inspirar y traer juntos los líderes jóvenes del barrio y para unir la comunidad hispanohablante del barrio. Es evidente que la gente del barrio actual sea consciente de la historia y los cambios recientes. El centro de comunidad es una prueba que la gente quiera fortalecer la comunidad latino de este barrio cambiando.

Caminando en la calle Roebling hacia el paso subterráneo de la autoría, gradualmente, las palabras de las señales de los negocios se convierten desde inglés a español. Debajo del fin de la fuente de Brooklyn, hay una tienda que se llama “La nacional” y que promociona sus servicios en español en la ventana, incluyendo el envío de valores, llamadas, recargas y más, todos promocionados en español. Los servicios son indicativos de una población inmigrante que puede necesitar un lugar para enviar dinero a sus familias en otros países.

En la sur segunda calle, hay una iglesia que se llama la Roca Eterna Pentecostal Church. Fue un domingo que la pasé, y paré en frente cuando oí voces ruidosas dentro. Estuvo la congregación rezando muy fuerte en español. “¡Gracias, porque sus palabras pasen la palabra buena! ¡Gracias! Bendicenos, Señor, bendicenos,” proclamó una voz fuerte de una mujer.

Había ido a varios servicios religiosos en iglesias aconfesionales, iglesias católicas, y sinagogas. Nunca hablaba oído la pasión que vino de las puertas de esta iglesieta en Williamsburg este día. Yuxtapuesto al “nuevo barrio” solamente diez manzanas al norte—que representa el materialismo americano y la importancia de seguir lo que es guay—el espíritu de estos feligreses muestra la humanidad honesta y la humildad de las comunidades de inmigrantes.

Es muy fácil ver la distinción entre el Williamsburg gentrificado y el Williamsburg de las comunidades originales a través de un paseo del barrio. Aunque el Williamsburg “hipster” es lo que es más sabido del barrio, las comunidades originales del barrio quedan intactas y fuertes. Sin embargo, es una pena que estas comunidades han sido afectados por la gentrificación.
“Educación con Igualdad Ahora” or “Education with Equality Now” reads this marcher’s cutout. She is a part of the organization FENMUCARINAP, which stands for Federación Nacional de Mujeres Campesinas, Indígenas, Nativas, y Asalariadas de Peru (or National Federation of Country, Indigenous, Native, and Wage-Earning Women of Peru).
This fall Ava Braccia completed an internship with Latin American News Digest that entailed translating Spanish-language media articles into English summaries for North American and European readers on a weekly basis. On February 17, 2018, the online magazine published her research piece titled “Understanding Nayib Bukele’s Presidential Victory in El Salvador” for which she received the byline. The aggregation detailed the manner in which Bukele’s finesse of social networking sites, anti-corruption platform, appeal to younger audiences, and previous political experience paved his path to triumph in the polls with his GANA party.

Ava is currently studying sociology, anthropology, and Spanish abroad at Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú in Lima for the Spring 2019 semester. She was inspired to travel there after taking SPAN3002 and SPAN3072 with Professor Cynthia Vich, as she comes from Lima and incorporated many interesting Peruvian authors and issues into her coursework. Ava finds that those around her are generally very kind and willing to work with or help foreigners like herself. Although the transportation system is hard to navigate, the delicious food and beautiful cultural sites make up for it. Highlights of her trip thus far include attending a women’s march for El Día Internacional de la Mujer with other members of her CIEE program, visiting El Museo Larco, lying in the grass between classes on campus, hitting the beach in Ancón, having dinners with her host family, and watching the sunset in the Miraflores district. Ava looks forward to perfecting her Spanish skills with practice, paragliding over the Costa Verde, mastering the micro bus system, and trekking the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu in June.

From left to right: Ava, Jacqueline, Juan, and Jillian at the women’s march for International Women’s Day, or El Día Internacional de la Mujer, on March 8th. Behind the group are many participants holding their banners and the monument of Plaza Bolognesi on Avenida Brasil, which was closed down for the duration of the event. Although the demonstration was held primarily in honor of women, the content of marchers’ banners has political implications.

Ava in the midst of the crowd at the Women’s Day march. The woman’s pro-choice sign on the left reads “decidir nos hace libres,” or “to decide makes us free,” and you can see a uterus drawn in the corner.
This young smiling marcher’s flag reads “No nací mujer para morir por serlo,” or “I was not born a woman to die for being one” along with the hashtag #NiUnaMenos, a campaign in Peru against femicides, sexual abuse, and violence against women.

“No more discrimination and exploitation for women” and “No more aggression and impunity” declare these female cutouts held by two strong marchers.
El Museo Larco is a beautiful museum notable for both its wide-ranging collection of pre-Colombian art and its flower-covered exterior. Ceramic, textile, stone, and metal pieces depict the religious and class-based societal beliefs of ancient civilizations such as the Moche or Nazca. Perhaps most impressive is its multitude of huacos, or pottery vessels.

“Pero llega la hora de la venganza y te amo.” “But arrives the hour of vengeance, and I love you”. Out of context, I took this quote to mean that there is often one person (or a few) in your life who have done wrong by you and don’t deserve the soft spot you have for them, but you continue to love and care anyway. According to Google, the phrase is part of a Pablo Neruda poem.
The lighthouse, El Faro, in Antonio Raimondi Park in Miraflores, featuring a paraglider.
This mosaic wall-art is one of many pieces in Miraflores’ Parque del Amor, or Park of Love. The words say “Amar no es un delito,” or “To love is not a crime,” which I find quite touching. My group spends a lot of time here and we return about two or three times a week, partly because it’s an easy meeting spot, and mostly because the views are incomparable.

This is a plate of anticuchos, or cow heart, that I ordered from La Sucursal in my neighborhood of Pueblo Libre. After a while, it does taste a lot like game, but it was still amazing. Also, Lima has the best lemonade I have ever tasted (see the glass on the right).

This is me with my host parents, Augusto and Hermi, and my roommate, Jillian at Ancón to celebrate Hermi’s birthday. In only the span of a month, we have all become very close and I am thankful to have them in my life.
Student Spotlight
Josh Anthony (FCLC ’19)

Starting this fall, Josh will be pursuing a Ph.D. in colonial Mexican history at Rutgers University with the celebrated scholar Camilla Townsend. As graduation approaches, Josh shares his doctoral research plans and reflects on what LALS and History have meant to him.

At Rutgers I’ll be researching the indigenous cultures of colonial Mexico, with a focus on the Nahua of central Mexico in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. I hope to study how Nahua scholars adopted and transformed European ideas and systems of knowledge to fit their own intellectual needs and concerns, and by doing so I hope to help elucidate the Nahua understanding of the wider world. I’ll be focusing on the rich corpus of historical narratives written by indigenous intellectuals, in Spanish and in Nahuatl, but I’m also interested in the universities operated by Franciscans and Jesuit friars in this period that sought to educate indigenous students, and were sites of frequent scholarly collaboration across ethnic lines.

I’ve always had a fascination with the past, and when I entered Fordham I was able to explore this fascination through the History major. I took a variety of great classes with fabulous professors in all kinds of different subjects before deciding to pursue Latin American history in depth. I took on the Latin American/Latino Studies minor to broaden my understanding of this field by exploring Latin American culture through different methodologies and lenses besides history. Besides enriching my understanding of Latin American history, the LALSI minor made me aware of the many aspects of contemporary Latin American and Latino life that will continue to affect the way I engage with the world, as well as the history I study. I believe history is crucial to understanding the modern world and our position within it, and I hope that my scholarship can serve as a commentary on present concerns as well as the historical events I study. My History major and my LALSI minor were absolutely pivotal in getting me to the point I’m at today.
Rosalyn Kutsch is a member of the Honors Program at FCRH and is double majoring in International Political Economy and Latin American and Latino Studies. While at Fordham, she has served as a member of the executive board of the Model United Nations club, Editor at the Fordham Political Review, athlete on the Women’s Rowing Team and as a policy intern at the United Nations. During her sophomore and junior years she conducted research in Guatemala about the relationship between social enterprises and female indigenous artisans, and in Peru about microfinance services in artisan communities. She presented her findings in these areas at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research. Rosalyn has enjoyed exploring a number of interesting topics through the LALS major. She was able to combine her many interests in her senior thesis project that models individual’s trust in governments in “Latin America: A Cross Sectional Study of Political Trust in Latin American Institutions.”

Rosalyn has received a Fulbright scholarship to teach English and Model United Nations to high school students in Madrid, Spain next year. She is excited to immerse herself in her community, improve her Spanish-language skills, and share with her students the importance of international cooperation and diplomacy. While abroad, she hopes to conduct research on Spain’s economic and cultural relationship with Latin America. Ultimately, Rosalyn hopes to combine her interests in research and policy design in a career in sustainable international development.
Congratulations class of 2019!

Majors

Johana Guerrero
Rosalyn Kutsch
Caroline Shriver

Minors

Hanna Almai
Joshua Anthony
Lyanette Benoit
Matthew Gilligan
Leanna Nichols
Katharine Richardson
Thomas Sandoval
Catherine Schwarzler
Shirley Troche
Kayla Velez
Lisbeth Vicente
Sara Lehman has enjoyed being Director of LALS this year, after three years as Associate Director. She taught and advised in the Manresa Freshman Honors Program this year, and offered Latin American Themes and Transatlantic Picaresque. In the summer she’ll be advising incoming freshmen and offering Approaches to Literature in a special online format.

Clara Rodríguez presented a talk on her 2018 book America, As Seen on T.V. at the Fed and published the following two articles:


She introduced the keynote speaker at the October 26th Immigration Symposium organized by Rafael Zapata, Elaine Congress (Social Work/GSS) and Darryl McCloud (Economics) and which was intended to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the implementation of the Hart-Celler Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (first implemented in 1968).

Finally, she was part of the panel “Immigration, Citizenship and Belonging in 21st Century America,” on October 9 at Goldman Sachs that was co-organized by Fordham Law School’s Center for Race, Law and Justice.
Sarah Molinari

Sarah Molinari (2011) advanced to candidacy in the doctorate program in Cultural Anthropology at the CUNY Graduate Center in December 2017, and has been conducting ethnographic fieldwork with National Science Foundation funding on the politics of debt and disaster in Puerto Rico, where she is a Visiting Researcher at the University of Puerto Rico’s Institute for Caribbean Studies. In 2018, Sarah became an executive board member of the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) new Section on Puerto Rico, and she continues to collaborate with the digital humanities project, the Puerto Rico Syllabus. Sarah authored a book chapter based on her dissertation research in the edited volume Aftershocks of Maria, which will be published in September 2019 by Haymarket Press.

Yeob Kim

Mr Sang Yeob Kim, GSAS11. His professional career at United Nations began in Permanent Mission of Chile to the UN in New York as Policy Adviser in the area of political and economic affairs since 2011.

Subsequently, he moved to UNDP Bangladesh in 2017, where he held the position of SDG Officer at the UNDP Innovation Hub and the UNV Country Office, for private sector engagement.

In 2018, he started his new assignment in UNDP Ecuador as Programme Officer, is responsible for the management and implementation, monitoring and reporting of different projects in the area of economic inclusion, SDGs, innovation and livelihood, etc.

Recently, he has contributed the useful feedback about block chain on the publication, Technological Change and the Future of Jobs, of UNDP Seoul Policy Centre.

After having his master’s degree in LALSI, he also graduated from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy with a master’s degree in international relations.

H.E. Arnaud Peral, Resident Coordinator of UN Ecuador

At the UN/UNDP Ecuador