FACULTY

Arnaldo Cruz-Malavé, Director
Modern Languages & Literature

Sara Lehman, Associate Director
Modern Languages & Literature

Gregory Acevedo
Graduate School of Social Service

Sal Acosta
History, Executive Committee

O. Hugo Benavides
Sociology & Anthropology

Susan Berger
Political Science

Daniel Contreras
English

Emilio Estela
Adjunct Instructor

Carl Fischer
Modern Languages & Literature

Greta Gilbertson
Sociology & Anthropology

Javier Jiménez-Belmonte
Modern Languages & Literature

Carey Kasten
Modern Languages & Literature

Rafael Lamas
Modern Languages & Literature

Michael Lee
Theology

Luz Lenis
Assistant Sophomore Dean (FCRH)

Héctor Lindo-Fuentes
History

Gioconda Marún
Modern Languages & Literature

Ronald Méndez-Clark
Modern Languages & Literature

Yuko Miki
History

Barbara Mundy
Art History, Executive Committee

S. Elizabeth Penry
History

Rose Perez
Graduate School of Social Service

Erick Renjifo
Economics

Monica Rivera-Mindt
Psychology

Clara Rodríguez
Sociology & Anthropology

Orlando Rodríguez
Sociology & Anthropology

Mark Street
Visual Arts

Luisita Torregrosa
Distinguished Adjunct Instructor

Cynthia Vich
Modern Languages & Literature

Student Assistants

LC
Jennifer Acevedo
Rossy Fernandez

RH
Jimy Vasquez

Boletín Design

Rossy Fernandez

Administrative Staff

Sandra Arnold
Executive Secretary [LC]

Isaac Tercero
Program Administrator [RH]
CONTENTS

From the Director’s Desk 6

Events 10

Truth: Women, Creativity and Memory of Slavery 12

Pedro Guerrero: A Photographer’s Journey 14

Latino Stats: American Hispanics by the Numbers 16

Havana Hardball: Spring Training Jackie Robinson and the Cuban League 18

Student Activism and the History of the Young Lords Party 20

Spanish Musical Dislocations 22

Rafael Villares: Cuban Art Today 24

Whose Debt? The Puerto Rican Financial Crisis in Context 26

Salsa Workshop 28
CONTENTS

Vision Day 2016 ........................................ 29

Race, Sexuality, Afro-Cuban Religious Practices, and the Cuban State ............ 32

Faculty and Staff News ................................ 33

Congratulations Class of 2016! ........................................ 39
THIS PAST FALL LALSI partnered with important NYC, national and international institutions to offer timely and impacting programming on Latin America and Latinos in the United States. This year we decided to focus on race and Caribbean studies in honor of our recently deceased colleague Dr. Christopher Schmidt-Nowara whose innovative work on the history of antislavery movements in Cuba and Puerto Rico and transatlantic and Iberian empire studies, teaching and supportive and generous mentoring of students and colleagues alike continues to inspire us. We collaborated with the United Nations and the Periwinkle Initiative to celebrate International Day of Remembrance with a panel on Women, Creativity, and the Memory of Slavery. The panel featured distinguished women artists and scholars who discussed the representation of slavery by women artists of African descent throughout the Americas.

In October, LALSI joined Columbia University’s Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race and New York University’s M.A. Program in Creative Writing in Spanish to sponsor a series of talks at our three institutions on the very timely Puerto Rican Debt Crisis. At Fordham we hosted a conversation on The Puerto Rican Financial Crisis in Historical Context with two of New York’s best known Puerto Rican scholars and political analysts: Nelson Denis, author of the best-selling The War against All Puerto Ricans, and the acclaimed NY Daily News and Democracy Now! journalist Juan Gonzalez, author of Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America and News for All the People: The Epic Story of Race and the American Media. The conversation was moderated by Luisita Lopez Torregrosa, the NY Times journalist and memoirist, author of The Infinite Noise of Longing, who is a distinguished adjunct in journalism in our program.

In November we partnered with the Centro Cultural Cubano de Nueva York to cosponsor the presentation of a new book on the contribution of Cuban baseball to U.S. baseball and its impact on the breaking of the U.S. color barrier in this sport, César Brioso’s Havana Hardball. And we brought to the university one of the top authorities on the history of race relations in Cuba, the distinguished scholar and researcher at the José Martí National Library, Tomás Fernández Robaina, author of Blacks in Cuba 1902-1958: Notes on the History of the Struggle against Racial Discrimination, who spoke on race, religion, and the Cuban state. In December we partnered with WNET New York Public Media to offer a screening and panel discussion of the PBS American Masters film Pedro E. Guerrero: A Photographer’s Journey, on the distinguished career of this often-overlooked Mexican American photographer. And we celebrated the launch of Rafael Lamas’s latest book, Escuchar e interpretar: Ostracismos musicales en los albores de la conciencia moderna española, by cosponsoring a musical performance and oral presentation, directed by Dr. Lamas, on the impact of modernity on Spanish musical traditions and its exilic artists. Titled Spanish Musical Dis-locations, the performance was held at The Irene Diamond Educational Center of Jazz at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts.
To complement our courses and on-going conversations on campus on race and diversity, LALSI hosted a conversation with the filmmaker Iris Morales, author of the documentary ¡Palante, Siempre Palante!: The Young Lords and former member of the New York Puerto Rican activist group, The Young Lords, to discuss student activism and the legacy of the Young Lords. Her conversation was amplified by a talk on race and the evolution of Latin Music in New York by the journalist and cultural critic Ed Morales, author of Living in Spanglish, and followed by an exhilarating workshop on mambo and salsa by the extraordinary New York dancers Nélida Tirado and Eddie Torres Jr. A NYC Latino dancer of international acclaim, Ms. Tirado had just finished a new dance show that combined flamenco and salsa at Joe’s Pub.

This spring LALSI collaborated with the departments of Music and Art and Sociology and Anthropology to bring to campus one of Cuba’s most successful and innovative contemporary artist, Rafael Villares, whose public art has had great impact on Havana’s urban landscape. At Fordham Villares taught a class in the contemporary art program and gave a master lecture on his work and current trends in Cuban art to a packed audience of faculty and students.

At the end of the semester, on May 25th, LALSI will be hosting the Pre-Latin-American-Association-convention meeting of the Latin American and Latino Queer/Cuir Diasporas Working Group. Many of the association’s distinguished Latin American and Latino scholars on gender and sexuality studies, who will be in the city for the association’s annual convention, will be at our Pre-Latin American Studies Association meeting where they will be presenting proposals for collaborations across the Americas.

Finally, we have organized a panel in honor of Chris Schmidt-Nowara as Pioneer of Atlantic Empire and Antislavery Studies for the LASA convention, with the participation of distinguished Latin Americanists and Americanist scholars, Benjamin Carp, the Daniel M. Lyons Chair of History at Brooklyn College, Geraldo Cadava, Assistant Professor of History at Northwestern University, and our very own Barbara Mundy, Professor of Art History who specializes on Colonial and Mexican art, author of the recently published, The Death of Aztec Tenochtitlan, the Life of Mexico City (University of Texas, 2015). We hope that you will be able to join us at these exciting events!
ON OCTOBER 5, 2015, Fordham partnered for a second year with the United Nations Remember Slavery Programme. The annual commemoration by the United Nations via its Department of Public Information (DPI) was established in 2007 by the General Assembly to remember the victims of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade. The day of memory is observed annually on March 25th as the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery & the Transatlantic Slave Trade, and is followed by a series of events throughout the year. The 2015 theme was Women and Slavery. In keeping with that focus, the Fordham event, which was hosted at the School of Law was titled: TRUTH: Women, Creativity and Memory of Slavery. The Latin American & Latino Studies Institute (LALSI) and the School for Professional & Continuing Studies (PCS) were the lead sponsors with the Departments of History and African & African American Studies (AAAS) providing additional support.

TRUTH, which examined the role of artistic creativity in the public memory of slavery and its female victims, was moderated by Dr. Aimee Cox, cultural anthropologist and Associate Chair of AAAS at Fordham. The symposium was well received with over 300 guests in attendance. Noted scholars and experts gave engaging presentations and participated in a passionate discussion. They included Dr. Deborah Willis - Chair of the Department of Photography & Imaging at the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University; Dr. Nicole R. Fleetwood, Associate Professor, Department of American Studies and Director of the Institute for Research on Women at Rutgers University; Yolanda Arroyo Pizarro - award winning novelist, short story writer and essayist; Gabriela Salgado, Contemporary Art Curator & Consultant in Europe and Latin America; Dr. Iyunolu Osagie - Associate Professor of English at Pennsylvania State University, and Dr. Yuko Miki Assistant Professor of Iberian Atlantic History at Fordham University.

International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade website: rememberslavery.un.org

Photos: Inside Fordham
The American Masters series and Latino Public Broadcasting’s VOCES series joined forces for the first time to explore the life and work of photographer Pedro E. Guerrero (September 5, 1917 – September 13, 2012), a Mexican American, born and raised in segregated Mesa, Arizona, who rose to international fame as a photographer.

In their film, Pedro E. Guerrero: A Photographer’s Journey, filmmakers Raymond Telles and Yvan Iturriaga showcase an in-depth, exclusive interview with Guerrero alongside his photography to explore his collaborations with three of the most iconic American artists of the 20th century: architect Frank Lloyd Wright and sculptors Alexander Calder and Louise Nevelson. Using his outsider’s eye to produce insightful portraits of important modernist architecture, Guerrero became one of the most sought-after photographers of the “Mad Men” era, yet his story is largely unknown.

American Masters — Pedro E. Guerrero: A Photographer’s Journey highlights the milestones in Guerrero’s life: his serendipitous enrollment in photography classes, his 1939 meeting with Wright at Taliesin West (Scottsdale, AZ), his World War II service and his post-war magazine photography career in New York City, shooting interiors while his work with Wright continued. Settling in New Canaan, CT, Guerrero describes his life after Wright's death, his work with Calder and the end of his magazine assignments because of his vocal opposition to the Vietnam War.

LALSI partnered with WNET New York Public Media on a screening of this important film on December 1, 2015, in the Constantino Room of the Fordham Law School. A discussion followed with panelist that included the film’s Executive Director, Michael Kantor of the PBS American Masters film series, LALSI Director, Arnaldo Cruz-Malavé, noted architectural photographer, Norman McGrath, and Susan Guerrero, New York Times editor and daughter of the late Pedro E. Guerrero. The discussion and Q & A was moderated by Abby Goldstein, Director of Fordham’s Graphic Design program.

Photos: PBS/American Masters
“Using his outsider’s eye to produce insightful portraits of important modernist architecture, Guerrero became one of the most sought-after photographers of the ‘Mad Men’ era, yet his story is largely unknown.”
Idelisse Malavé began her talk on “Latino Stats” by saying she had been a “long time feminist” since 1970, and that she has aimed to ignite inner-reflection and welcome dialogue about why we are the way we are. Standing in front of the audience on Tuesday, February 23 she opened her presentation, which poignantly felt more like a conversation, with an impressive biography. Not only has she trained as a lawyer and at the age of twenty worked as a psychologist in Puerto Rico, but also is an accomplished author who specializes in organizational strategies. As she took a moment to transition out of her biography, she verbalized her two motivating factors in life—being Latina and a feminist. She brought to our attention that being both has dictated a life of vicissitudes.

Her interactive True/False quiz propelled the audience’s knowledge and understanding of Latino statistics, allowing the presentation not only to be innovative but also collective. She said that her primary reason for writing her book was to spark social change, and sheoptimistically ended the quiz by expressing her excitement for the Latino generations to come.

The second half of the presentation consisted of answering student inquiries about Latino stats. Questions included what are the reasons for Latino obesity, why does the data indicate that Latinos have a high trust in the police force, what are the positives and negatives of assimilation in America, what is the situation of Latinos and foster care, and why do Latina/os have a high rate of HIV/AIDS. She touched upon how little we still know about Latino history, and cited how few people know about Mexican Repatriation in the 1930s as an example. Students’ inquiries moved the conversation about the concept of linked fates further and how our multiple selves should not get lost throughout the process of life.

In closing, she allowed the audience to ponder the Latino past and future. She read aloud Latino Stat’s opening quote: “Even well educated, amiable, open minded people in the United States do not realize that their country has a Hispanic past, as well as a Hispanic future”—Felipe Fernández-Armesto. Then she took a breath, and stated, “Latinos’ have a bright future in the United States.”
Co-sponsored by the Cuban Cultural Center of New York and LALSI’s Lecture Series in Honor of Chris Schmidt-Nowara, our recently deceased colleague who was a pioneer of Transatlantic and Antislavery Hispanic Caribbean Studies and a passionate aficionado of baseball, *Havana Hardball: Spring Training, Jackie Robinson, and the Cuban League* presented sports journalist César Brioso’s latest book on the shared history of Cuban and American baseball. In fall 2011 Prof. Schmidt-Nowara, organized, in collaboration with the Cuban Cultural Center of NY, a conference on the history of Cuban baseball with the participation of the National Humanities Medal winner, Roberto González Echevarría, author of *The Pride of Havana: A History of Cuban Baseball*, and the very special participation of César Brioso from USA Today, who moderated that event.

Fordham’s association with Cuban culture, and specifically Cuban baseball, is long and deep. It takes us back to the mid-1800s when one of our international students from Latin America, the Cuban Esteban Bellán, learned to play baseball at Fordham where he joined the Fordham Rose Hill Baseball Club. Bellán would go on to become the first Latino to play professionally for an American league, the National Association of Professional Base Ball Players from 1871-73. And on his return to Cuba he would also become one of the founders of baseball on the island. We at Fordham are proud to recognize him as one of our distinguished alumni.

Born in Havana in 1965 and educated at the University of Florida, where he received his bachelor’s degree in journalism in 1988, César Brioso has been researching and writing about Cuban and American baseball for decades. A self-described *almendarista*, or fan of the Almendares Baseball Club of Havana, Brioso is a member of the Society for American Baseball Research and blogs about Cuban baseball history and baseball teams at cubanbeisbol.com. He is a digital producer for USA Today Sports, and served as its baseball editor from 2003 to 2004. He has been a writer and editor for many other papers and magazines, including the Miami Herald, the Sun-Sentinel (South Florida), and the Tampa Tribune.

In his now classic and groundbreaking *The Pride of Havana*, Prof. González Echevarría proposes that, despite assertions to the contrary, American culture, as represented most evidently by baseball, is an important component of Cuban culture. We could also suggest that César Brioso’s book, *Havana Hardball: Spring Training, Jackie Robinson, and the Cuban League*, makes a similar, though inverse, proposition: that is, Cuban, and by extension, Latin American, cultures are an important—even crucially important—part or component of U.S. American culture, especially as represented most evidently by baseball. In a way, we could say that Mr. Brioso’s book is an engaging and fascinating look at we in Latin American, Latino and American studies call transnationalism—that is, it is an engaging and analytical look at how a large and significant part of what we know as American baseball history actually took place outside the geographical boundaries of the United States, in places like Havana, where American teams and players from the Major Leagues would play with and against local teams that were racially integrated.

It was in Havana, where the professional—not the amateur—leagues had been integrated since the early 1900s,
that American blacks and whites first had the experience of playing professionally and sharing and competing with and against players of different races. This formative, shared experience, Mr. Brioso claims, would impact US sports history and society, especially during the pre-Civil Rights era following the Second World War, when the legendary American baseball player, Jackie Robinson, would become the first African American to break the so-called “color line” in 1947 by joining the Brooklyn Dodgers.

“Cuban, and by extension, Latin American, cultures are an important—even a crucially important—part or component of U.S. American culture, especially as represented most evidently by baseball.”
Complementing the three-venue exhibition on the legacy of the Young Lords, which opened last fall at the Bronx Museum of the Arts, El Museo del Barrio and the Loisaida Center in the Lower East Side, Presents: The Young Lords in New York, and the conversations on race and activism that have been taking place on campus this year, LALSI’S course on NYC in Latino literature and film, taught by Prof. Cruz-Malavé, and Geographies of Power/Justice, taught by Prof. Vich, hosted a conversation with filmmaker Iris Morales, a former member of the Young Lords and director of the 1996 documentary film ¡Palante, Siempre Palante!: The Young Lords.

Ranging broadly, Ms. Morales discussed with students the goals, ideology and political practices of this New York Puerto Rican/Latino activist group that modeled itself after the Black Panthers and the anti-colonial struggles in the then-called third-world and which spanned the period from 1969 to 1976. Although the Young Lords were active for a brief period, they had a profound effect on the city of New York. Made up mostly of young multi-racial inner-city youth, their site-specific interventions, or what has been called their ‘street theater,’ in several of NY’s Latino neighborhoods, succeeded in important ways, from founding a lead-paint testing program that resulted in the banning of lead paint from buildings in the city to establishing the first in-patient drug and rehabilitation program for the working poor in New York and orchestrating the takeover that culminated in the construction of a new Lincoln Hospital in the South Bronx. Yet the Young Lords greatest achievement, as the scholar Darrel Enck-Wanzser argues, “should not be measured by such [an] instrumentalist standard.” They also “constituted...a fundamental political consciousness [among residents] in El Barrio that offered [them] a social imaginary through which an active political life could be led” (Darrel Enck-Wanzser, “Introduction: Toward Understanding the Young Lords,” The Young Lords: A Reader, ed. Darrel Enck-Wanzser [New York: New York University Press, 2010], 4) ushering in, as Frances Negron-Muntaner’s has argued, a new modern Latino political subject with a new consciousness (“The Look of Sovereignty: Style and Politics in the Young Lords” [Centro Journal XXVII, 1 [Spring 2015]). In her talk, Ms. Morales gave students a view not only of the goals and political practices of the Young Lords but also of the challenges they faced as they attempted to radically transform society and themselves. One area in which the activism of the Lords faced great challenges and inspired great changes among its members was, according to Ms. Morales, the area of gender. The women’s caucus of the organization was responsible for getting the organization to adopt as one of the main points of its 13-point program, the struggle against machismo and for gender equity. In her inspiring talk, Ms. Morales who is a lawyer, filmmaker, and an educational advocate, reminded students of the power that all young people have to transform society when they set their minds and their creative force to it.

Event Photos: Rossy Fernandez
Spanish Musical Dislocations

Spanish Musical Dis-locations explored the construction of Spanish modernity through exile and emigration. Intertwining music, photography and narration, it fused voices and images of Spaniards in the United States with pieces by three displaced composers, Boccherini, Gerhard, and Lorca, whose works deconstruct notions of Spanish nationality and identity. It was conceived and directed by Prof. Rafael Lamas based on research for his latest book, Escuchar e interpretar: Ostracismos musicales en los albores de la conciencia moderna española, and with the participation of Prof. Alberto Medina from Columbia University as master of ceremonies.

Alberto Medina
Rafael Villares, a visiting visual artist from Cuba, spent the week of February 8th at Fordham. He spoke with students about his work at Professor JoAnna Isaak’s Art and Ecology class on Tuesday, and capped off the week with a well-attended presentation at Flom Auditorium in Walsh Library on Friday, February 12th.

Villares, born 1989 in Havana, is a graduate of Cuba’s oldest and most prestigious art school, Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes “San Alejandro” and completed his graduate work at the Instituto Superior de Arte in Havana. His main body of work includes site-specific installations that invite viewers to participate in the artwork, and often concern the relationship of human beings to their environment. For many city dwellers, the plants they tend in clay pots on a windowsill provide their closest contact with nature. To take this quotidian and intimate experience and move it into the public urban sphere, he created “Moving Landscape,” in 2012. He planted a giant pot with a ficus tree and set a bench at the tree’s base, and then suspended the pot from a crane. People walking along Havana’s famous seawall, the Malecón, could climb up to sit on the bench, and from there, experience the city from a new place. The pot was moved to two other sites in the city, offering different perspectives on the urban sphere. About the work, Villares said, “art can change your reality.”

Villares connects his work to a long tradition of art about the landscape, a constant theme in Cuban painting. But instead of beginning with a canvas, he begins, he said, with the question, “how do we redefine the notion of landscape?” He described a recent work, “Chromatic Storm,” as beginning with his desire to capture the experience of a tropical storm. Installed in the poor community of Casa Blanca, across the harbor from Havana, the work is a small open room outdoors. Viewers are invited to enter as colored water rains down from the ceiling, and every five days the water is replaced with new water of a different color. In another work just exhibited in Portland, Oregon, he installed the root system of an uprooted tree from local woods to make a base. Into the tree base, he installed a photographic image of a night landscape of Havana where a fork of lightning strikes a building. But the shape of the lightning was manipulated to create the shape of the Mississippi River and its tributaries. In making this work, Villares wanted to underscore the parallels seen in nature, as the forks of lightning resonate with the root system of the tree, and on a metaphoric level, to connect Cuban culture, symbolized by the uprooted tree, to the diasporic flows of its peoples.

Some of the students in the audience had already met Villares during visits to his studio in Havana, either during the 2015 study tour on Contemporary Cuban Culture led by Professor Cruz-Malavé (Modern Languages and Literature) in March of 2015, or in the March, 2013 study tour on Art and Architecture of Havana, led by Professors Mundy (Art History) and Benavides (Sociology and Anthropology). The studio visit was one of the highlights of these Havana courses. Villares’ visit to Fordham was made possible by support from LALS, the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, and the Department of Art History and Music.
“Villares connects his work to a long tradition of art about the landscape, a constant theme in Cuban painting. But instead of beginning with a canvas, he begins, he said, with the question, ‘how do we redefine the notion of landscape’?”
WHOSE DEBT? The Puerto Rican Financial Crisis in Historical Context

ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2015, LALSI hosted a discussion with three distinguished Latino writers and journalists, Puerto Rican New Yorkers all three of them, on a subject of great interest to Latino New Yorkers which has been recently prominently displayed in the news in the United States and around the world: the financial crisis of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or in Spanish, Estado Libre Asociado, a territory of the United States since the Spanish-Cuban-American War of 1898. In a wide-ranging discussion, titled Whose Debt? The Puerto Rican Financial Crisis in Historical Context, introduced by Dr. Cruz-Malavé, director of LALSI and moderated by our distinguished adjunct instructor, the journalist and memoirist Luisita Lopez Torregrosa, the journalist, politician and filmmaker Nelson Denis, author of the best-selling The War against All Puerto Ricans, and acclaimed NY Daily News and Democracy Now! journalist Juan González, focused on the historical and political context of this crisis which is often overlooked in financial or economic discussions of this hotly debated topic.

Before a packed audience of faculty and students in the Plaza Atrium of Fordham’s Lincoln Center campus both Denis and González offered a broad outline of the historical and political circumstances that have led to the current Commonwealth government’s debt of $73 billion, which Gov. Alejandro García Padilla has claimed is “unpayable.” While acknowledging that the current state of this debt has massively increased since 2006, when the tax exemption status that the government of Puerto Rico granted to U.S. businesses as part of its development strategy was rescinded by the U.S. Congress, the journalists and authors traced the problems of Puerto Rico’s economy to its status as a “territory” or colony of the United States, or in Gonzalez’s words, “the most important colonial possession in this nation’s history.” During the first decades of U.S. occupation and direct colonial rule of the island, Denis claimed, the agrarian economy of Puerto Rico, which was based on the exportation of coffee, was decimated and a new sugar-plantation economy was set up and controlled by a few U.S. companies. Massive levels of unemployment, displacement and poverty ensued and an exceptional state of security was put in place that targeted and persecuted people and organizations advocating independence and sovereignty, which is the subject of Denis’s best-selling book, War against All Puerto Ricans. Lack of sovereignty and control over the island’s economic policy has since been a great hindrance to the development of the Puerto Rican economy, González maintained. Early in the twentieth century, in 1917, the U.S. Congress formalized its relationship to Puerto Rico through the Jones Act, which granted previously stateless Puerto Ricans U.S. citizenship and established as well a law that required all goods transported to and from the island to use U.S.-constructed, U.S.-flagged and U.S.-manned ships. Thus while most of the world uses cheaper freighters to transport their products, Puerto Rico, a poor country, is obliged to spend $567 million a year in extra costs to transport its goods, González and Denis explained. Even plantains which are imported from the neighboring island of Hispaniola must first be transported to farther-off Florida where they are then reloaded onto American ships.

The havoc that the lack of control over economic policy has wreaked on the Puerto Rican economy is perhaps most evident, González asserts, in the Commonwealth’s attempt to find a solution to the current financial crisis by filing for bankruptcy in order to restructure its debt. But because Puerto Rico is neither a state of the Union nor an independent country, and Republicans in Congress attached a provision to a 1984 law in order to exclude “territories” from bankruptcy law, Puerto Rico cannot avail itself of either national or international remedies. Currently, a suit brought by the journalists and authors traced the problems of Puerto Rico’s economy to its status as a ‘territory’ or colony of the United States, or in Gonzalez’s words, ‘the most important colonial possession in this nation’s history’.
by the Commonwealth to force the Congress to allow the island to file for bankruptcy is making its way to the Supreme Court. It addresses the status of the island, arguing that the island has been a self-governing body or, as its Spanish title claims, a estado libre asociado or “freely associated state,” ratified by Congress and confirmed by the United Nations in 1952. The U.S. Office of the Solicitor General has countered however that, as a “territory,” the sovereignty of Puerto Rico continues to reside not with the people of Puerto Rico but with the Congress of the United States, which can act as it deems appropriate without consultation.

In the meantime, while this suit works its way through the courts, political figures from the Puerto Rican diaspora, such as Representatives Nydia Velázquez of New York and Luis Gutiérrez of Chicago, have been meeting in places like Orlando, Florida to strategize to force Congress to provide assistance to Puerto Rico and allow it to file for bankruptcy. The choice of Orlando is not fortuitous. Diasporic Puerto Ricans, who now account for more than half of all Puerto Ricans, will be a decisive voting bloc in the presidential elections, especially in so-called swing states like Florida, where the Latino vote which was controlled by Republicans is now trending democratic in part with the help of Puerto Ricans. Asked by our students if they were hopeful that Puerto Rico would be able to gain some measure of control over its political and economic future, González and Denis reiterated both that, although the economic conditions in the island are dire and bound to get worse as younger Puerto Ricans migrate to the continental U.S. in search of jobs, they are hopeful that the current crisis also offers, in Gonzalez’s words, “the best opportunity in decades to finally get Congress and the American people to address the question of what to do about Puerto Rico, not just in the next few months, but to resolve once and for all the issue of the island’s status. Puerto Rico is, after all, the largest overseas territory still under the sovereign control of the United States.”
LALSI hosted a Salsa Workshop for Beginners at Fordham’s Lincoln Center campus for students faculty and staff. The exciting event was taught by acclaimed dancers Nélida Tirado and Eddie Torres, Jr.

**Nélida Tirado** is one of the most acclaimed and compelling contemporary practitioners of Flamenco and Afro-Latin dance. A native of the Bronx, she has performed with Riverdance, the Buena Vista Social Club, Franco Zefferelli’s Carmen at the Metropolitan Opera, and most recently in her own show, Dime Quién Soy at Joe’s Pub. She has taught at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

**Eddie Torres, Jr.** is the accomplished son of Afro-Latin Dance master Eddie Torres and Nélida Tirado. He has performed with legendary salsa artists Tito Rojas, Víctor Manuelle, and José Alberto “El Canario” at Manhattan Center and Lincoln Center, and with Wynton Marsalis at Harvard University.
On April 18, 2016, LALSI produced its second VISION DAY for Bronx middle schoolers from IS 318 School for Mathematics, Science & Technology through the Arts. Members of the Fordham faculty shared their personal stories at the Law School’s Moot Courtroom about overcoming significant challenges and circumstances to excel in life and college. At this year’s Vision Day, faculty and staff encouraged the students from IS 318 with a message that, no matter the circumstances, they, too, could overcome, excel, and go to college. Participating faculty and staff included Dr. Aimee Cox, Dr. Christina Greer, Dr. Lisa Gill, Emilio Estela, Juan Carlos Matos, Joel De Andrade Ledesma, and Dean Robert Grimes, SJ.

View a short video about the event at Fordham’s Youtube Channel: youtube.com/FordhamUniversity

Photos: Miguel Gallardo for Inside Fordham
Distinguished Cuban Scholar Tomas Fernandez Robaina visited Sara Lehman’s class Latin American Themes in November as part of the Lecture Series in honor of Chris Shemidt-Nowara (1966-2015). Tomas is a researcher at the Biblioteca Nacional Jose Martí, professor at the Universidad de la Habana, and a member of the Cuban National Committee on Slave Routes. He is also the author of many books and articles on race in Cuba, among them Blacks in Cuba 1902-1958: Notes on the History of the Struggle against Racial Discrimination. His most recent work focuses on Afro-Cuban religious studies and bibliographies.

During the visit, Tomas spoke to the class of Spanish and LALSI majors on topics as varied as race, Afro-Cuban religious practices, university life in Cuba, and gender roles. Afterward, he and the class shared a Mexican meal and continued the conversation.
During fall 2015 Prof. Cruz-Malavé (Modern Languages and Literatures) published “Between Irony and Belief: The Queer Diasporic Underground Aesthetics of José Rodríguez-Soltero and Mario Montez.” in GLQ 21, 4 (Fall 2015), an article on transnationalism in the work of the New York Puerto Rican author Manuel Ramos Otero “Transnationalism and Manuel Ramos Otero’s ‘Traveling Theater’ of Return,” Rasalblaj Caribéen, and a book review in a special Caribbean issue of e-misférica, the electronic journal of the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics at NYU, “In Visible Movement: Nuyorican Poetry from the Sixties to Slam by Urayoán Noel,” Caribéen. He delivered a lectura at Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, and papers at the Latin American Studies Association Convention in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and at the Coloquio sobre el transnacionalismo en las comunidades latinas de los EE. UU. at Casa de las Américas in Havana, Cuba. He also participated in panels at NYU and the Bronx Museum of the Arts.

Dr. Sara Lehman (Modern Languages and Literatures) published a book review, “Evelina Guzauskyte, Christopher Columbus’ Naming in the ‘Diarios’ of the Four Voyages: A Discourse of Negotiation” in the Revista Canadiense de EstudiosHispanicos in the fall. In January, she delivered her talk “The Parián and the Pirata: Transpacific Commerce in Two Mexican Picaresque Novels” at the convention of the Modern Language Association in Austin. She taught a new Latin American Themes course in the fall and a new course on Hispanic legends in the Spring. Her summer will be spent working with Fordham undergraduate research assistant Caroline Deakin on a new project about the Spanish treasure fleets, and traveling to Bruges for the Sixteenth Century Society Conference.

In addition to his upcoming sabbatical, Dr. O. Hugo Benavides has been organizing a panel abroad and collaborating with various universities and schools. Currently, he is organizing a panel for the conference, Teoría arqueológica de America del Sur (TAAS VIII), “El rol del otro en la constitución del sujeto histórico latinoamericano: La pluralista y subversiva producción de identidades y discursos,” in La Paz, Bolivia in May 2016. He was previously a panelist at TAAS VII conference in San Felipe, Chile in October 2014. In October 2015, Dr. Benavides led a week-long seminar, “Género y Teoría Queer,” for faculty in Ecuador’s Jesuit University, Universidad Católica. Dr. Benavides is also working on a project to explore and compare the Irish and the Mexican experience in New York City. This is a tri-national project with faculty and undergraduate students from Fordham University, Maynooth University in Ireland (Profs. Lawrence Taylor and Mark Maguire) and Puebla Iberoamericana University in Mexico (Profs. Marcela Ibarra and Olivia Quiroz). The research project focuses on exploring and comparing the respective immigrant...
experience of recent (late 20th-early 21st century) Irish and Puebla Mexicans in NYC. The hope is to launch this project by Spring 2017.

Aside from collaborating with universities, Dr. Benavides has been working with Soundview Academy for Culture and Scholarship, a junior high school in the Bronx. Up to now this has included mentoring students, having them attend athletic games and plays at Fordham University, as well as, taking the students to visit New York City’s Metropolitan museum and Brooklyn museums (with Dr. Benavides as their guide).

From October 7-9, Professor Cynthia Vich (Modern Languages and Literatures) attended the “VII Congreso Internacional de Peruanistas” held at the University of Poitiers in France. Prof. Vich presented the paper “Pacto de conveniencia: performatividad y nación en el film Octubre de Daniel y Diego Vega”, and chaired the panel on “Iconografía, medios audiovisuales y globalización”. Her paper discussed the different models of nation building presented in this Peruvian film released in 2010.

On October 24 Prof. Cynthia Vich took all students in her “SPAN 3710: Contemporary Latin American Fiction” course to see the play “La caída de Rafael Trujillo” performed by Teatro Círculo, a NYC-based Latino theater group. The play presented the downfall of Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo, a subject that was addressed in Prof. Vich’s course in relation to the discussion of the novel Papi by Dominican author Rita Indiana.

In the Fall of 2015, the book Escritura e imagen en Hispanoamérica. De la crónica ilustrada al cómic published by the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, was published in Lima. Prof. Cynthia Vich’s contribution to this book was the article “De cartografías, alegorías y testimonios gráficos. Ciudad de Payasos de Daniel Alarcón entre texto e imagen”.

In December 2015 Prof. Cynthia Vich was awarded a one year Faculty Fellowship for 2016-17 to work on her project Habitar la ciudad: sujeto y espacio urbano en el cine peruano contemporáneo.
Last fall in Professor Emilio Estela’s (Latin American and Latino Studies) Crime, Literature and Latino class, they had the privilege of welcoming two of the prominent voices in the New York Latino experience; the Honorable Judge Edwin Torres and Professor Ernesto Quinonez. Professor Estela led his class in lively discussions on two separate evenings and the authors shared from their experiences growing up in El Barrio, albeit in different decades, that spoke to both the evolution of that community and the ever changing diaspora of Puerto Ricans in New York.

Judge Torres, the author of “Carlito’s Way”, Q & A and After Hours enthralled the class with stories of his youth, from his years as the first Puerto Rican Assistant District Attorney, his time as a defense lawyer and from his many years on the bench. A much repeated phrase, “you can’t make this stuff up,” became a catch phrase for the class. Among the stories he shared one involved his father, a strict disciplinarian and steady figures not his life. He spoke of a time where he decided to join his buddies in a pool hall where his father happened to walk by and spot the young Edwin inside. He tapped on the window and called his son out and without embarrassing him let him know that he was to finish his game and get home. The judge never set foot in the pool hall again. The judge did stand as witness to many extraordinary stories and recounted many to the delight of the class.

Professor Quinonez’s remarks were less personal but equally moving. He shared the art of character development and story telling. The students had an opportunity to explore the lives of Willie Bodega, Sapo and Blanca, the principal characters of Bodega Dreams, a novel that explores the gentrification of El Barrio in the late 70’s and the heart and soul of a compromised yet valiant character, Willie Bodega. While the professor’s remarks about his characters did not match the hope the students had for a happy ending of those very characters, he did make the students recognize that they are the heroes of their own stories.

Through the works of these authors the class examined the relationship between criminal law and Latino literature. They saw the interplay between law and morality, law and justice and how the authors viewed the criminal justice system. These two authors are among several prominent Latino authors examined in the course.

Professor Carl Fischer (Modern Languages & Literatures) has returned this spring after spending the fall in Chile on Faculty Fellowship to finalize the manuscript of his book, “Queering the Chilean Way: Cultures of Exceptionalism and Sexual Dissidence.” The book argues that the discourse of superior economic stability that Chile projects about itself abroad is primarily embodied in the form of idealized heterosexual subjects. In response, it proposes an alternative archive of Chilean literature, performance art, and film from 1965 to 2015 whose subjects model queer sexualities. These subjects critique and deconstruct the heterosexual bias, and exclusions, inherent to the rhetorics of exceptionalism propagated in Chile’s official circles. While in Chile, Carl researched and wrote a new chapter for the book covering the most recent period of Chilean cultural history, which has been marked by the two presidential terms of Michelle Bachelet, for whom Carl worked as a translator while living in Santiago a decade ago. This last chapter examines what happens when Chile’s official discourses of exceptionalism—promoted, until recently, in almost exclusively masculinist terms—are espoused by a woman: will her moderate feminist rhetoric lead to greater inclusiveness, or does the fact that she must still represent the interests of a bourgeois state and wealthy corporations augur more radical breaks with the system? The book is due out in late 2016 or early 2017 as part of Palgrave MacMillan’s “New Directions in Latin/o American Cultures” series.

Spring and Fall 2015 have been a busy time for Dr. Elizabeth Penry (History). In May 2015, Dr. Penry traveled to San Juan, Puerto Rico for the annual meeting of the Latin American Studies Association where she co-organized a panel with Dr. Juan Cobo.
Betancourt on religious confraternities in colonial Latin America, and gave a paper titled “Religious Practices and the Legitimization of Political Authority in the Early Modern Andes.” Dr. Penny and Dr. Cobo are editing a volume of essays on confraternities based on the papers given at the LASA conference. In July, Dr. Penny presented a paper co-authored with Dr. Thomas Abercrombie at the Council for European Studies Conference in Paris, titled “Regional Sovereignty and the Branding of Locality: Villalar de los Comuneros from Spanish Empire to the European Union.” In November, Dr. Penny traveled to Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee for an international symposium on “Rethinking Forced Resettlement in the Colonial Andes,” and presented a paper titled “Municipal Republics in the Iberian Atlantic World.” This symposium was the first event of a five-year, multi-disciplinary project reassessing forced resettlement of indigenous people in the 16th century.

For the six months, Professor Luisita Lopez Torregrosa (Latin American and Latino Studies) taught the Latinos & the Media seminar, and the Communication and Media Studies course International Communication. She published a cover piece on Puerto Rico in the New York Times Travel section and several columns and profiles on the Women in the World/New York Times website (including Carly Fiorina; Caitlyn Jenner; Cuban women’s rights; top TV female foreign correspondents; and Lucy Lawless of “Xena: Warrior Princess”). Torregrosa was a featured expert on a New York Times Journey tour of Cuba in December. She will be teaching International Communication this Spring.
Thank you,

SANDRA ARNOLD!

By Arnaldo Cruz-Malavé

The faculty and staff of the Latin American and Latino Studies Institute would like to express our gratitude as well as our sadness at bidding farewell to our much-loved, power-house administrative assistant, Ms. Sandra Arnold. We are also proud and thrilled to announce that Sandra, who holds a Fordham B.A. in History and is a graduate of our School of Professional and Continuing Studies, has won a graduate fellowship to study at Brown University where she will be pursuing an M.A. in Public Humanities. She will be the incoming Graduate Fellow for the Study of the Public History of Slavery at Brown University, a very competitive fellowship sponsored by Brown’s Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice and the John Nicholas Brown Center for Public Humanities and Cultural Heritage. A prestigious M.A. in Public Humanities from Brown will allow Sandra to expand the work that she began at Fordham, developing a national repository to document burial grounds of enslaved Americans in the United States. The work was awarded a Chairman’s grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and has been recognized by noted scholars and experts from the Smithsonian Institution, Yale’s Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Abolition, and Resistance, and the UNESCO’s Slavery and Remembrance Initiative.

Independent from Fordham, Sandra founded the nonprofit Periwinkle Initiative, a public humanities and education initiative dedicated to preserving cultural heritage associated with enslaved Americans. It will further enable her to realize her life work of educating the general public on historically significant issues, such as the need to memorialize enslaved Americans, as a way to heal and move beyond the impass of our contemporary racially polarized world, as a path to bringing about racial reconciliation and equity. As Sandra so eloquently wrote in her recent New York Times op-ed, “Our country should explore ways to preserve the public memory of enslaved Americans. Their overlooked lives are an inextricable part of the historical narrative of our country...They offer our contemporary society examples of resilience and humanity. Preserving their memory contributes to our own humanity.” Refusing to acknowledge such memory or forgetting it contributes on the other hand to our dehumanization.

At Fordham, and specifically in the Latin American and Latino Studies Institute, we have much for which to be thankful to Sandra. For the past 4 years Sandra has helped us to conceive and impeccably organize events and conferences that encouraged us to look at the Americas in a broad perspective. Conferences organized by Sandra, such as Women, Creativity, and the Memory of Slavery, which featured distinguished women artists and scholars discussing the representation of slavery by women artists of African descent throughout the Americas, as part of the United Nations’ International Day of Remembrance, have focused on our mutual indebtedness and the historical and affective bonds of resilience that bind us as Americans, Latin Americans and people of African descent. This commitment to our mutual interconnectedness is most palpable in her continued organization of a visit to campus by the mostly Latino, African and African American students of Middle School IS 318 in our immediate neighborhood of the Bronx that has given these students the opportunity to engage in an intellectually spirited and inspirational conversation with Fordham African American and Latino professors about the challenges of envisioning themselves as attending college.

In the current climate of discussions about race, racism, and the necessity to diversify Fordham’s campus Sandra has been an indefatigable supporter of the African American student group at Lincoln Center, the Black Student Alliance. And she has been a crucially important mentor for the Latina student workers in our program. As director of LALSI, I consider Sandra my right-hand assistant at Lincoln Center and one of my main interlocutors as I reflect not only on the future of the program but on its day-to-day workings, on our shared daily experience of working at Fordham and interacting with our environment not only as professionals or workers but as people. For this I am most grateful and, though joyful about Sandra’s brilliant prospects, most saddened to see her leave and can only respond by using the same term that she has so often used to refer to me in her blend of Tennessee and Nuyorican Spanish. Hermana, you will be sorely missed!
CONGRATULATIONS
CLASS OF 2016!

Cynthia Caceres, FCLC
Diana Velasquez, FCRH
Edenized Perez, FCLC
Edilenia Rojas, FCRH
Georgina Owolabi, FCLC
Jessica Uruchima, FCLC
Kathryn Hul seamless, FCRH
Katrina Gomez, FCLC
Nicole Batkis, FCRH
Nuwani Irizarry, FCLC
Wicksie Tu, FCRH