Director’s Note

LASC Panel Brings the Immigration Debate to Campus

UMD Faculty Travel to Brazil

“Latinia, UMD”

Faculty and Visiting Scholar

Student Research

Courses and Study Abroad

Events Fall ‘11
Immigration is the theme of our fall 2011 newsletter. The artwork on the cover is by Aurora Cólon, a student in our LASC Certificate Program who is majoring in graphic design. If you’ve noticed that LASC has a more professional “look” these days, it’s thanks to Aurora who is working with us this year as she builds her portfolio.

To celebrate Latino/a History Month, LASC and the Center for the History of the New America sponsored a forum on the Maryland Dream Act. You can read about the Dream Act and our forum in this issue’s article by LASC Newsletter editor Enrique Rivera. The forum was exceptionally well-attended. This is an issue our community cares a lot about.

Many people asked me why the forum did not include speakers who oppose giving educational opportunities to undocumented high school graduates. Those questions came from people who wanted a vigorous debate. I shared that desire. But I was wary of giving over the podium to representatives of groups that veer at times toward one-sided, racist depictions of immigrants and Latino/as. Providing a platform for those views would have been doubly inappropriate during Latino/a History Month, which is after all a time to celebrate the contributions of all Latino/as—immigrant and non-immigrant, citizen and non-citizen, documented and undocumented. I fully support the right of groups opposing the Dream Act to express themselves, and I expect there will be other fora on our campus in which they will do so. I do not feel obliged to provide that forum through LASC. The vast majority of LASC faculty and students support the Dream Act. Many wish legislators would go further in providing educational opportunities for all. They see education as valuable to individuals and society as a whole, and feel that access to education should not depend on citizenship or immigration status.

The speakers invited gave us the perspectives of the legislator, the community activist, the policy expert, and the student. By inviting different constituencies supporting immigrant rights, we were able to have a frank discussion about the roots of anti-immigrant politics and the strategies for rebuffing them. Are anti-immigrant politics homegrown or are they being used instrumentally by right-wing groups with other agendas? What role do fear and economic insecurity play? What about ignorance of laws like the Dream Act or of how our immigration system functions? How does lack of exposure to immigrants influence popular opinion?

For me personally, it was refreshing to hear these issues being honestly discussed. It reminded me of what is lost in discussions organized only around “pros” and “cons.” Having to defend a position in such a context can lead to staid talking points and impoverished debate. I walked away from the LASC forum greatly satisfied that I had heard something new rather than recycled rhetoric. We are quite pleased with this issue of our newsletter and hope you enjoy it.
Amidst chaos, jubilation, and outrage in Alabama over that state’s controversial anti-immigration law, immigration experts gathered at UMD to discuss what many think is a pro-immigration law—the Maryland Dream Act. This measure allows undocumented students access—with some provisions—to pay in-state tuition at any public university in the state of Maryland.

“I have to represent the people of the State of Maryland. And these high school students graduate from the state of Maryland,” said Maryland State Senator Victor Ramirez, author of the Maryland Dream Act.

Senator Ramirez was one of four panelists who, on October 4, expressed their views in the Prince George’s Room at the Stamp Student Union, in front of an audience of over 150 students, staff, faculty, and community members. The panel was part of UMD and LASC’s celebration of Latino Heritage Month and co-sponsored by The Center for the History of the New America. In addition to Senator Ramirez, the panel featured Kim Propeack, Political Director of CASA de Maryland, one of Maryland’s largest organizations that service the Latino community; Roberto Juárez of the Maryland Dream Youth Committee, an organization dedicated to creating space for undocumented youth to advocate on their own behalf for education reform; and Mary Giovagnoli, Director of the Immigration Policy Center at the American Immigration Council, a Washington, D.C.-based think tank that works on immigration related issues.

College of Arts and Humanities Dean Bonnie Thornton Dill opened the evening’s event expressing her concerns that education has been losing its mission and purpose as a critical tool to preserve and promote democracy, “In the same way that the Truman commission raised the issue of equality of access to higher education based on economic discrimination, the Dream Act raises the issue about access to higher education based on citizenship status.” LASC Director and History Department Associate Professor Karin Rosemblatt followed the Dean, sharing some intimate words with the audience.

“I am also a Latina and an immigrant. My parents came to the United States to study. My grandparents were also migrants who moved to gain economic opportunity. Their parents were immigrants as well, who left Eastern Europe to escape religious persecution.”

In an effort to support undocumented immigrant students, the Maryland Dream Act passed through Maryland’s House and Senate and was signed into law by Governor Martin O’Malley in May 2011. The Maryland Dream Act is one of 11 similar measures taken by states across the country to allow in-state tuition to undocumented students.
Opponents of the Maryland Dream Act collected enough signatures to force a statewide referendum on the Act scheduled for November 2012, suspending the law until the electorate votes on it next year.

“We’re going to win the referendum,” said Propeak. “This is important to emphasize because if you look at the newspaper, especially the editorial section of the newspaper you’ll be led to believe that we live in a racist country. . . Most people in Maryland are pretty good people,” she added.

The Maryland Dream Act states that an undocumented student can receive in-state tuition if she or he has attended high school in Maryland for two years and has a high school degree or equivalent in the state of Maryland, if they attended community college, and if the student or a parent can prove that Maryland income tax was withheld the year before high school graduation or its equivalent, among other qualifications.

Laws such as the Maryland Dream Act have angered many who argue that they are concessions to people whose very presence in the US makes them criminals. Others who oppose the Dream Act have claimed that these students will be taking the places of residents who are more deserving.

“They do really well in generating fear,” said Juárez, who graduated from UMD in 2007 with a B.A. in Government and Politics.

“The anti-immigrant movement continually relies on misinformation,” said Giovagnoli.

However, some opponents of the bill say it does not go far enough.

“Putting in the requirement that they have to go to community college first—in the Senate or the legislature, was there a discussion that this was discrimination?” asked UMD History Department Professor Sonya Michel. This stipulation among others, including a high school GPA requirement and perhaps most controversial—that students must register in case of a military draft—has frustrated many who had high hopes for the Maryland Dream Act.

“Unfortunately I’m one of 47 state senators and 141 state representatives. It’s not a perfect bill. This was the most reasonable. And I think it’s reasonable,” said Senator Ramirez.

Despite criticisms of the Maryland Dream Act and others like it around the country, some of which were expressed at this event, the mood in the room was generally optimistic.
As we work towards the completion of the umbrella Memo of Understanding, UFBA’s Director of International Programs Livio Sansone and Professor of History João José Reis have committed themselves to working with UMD on some specific areas of exchange. One of the most promising areas of shared interests includes a conference about the intersections of African Diaspora studies and the digital humanities. The work surrounding UFBA’s Museu Digital da Memória Afro–Brasileira (Digital Museum of Afro-Brazilian Memory) offers some especially exciting opportunities to explore the theoretical, practical, and technical challenges of the digital turn in Diaspora studies and display. UMD has much to offer in this regard, such as Nunes’ work on “The Harlem Renaissance in Second Life,” my current book project on a spatial history of freedom in Brazilian slave society, and the ongoing efforts led by Rosemblatt and Berlin to enhance the public programming connections between the LASC, the Center for the History of the New America, and the Smithsonian Institution.

Other areas of near-term collaboration include a virtual workshop on the comparative study of slavery and emancipation, and a Terp presence at the next Fábrica das Idéias, an annual research symposium hosted by CEAO since 2002 that centers upon the promise and problems of critical scholarship concerning race and ethnicity, especially along a South-South axis.

Stay tuned for more details.
“Latinia, UMD”

Salvadoran-Ethiopian, Honduran-Iranian, Mexican-Puerto Rican. They are what Prof. Ana Patricia Rodríguez calls the children of “Latinia.”

“We’re trying to understand the mixing that occurs here in D.C . . . . We’re trying to understand UMD,” says Rodríguez.

In an effort to discern the diverse experiences on UMD’s campus, students in Rodríguez’s U.S. Latina/o Studies II course worked in teams to construct a common narrative. The theme of this narrative would be their “mixed” conditions, which was to be presented as a form of art. The students used film, multimedia, and live performance to articulate these stories during a live show in front of over one hundred UMD students, staff, faculty, and visitors from across the state of Maryland.

“Latinia, UMD” took place on May 5, 2011 in Tawes Ulrich Recital Hall. “I told the students we want to take back Cinco de Mayo,” Rodriguez says with a smile. The program was sponsored by LASC along with the U.S. Latina/o Studies Program, the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, Multicultural Involvement and Community Advocacy, and La Unidad Latina Lambda Upsilon Lambda, Fraternity, Inc., Phi Chapter.

The term “Latinia” is the brainchild of Washington, D.C. based poet and activist Quique Avilés. In his play, “The Children of Latinia,” Aviles performs the stories of what he calls “mixeados,” the Central American/Caribbean/ Middle Eastern/African children who are the products of a globalized world of migrants. One of the epicenters of this global migration, and its biological byproducts, is Washington, D.C.

“Students know there are a lot of [different] Latinos, but they don’t know why—but they want to know,” affirms Rodríguez. Students’ desire to understand how and why Latinos migrate to the U.S. was the foundation from which the Latinia UMD project flourished.

Rodríguez’s students broke up into several groups to work on personal projects within the framework of Latinia. Avilés then conducted four workshops in class to help students develop their projects. Students were required to submit first drafts of their ideas, a final draft of their work, and a script for their final project. Students used camcorders and had access to innovative computer design programs.

Dozens of Latina/o elementary school students from Prince George’s county, many from low income homes, were on hand on May 5 to witness the product of this collaborative project. Rodríguez says that she hopes this event serves as “a larger outreach program” that shows young Latinas/os that college can be an option.

However, the elementary and college students weren’t the only ones to benefit from this project. “I really get to know the students and I learn a lot. I have fun,” says Rodríguez.
This fall, Prof. Perla M. Guerrero joined UMD as Assistant Professor in the Department of American Studies and a core faculty member of the U.S. Latina/o Studies Program. Guerrero received her PhD in American Studies and Ethnicity from the University of Southern California in 2010. Her research and teaching interests lie in approaches to the study of race and ethnicity and processes of racialization. As an interdisciplinary scholar, Guerrero's work is informed by historical methods and human geography as they pertain to Latina/o Studies, American Studies, comparative ethnic studies, and the U.S. South.

Last year, Guerrero was a Latino Smithsonian Postdoctoral Fellow and a Goldman Sachs Junior Fellow at the National Museum of American History. Guerrero's dissertation traced the arrival and racialization of Vietnamese and Cuban refugees and Latina/o immigrants in Arkansas. She is currently at work on a monograph tentatively titled Race, Labor, and Place: Asians and Latinas/os Remaking Arkansas. The book explores the development of Northwest Arkansas as a particular kind of place, one that in 1990 was overwhelmingly White, in some places up to 99 percent, and where the last twenty years has seen an influx of Asian and Latina/o immigrants. This semester, Guerrero is teaching “Special Topics in American Studies: Citizens, Refugees, and Immigrants.” In this course, students look at how those three categories are constructed legally and discursively, how they shape people’s lives and have material consequences, and how individuals and communities challenge, negotiate, or contribute to those designations. Next semester Guerrero will be teaching the “U.S. Latina/o Senior Seminar.”

Dr. Paola Ricaurte Quijano is a LASC Visiting Researcher on a research fellowship from Tecnológico de Monterrey, Mexico City campus and from Mexico’s Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología (National Council of Science and Technology). She is Professor-Investigator in the Department of Cultural Studies at the Tecnológico de Monterrey, Mexico City campus and, in association with CASA de Maryland, Ricaurte Quijano is developing an empirical research project on digital competences for social action and the improvement of the quality of life among working-class Latin American immigrants. Ricaurte Quijano received her PhD in Language Sciences in 2009 from the Instituto Nacional de Antropología in Mexico City. Her research interests include the impact of technology on social life through the empirical analysis of media environments and socio-cultural phenomena, such as cybercultures, e-politics, cyberactivism, and digital literacy. Her doctoral dissertation, “Migration, Memory and Signification” analyzes the construction and reconstruction of memory among Latin American immigrants in the United States. Ricaurte Quijano is a member of the Cátedra de la Sociedad de la Información y del Conocimiento (Research Group of the Information and Knowledge Society) at the Tecnológico de Monterrey and she is a member of the seminar Identidades, cambio social e Interculturalidad (Identity, Social Change and Interculturality) at the Centro de Investigaciones sobre América Latina y el Caribe. In 2010, she organized the First International Congress on Social Media, held in Mexico. Ricaurte Quijano also writes a collective blog for El Universal, a leading newspaper in Mexico (http://blogs.eluniversal.com.mx/virtualis/).
Brent Edwards is a fifth-year doctoral student in the International Education Policy program at the University of Maryland, where he studies the decentralization of education management in Central America, mainly in El Salvador. This year, Edwards is in El Salvador collecting data for his dissertation with the help of a Fulbright Research Scholarship. During his time there, from October 2011 to July 2012, Edwards will be based at the Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas in San Salvador. For his dissertation research, Edwards will focus generally on processes of education reform and specifically on the trajectory of the program Educación con Participación de la Comunidad (EDUCO), an education management decentralization program where communities, rather than the central ministry, have themselves managed their own schools through an elected five member council of parents. The history of this program is particularly important to understand not only because it has been at the center of education policy debates in El Salvador for nearly two decades, but also because it has been extremely influential with international agencies. Institutions like the World Bank have heavily promoted these types of decentralization programs in Central America and advertised the supposed success of EDUCO to promote similar reforms around the world. In studying EDUCO specifically, Edwards will focus both on its initial adoption in 1991, subsequent scaling up in 1996, and recent reform in 2011, as well as the effectiveness of this program at the local level.

Seven years ago, Brazil was still seen as possessing more potential as a global power than actual influence, but as President Obama remarked in Rio de Janeiro this March, it “is a country of the future no more . . . the future has arrived, it is here now.” I spent the past summer in Brazil, a country much changed since I moved away in 2004. As a Brazilian-American with significant personal investment there, I welcome its new prominence on the world stage and invite other students to take a closer look at the largest nation in South America. Indeed, Brazil’s ascendancy has impacted me in a number of ways, inspiring me to pursue a PhD in Latin American history next year with a focus on twentieth-century Brazil. I want to study Brazil because I want to understand the historical processes that have led it to where it is today. While I know that the march to economic and political stability has been a long, difficult slog, I am interested in understanding more about exactly how Brazil landed in the fortuitous position it now occupies. In the end I am drawn to studying Brazil because it is an endlessly intriguing place that I hope will be the land of the future—my future—for years to come.

Brandi Townsend received a Fulbright research fellowship from the Institute of International Education to conduct research in Santiago, Chile, from March to December of 2012. This research is for her dissertation, “Public Reckoning, Private Recovery: Gender, Memory, and Human Rights Struggles in Chile, 1973-2012.”

Prof. Ruth Enid Zambrana was awarded the 2011 Julian Samora Distinguished Career Award from the American Sociological Association (ASA). Her latest book was published this year, Latinos in American Society: Families and Communities in Transition (Cornell University Press, 2011).

Joshua Walker received The Institute of International Education Graduate Fellowship for International Study. He will be doing research in both Mexico City and Oaxaca from January to November 2012 for his dissertation titled “Faucets and Fertilizers: Interpreting Changing Technologies of Production in Oaxaca, Mexico, 1943-1982.”
Courses and Study Abroad

Winter Courses 2012

ENGL362 Caribbean Literature in English
HIST319X Special Topics in History: Cultural History of Latin America: Music, Movies and Revolution
SPAN222 Cultural Difference in Contemporary Latin America

Spring Courses 2012

LASC235 Issues in Latin American Studies II
0101(49378) I. Rodriguez-Santana
0201(49379) T. Guzman-Gonzalez

LASC235H Issues in Latin American Studies II
0101(49389) I. Rodriguez-Santana

LASC448I Special Topics in Latin American Studies: Latin American Caribbean Thought
0101(49399) J. Maffie

LASC448L Special Topics in Latin American Studies: Conservation and Indigenous People in Latin America; also offered as ANTH468L.
0101(49409) J. Chernela

Electives

ARTH389L Special Topics in Art History and Archaeology: Latin American and Latino Art since 1945
ARTH370 Latin American Art and Archaeology before 1500
CMLT277 Literatures of the Americas
ENGL362 Caribbean Literature in English
ENGL448A Literature by Women of Color: Caribbean Literature by Women
GEOG413 Migration: Latin America and the United States
HIST251 Latin American History II
HIST208B Historical Research and Methods Seminar: Women and Gender in Twentieth Century Latin America
HIST208V Historical Research and Methods Seminar: From Ellis Island to El Paso to Buenos Aires: Immigration in the Americas, 1850-2000

Graduate Courses 2012

ANTH688L Current Developments in Anthropology: Conservation and Indigenous People in Latin America

ARCH768 Seminar in Latin American Art and Archaeology
GEOG788M Selected Topics in Geography: Migration: Latin America and the United States

Study Abroad Winter 2011-2012

Chile: Chilean Literature, Democracy and Social Change -ARHU 319C, CMLT498, GVPT309F, HIST329N, or HONR349C for three (3) credits
1/2/2012 – 1/22/2012

Ecuador: Andean Spaces - Traversing the Colonial City and the Natural World -SPAN 448E: Special Topics in Latin American Cultures -Andean Spaces: Traversing the Colonial City and the Natural World for three (3) credits.
1/5/2012 – 1/22/2012

Mexico: Sexual and Gender Diversity
Movements in Mexico City -LGBT 398M Sexual and Gender Diversity Movements in Mexico City for three (3) credits.
1/1/2012 – 1/21/2012

Southern Caribbean: The Geography of the Southern Caribbean -GEOG 328B Geography of the Southern Caribbean for three (3) credits.
1/3/2012 – 1/22/2012

Costa Rica: Sustainable Tropical Ecosystems -PLSC489K Sustainable Tropical Ecosystems or HONR 379K Sustainable Tropical Ecosystems for three (3) credits.
1/8/2012 – 1/21/2012

Deadline Application: 11/1/2011*

HIST471 History of Brazil
HIST473 History of the Caribbean
HONR289D Honors Seminar: Bodies, Borders and Citizenship: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on American Immigration
PORT221 Introduction to Brazilian Literature
PORT399B Independent Study in Portuguese:
Colloquium: Brazilian Cinema
SPAN362 Latin American Literatures and Cultures II: From Independence to Nation Formation
SPAN363 Latin American Literatures and Cultures III: From Modernism to Neo-Liberalism
USLT202 US Latina/o Studies II: A Contemporary Overview 1960’s to present

HIST608J General Seminar: 20th Century Latin America
SPAN798W Open Seminar: Latin American Poetics from Romanticism to Modernity
Events Fall ‘11

September 21
• Café Break Series: “International Networks, Nuclear Energy and Nonproliferation in Latin America”, Isabella Alcañiz, Dept Government and Politics
  Location: Francis Scott Key 2120 (Merrill Room)
  Time: 3:00-5:00 pm

• LASC Faculty and Graduate Students Welcome Reception
  Location: 3107 Taliaferro Hall
  Time: 3:00-7:00 pm

October 4
• Hispanic Heritage Month: Forum on the DREAM Act and Education
  Panelists: State Senator Victor Ramirez; Kim Propeck, Political Director, Casa de Maryland; Roberto Juarez, Member, Maryland Dream Youth Committee, and Mary Giovagnoli, Director of the Immigration Policy Center at the American Immigration Council.
  Location: Prince George’s Room of the Stamp Student Union
  Time: 4:00-6:00 pm

October 14
• Conference: Washington Area Symposium on the History of Latin America (WASHLA)
  Location: 2110 Taliaferro Hall
  Time: 12:00-6:00 pm

October 19
• Café Break Series: “Searching for a Cure for Diseases of the Rubber Tree: Adventures in the Amazon”, Priscila Chaverri, Dept. of Plant Sciences and Landscape Architecture
  Location: Francis Scott Key 2120 (Merrill Room)
  Time: 3:30 pm-5:00 pm

October 26
• Undergraduate Open House
  Location: 3107 Taliaferro Hall
  Time: 5:00-7:00pm

October 31
• “The founding of the Inter-American Commission of Women: Havana, February 1928”
  Marysa Navarro, Charles Collis Professor of History Emeritus, Dartmouth College and Ana Lau Jaiven, Research Professor, Dept. of Politics and Culture, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Xochimilco, Mexico.
  Location: Francis Scott Key 2120 (Merrill Room)
  Time: 3:30 pm-5:00 pm

November 3-4
• Graduate Student Conference on Latin America and the Caribbean: Imagining Culture, Past and Present
  Location: Mckeldin Library, Special Events Room
  Time: 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

November 9
• Café Break Series: “Indigenous or Mestizo?: A Comparison of the Trajectories and Local Meanings of Two Andean Musical Genres in Bolivia and Peru.” Fernando Rios, Visiting Assistant Professor in Ethnomusicology
  Location: Francis Scott Key Hall 2120 (Merrill Room)
  Time: 3:30 pm– 5:00 pm

November 16
• “Contested Inclusion: Status, Movements, and Transformations of Nationalism”
  Matthias vom Hau, Assistant Professor, Institut Barcelona D’Estudis Internacionals, Barcelona, Spain
  Location: Francis Scott Key Hall 2120 (Merrill Room)
  Time: 12:00 pm– 2:00 pm
Support the Latin American Studies Center!

LASC provides a variety of courses on issues relevant to Latin America and the Caribbean in both English and Spanish, facilitates research on a diverse range of topics pertaining to the region, conducts outreach programs to US Latino/a communities, and holds several national and international conferences and symposia each year.

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