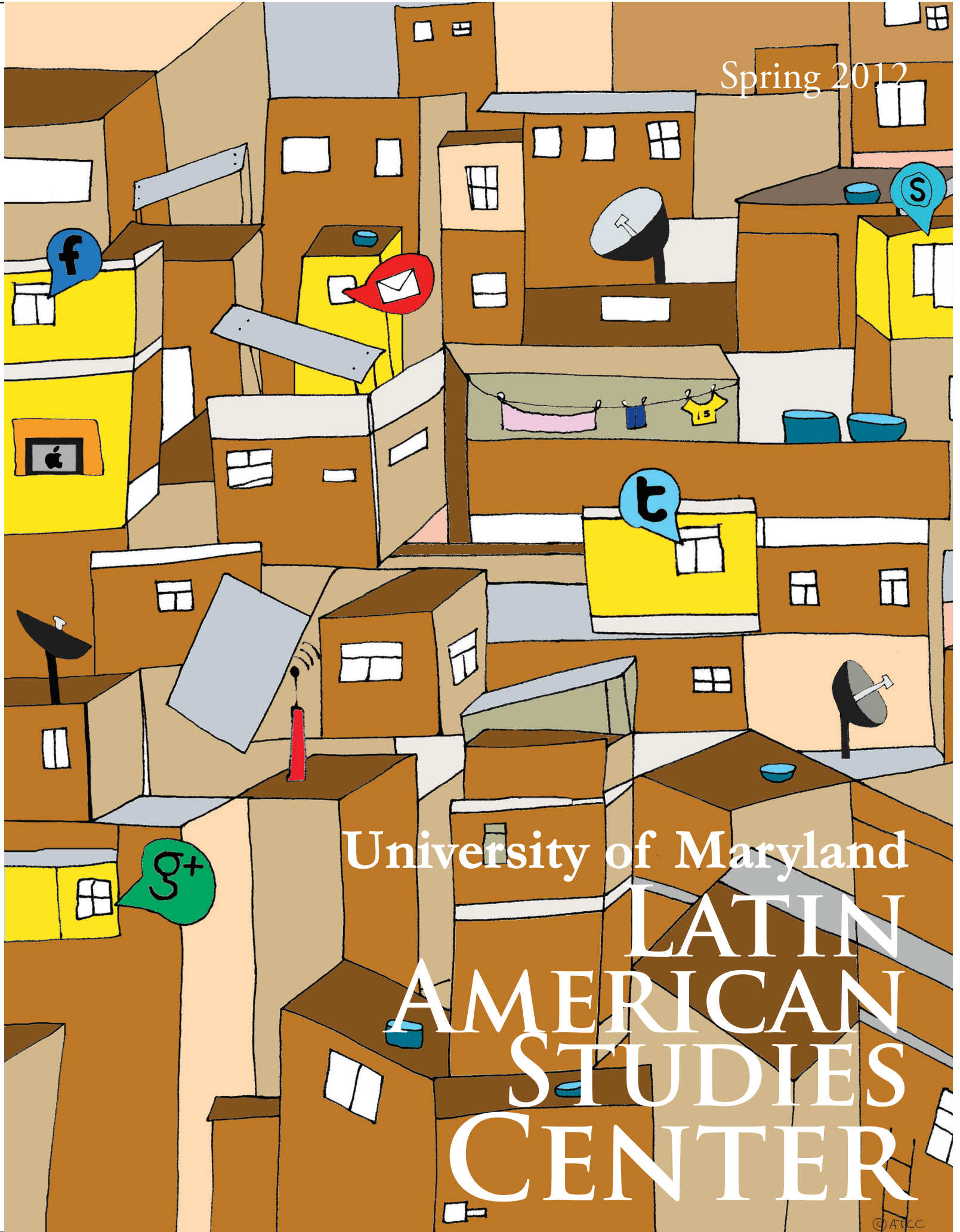


Spring 2012



University of Maryland
**LATIN
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CENTER**

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On the cover "*Casitas*" by Aurora Colón

Director's Note

by Prof. Karin Roseblatt

Since 1988, LASC has hosted fellows. Past fellows have included distinguished and more junior scholars such as Miguel León Portillo, Franklin Knight, Dennis Tedlock, Sergio Ramírez, Ramón Gutiérrez, and Meiko Nishida (For a full list, check our website). When I took over as LASC director in 2008, the program was underfunded, and we were unable to recruit more senior scholars. We turned a two-semester program into a more robustly funded one-semester program, and were able to bring Daniel Mato to our campus in Fall 2010.

This year, we are experimenting with a new format: short-term visiting scholars who are in residence between ten days and two weeks. We expect that this format will promote greater interaction between visiting scholars and the university campus at large. This spring, LASC hosted two visiting scholars. Carlos Pabón of the Universidad de Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras was here in February and, as I write this in mid-April, Juan Castillo Cocom of the Universidad Intercultural Maya de Quintana Roo has just left our campus. Each scholar gave a public lecture and a two-day workshop that was attended by our own faculty, faculty colleagues from area universities, community members, and our own graduate and undergraduate students, some of whom opted to receive one course credit for writing a short paper and attending events. Pabón also attended a graduate seminar as guest lecturer. Castillo Cocom participated in a lively debate with Professor Elizabeth Povinelli, an anthropologist from Columbia University who has worked with Native peoples in Australia as well as queer communities in New York City. The conversation between Castillo Cocom and Povinelli was co-sponsored by the LGBT Studies Program.

Professor Pabón explored questions of memory and trauma in the context of the repressive governments in Argentina, Chile, and Spain. By comparing societal reckoning with the military dictatorships in Argentina and Chile and the regime of Francisco Franco in Spain, Pabón was able to highlight important differences. In Argentina, where public discussion of traumatic events has been most complete, public and scholarly discussion has recognized the positions of the victims and has been able to take a critical distance from it; witness the debate surrounding the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo. In Spain, by contrast, the denial of the claims of the victims has led to a political polarization that recreates and reaffirms the divisions of the past.

Professor Castillo Cocom discussed his controversial concept of “ethnoexodus,” or the exit from temporary points of identity, as when a student at his university who is fluent in Yucatec Maya denies that she can speak it. Rather than label this as a lie or an example of self-hating, Castillo Cocom saw this as an example of a temporary vacating of an identity, stressing the multiplicity of identity, and the formation of identity within narratives. He placed this ethnoexodus within a history that has identified indigenous people, “indios,” or Mayas with pejorative terms. He also grounded his notion of ethnoexodus in the Maya notion of “*iknal*,” an atemporal and aspatial concept that connotes presence and absence of being in action.

LASC hopes to continue its visiting scholar program next year. We welcome your nominations.



UMD alum Amberly Ellis and two students from La Piedra show off their shoes



Young people in La Piedra learn computer basics from battery-powered laptops

Plugging in Without Electricity

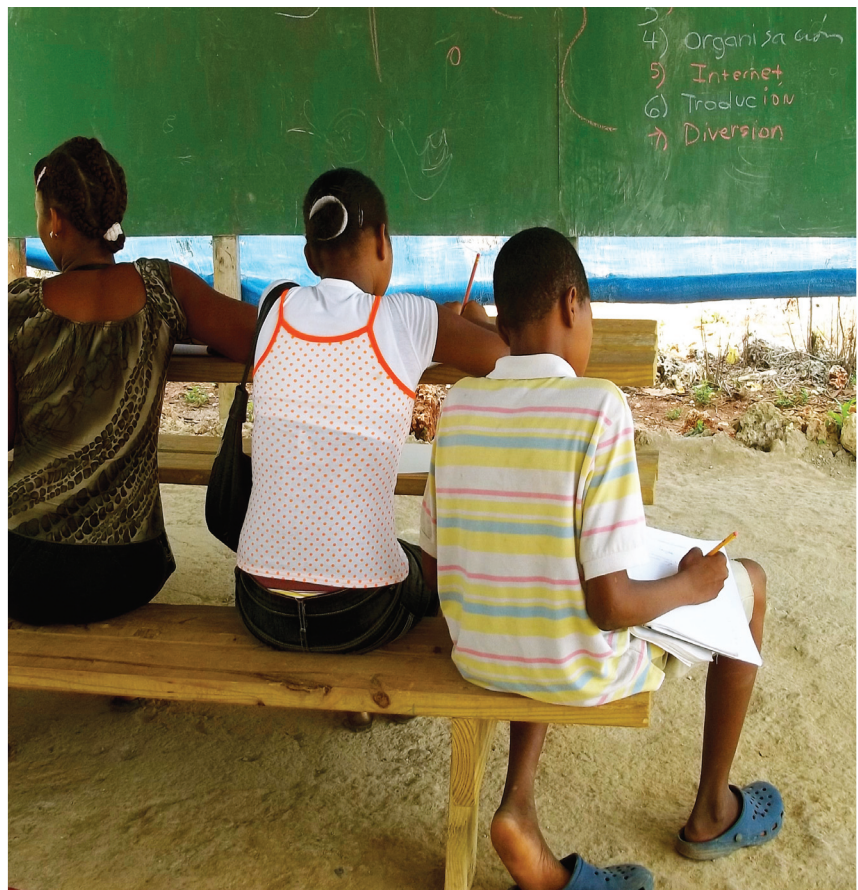
Digital Outreach in Latin America and the Caribbean

by Enrique Salvador Rivera

The digital divide between Latin America and the U.S. and Canada is vast. According to Internet World Stats, an organization that tracks internet use around the world, nearly 80 percent of North Americans are internet users, compared to 43 percent of South Americans, 33 percent of Central Americans, and just 29 percent of people in the Caribbean. On top of this, internet access at home is drastically lower in Latin America and available to few people, relative to the general population.

This gap is closing, however, according to the Council on Hemispheric Affairs which cite private and government initiatives across Latin America that have proven effective in raising the number of internet users in the region.

The Centro Cultural Guanín in the Dominican Republic is a non-profit dedicated to providing educational support to underprivileged youth in urban and rural communities. The center relies on local volunteers and help from international students to implement programs such as English courses, adult literacy, afterschool care, and computer literacy.



Students in La Piedra take notes on computer use

UMD graduate Amberly Ellis recently volunteered for the Centro Cultural Guanín and says this service had a profound impact on her. "It was an amazing experience," says Ellis who volunteered in La Piedra, a small rural town just outside of Santo Domingo.

Like many communities around the Dominican Republic, La Piedra has no running water or electricity. This has not deterred community members from seeking training in computer literacy. Using battery-powered laptops, Centro Cultural Guanín volunteers give lessons on how to operate a computer and instruct students on how to surf the web and use sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube.

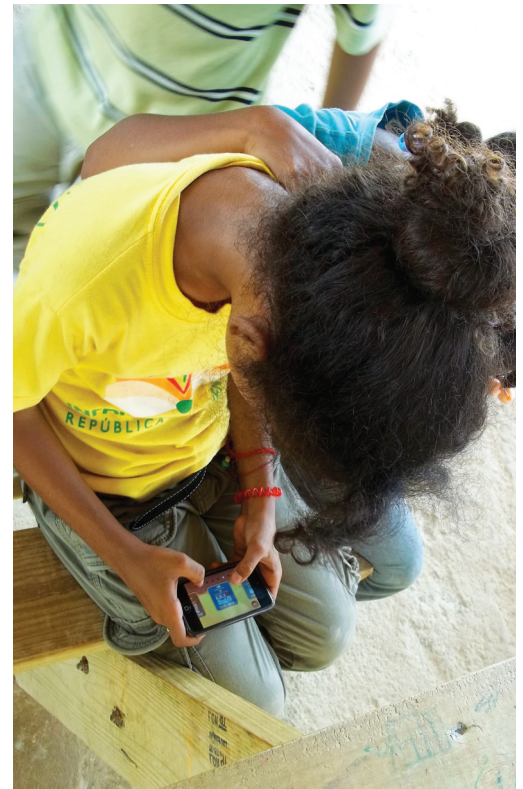
Efforts similar to these can be found throughout Latin America. "One laptop per child" programs have distributed nearly 2 million laptops to children in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay.

In another noteworthy achievement, UNESCO recently awarded Venezuela's Infocentro program its Prize for the Use of Information and Communication Technologies. Infocentro offers computer literacy courses and supplies free computer and internet access in 680 cyber centers across the country.

Telemedicine initiatives, such as the American Telemedicine Association's Latin America and Caribbean Chapter, have also been implemented across Latin America. Via the internet, doctors affiliated with organizations such as these provide medical expertise to patients in rural areas which lack access to health care.

Through technology, private institutions in collaboration with progressive government programs across the region are forging a digitalized world.

Special thanks to Amberly Ellis for providing the photos for this essay. To learn more about how to volunteer with Centro Cultural Guanín in the Dominican Republic, see: www.guanin.org



"It took them like two seconds to figure that out," says Ellis about her smartphone.



Taking a break from class and the sun



Mobile library at Centro Cultural Guanín's site in La Piedra

Digital Latinas/os in Maryland

by Enrique Salvador Rivera

In the largely Latino neighborhood of Langley Park, MD, LASC Visiting Researcher Paola Ricaurte is teaching immigrant women how to Skype. Ricaurte, who is Professor-Investigator at the Tecnológico de Monterrey, is researching how to best bridge the digital divide.

“One can connect and talk to your family and see them with a video, and it’s free,” Ricaurte emphasizes with a pitch. “We save money but we also get to see our family. . . I connect with my mom everyday and she’s far and she sees my kids every day,” Ricaurte adds.

Ricaurte’s students say they do not use the internet because they don’t have access or because they don’t know how. They do, however, want to learn.

Ricaurte applies the action-research method to her investigations, which is designed to leave a direct and positive impact on community members, solving specific problems they raise.

In class, students are learning how to download Skype and talk to loved ones in their home country. Ricaurte walks students through the basics of learning how to use the computer: how to turn it on, how to use CDs and USBs, and how to use the mouse and keyboard. But Ricaurte’s primary concern is to show students how to navigate the internet, using programs such as Google, Facebook, and Youtube, among others.

“The objective isn’t just the investigation, it’s that people get some benefit from it,” affirms Ricaurte.

Access to the internet is largely divided among ethnic and racial lines in the United States, and Latinos lag far behind all other groups. A recent study by the Pew Hispanic Research Center concluded that only 45 percent of Latinos had broadband access at home compared to 65 percent of whites and 52 percent of African-Americans. The percentages for internet access for Latinos gets lower with those who are foreign-born and even lower when their primary language is Spanish.

“Technological inequality is a form of inequality like education,” says Ricaurte.

To spread the digital revolution, Ricaurte has been working with three groups of Latina/o adults in the largely Latino neighborhoods of Langley Park, Maryland and Adams Morgan, Washington, D.C.

“Can you take English classes on the computer?” one student asks. Ricaurte shows students that the internet can help serve their needs in a comfortable and easy way. Through surveys and group discussions, Ricaurte has found that most Latino men want help finding a job or information on acquiring citizenship. Most women seek information on health related issues.

Ricaurte’s work in the Latino community has garnered interest from the University of Maryland, College Park, and from the Mexican government. In collaboration with the Mexican embassy in Washington and community organizations in the area, Ricaurte will also be incorporating the Plazas Comunitarias program into her sessions. Plazas Comunitarias is a program which originated in Mexico in order to give space to citizens who would like to learn how to read and write or earn certificates in elementary and high school education. In class, Ricaurte will provide technical support to students who wish to earn these certificates online. In collaboration with Ricaurte and through her courses on digital literacy, Mexico’s embassy in Washington is attempting to bring this program to Latin American immigrants in the Washington, D.C. area, free of charge and regardless of their country of origin.

Overall, Ricaurte’s goal is to have an economic, social, scientific, and technological impact on the community here. There is success “if they have incorporated internet use into their daily lives,” says Ricaurte.



Ricaurte gives computer lessons to a student

Chile's Student Movement Stalls. . . Or Does It?

by Jesse Zarley, PhD student in History

On a relatively quiet, hot Sunday in Santiago in early January, as I walked down Avenida Once de Septiembre, I noticed a handmade banner hanging from the walls of a school called Lastarria in the comuna of Providencia. The sign read “Lastarria en Toma (Lastarria is Occupied).”

Like millions of people around the world, I spent 2011 following the inspirational struggles for justice from Cairo to Tunis, from Madison to Santiago. I didn't know what to expect when I arrived in Chile: street battles between protesters and the *pacos* (cops)? Signs of defeat from a movement that had not won fundamental education reform? Instead, what I encountered on that day in January artfully illustrated the state of the Chilean reform movement: the calm doldrums of a vacation month marked by the stubborn, staccato persistence of the educational reform movement.

For most of 2011, secondary and university students and teachers have mobilized for drastic reforms of the Chilean education system. Beginning in April, students of the CONFECH (Chile's confederation of university students) went on strike to challenge the for-profit education system and to demand lower interest rates on their loans, free public transportation, and better scholarship programs. Students also called for free higher education.

The Pinochet dictatorship increased the expansion of private institutions of higher education. According to the Organization for Economic Coordination and Development (OECD), the lack of effective reforms to the education system from the post-authoritarian governing coalition, the Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia, has resulted in the fact that “at relative prices, higher education in Chile is the most expensive in the world.”

So far, only minor reforms have been implemented, but with his popularity rapidly dwindling, President Sebastian Piñera offered a \$4 billion scholarship fund for poorer families in July. Piñera also replaced his minister of education and initiated a round-table discussion strategy, but students have rejected these measures so far.

During the Chilean Winter, students conducted sit-ins, occupied their schools and universities, organized mass demonstrations that included

labor and indigenous rights movements, and temporarily occupied a television station to air their demands. By mid-June, some 100 schools were being occupied across Chile, 80 in Santiago alone. More than 100,000 filled the streets of the capitol on June 30 in what is estimated to be one of the largest protests since the fall of the eighteen-year Pinochet dictatorship in 1990.

Yet the movement seems not to have disappeared, despite the wishes of the Chilean government. The central issue of contention—the for-profit education system—remains completely intact. It would be deceptive, though, to be lulled by the relative calm of Santiago's summer. While students were on vacation, administrators and mayors were making plans to fire and punish students and teachers who occupied their schools. Despite this opposition to the protests, many occupations persist. To write off the movement at this point seems foolish.

Students and supporters hold a massive rally in Santiago





Isabella Alcañiz

Isabella Alcañiz is Assistant Professor in the Department of Government and Politics (beginning July 2012). For the past two years she has been a Postdoctoral Researcher and Visiting Professor at The Joseph Lauder Institute of Management and International Studies, University of Pennsylvania. Her research interests include globalization, energy and the environment, science and technology, and multilateral security in the developing world (with a focus on Latin America). Her work has been published in the *Latin American Research Review*, *Latin American Perspectives*, the *British Journal of Political Science*, and *World Politics*. She is currently working on a book manuscript in which she examines the role of skilled bureaucrats in advancing nuclear science and technology under nonproliferation conditions in Latin America. Alcañiz holds a Licenciatura degree in International Relations from the Universidad de Belgrano (Buenos Aires, Argentina) and a PhD in Political Science from Northwestern University.



Jóhanna Birnir

Jóhanna Birnir is Associate Professor in the Department of Government and Politics and the Research Director of the Center of International Development and Conflict Management. Her research is in the field of comparative politics. Birnir focuses on political developments in new democracies in Latin America and Eastern Europe. More specifically, she studies the effects of institutions on party system development and ethnic politics with a special emphasis on conflict and terrorism. Her book *Ethnicity and Electoral Politics* looks at peaceful and violent plural democracies and the role ethnicity plays in them. Her current projects examine the effects of violence on electoral behavior in Peru and the relationship between religion and violence. Birnir received her PhD in Political Science from the University of California, Los Angeles. She has published articles in *Party Politics*, *American Journal of Political Science*, and *Latin American Research Review*, among others.



Sergio Urzúa

Sergio Urzúa is Assistant Professor in the Department of Economics and the Maryland Population Research Center. Urzúa comes to UMD from posts at the Finance Ministry of Chile and Northwestern University. He specializes in applied micro-econometrics, labor economics, and development. Urzúa has written many articles on a wide array of topics such as lead exposure and its effects on academic achievement, the effects of long school days, schooling choices, occupational choice, labor market discrimination, and racial labor market gaps. His work has been published by the *American Economic Review*, *Journal of Econometrics*, and the *Journal of Labor Economics*, among others. Urzúa received his PhD in Economics in 2007 from the University of Chicago.

Prof. Janet Chermela (ANTH) had several articles published this year in *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, *Proceedings of the First Symposium on Teaching Indigenous Languages of Latin America*, *Climate Vulnerability and Adaptation: Marginal Peoples and Environments*, and in *The Anthropology of Extinctions: Essays on Culture and Species Death*, ed. Genese Marie Sodikoff.

LASC Certificate Junior Nathan Dize (FREN and ENGL) was awarded a Maryland Summer Scholar grant to work with Prof. Valérie Orlando (FREN) on research about Haitian author Marie Vieux-Chauvet.

LASC News and Awards

Prof. Roger Betancourt (ECON) has a forthcoming article in the *Cuban Affairs Journal* entitled “Why Cuba Remained a Colony While Latin America Became Independent: Implications for the Current “Transition.””



Mario Escobar

Mario Escobar is a first-year PhD student in Spanish and Portuguese. He is the author of *Gritos Interiores* (Cuzcatlan Press, 2005), a book of poems written in response to California Proposition 187. Born in El Salvador, Escobar is a former child soldier who came to the United States at age 12 and was raised in South Central and East Los Angeles. In 2006, he worked with legislative allies and the media to advocate for his particularly complex immigration case and earn asylum. In collaboration with CHIRLA, an organization dedicated to campaigning for immigrant rights in Los Angeles, Escobar participated in a two-week long fast in 2007 to demand immigration reform. For his commitment to improving education for inner city youth, Escobar has been recognized by the Los Angeles Board of Education, the California State Assembly, and the California State Senate. He has lectured on the trauma of child soldiers at the University of Santa Barbara, the University of Los Angeles, the University of Southern California, and Arizona State University. This semester, in collaboration with the LASC and the Jiménez-Porter Writers' House, Escobar directs a weekly workshop with students at Northwestern High School in Prince George's County. Students discuss culture, poetry, family, and education, and will complete the workshop by producing a journal of original work. Escobar holds a BA in Spanish Literature and Chicano Studies from UCLA and an MA in Spanish Literature from Arizona State University.



Aurora Colón

Aurora Colón has been pursuing a LASC certificate at UMD while working as LASC's graphic designer for the past year. This work has enabled her to see Latin America through the lens of visual communication, forcing her to familiarize herself with common stereotypes regarding the region and challenging her to engage them. Colón has learned alternative methods of visually interpreting diverse topics related to Latin America, learning that different people in Latin America hold different views and realizing that it is her job to interpret these ideas through her design. Colón says this has been an invaluable experience for her, not only as a Latin American graphic designer, but more generally, as a human being living in a globalized world. Colón will graduate from UMD in May with a BA in Studio Art and a Certificate in Latin American Studies. After graduation, she would like to work in a design studio or a firm that works with clients who understand the important role arts and humanities play today. Colón is grateful for the opportunities LASC has provided her and looks forward to continuing her relationship with LASC for many years to come.

Shawn Moura (HIST) was awarded a Fulbright-IIE Fellowship to conduct research in Brazil for his dissertation titled "Development Begins at Home: Women and the Domestic Economy in Brazil 1945-1975."

LASC Certificate Senior André Pagliarini (HIST) was admitted to the PhD program in History at Brown University.

LASC Certificate Senior Natasha Rodríguez (HIST) was inducted into the National History Honor Society's Phi Alpha Theta Beta Omega Chapter.

Prof. Ana Patricia Rodríguez (SPAN) received the Arrowhead Plaque from the United States National Park Service for her development of the D.C. Latino Tour. Rodríguez also received the La Raza Award from UMD's Gamma Phi Sigma "Hermanos Unidos" Fraternity.

Prof. Daryle Williams (HIST) has been awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Stipend to work on "A Spatial History of the Free Africans of the Slave Ship *Cezar*, 1838-1865," part of a larger book project on free Africans in nineteenth-century Brazil.

Summer 2012

Undergraduate Courses

ENGL362
Caribbean Literature in English

HIST319M
Special Topics in History
From Columbus to Che Latin
American History through Film

GEOG313
Geography of Latin America
and the Caribbean

SPAN222
Cultural Difference in
Contemporary Latin America

SPAN303
Approaches to Cultural Materials
in the Hispanic World

SPAN448D
Special Topics in Latin American
Studies: Civilization, Literature,
Popular Culture and Music
in Contemporary Puerto Rico

Study Abroad

Brazil
Environmental Conservation
and Indigenous Peoples
AMST298Y, ANTH298N,
ANTH498C, ANTH698C,
LASC448C
6 credits 07/14/12-08/03/2012

Fall 2012

Undergraduate Courses

AMST498G
Special Topics in American Studies
Latinas/os on the Silver Screen

ARTH389L
Special Topics in Art History
and Archaeology: Modern Latin
American Art to 1945

CMLT277
Literatures of the Americas

GEOG313
Geography of Latin America
and the Caribbean

HIST250
History of Colonial Latin America

LASC234
Issues in Latin American Studies I

LASC248N
Special Topics in Latin American
Studies: American Indians in
Literature and Film: Perspectives
North and South

LASC448J
Special Topics in Latin American
Studies: Aztec Culture: Human
Sacrifice and Conquest

SPAN408 W
Great Themes of the Hispanic
Literatures: The Bright Middle Ages

SPAN425
Introduction to Hispanic
Linguistics I: Basic Concepts

SPAN303
Approaches to Cultural
Materials in the Hispanic World

SPAN361
Latin American Literatures
and Cultures I: From
Pre-Columbian to Colonial Times

SPAN363
Latin American Literatures and
Cultures III: From Modernism
to Neo-Liberalism

SPAN408T
Great Themes of the Hispanic
Literatures: Whose Voice? Gender,
Class and Ethnicity in Mexico

SPAN408V
Great Themes of the Hispanic
Literatures: Bourgeois Notions of
Gender and Sexual Transgressions in
the Spanish Realist/ Naturalist Novel

Graduate Courses

HIST639N
Special Topics in History
Rethinking Freedom
and Modernity
The Haitian Revolution

SPAN788T
Seminar Series in Spanish
and Latin American Languages,
Literatures, and Cultures
Juan Ramon Jimenez Series

SPAN 798T
Latin American Theater

SPAN798V
Luso-Brazilian Studies

SPAN798W
Cine Peninsular

SPAN 798Y
Latin American Literature: Borges

Events Spring 2012

February 8

Café Break Series
Mexican Activism
and the Internet: The Case
of Movimiento 5 de Junio

Paola Ricaurte-Quijano
LASC Visiting Researcher
and Professor-Investigator
in the Department of Cultural
Studies at the Tecnológico
de Monterrey, Mexico City.

February 17

Social Inequality
and Political Regimes
in Argentina, Brazil and Chile
A Comparative Perspective

Marcelo Cavarozzi, Universidad
Nacional de General San Martín
Buenos Aires, Argentina.

February 22

Visiting Scholar Lecture
Can the Story Be Told?
History, Memory, and Fiction
in the Representation
of Extreme Violence

Carlos Pabón-Ortega, Professor of
History at the University of Puerto
Rico, Rio Piedras.

February 24-25

Visiting Scholar Workshop
History and Memory of
Recent Traumatic Pasts
(Chile, Argentina, and Spain)

Carlos Pabón-Ortega, Professor of
History at the University of Puerto
Rico, Rio Piedras.

March 5

Un modo de periodizar
la literatura latinoamericana
procesos de cambio entre
los clásicos del siglo veinte
y las nuevas escrituras del
siglo veintiuno
Josefina Ludmer
Yale University Professor Emeritus.

March 6-7

Conversatorios con
Josefina Ludmer
Josefina Ludmer
Yale University Professor Emeritus.

March 14

Café Break Series
Applied Linguistics in
the Spanish-Speaking World
Mapping Out the Road
Manel Lacorte
Department of Spanish
and Portuguese.

March 28

Career and Internship Workshop
Jorge Bazán, Carlos Rosario
International Public Charter School
Rosa Lozano, Jobs with Justice
María Vásquez, Nueva Vida; Leslie Brice
Coordinator UMD National Scholarship
Office; Kate Juhl, Program Director
UMD Career Center.

April 4

Visiting Scholar Lecture
Ethnoexodus: Strategic
Forgetfulnesses and Flashbacks
Juan Castillo Cocom
Associate Professor
Universidad Intercultural
Maya de Quintana Roo.

April 6-7

Visiting Scholar Workshop
Ethnoexodus: Maya Yucatec
Topographic Ruptures
Juan Castillo Cocom
Associate Professor
Universidad Intercultural
Maya de Quintana Roo.

April 12

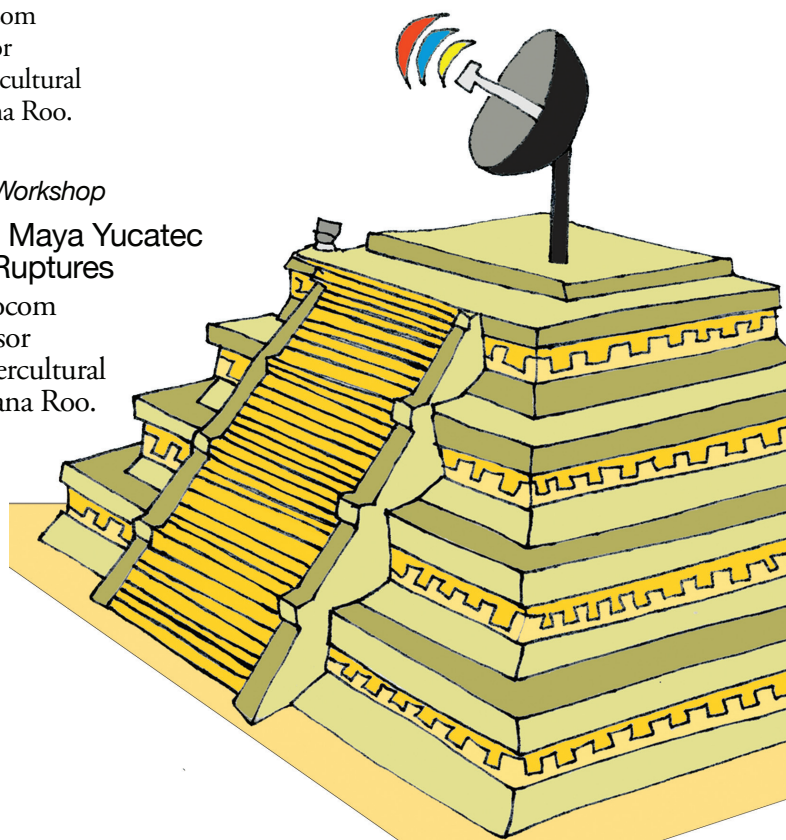
Slaves on the Move: African
Biographies in 19th Century Brazil
João José Reis, Professor of History
at the Universidade Federal da Bahia
Brazil, and Keila Grinberg, Associate
Professor at Universidade Federal do
Rio de Janeiro.

April 18

Café Break Series
The Face of the City
Pan-Americanism, Border
Politics, and Racial Identity in
San Diego's Civic Center Sculpture
Breanne Robertson, Lecturer in
Art History at George Washington
University.

April 23

A Reading from *Beyond
the Ties of Blood: A Novel*
Florencia Mallon, Julieta Kirkwood
Professor of History and Department
Chair at the University of
Wisconsin- Madison.





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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.

I would like to support the Latin American Studies Center with a gift of:

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- \$50 _____
- \$_____ E-mail: _____

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