



# *Noticias*

*Latin American & Iberian Studies Program News*

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## **From the Director:**

Following last year's PRP report, the Latin American and Iberian Studies program implemented a series of curriculum changes intended to strengthen the program's instructional coherence and outreach. A new course, LAIS 10, is being offered for the first time this fall, to introduce freshman and sophomore students to Latin American Iberian Studies. The course is being taught by **Silvia Bermudez**. Program requirements were streamlined to allow students to take LAIS 100, LAIS 101 or LAIS 102 in fulfillment of the upper-division course requirement.

A detailed analysis of the career paths of past LAIS masters students was also done, with the assistance of current LAIS grad student **Paul Bancroft**. Almost half (49%) of our masters' students wind up in PhD programs after completing their degrees, specializing in Latin American and/or Iberia as an area. An additional 10% teach in public schools, usually in bilingual programs; 8% became journalists focusing on Latin America-related issues; and 8% work in the non-profit sector serving poor and minority communities in the U.S. and Latin America. With the support and advice of our cohort of graduate students, the program also began revising the curriculum offered to LAIS masters students, strengthening the methods component of the program and starting a 'thesis-writing group' in fall 2007.

**Kathleen Bruhn** continues as the LAIS director. Cecilia Mendez continues her service as the Director of Graduate Studies.

## **Distinguished Speakers**

During winter quarter 2008, UCSB welcomed prominent Argentine filmmaker (and presidential candidate) **Fernando Solanas** to campus as the Visiting Regents' Lecturer. Mr. Solanas was nominated by **Cristina Venegas** and supported by the Latin American and Iberian Studies program. In addition to various talks and presentations, students and faculty were able to screen one of his recent films, "Argentina Latente" (2007).



Fernando Solanas, with LAIS affiliate Cristina Venegas

### **New Affiliates:**

Since last year, LAIS has approved two new faculty members as affiliates. **Dolores Ines Casillas** (Chicana and Chicano Studies) focuses on language and communication as it intersects with Latino popular culture. In particular, her work looks at Spanish-language media in the United States and what it has to tell us about migration, masculinity, and transborder identity. Casillas teaches undergraduate seminars such as the "Politics of Language" and "Chicano/Latino Media Studies." At the graduate level, she teaches "Cultural Texts" as well as a "Listening to Race" course. **Casey Walsh** (Anthropology) studies the political economy of the Mexico-US borderlands, in particular the ways in which water, land and labor have been organized in northern Mexico and the southwestern United States to produce irrigated cotton agriculture in the borderlands, and in particular, northeastern Mexico. He is the author of *Building the Borderlands*, which tells this story of cotton, water, colonization and migration.

### **Faculty news:**

**Kathleen Bruhn** (Political Science) has been promoted to full professor as of July 2008. Her latest book, *Urban Protest in Brazil and Mexico*, was released by Cambridge University Press in spring 2008.

**Sarah Cline** (History) has been awarded a one-quarter IHC fellowship for Spring 2009, to continue research on casta paintings in Mexico, which depict how race and racial mixing were perceived in colonial Mexico.

**John Foran** (Sociology)

**Anabel Ford** (ISBER/MesoAmerican Research Center) continues her work with the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve for Maya Flora and Fauna. In October 2008, she signed a memorandum of understanding with... Which will formalize an ongoing relationship between UCSB and the El Pilar project (see "TITLE", this edition).

**Mario García** (Chicana and Chicano Studies) has published a new edited book with Gaston Espinosa, entitled *Mexican American Religions: Spirituality, Activism, and Culture* (Duke University Press). In addition, he expects two solo-authored books out this fall, *Catholicos: Resistance and Affirmation in Chicano Catholic History* (University of Texas Press) and *A Dolores Huerta Reader* (University of New Mexico Press).

**Cecilia Mendez** (History) has been awarded the prestigious 2008 Howard Cline Memorial Prize from the Conference of Latin American Historians for her book, *The Plebeian Republic: the Huanta Rebellion and the Making of the Peruvian State, 1820-1850* (Duke University Press, 2005). The prize is only given every other year, to the book or article in English, German or any Romance language considered to have made "the most significant contribution to the study of Indians in Latin America."

**Carlos Morton** (Dramatic Art)

**Mary O'Connor** (ISBER) received a Non-Senate Faculty Professional Development Grant to attend the American Anthropological Association Meetings in San Francisco in November, where she will present a paper on "Engaging Latin American Pentecostals." She was also awarded a UC MEXUS grant for her project on the development of the Iglesia de Jesucristo de las Américas by Mixteco migrants. Her other line of research, "Food Matters" (with Daniela Soleri) looks at the impact of globalization and the role of indigenous people on the maintenance of crop diversity of maize in Oaxaca.

**Horacio Roque-Ramírez** (Chicana and Chicano Studies) published his essay "Memory and Mourning: Living Oral History with Queer Latinos in San Francisco," in *Oral History and Public Memories* (Temple University Press, 2008), and "Bodies, Borderlands, and Crossings: Teaching LGBT Latina and Latino Community Histories and Lives," in *Teaching American History in a Global Context* (M. E. Sharpe, 2008). On October 27, 2008 he delivered a talk entitled, "Queer Latino Historical Debris: Archiving the Erotic Immigrant Body" at Duke University, and in winter 2009 he will be an IHC Senior Fellow.

**Harvey Sharrer** (Spanish and Portuguese)

**Gabriela Soto Laveaga** (History) has received a visiting research fellowship at the Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies (UCSD) to continue work on her second book project, about a physician strike in Mexico in the 1960s.

### **Graduate student news:**

#### **New Students 2008-2009.**

LAIS welcomed five new graduate students to the program this fall

**Lance Awbrey** (B.S. United States Military Academy, Portuguese/Spanish; M.A. Webster University, Management) Lance is an active-duty army officer. He hopes to complete his degree in just over a year, whereupon he will move to Santiago, Chile and work at the U.S. Embassy and also attend the Chilean Army Staff College. Lance plans to focus his work on 20<sup>th</sup> Century Chilean reforms and US involvement in Pinochet's rise to power.

**Linda Hall** (B.A. UCSB, Spanish) has already begun field research for her thesis project on the mostly verbal and infrequently published Afroandino literature of the Ecuadorian provinces of Esmeraldas and El Chota, and attempts by the current national government to recognize the unique literary contributions of all sectors of its highly diverse society. Post graduation aspirations include expansion of her thesis work into a lecture series in collaboration with one of the museums currently sponsored by the Banco Central de Ecuador.

**Robin Hoffman** (B.A. Central Washington University, Anthropology) With a background in West Africa, Brazil and Iberia, Robin is interested in the history, cultural anthropology, and linguistics of the Lusophone world. Issues of identity, cultural transmission (including religion and music), and language acquisition will form the backbone of Robin's research at UCSB. His ultimate goal is to expand avenues for empowerment for marginalized populations in the Lusophone world through teaching.

**Leah Russell** (BA State University of New York at New Paltz, with majors in Spanish and Latin American Studies). For her Master's thesis, Leah intends to examine how the presence of a growing afro-reggae movement in the *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro has affected the lives of youth participants and other community members. She aims to conduct field research to determine if this unique form of creative expression currently serves as a means for social change in the *favelas* and/or provides youth with an alternative to life in the drug traffic industry.

**Jeremy Simer** (B.A. University of Washington, Spanish major with minors in Latin American Studies and Labor Studies) is originally from San Luis Obispo, and returns to the Central Coast after 13 years in Seattle. He has worked as a journalist (in 1999 he spent four months in Mexico City writing freelance articles about a student strike at

UNAM), and more recently has worked as a community organizer and Spanish medical interpreter. Jeremy's thesis research will explore the relationship between Castille's consolidation of power in Catalonia in the 18th century, and the Catalanian soldiers who later played an important role in Alta California's colonization.

## **Continuing Students**

### **Miguel Becerra**

**Justine Meyer** is working on a survey of EAP alumni for her research into the impact of education abroad experiences, particularly in Latin America.

**Natalie Rogers** spent the summer researching and her thesis on 20th Century Mexico and the political and economic uses of ballet folklórico in the development of national identity and the tourism industry. As part of her research she spent 5 weeks in Xalapa, Veracruz, Mexico conducting interviews and observations of the Ballet Folklórico de la Universidad Veracruzana. She is currently working with Professor Gabriela Soto-Laveaga in the History department.

**Zachary McKiernan** is writing his "masters' thesis on historical memory in Chile, focusing on the different ways in which the national stadium serves as a symbolic carrier of memories." He argues that the stadium's emblematic events—Allende's inauguration, Pinochet's concentration camp, Pope John Paul II's convocation, to name a few—represent the greater social, cultural, and political processes in which they exist. He then uses *place memory* as a starting point to investigate the significance of these events and processes in regards to both the individual and collective memories that interrogate and remember the past—for better or worse. Zachary will be traveling to Chile during the winter quarter to advance and further test his current working theory. He has also recently started his first quarter of teaching SPAN 1 in the Spanish and Portuguese Department.

**Amy Milner** is completing her thesis on "Community Development in Globalized El Salvador: A Case Study of *Regalo de Dios*." She spent a month in winter 2007 doing interviews with community members in Regalo de Dios and is analyzing the social forces, political agents, and institutional structures that shape community development.

**Yully Nieves** is presenting first-year research on pro-environmental efforts in South America at the Pacific Coast Council on Latin American Studies. Last spring she presented pedagogical research at the Student Research Conference on Latin American and Iberian Studies and is currently writing on the use of technology in second language acquisition. In addition, she completed the Summer Teaching Institute for Associates training and continues to teach Spanish. She was the LAIS student representative to the Graduate Student Assembly last year and is currently a member the PCCLAS Board of Governors and Publicity Committee. In her second year Yully is taking courses in the

Education department and investigating higher education reform in South America. She will be the LAIS T.A. in spring 2008 for LAIS 101/102, with Professor **Bill Robinson**.

**Amy Rosner** is writing her thesis on Latin American film under the supervision of Cristina Venegas.

### **Alumni News:**

**Karen Aburto** (M.A. 2007)

**Rafaela Acevedo-Field** (MA 2000) passed her doctoral qualifying exams in History in Spring and did preliminary research in Madrid and Seville this summer on crypto-Jews before the Mexican Inquisition. Her research trip was funded by the James R. Scoby award of the Conference on Latin American History, the professional society of Latin Americanists affiliated with the American History Association. She has also been awarded a History Department dissertation fellowship.

**Paul Bancroft** (M.A. 2008) is currently working as a bilingual social educator for Tahoe Women's Services, dealing with issues domestic violence, sexual assault/harassment, and presentations local schools as well as other agencies, churches, businesses etc. He also leads Boys Groups in most of the schools working with "at risk" boys discussing gender violence, social justice etc. By night he teaches a parenting class in Spanish to Latino fathers who have kids aged 0-5.

### **Ricardo Caton**

**Thomas Clark** (M.A. 2008) finished his masters' thesis on the globalization of sport, which looks at the expansion of Major League Baseball into Latin America.

**Claudia Johnson** (MA 2007) taught the 2007 offering of LAIS 100/200.

**Andrew Leonard** (MA 2006)

**Sylvia Lizama** plans to file her masters thesis on the impact of NGOs in Chiapas in December 2008. She is proud to announce that she is expecting her first child shortly.

**Steven Lockwood** (M.A. 2008) completed his masters thesis on the Portuguese South Atlantic Empire in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, entitled "Antonio Teles da Silva, Governor-General of Brazil 1642-1647: His Family, His Life, and Early Career," in one year. He is currently teaching U.S. and Latin American history courses at Community College in Southern California, and plans to return to graduate school for his PhD at some point in the future.

**Anil Mukerjee** won the Humanities and Fine Arts Dean's teaching prize and will be offering an upper-division History course on Atlantic world slavery.

He is completing his dissertation on Brazil, Portugal, and the making of the Atlantic world, concentrating on Portuguese financial policy in Brazil.

**Nicole Pacino** (M.A. 2007) passed her qualifying exams in the History Department's PhD program at UCSB. She is currently applying for funding to pursue her research on public health programs in Bolivia, working with LAIS affiliate Dr. **Gabriela Soto Laveaga**.

**Steven Pent**

**Kevin Smith** has completed archival research in Mexico for his dissertation on environmental changes in the basin of Mexico following the Spanish conquest. He received funding from UC MEXUS for the research.

**Larisa Veloz** (M.A. 2008) has been awarded a multi-year doctoral fellowship at Georgetown University to pursue a PhD in Mexican history.

**Upcoming Events:**