Saludos,

I often tell people that New York City is a great place to study Latin America and the Caribbean because it is the island closest to the United States. The joke rests on the realities of our changing city, where a full 37% of the population is foreign born and a great many more are children of immigrants. Sharing a city with these 3.1 million “Newest New Yorkers,” of whom fully half come from the Caribbean and Latin America, has sharpened our mission as a Title VI National Resource Center to promote, share, and produce knowledge about the region and its languages.

Through extensive public programming and K-12, post-secondary, and community outreach programs, CLACS functions as a nexus between the university and wider communities of learning. We understand these newest New Yorkers both as constituents with distinct needs for area studies expertise and also as powerful resources for learning about the region. As a recipient of Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) funds, the Center maintains a strong commitment to less commonly taught languages of the region, especially Quechua, and to understanding more fully the social politics that surround language acquisition, loss, and recovery for native speakers and their communities.

In 2012 we welcomed the North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA), publisher of a renowned policy analysis magazine, to the Center. By opening opportunities for our students and faculty to participate in the publication, our connection with even wider publics has deepened. I invite you to join our network—as a student, scholar, interested public, or as a fellow New Yorker. Our doors are open.

Cordialmente,

Jill Lane
Director of CLACS at NYU
The past year was unexpectedly—heartbreakingly—bookended by the loss of two luminous scholars: Michel-Rolph Trouillot, great anthropologist and historian of Haiti, and José Esteban Muñoz, scholar and theorist of queer Latino/a American studies who made his home with us here at NYU. Their field-transforming works, notably Trouillot’s *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (1995) and Muñoz’s *Cruising Utopia: The Here and Now of Queer Futurity* (2009), share fundamental ambitions: both look to scholarship to critique the conditions of the here and now in order to imagine a better then and there of the future. Both teach us to brook the impossible.

*Silencing the Past* studies the structuring silences that eclipse the radical past of the Haitian Revolution. That past is no longer accessible to us because, Trouillot argues, it was “unthinkable even as it happened.” He asks: “if events cannot be accepted even as they occur, how can they be assessed later?” Indeed, “how does one write a history of the impossible?” We are not prisoners of that past, says Trouillot, but neither is history whatever we make of it. We must “unthink a chimera” to move forward. His beautiful book excavates the losses produced through such silencing and models ways of drawing out the impossible past from imperfect remains.

In *Cruising Utopia*, Muñoz calls forth impossible futures: queer futures that are violently eclipsed by structuring normativity, but that, at the same time, are ever immanent. Muñoz names such immanence “a forward-dawning futurity” that is best modeled—practiced, planned, rehearsed—in the realm of the aesthetic. In this book as in his earlier *Disidentifications* (1999), Muñoz carefully unfolds the “blueprints and schemata” of queer potentiality in the work of New York City performers such as Jack Smith, Herko, and Kaylup Linzy, as well as Latino/a artists Nao Bustamante, Coco Fusco, Carmelita Tropicana, and Félix González Torres. In this larger map of queer futurity, we enter Latin/o America as a site of queer world-making, vibrant and politically urgent.

Trouillot helps us to understand the presence that the past accrues in the present, and Muñoz helps us to see—in that same here and now—the busy presence of so many possible then and theres. Both books are, as Muñoz says of his own, “resource[s] for the political imagination”; both are “flight plan[s] for collective political becoming.”

Trouillot and Muñoz attend to the complex, shifting, and deeply contested relations between event, representation, and interpretation that enables us to connect that past to this present and that future. For both the past is a field of potentiality: even as that field is, yes, compromised, half ruined, and unknown even to itself, it also replete with infinite futures imagined but not realized, futures unleashed but lost, not yet harnessed to a political project for the present.

Both inspire us to take on such lost futures as our own, and to make them part of our teaching, our scholarship, and our world.

— Jill Lane
Interdisciplinary Research Colloquia

Each semester, CLACS hosts an Interdisciplinary Research Colloquium which consists of a graduate course and a related speaker series. The course is co-taught by faculty from different academic fields, enabling interdisciplinary learning and collaboration. The series invites leading scholars and artists from the United States and across Latin America and the Caribbean to share their work with the NYU community and with the general public. These cutting-edge, themed colloquia are often the result of faculty working groups.

New Perspectives on Colonial Latin America and the Caribbean

Fall 2012

The Fall 2012 Colloquium explored new and innovative approaches to colonial Latin American and Caribbean history through talks given by six speakers whose research highlighted diverse methodological and theoretical approaches. The series provided a range of perspectives on topics such as racial classification and mixture, codes of gender and sexuality, the rise of capitalism, and the legacy of slave regimes. It was organized by Sinclair Thomson (History, CLACS), Sarah Sarzynski (CLACS), and Zeb Tortorici (Spanish & Portuguese).

During his presentation at CLACS, Edward Sullivan (NYU) focused on late colonial visual cultures and artistic production in the Caribbean. Joanne Rappaport (Georgetown) spoke on race relations and complex categories of racial mixing and miscegenation in the early colonial period. The talk by Pete Sigal (Duke) elucidated pre-Hispanic conceptions of gender, sexuality, and sacrifice in Mesoamerica, focusing on the changes brought about through colonial contact. John Tutino (Georgetown) spoke on his award-winning book, Making a New World: Founding Capitalism in the Bajío and Spanish North America, highlighting innovative research methodologies, early forms of globalization, and intimately linked trans-Atlantic and trans-Pacific commodities and capitalist ventures. Ana Lucia Araujo (Howard) presented on slave labor and slave memories in the early modern Iberian Atlantic world, thinking through memorials and monuments as politically charged historical documents. Lastly, Vincent Brown (Harvard) demonstrated the intricate links between cartographic representation and slave rebellions in colonial Haiti.

In all, this speaker series exposed graduate students and scholars to multidisciplinary research methodologies and theoretical approaches through the themes of slavery and memory, global trade, the rise of capitalism, rebellion, mestizaje, gender, and sexuality in colonial contexts.

What’s Left of Cuba?

Culture, Politics, and Civil Society

Spring 2013

In his lecture entitled “Photographs of the Day Before,” presented at CLACS in April 2013, writer and photographer Orlando Luis Pardo Lazo described Cuba as both “a closed fortress of internal feudal repression” and “the utopia of the international left.” His photographs capture both the Cuban reality and the international romanticized dream of Cuba “before” the Revolution ends. Could it be that such dreams of the day “before” dramatic change arrives are, in reality, our way of coping with the day “after” that is already here?

His presentation answered the central concern of the Spring 2013 CLACS colloquium course, organized by Jill Lane (Director, CLACS), José Muñoz (Performance Studies), and Ana Dopico (Spanish & Portuguese, Comp Lit), entitled, “What’s Left of Cuba?”, where is Cuba now in the geopolitical imaginary that once heralded Cuba as the exemplar of radical left projects in Latin America?

Cuban civil society has recently challenged the projects of the revolution and has recast cold war frames of embargo, exile, and exceptionalism. A new generation of writers, bloggers, visual and performance artists, as well as political activists and dissidents, demand both universality and contingency: an agenda that mixes the politics of human and civic rights, Cuban values, and the unfinished projects of both the republic and the revolution. Social actors are creating spaces of expression and action that open fissures and apertures in the discourse of the revolution and the control of the state. We invited artists, activists, and scholars from Cuba and from Greater Cuba to reflect on what is left of, left to, and left for Cuba in the complex transition from the day “before” to the days ahead.

In addition to Pardo Lazo, the series featured presentations by Tomás Fernández Robaina (National Library of Cuba), Jafari Allen (Yale), José Muñoz (NYU), José Quiroga (Emory), Albert Sergio Laguna (Yale), Antonio López (George Washington), Alexandra Vazquez (Princeton), and artists Coco Fusco, Tania Bruguera, and Jorge Ignacio Cortiñas.
Afro-Latin Soundscapes  
Fall 2013

The Fall 2013 Colloquium, “Afro-Latin Soundscapes,” aimed to explore how music crosses linguistic, political, social, and ethnic boundaries, as participants studied examples from Brazil, Cuba, Mexico, Puerto Rico, New Orleans, New York, Senegal, and the Ivory Coast. The series was coordinated by Dylon Robbins (Spanish & Portuguese, CLACS) and brought influential scholars and musicians including Puerto Rican saxophonist Miguel Zenón, the Cuban hip-hop duo Obsesión, Brazilian percussionist Cyro Baptista, as well as Arcadio Díaz-Quinones (Princeton), Juan Flores (Latino Studies), Robert Stam (Cinema Studies), Sujatha Fernandes (CUNY), Christopher Dunn (Tulane), and musicians Joe Bataan, Donald Harrison, and Ned Sublette to perform and speak about how rhythms and compositions were resituated in different contexts, and how they played a role in creating bridges between diasporas. Students relied on these performances, and the panoply of pieces they listened to in class, to begin to answer the overarching questions, “how does what you listen to shape your sense of self? And how do we relate to each other through music?” Through its remarkable breadth, the colloquium illuminated the complex relationships between music and the self, in both a national and international context.

Whither the Caribbean?  
Spring 2014

“Whither the Caribbean: Critical Perspectives on History, Politics, and Culture,” the Spring 2014 Colloquium, focused on the complex and storied history of the Caribbean, one which has been marked with revolution and change. Organizers Ada Ferrer (History, CLACS) and Sibylle Fischer (Spanish & Portuguese, CLACS) invited an array of speakers, whose discussions and explorations focused on pivotal moments in Caribbean history. Melanie Newton (University of Toronto) examined race and indigeneity in Granada in her lecture, “The Race Leapt at Sauteurs.” Edgardo Pérez Morales (CLACS) discussed how an uprising in Cartagena, Colombia reverberated throughout North America and Europe in his discussion, “Atlantic Connections of the Revolutionary Caribbean.” Robin Derby (UCLA) examined sorcery in Hispaniola, Kaima Glover (Columbia) focused on Afro-Alterity in Haiti, and Stephan Palmié (University of Chicago) debated ethnographic and historical research on Afro-Caribbean cultures in his lecture, “Caribbeanist Anthropology and Minerva’s Owl: Lessons Forgotten, Lessons Learned.” The interdisciplinary approaches of these scholars critiqued the portrayal of key Caribbean events in literature, history, and film since the early 18th century.
“Digital culture is Cuba’s 21st century avant-garde, and a cultural movement of such force demands thoughtful assessment,” said Cuban-American artist Coco Fusco, then professor of fine arts at Parsons The New School for Design and co-organizer of the three-day conference “The Revolution Recodified,” which explored the impact of digital technology in Cuban culture and society. The conference brought prize-winning Cuban writer Yoani Sánchez to the United States for the first time in her controversial career as a blogger. Her keynote address, held at NYU on March 15, 2013, was Sánchez’s first public lecture in the United States. Best known for her blog Generation Y (http://www.desdecuba.com/generationy/), Sánchez is the leading figure of an independent online cultural movement in Cuba composed of writers, artists, musicians, and activists.

The conference explored how digital technology is transforming Cuba’s cultural and political landscape by challenging the state’s longstanding monopoly on communications media and its hegemonic control of cultural production and distribution. For more than a decade, Cuban artists, musicians, independent journalists, and librarians have teamed with computer scientists and engineers on the island and in the diaspora to foment a socially engaged and politically independent culture using digital technology. “The virtual Cuba is influencing the real Cuba directly and definitively,” says Sánchez, noting how in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, Cubans used text messages to mobilize relief for hard hit communities in Oriente, thereby revealing a crisis the government had downplayed. Fusco adds: “Online culture has completely transformed the way that Cubans around the world interact and understand each other and it has also changed the way that the rest of the world perceives us.”

Presenters from Cuba also included the writer and photographer Orlando Luis Pardo Lazo and composer Pablo Menendez, who performed with his band Mezcla. US-based Cuba scholars included Ted Henken, Ariana Hernandez-Reguant, and Ana Dopico (Comparative Literature, Spanish & Portuguese). New Media scholars from the New School Nitin Sawhney, Sean Jacobs, and Thomas Werner, along with John Kelly from Morningside Analytics, compared the Cuban use of social media to that in other politically contested regions.

The event was organized by Coco Fusco and Chris Stover, both faculty at The New School, in collaboration with Jill Lane (Director, CLACS). The event was sponsored by multiple collaborating programs. At the New School: the Academic Events Fund, Parsons Cross School Funds, Eugene Lang College, The New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music, and The Vera List Center for Art and Politics; at NYU: CLACS, The office of the Dean of Humanities in the Graduate School of Fine Arts and Sciences, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, and the Department of Comparative Literature; the Institute for Latin American Studies at Columbia University; and The Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy.
“Stories of El Salvador: The Civil War and Its Aftermath” was a photographic exhibition curated by CLACS MA candidates with concentrations in Museum Studies, José Raúl Guzmán and Camilla Querin. The exhibition was on view at the Stovall Gallery at New York University’s Kimmel Center, April 6 – May 8, 2014 and focused on the Civil War in El Salvador and the role of women during and after the conflict.

Beginning in 1979 and lasting until peace accords were signed in 1992, the civil war in El Salvador resulted in the deaths of over 75,000 people and the conflict involved a high number of women combatants. According to Jenni Lidia Ungo, one of the women whose photographs and stories were featured in the exhibit, “Women were in the trenches, alongside men, fighting. I feel like there was a lot of equality during the conflict between men and women, and solidarity.” However, after the conflict many women have struggled with the contradiction between this equality achieved during the war and the expectations many still hold about the traditional role of women in Salvadoran society.

The NYU exhibition sought to tell the stories of many of these women through the inclusion of portraits from the Mujeres de la Guerra Project by the photographer Lyn McCracken and the activist Theodora Simon, as well as utilizing the photojournalism archive of the North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA).

Along with these portraits, the exhibition included oral histories of the women leaders and activists collected by McCracken and Simon. The portraits and accompanying stories document the women’s time during the war, including their experience of government repression and their time hiding in the mountains suffering from starvation and exhaustion.

A film series and symposium complemented the exhibition to further examine the themes raised.
Performing in Havana

STEPHANIE NOACH is an MA CLACS alumnus and now an independent curator.

After five years of inactivity, the bookstore of the University of Havana suddenly came back to life in 2012. A large crowd gathered in this impoverished space in Centro Habana to eat, play, and debate. Some enjoyed the freshly cooked meal that was located on a hanging table. Others played with a radio-controlled car, or talked with the naked man who lay on the floor of a completely darkened room. Most eyes, undoubtedly, were on the girl that was bathing herself in a barrel of red wine. She was surrounded by a number of straws from which the visitors were invited to drink, slowly lowering the level of the wine to reveal the women's bodies. In May 2012, the exhibition that I curated—“Una exposición sin espectadores”—of five Cuban performance artists opened its doors for the local communities and an international audience of art visitors. It formed part of the Eleventh Havana Biennial.

Cuban performance art has received a great deal of attention since the inception of the Havana Biennial in 1984. A number of scholars from both inside and outside Cuba have reflected upon the oftentimes critical and ludic nature of performance art in Cuba. Among others, Gerardo Mosquera has written about the socio-critical performances carried out in the 80’s, the epoch analyzed as the renaissance of Cuban art. More recently, he evaluated the performative works of Tania Bruguera, who challenges the imaginary of the Cuban Revolution. Scholars such as Luis Camnitzer, Sujatha Fernandes, Coco Fusco, Miguel Rojas Sotelo, and Rachel Weiss discuss the ways in which the body provokes and questions the official discourse. Among these scholars, Fusco has most specifically reflected upon how bodies are constrained in Cuba. Her book about recent performance practices in Cuba is forthcoming.

Like much discourse in Cuba, two opposing camps have led the discussion about performance art and its relation with Cuba’s official discourse. On one side, pro-revolutionary scholars have an idealistic, romanticized view of the position of the arts within the Cuban Revolution, ignoring problems such as the lack of democracy and state repression. Critics of the Cuban government, on the other side, see repression everywhere and fail to acknowledge, first, the incredible state support for art and education, and second, the relative freedom granted to the arts.

During the month I spent in Cuba doing my research, I was interested in analyzing recent performances in their own right—if such thing existed. Can art works be valued independently, or at least, without merely seeing them as a reflection of the social and political context? Or, are we forced to put so much weight on the political when speaking about arts in Cuba? And if such is the case, is a more nuanced understanding of the relation between the state and the arts possible?
To analyze this, I conducted initial archival research in Havana. I interviewed a large number of artists, curators, and critics to talk about past performances. My research focused on the different contexts in which the performances took place, for example in official institutions or alternative spaces. During the course of the Eleventh Havana Biennial, I visited performances and held discussions with the audiences there. I gained yet new insights into Cuban performance by curating “Una exposición sin espectadores,” as part of the official Biennial.

Portuguese Africa in the Brazilian Press

WENDI MUSE is a CLACS alumnus and now a doctoral candidate in History at NYU. In 1951, Brazilian intellectual Gilberto Freyre traveled throughout Portugal and the Ultramar, Portugal’s territories in Africa and Asia, at the invitation of the Portuguese dictatorial government. He recorded his experiences in a series of articles and books that became reference tools for internationally-engaged members of the Brazilian elite. In the decade that followed, tensions built in Portugal’s largest territory, Angola, finally erupting in a full-scale war for independence in 1961 that catalyzed armed contestations of Portuguese control throughout the African Ultramarine colonies. Serving as the primary conduit of information between the world and the populations that made up its readership, print media provided the lens through which Brazilians observed and understood Lusophone Africa. Journalists based in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, home to the most literate and cosmopolitan populations in Brazil at the time, captured Lusophone Africa before and after the onset of anti-colonial struggle through hundreds of news articles, opinion pieces, and regular columns.

My interest in these rarely-discussed perspectives on Portuguese Africa led me to Brazil to find out more. Thanks to the tremendous support from CLACS and a generous grant from the Tinker Foundation, I spent three months in the summer of 2012 in Brazil conducting archival research for my MA thesis. In June, I traveled to the city of Rio de Janeiro, where I spent two months reading through newspapers, magazines, and several special photo collections at the Biblioteca Nacional and the Arquivo Nacional. I then spent August in the cities São Paulo and Campinas, where I conducted further archival research on newspapers, magazines, police records, and contemporary secondary sources (books written during the scope of my research on Portuguese Africa) at the Biblioteca Mário de Andrade, Arquivo do Estado de São Paulo, and the Arquivo Edgard Leuenroth.

My study, “What Lies Between the Lines: Portuguese Africa in the Brazilian Press, 1951 – 1964,” examines portrayals of the African Ultramar in Brazilian print media, beginning with Freyre’s journey in 1951 and ending in early 1964, before the press fell under the intense scrutiny and censorship of Brazil’s incoming military dictatorship. Building upon existing scholarship on Brazil’s intermediary position between Portugal and Africa during the twentieth century, I contend that popular discourse played a pivotal role in the construction of Portuguese Africa and its inhabitants in the Brazilian imagination. Close readings of articles from mainstream and alternative newspapers and magazines across a variety of political perspectives reveal that Brazilian journalists used their coverage of Portuguese Africa as an outlet to exercise racist attitudes toward blacks, contradicting contemporary trends in Brazilian law and diplomacy. Furthermore, many of these journalists fashioned Portuguese Africa into a proxy for Brazil, using discussions thereof as canvases onto which they projected anxieties over Brazil’s position as a multiracial democracy and potential leader in the developing world, and attempted to reconcile diplomatic allegiance to Portugal alongside a growing economic and social interest in emergent African nations.

A Better Destiny: Human Rights, Caribbean Exiles, and Dictatorship During the Cold War

MILLERY POLYNÉ is Associate Professor at the Gallatin School of Individualized Study, NYU. The interactions between Caribbean and Latin American exiles, human rights activists, and NGO leadership are essential to understanding the decisions and missteps of human rights actors in the Americas that shaped and expanded the contemporary discourse on individual rights. The book, “A Better Destiny,” examines the circulation, appropriation, and translation of individual rights discourse in Haiti by political and economic elites and non-elites who lived through the trauma of exile and sought...
inclusiveness and more democratic strategies for change within despotic societies.

An examination of the circulation and translation of a discourse of rights demonstrates the importance of building theoretical passageways between the juridical and cultural realms of the human rights field. In contrast to current scholarship on human rights that isolates legal, anthropological, cultural, and intellectual spheres, “A Better Destiny” examines the cross-pollination and appropriation of human rights discourse in the interstices of national policy, fiction, international law, and Caribbean and Latin American despotism. The upsurge and global popularity of Caribbean and Latin American fiction and poetry of the period signals the cultural interconnections between immigration law, human rights abuses, political subjectivity, and reconstructed memories as articulated in novels, memoirs, and burgeoning diasporic spaces. Through an examination of the tensions and fissures between national and international legal decrees and theoretical schools of jurisprudence (natural law, legal positivism, and legal realism) and the (sur) realisms of Alejo Carpentier’s Explosion in a Cathedral (1962), René Dépestre’s The Festival of the Greasy Pole (1990) and Marie Vieux-Chauvet’s Love, Anger, Madness (1968), I examine how a discourse of rights mediated the gendered, economic, and political lives of those who suffered dictatorship and those fortunate to escape it.

Through a research grant from CLACS I was able to conduct research in Port-au-Prince, Haiti and in Havana, Cuba, focused on the ways in which Haitian exiles organized their networks between Cuba, their homeland, and New York City and how they formalized and circulated their strategies and institutions within that space. Cuba is particularly significant because Haitian (and Dominican) exiles, inspired by the radicalism of the Cuban Revolution (1959), used Havana and Santiago de Cuba as one of several bases of operation in attempts to overthrow the Duvalier and Trujillo regimes. Exploring the ideological and cultural production, movement, memory, and translation of ideas on human rights within the Americas, from Haiti to Cuba, Dominican Republic to the United States, at a time where the hemisphere was engaged in varied conflicts that linked individual rights to identity politics, labor disputes, democratization, militarism, and economic inequality, not only illuminates past discourses and strategies to ameliorate the human condition, but helps scholars and activists to critically re-think the more important and significant ways that conflict and inequality are being addressed legally and culturally on an international and hemispheric scale.

Constitutional Transformations and Transgender Politics in Ecuador

CLAUDIA SOFÍA GARRIGA LÓPEZ is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Social and Cultural Analysis of New York University. Ecuador is undergoing a period of rapid and oftentimes contradictory, political transformations under the center-left government of President Rafael Correa. There is much at stake in how constitutional affirmations of equality will or will not manifest on the ground.

Through the CLACS Tinker grant for preliminary research I was able to conduct two trips to Ecuador in the summers of 2011 and 2012. There I analyzed this politically strategic period of a constitutionally mandated expansion of rights, to actively interpret and assess how social movements that deal with gender and sexuality take up the opportunities created by this new constitution. This study of gender and sexuality rights, particularly as these pertain to transgender people, was organized around three research areas situated within an emerging field of Transgender Studies, at the intersection of Gender and Sexuality Studies, Latin American Studies, and Critical Legal Theory. I turned my attention to three areas of inquiry: 1) the legal precedents, preparations, and negotiations in the constituent assembly, particularly as it pertained to gender and sexual equality; 2) the anti-discrimination legal cases brought by transgender plaintiffs since 2008; and 3) a national movement campaign for choosing one’s gender on the government-issued record and official identification cards cards called “My Gender My ID.”

I wanted to explore several questions. What laws and constitutional articles are available to assert the rights of transgender people? And conversely, what forms of structural discrimination against transgender people persist in the face of their formal legal equality? What are some of the ways in which purportedly neutral government administrative practices of record keeping contribute to the systematic exclusion of transgender people from social, economic, and political participation? My research investigated both the possibilities and limitations of pursuing legal reforms as a strategy for achieving increased rights and social well being for transgender people in Ecuador. I worked to situate this research in the context of transgender politics and older feminist and indigenous social movements in Ecuador and the broader Latin American region.

I utilized a wide range of methodological and analytical approaches, including archival research, one-on-one interviews, participant observation, and media and legal analysis. One of the innovations of this project was to contextualize transgender struggles for legal reform over the past decade within a macroeconomic analysis of Latin America. Within Transgender Studies there is an important body of literature on legal processes in the United States and other governance structures. And yet, Latin American laws and rights that affect transgender people are largely left out of these discussions even though countries like Brazil, Argentina, and Ecuador are arguably pioneers in transgender rights. My dissertation prompts the field Transgender Studies to engage with the Latin American region more fully.
Building an Interdisciplinary Health Professional Research Team at NYU and Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia

NATHAN BERTELEN M.D. is Assistant Professor of Medicine and Population Health and Course Director for the Global Health Selective at NYU School of Medicine, and Director of Primary Care at the Bellevue/NYU Program for Survivors of Torture.

Participation in interdisciplinary teams is essential for understanding and addressing global health problems. Recent proposed reforms in health professional education identify interactive learning by students of various disciplines as foundational to addressing health care needs in an interdependent world. While the attention to global health is skyrocketing among health professional schools across the country and world, quality among overseas academic collaboration and research remains widely variable. Few curricular components in current medical, nursing, and dental education provide the theory or practical opportunities to learn the skills in communication or collaboration necessary to work productively in teams, learn collaborative care models, or address health care needs in culturally relevant contexts. Global health work, in turn, lends itself to the learning and the “doing” of collaborative teamwork, resulting in more effective care delivery and the emergence of research questions that can consider cultural elements and social policy, as well as the study of health and illness.

The Study

Supported in part by a CLACS grant, interdisciplinary student teams from NYU and Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia (UPCH) collaborated over six months in 2012 to initiate a nutrition study to conduct fieldwork at health centers in the Callao province of Peru. They underwent research training in Lima, Peru, and used shared competencies to develop a protocol. The NYU team consisted of medicine, nursing, and bioethics students. The UPCH team included “Cayetano en Acción” students from healthcare administration, emergency medicine, medicine, biology, dentistry, veterinary medicine, and nursing, mentored by the Global Health Peru Program at UPCH and the Center for Healthful Behavior Change at NYU. Together they designed a research protocol and instruments (nutrition survey, focus group guide, health/nutrition brochure) and completed research training, participant recruitment, data collection (348 surveys, 348 anthropometric measures, four focus groups of eight participants), health awareness promotion in the community, and data analysis.

The Findings

The team found that structured activities, like the Global Health Peru Program including cultural orientation, a unified information channel, role definition, institutional leadership and mentorship, and a pre-determined budget, are essential for successful student team formation and collaboration. Additionally, common goals, trust, equality, flexibility, altruistic motivation, commitment, and professional identity were operations that influenced collaboration.

The Outcomes

Outcomes of this interdisciplinary team feasibility study are promising. In the next phase, a senior resident physician from NYU joined “Cayetano en Acción” at UPCH in Lima to formalize next steps. Lessons learned in the initial phase helped outline student prerequisites, training, roles, and responsibilities for future student exchanges. The ultimate outcome offers a substantive collaboration for both sites for shared learning. In addition, we are building an orientation for working with Latin American patients within the curriculum at NYU School of Medicine, designed for NYU medical students and internal residents, and we are collaborating with the International Health Program at NYU School of Medicine to enhance its orientation for medical students planning fieldwork in Latin America.
Faculty Publications

Focus on Haiti


No story of the rise of rights is complete without an engagement with the intellectual, and political work done in Haiti.

-Ada Ferrer in “Haiti, Free Soil, and Antislavery in the Revolutionary Atlantic”

Books


**Lucas, Peter** (CLACS) and Mauricio Lisovssky. The Last Hour of Summer: The Lost Photographs from Ipanema. Casa da Palavra Books, 2014.


**Articles**


**What is it about the configuration of the concept of cosmopolitanism in the Caribbean that has resulted in marginalizing or eliding Islam in the historical record?**

— Aisha Khan in “Islam, Voudou, and the making of the Afro-Atlantic”


NYU has offered Quechua language classes since 2008, headed by Professor Odi González, linguist and poet from Peru. An official language of Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru, Quechua is the most widely spoken indigenous language in Latin America, with approximately 10 million speakers. Debates about the political and cultural status of indigenous language—and the rights of those who speak them—have been central to the reconfiguration of nation and state in the “New Left” turn across the region. Indigenous communities are defending their rights to language in emerging “plurinational” states, alongside dramatic struggles over citizenship, education, and territory. By studying Quechua, students contribute to indigenous language recovery and visibility, and gain unique insight into these dynamic social processes. Classes are available to graduate and undergraduate students at NYU and at our Title VI partner Columbia University. The program anchors CLACS’s broader Andean Initiative, which gathers NYU faculty and students in a comparative, interdisciplinary study of the Andean region.

Aligned with its mission as a Title VI National Resource Center, CLACS promotes the development of publicly accessible teaching materials to support Quechua language learning, including the innovative student-produced Quechua language podcast, Rimasun, available on the CLACS Blog and via iTunes. The Center actively supports outreach initiatives related to Quechua in the New York City area, particularly with Quechua- and Kichwa-speaking communities; to date CLACS has sponsored over 40 “Quechua Nights” at NYU and across the city. The student-organized Runasimi Outreach Committee (ROC) has taken leadership in planning these activities; 2013-14 officers included Michael Abbot (MA 2014), Doris Loyaza (MA 2014), Charlie Uruchima (MA 2015), and Constanza Ontaneda (MA 2015), all of whom are also recipients of two-year FLAS awards for the study of Quechua. ROC has collaborated with partners including the Queens Museum, New York Quechua Initiative, the Native American and Indigenous Students’ Group at NYU, Immigrant Movement International, the Patterson Museum, Abya Yala Arte y Cultura, Juventud Ecuatoriana, Movimiento Indigena Asociados, Pachamama Peruvian Arts, Ecuador Sumag Llacta, and Casa Peru.

CLACS regularly invites scholars, artists, and activists to the Center to develop and present Quechua-related work. In Fall 2013, NYU Linguistics Professor Gillian Gallagher organized a multi-week Quechua literature workshop with Gladys Camacho Ríos, Bolivian author of Quechua language fiction. The fall prior, we were honored to host Manuelcha Prado, renowned musician whose compositional repertoire draws on a vast Andean cultural heritage preserved by oral memory in Quechua.

For more information about Quechua at NYU, please contact Quechua Outreach Coordinator Christine Mladic Janney at quechua@nyu.edu.
Consortium Conferences

For over two decades, CLACS and the Institute of Latin American Studies (ILAS) at Columbia University have collaborated in a Title VI NRC consortium. Through this partnership, CLACS and ILAS jointly host events and conferences throughout the year.

Feminist Constellations

This Consortium Conference, based on a “call for ideas,” consolidated the formation of a Working Group with the same name. This two-day event took place on April 12 – 13, 2013 and was a collaborative effort by CLACS-NYU, Stony Brook University, and Columbia University’s Barnard Center for Research on Women.

The purpose of the conference was to open a platform for the connection and strategic intercultural dialogue between feminists and non-feminist activists and scholars from diverse disciplinary backgrounds, carving out feminisms and feminist emancipatory actions occurring simultaneously throughout the hemisphere. While feminist conferences and meetings tend to focus on particular issues, our conference emphasized the necessity of creating spaces for a variety of feminisms to connect.

Indigenous, black, decolonial, communal, and anti-racist feminist stances were discussed in relation to contemporary debates about the challenges of democratization, decolonization, and de-patriarchalization of state, society, and mind. Feminism conceived as critique served as the basis from which to bridge these diverse stances through genealogical understandings of where “our” feminisms came from and why.

By inviting scholars and activists who bridge Latin American, Africana, Native American, Latino, and Gender Studies, the conference encouraged the possibilities of learning from one another through diversity.

The organizers of the Consortium Conference were Pamela Calla (CLACS), Sarah Sarzynski (CLACS), and Melissa Forbis (SUNY).

Politics of the Popular

The “popular” and “populism” are central threads in Latin American history and have returned to prominence in the last decade and a half. Although the phenomenon appears to have spread across the entire region, it has been most visible since the 1999 election of Hugo Chávez and he, more than anyone, has been central to discussions of the popular and populism.

On March 7, 2014 CLACS and the Institute for Latin American Studies at Columbia University presented their 2014 Consortium Conference: The Politics of the Popular in Latin America, organized by Tony Spanakos (NYU Politics). This event offered a multidisciplinary approach to the question of the politics of the popular. Bringing in analysis of various Latin American countries, institutions, and popular actors, the event contributed to a broader understanding of how the conference’s key themes translate globally and to such movements as Occupy, Indignados, Middle East uprisings, as well as the recent unrest in Venezuela.
“Why Remember Guantánamo?” was a two-day symposium held in December 2012 at NYU and Columbia University with international scholars and stakeholders in Guantánamo’s past and future. The event explored the century-long history of Guantánamo before 9/11 and its implications for what came after, raising critical questions around citizenship, immigration, public health, national security, and the nature of democracy. The symposium coincided with the opening of the Guantánamo Public Memory Project Exhibition, a multimedia collaboration of 11 different universities, which opened at NYU’s Kimmel Center for University Life Windows Gallery.

To create the exhibition, students at each university asked: what can the history tell us about what’s happening now—both there, and here at home? They dug through historical and visual archives; talked to people who worked there, lived there, or were detained there; and explored how Guantánamo relates to issues, people, and places in their own communities. Each student team created a piece of the Project’s traveling exhibit, sharing their discoveries—and the difficult questions they struggled with. NYU’s team, lead by Guantánamo Public Memory Project Director Liz Sevcenko, focused on the experience of Cuban Balseros (see verso).

After opening at NYU, the exhibition travelled to partner sites in 2013, including: the Douglass Library, Rutgers University; Cultural Arts Gallery, Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis, IN; the California Museum of Photography, Riverside, CA with USC. The exhibition traveled in 2013–14 to UMass Amherst, Phoenix Public Library, NYU London, International Civil Rights Center and Museum in Greensboro, NC, the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul, MN, T.T. Wentworth, Jr. Florida State Museum in Pensacola, FL, and the Little Haiti Cultural Center in Miami, FL. Public dialogues accompany the exhibit in each host community.

Student Michael B. Jordan (CLACS MA 2013) says “As an MA student in CLACS, I not only participated in a course co-offered by CLACS and Museum Studies dedicated to the curation of NYU’s portion of the exhibition, but also decided to make the Project the subject of my MA thesis, exploring the Project’s effectiveness at engaging the public in dialogue. To facilitate the research, I worked as an intern for the Project, traveling across the country with the exhibition and conducting surveys of the participants.”

Join the National Dialogue! For more information see: gitmomemory.org.
Why Remember Guantánamo?

CUBAN BALSEROS AT GTMO
SAFE HAVEN OR PRISON CAMP?

“It was worth it...to have a new life.”
- Conrado Basulto, balsero

“It felt like a prison.”
- Sergio Lassares, balsero

In August 1994, when President Castro lifted an exhumation ban, thousands of Cubans set to sea, many on makeshift rafts. These “rafters” or balseros, fled extreme food rationing, rampant power shortages, and the political repression of Cuba’s post-Soviet “Special Period in Peacetime.”

Fearing an immigration crisis, President Clinton reversed US policy of automatically granting Cubans who left the island asylum. He ordered the Coast Guard to intercept and send approximately 32,000 Cubans to the “safe haven” of GTMO.

GTMO officials first told balseros they would never enter the US, but did not explain how long they would be held or where they would go. Already overwhelmed by thousands of Haitians detained at GTMO, US military personnel struggled to accommodate the Cubans. Many balseros suffered extreme heat, hunger, violence, and acute boredom during their detention.

SHAPE THE DEBATE
Should the government use GTMO for refugees in the future?
SMS VOTE Yes or No by texting GITMO@ to 41411.
See your comments shape the debate.

But conditions gradually improved, and with help from aid agencies, balseros created a vibrant community that included art galleries, newspapers, and a radio station.

Ultimately, the US government admitted most balseros within a year of their arrival at GTMO. This stood in stark contrast to the treatment of Haitians detained there, the majority of whom were returned to a volatile Haiti.

The last balsero left GTMO on January 31, 1996. But the base continues to hold handfuls of Cuban refugees captured at sea—the current “wet-footdry-foot” policy only grants asylum to Cubans who make it to US soil. Recently improved facilities now stand ready to house potential future refugees.

OUR POINT OF VIEW
As students living in a city charged with post-9/11 memories, we are grateful to the Cuban civilians for offering a glimpse of pre-9/11 Guantánamo. We honor their stories of the creativity that emerged behind barbed wire.

- New York University

NYU panel from the Guantánamo Public Memory Project Exhibition.
K-12 Teacher Outreach

Serving the largest public school system in the country, comprising almost one million NYC students, CLACS strives to provide high-quality teacher training on Latin American Studies. Each year, our K-12 programming reaches hundreds of teachers through intensive training workshops, by developing curricular materials, and through in-school programs.

The CLACS Teacher Residency Program, funded by the Department of Education, was first piloted in 2010. Through this program, select teachers worked closely with NYU faculty members, NYU Bobst Library resources, and CLACS K-12 outreach staff to research topics relevant to Latin America. The 2012 – 2013 program focused on US-Mexico relations as well as the Andean region. Teachers explored issues of educational injustice, the ethnic studies debate, and murals as a form of public protest.

CLACS also collaborates on K-12 teacher training with a fellow NRC at NYU, the Kevorkian Center for Near East Studies. The centers co-sponsored two events in the Spring of 2014, inviting experts to work with educators to explore complex themes they can then bring into their classrooms. The first conference, “On Humanitarian Intervention,” included discussions on international involvement in the Syrian conflict, and CLACS invited CUNY Law Professor Lisa Davis to examine UN involvement in Haiti. The next conference focused on “Islam in the Americas.” After her presentation, CLACS affiliated faculty Aisha Khan worked with teachers to unravel the issues raised in the discussion.

Throughout these programs, teachers gained expert support and research opportunities to develop curricular materials published on the CLACS website and for use in classrooms. The online curricular materials are available to the public and educators at no cost.

Life After CLACS: Featured Alumni

The interdisciplinary MA in Latin American Studies as well as joint degree programs equip alumni to pursue diverse careers after graduation.

**Tamar Hahn** completed the joint MA program in Latin American and Caribbean studies and journalism at CLACS in 1998. Hahn began her career as a journalist covering Latin American finance as the managing editor of *The Earth Times*, a newspaper based in New York that covers the United Nations. Hahn is now the Regional Communications Officer for Latin America and the Caribbean for UNICEF in Panama. Native to Argentina, Hahn mentioned that “it’s funny that in order for Latin Americans to learn about Latin America, we have to go outside of it.”

**Another CLACS alumnus, Benjamin Aplin, is currently the Director of Institutional Advancement at the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience.** He spent the last five years working at New York-based international non-profits, including FilmAid, Trickle Up, The Hunger Project, and the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience. He says his time at CLACS developed his persuasive writing as well as his research skills, which have aided him tremendously in his career when looking for new approaches to solving problems. He added that CLACS helped him to learn how to speak in a group setting and confidently put his ideas on the table, while remaining open to feedback from his peers.

**Ana María Blanco** earned her law degree in Colombia where she worked for a corporate law firm and later for the Colombian government conducting research on the ongoing armed conflict in the country. She applied to NYU in order to continue researching Latin America and graduated from CLACS in 2005. She now helps companies implement and disclose progress on corporate social responsibility issues as the Communications on Progress Manager at the United Nations Global Compact.

If you are a CLACS alumnus, there are several ways to connect with us. Join our LinkedIn account at linkedin.com/in/clacsnyu or send us an email at info.clacs@nyu.edu.
MA at CLACS

Located in the heart of New York City’s Greenwich Village, NYU’s Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies promotes knowledge from and about Latin America and the Caribbean and fosters interdisciplinary and innovative approaches to area studies. A federally designated National Resource Center, CLACS hosts over 100 events per year, including lectures, conferences, symposia, film series, music, and more.

An MA from CLACS offers rigorous academic training, international field research experience, and professional development opportunities that prepare students to be leaders in academia or in the public and private sectors. MA students benefit from direct access to world-renowned scholars, while pursuing customized degrees in a city like no other.

In addition to the MA in Latin American and Caribbean Studies, joint degree programs are available in Global Journalism, Museum Studies, as well as in Law (MA/JD) and Library Science (MA/MLIS).

Numerous fellowships and scholarships are available to support academic studies, language training, and summer field research. Taking advantage of NYU’s longstanding relationships with key institutions in NYC, CLACS students participate in for-credit internships. For more information about The Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies at New York University, please visit www.clacs.as.nyu.edu.

CLACS Student Field Work

CLACS supports student research throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. From Mexico to Argentina, students combine research methods and course content they have learned at NYU to produce original scholarship. The map below is a sample of research projects funded by CLACS between 2012–2014.
NACLA Partnership Brings Publication to CLACS

In 2012, the North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA) moved to NYU to partner with CLACS. NACLA is an independent, nonprofit organization founded in 1966 that advances justice in the Americas by providing independent reporting and analysis on Latin America and the Caribbean and the region’s often-contentious relationship with the United States. For 47 years, NACLA’s community of deeply engaged researchers, writers, scholars, and activists has been at the forefront of exposing and stopping U.S. support for dictators, rights violators, and policies that undermine security, dignity, and a healthy environment in the region.

NACLA’s publication, *NACLA Report on the Americas*, is a quarterly magazine of news and analysis and is a three-time winner of the Utne Independent Press Award for International Coverage. Their website (nacla.org) features blogs and multimedia pieces and is home to 47 years of the NACLA archive. Through their in-depth reporting, NACLA brings critical coverage of political, economic, and social issues from Latin America and the Caribbean to the NYU campus.

NACLA and CLACS co-sponsor a variety of events at NYU, including panel discussions, author readings, and film screenings, and NACLA contributors are invited to present their work to the NYU community. These events have brought students, professors, and the general public together to learn about and discuss today’s most pressing issues in the Americas. With the help of dedicated interns, many of whom are NYU students, NACLA also recently launched a mobile app, making their valuable reporting on the region more accessible than ever.

CLACS and NACLA have developed a number of publishing workshops for NYU students. At these events, students work with journalists, editors, and academics on the approaches and best practices of academic and journalistic publishing. Students also have the opportunity to publish their own research in NACLA’s publication. Together, CLACS and NACLA are working on launching the Latin American Digital Media Initiative to augment NACLA’s in-depth analysis with breaking news from the region.

**CLACS hosts over 100 free public events each year**

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