

# Latin America N

# e W S L e t t e r

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### LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES AT WASH. U.

Ignacio M. Sánchez Prado

Assistant Professor of Spanish and Latin American Studies  
On Behalf of the Director, Mabel Moraña

Since the publication of our second Latin American Studies Newsletter in 2007, Washington University has been the site of an increasing number of academic and cultural activities revolving around Latin American Studies. During the 2007-2008 academic year, different departments in Washington University hosted a series of distinguished scholars from the various disciplines involved in Latin America, including Manuel Ferreira Lima Filho, Pedro Pérez Sarduy, David Guss, Cristina Rivera Garza, Idelber Avelar, Alberto Fuguet and Lois Parkinson-Zamora, amongst others. In addition, we had a symposium honoring Professor John Garganigo, one of the most important figures in the history of Latin American Studies and Wash U. This symposium was attended by distinguished former students in the graduate program in Spanish: Fernando Reati, Laura Demaría, Rafael Saumell, Ángel Tuninetti, Eduardo Espina and Ben Heller. All of last year's speakers gave us new perspectives on a whole set of issues and helped us enrich the international and interdisciplinary perspective at the core of our Program. Thus, we were able to have conversations about the construction of patrimony and historical sites throughout the Americas, as well as the constitution of oral histories and community spaces. We learnt about the infamous mental asylum of La Castañeda, one of the central institutions of Mexican Modernity, where many of the cultural processes emergent before, during and after the Mexican Revolution were articulated into a medical discourse that symbolized relations of power and production of pain. In the literary realm, we heard engaging topics about different dimensions of the practice of contemporary writing, including the difficult relationship of the writer to the market and the ways in which contemporary Argentinean literature keeps on coping with its dictatorial legacy. We can proudly say that last year Washington University was a point of attraction for many of the cultural and academic debates that allow Latin American studies be one of the most vibrant disciplines of today. With the recent hiring of Professors Claire Solomon and William Acree to our faculty, we expect the scope of our debates will widen. This ample academic conversation would not be possible with our success in shaping an undergraduate program that keeps on growing. By nearly tripling the size of the undergraduate program in three years, thus the largest number in our history, and thanks to an increasing interest in the major on the part of Freshmen and Sophomores, Washington University is consistently developing new generations in the study of Latin America. Besides the opportunity of attending world-class lectures, students have a diverse offering of classes, where they can build their knowledge on Latin American politics, history and culture, and ultimately develop independent theses and research projects. This past year, our students have produced meaningful research in issues such as indigenous movements, immigration to Latin America from Asia, Argentinean graffiti and Mexican poetry. Finally, we are increasing our number of international offerings. Currently, we have a Focus Program in Cuba, Summer Programs in Quito and Mexico and a Semester Program in Chile, all of which have provided meaningful experiences to majors and non-majors. In addition, the new Focus program in Argentina, developed by Richard Walter and Andrew Brown joins our existing Cuba Program in providing a classroom and on-site experience to freshmen interested in Latin America. Finally, Professors Moraña and Gustafson are working in the next installment of our South by Midwest conference. The proceedings of the previous conference, entitled "Cultura y Sociedad en América Latina" will be published under a new series co-edited by WashU and Vervuert. We anticipate that an increasing number of undergraduate and graduate students, as well as new faculty members, will reflect our commitment in enhancing both the Program's activities and structure and our international and inter-institutional connections, to make Washington University one of the most innovative centers for the study of Latin America.

# Assessing Democratic Institutions

by Brian F. Crisp

It is easy to criticize the quality of democracy in Latin America. Citizens do it, journalists do it, and academics do it. Scholars qualify democracies in the region with terms like “delegative” or “illiberal” to indicate that they are somehow flawed. Unfortunately, when read carefully, it is not very clear what these scholars expect democratic politicians to accomplish or whether those expectations are realistic. In my research, I try to be very explicit about how we should expect politicians to behave given the set of institutions – party nomination procedures, electoral laws, constitutional allocation of powers, etc. – within which they operate. These institutional characteristics vary dramatically across Latin America’s presidential systems.

For example, how legislators conceive of representation and the duties it entails is in large part a function of the institutions which govern how they get and keep their jobs. A candidate might remind prospective supporters that without her behind the scenes maneuvering, local construction companies would not have received lucrative contracts allowing them to employ so many workers. In another country a candidate would be more likely to remind voters of the stands his party took on big, national issues like lowering tariff barriers and pushing through a free trade agreement. If electoral laws encourage one form of vote seeking almost to the exclusion of the other, it will make for fundamental differences in how representation takes place and what citizens can expect from their governments.

Where individual, personal reputations have greater vote purchasing power than party reputations, candidates will focus on particularistic promises (“pork barrel”) for which they can claim credit, and incumbents will be assessed on their ability to have the resources of the many spent on the few – the few who make up the legislator’s constituents. On the other hand, party labels might not be very informative, and atomistic candidates will likely support the president’s policy program if he can “buy” them with the resources they need for their constituents. Where collective party reputations are more valuable than personal reputations, parties will campaign on differences in programmatic policy stances, and assessments of incumbents will be based on whether they faithfully implemented the mandate sent through the election. The sense of a personal connection with a particular legislator and the chances of receiving attentive constituency service may be diminished, but ideologically-motivated partisan delegations will bargain with the president, forcing her to compromise on major policy issues.

When we are careful and explicit in our reasoning, we usually find that politicians are predictable. Formal institutions certainly do not explain everything, but in my work, I find they are a good place to start when trying to understand democratic politics in Latin America.

## First Spanish Graduate Student Conference

On November last year, we held our First Graduate Student Conference, entitled “The Aesthetic Turn: Rethinking the Place or Art, Politics, and Subjectivity in Latin American and Spanish Cultures”. We invited students to rethink the place of aesthetics and art in their relationship with politics, subjectivities, and power in general. The aim was to have an opportunity to open a dialogue with other graduate students and to provide a discussion space to share works, views, different ideas and approaches. Students from Berkley, University of Michigan, New York University, Vanderbilt, and University of Illinois came and shared their works with us. We had panels dealing with a variety of topics, such as Visual Culture, Literature and Theater in Colonial and Golden Age Period, Southern Cone Contemporary Narrative, and Spanish fiction and Cinema, among others.

Presentations covered a variety of approaches and theoretical angles, such as the relationships between gender, race, and power, politics and aesthetics, etc. Our Guest Key Note Speaker, Idelber Avelar, gave a wonderful talk on Argentinean contemporary writers, entitled “Memory and Ruins in the Contemporary Argentine Novel.” Professor Avelar’s visit to Washington University was a remarkable experience for all of us.

## Latin American Colloquium Series

### The Politics of Gas, Jesuit Masculinities, and a “Southern Look” on Colonial History Research Fall 2007 Sessions

The Latin American Colloquium series has proved to be a productive space for sharing interdisciplinary approaches between faculty members and students here at Washington University. In this second session we had three guests from different Departments.

In our first session, Assistant Professor Bret Gustafson from the Anthropology Department gave a fascinating talk about his new research project on the nationalization of gas in Bolivia. Professor Gustafson also discussed and presented his past project on education and the discourse of “Decolonization” in Bolivia. In our second session, Assistant Professor Stephanie Kirk from the Spanish Department presented her new research project, which deals with the construction of a model of masculinity in Colonial Mexico. Her talk was entitled “Jesuit Masculinities: Knowledge and Power in Colonial Mexico”. For our last session of the semester we had a guest from Rutgers University. Andrea Campatella, Ph.D Candidate at the History Department presented her dissertation entitled “At the Periphery of the Empire: Indians and Settlers in the Pampas of Buenos Aires, 1580 – 1776”.

These three presentations provided us with different ideas and concerns regarding how ethnic differences involve power differences, the powers of writing in terms of self fashioning in the colonial period, and how we read history and analyze various forms of discourses.

## Professor Pedro Pérez Sarduy’s Visit



Afro-Cuban poet and writer Pedro Pérez Sarduy visited Washington University last fall. He gave a lecture entitled “Loma y Machete: The Symbolism of Race in Cuba Today.” He also read excerpts of his fiction, and shared his experience as a poet, writer, journalist and critic with students and faculty members at the Romance Languages and Literatures Program.

Professor Pérez Sarduy has not only published many books and has collaborated in different magazines, but also has been a broadcaster –he worked in Cuba for national radio (1965-79) and for the Latin American Section of the BBC World Service (1981-1994). He has authored the poetry books *Surrealidad* (1967), *Cumbite and Other Poems* (published in 1987 in Spanish, and in 1990 in a bilingual edition), and *Melecón Sigloveinte* (2005). Professor Pérez-Sarduy is also co-editor of *AFRO-CUBA: An Anthology of Cuban Writing on Race, Politics and Culture* (1993); and co-author of the Introduction to *No Longer Invisible/Afro-Latin Americans Today* (1995) and the book *Afrocuban Voices: On Race and Identity in Contemporary Cuba*, a book based on interviews with Afro-Cubans currently living and working in the island and discussing race issues, published on 2000. His first novel, *Las Criadas de La Habana (The Maids of Havana)* was published in 2001. Professor Pérez Sarduy has been the recipient of several literary awards. For more information on Professor Pérez Sarduy’s bio and activities:  
[www.afrocubaweb.com/pedroperezsarduy/pedroperezsarduy.htm](http://www.afrocubaweb.com/pedroperezsarduy/pedroperezsarduy.htm)

# Working on the Edges

## Interview with Cristina Rivera Garza

by José Galindo

Working on the finishing touches of a collection of short stories tentatively titled “Las afueras” and teaching two courses, Cristina Rivera Garza is spending the Spring semester of 2008 as a visiting professor at Washington University in St. Louis. The stories of the new collection deal with territories located at the margins of the legible world; its characters find themselves at the limits of the familiar and the comprehensible, a place where communication is clouded, and negotiations difficult.

“Having lived for many years at the border”, says Cristina, who taught for five years at the University of California at San Diego and received her Ph. D. in Latin American History from the University of Houston, “constantly dealing with bilingual approaches to the world, and having consciously decided to inhabit the edges of knowledge and territories, I find these places—the outskirts, the fringes—highly enticing, enigmatic. Because they provide a first approach to the unknown and because they are charged with expectation and fear”.



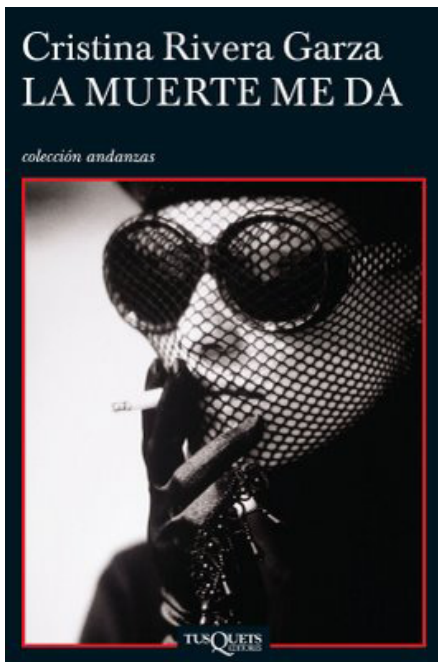
The author of books of poems (*La más mía*), short story collections (*La guerra no importa* and *Ningún reloj cuenta esto*), and novels (*Nadie me verá llorar*, *La cresta de Ilión*, *Lo anterior* and *La muerte me da*), Rivera Garza teaches at the Instituto Tecnológico de Monterrey, Campus Estado de México. *Nadie me verá llorar* earned her international recognition and prestigious literary prizes like the Premio Nacional de Novela José Rubén Romero and Premio Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz.

*Nadie me verá llorar* (Tusquets, 2000) has prompted a good deal of critical essays, and it continues to do so, but I am under the impression that you have left that stage of your writing behind. Could you provide a synthetic idea of your evolution as a writer?

The novel you refer to draws a lot from my experience as a historian, to the research I conducted on the infamous mental institution “La Castañeda” in Mexico City. It is a novel anchored geographically and temporally. Places, names, historical facts are identifiable throughout the novel. It took me five years to write it. Since then, I have been drifting away from this mode of writing. Gradually, I have been erasing identifying signs of space and time in my books. The short story collection I am currently working on represents a radical stage of this process.

At the same time (and considering that the perspective of the author is necessarily limited), I find a lot of common threads between those days and my present work. My use of historical documents in *Nadie me verá llorar* goes against the grain, never attempting to reconstruct a specific period or to render the story believable through the historical setting; it was a fragmentary, spaced out reading that was kind of based in the symptoms of the mental patients recorded in the files I encountered in my research. It also contains a narrative theory, although perhaps not as obviously as in my recent work, which I deem essential to its interpretation. In my later work it is as though the historical input has dwindled, but the influence of a historical reading is still there.

The facts, the names, the dates have faded away, but the principal tenets of the historian’s method are still present in the form of the interpretation of archival documents. To a certain extent, my writing has become more abstract and less identifiable in terms of historical references, also more fluid.



The common thread lies in understanding the novel as a critical tool of knowledge, and in the search for subverting conventional ways of reading and perception. Writer's obsessions may take different forms, but you cannot, even if you wanted, get rid of them.

*On recent articles for The New York Times, Stanley Fish wrote that the academic study of literature doesn't "do" anything for society. "Of what use are they humanities?" None whatsoever, he answered. "The humanities are their own good". You are not only a writer but also a literature professor. Why teach literature?*

Not only I teach the subject, I have also participated in the creation of a TV show on Literature, as well as in the design of an academic program in which authors visited classrooms where students had previously read their work. Therefore, I have frequently asked myself that question and consistently answered yes, it is worthwhile. I don't think that the study of literature produces better human beings, in the moral sense. I have met excellent readers, interpreters of literature with whom I would never sit down to have

a cup of coffee. However, I do think that books provide an alternative vision to our daily experience. The gap between our own experience and the perspective opened by certain books has a potential for critical thinking. Therein lies the value of literature and of teaching literature. Ideally, in the literature classroom you share different tools for reading, lenses through which to examine a book according to the rules established in the text itself. As a means to facilitate and develop a critical vision, I think teaching literature is of consequence, both culturally and politically.

Also, a classroom is a community of conversation. When conversation truly happens, when dialogue occurs, it becomes a critical, potentially radical, activity. When the conversation within the classroom is civil, profound, and passionate, I think we become part of something which is necessary, not only within the academy, but moreover outside universities.

## Intercambios

by Rachel England

*Intercambios* is a two part program in which students partner with Hispanic youth in the St. Louis area and youth in Costa Rica in order to foster global awareness, understanding and cooperation between the groups. *Intercambios* is an opportunity for students to develop leadership skills by facilitating critical cultural discussions and guiding two the two groups of youth in the process of creating a presentation about their lives and experiences to share with each other. During the week of Spring Break, students travel to La Fortuna, Costa Rica where they volunteer in an elementary school, showing the presentation created by the St. Louis Latino youth and working with the Costa Rican youth to create a reciprocal presentation to bring back to their cultural exchange partners in St. Louis. The goal of this initiative is to promote engagement of young people in the global community by directly involving them in the process of culturally educating other youth.

Rachel England is a sophomore in Arts and Sciences, majoring in Spanish and Latin American Studies with a minor in Political Science. She is president of *Intercambios*, an international spring break service trip to Costa Rica and a leader of the Niños Youth Mentoring Program. She has traveled extensively through Peru, Costa Rica, and Ecuador. Her interests in Latin America have to do, specifically, with International Diplomacy, Criminal Justice, and Human Rights.

# Faculty Updates

## Department of Romance Languages and Literatures

**William Acree** will join the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures as Assistant Professor of Spanish in Fall 2009. His research centers on print and popular culture and links to social identities in nineteenth-century Latin America, especially in the Río de la Plata region. Acree is completing the book project *From Reading to Reality: Print Culture and Collective Identity in the Río de la Plata, 1780-1910*, has recently published "Gaucha Gazetteers, Popular Literature, and Politics in the Río de la Plata" *SLAPC* (26, 2007) and is co-editor of the book *Jacinto Ventura de Molina en los orígenes de la escritura afrolatinoamericana* (forthcoming, 2008).

**Andrew Brown** edited and wrote the Introduction to *Tecnoescritura: Literatura y tecnología en América Latina*, Special Issue of *Revista Iberoamericana* 73.221 (Oct.-Dec. 2007). He has also written: "Edmundo Paz Soldán and his Precursors: Borges, Dick and the SF Canon" in *Science Fiction Studies* 34 (November 2007): 473-83; "Identidad poshumana en Lóbulo de Eugenia Prado" in *Revista Iberoamericana* 73.221 (Oct.-Dic. 2007): 801-12; "Sobrevivientes y cyborgs: Cine argentino al final de la dictadura", in *Cine, Historia y Sociedad: Cine argentino y brasileño desde los años 80*. Eds. Gastón Lillo and Walter Moser. Ottawa: Legas, 2007. 37-46. His office is now on Ridgley 304.



**Stephanie Kirk** published *Convent Life in Colonial Mexico: A Tale of Two Communities* (UP of Florida, 2007). Her essay "Power and Resistance: Teaching Convent Culture" in *Approaches to Teaching Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, eds. Emilie Bergmann & Stacey Schlu. (MLA Approaches to Teaching World Literature, December 2007) also came out last year. Forthcoming in 2008 are her articles "Pain, Knowledge, and the Female Body in Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz." *Revista Hispánica Moderna* (Volume 61.1, June 2008); "El parto monstruoso: Creación artística y reproducción biológica en la obra de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz." *Monstruosidad y biopolítica*, ed. Gabriel Giorgi. Special edition of *Revista Iberoamericana*; "'Ilustres varones apostólicos': el paradigma de la masculinidad jesuita en México del siglo XVII y XVIII." in *Poéticas de lo criollo: Inestabilidad semántica y heterogeneidad identitaria. La transformación del concepto 'criollo' en las letras hispanoamericanas (siglos XVI-XIX)*, eds. David Solodkow and Juan Vitulli. (Forthcoming from Beatriz Viterbo Editora); and the edited volume *Desplazamientos y disyunciones: Nuevos itinerarios de los estudios coloniales*. She presented papers at the American Comparative Literature Association in Puebla, Mexico, and at the Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas in Paris. She was co-organizer of the one-day symposium held at Washington University entitled "Religious Transformations in the Early Modern Americas." Professor Kirk is currently at work on her second book project, *Jesuit Masculinities: Power and Knowledge in Colonial Latin America*, which studies the formation and consolidation of Jesuit power in urban Mexico through the forging of masculine ties in the realm of education and erudition.

**Tabea Alexa Linhard** continues building bridges between her current book project on the reinsertion of Jewish culture in contemporary Spain and her interest in Mexican literature and culture. In April 2007 she presented the paper "Itineraries of Memory, Tours of Nostalgia: Mapping Jewish Spain" at the ACLA Annual Meeting, held in Puebla. Her book project also includes a study of the writings of Angelina Muñoz-Huberman, who in her vast work—not well-known outside of Mexico—delineates the complex relationship between growing up in Mexico in the 1940s, the Sephardic diaspora, and the Republican exile of 1939. Part of her research is included in her forthcoming article: "Hacia una poética del naufragio: melancolía, estudios mediterráneos y estudios transatlánticos." Finally, in the fall, she gave an invited talk on Juan Rulfo's *El llano en llamas* at the Universitat de Barcelona.

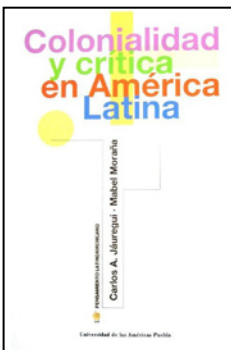
**Joseph Schraibman** participated in a seminar with an interview to Nathan Englander, author of *The Ministry of Special Cases*, a book on the dirty war and a period of Jewish prostitution at the beginning of 20th century, during the *Jewish Book Festival*. He also spends some time reading trials at the Archivo Histórico Nacional in México. He is responsible for the FO-CUS Program in Cuba.

**Elzbieta Sklodowska** presented a paper entitled “La emancipación del espacio: Retratos literarios de La Habana en *Memorias de una cubanita que nació con el siglo y Jardín*” at the Latin American Studies Convention (LASA) in Montreal (September 2007) and an invited paper, “Entre lo crudo y lo cocido: la comida en la narrativa cubana reciente,” at the symposium at the University of Antwerp (Belgium), “Saberes y Sabores en el Caribe y México.” Her essay, “La fabulación del vodú en ‘La tierra y el cielo’ de Antonio Benítez Rojo,” appeared in a book edited by Eduardo Espina in honor of John Garganigo (Santiago de Chile, 2007). Her book manuscript, *Miradas entrecruzadas: representaciones de Haití en el imaginario cubano*, has been recently accepted for publication by Iberoamericana-Vervuert. She continues to serve as chair of the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures and as general co-editor for *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos*.

**Claire Solomon** will join the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures as Assistant Professor of Spanish in Fall 2008. She received her PhD from Yale University in December 2007, and she is revising her dissertation, “Fictions of the Bad Life: Prostitution in Argentine Literature and Culture” for publication. She is also working on a new project focusing on the Yiddish theater and its avatars in Latin American and U.S. cities. She participated in an NEH Summer Seminar in Buenos Aires last July on the subject of “Jewish Buenos Aires” and she presented some preliminary research at a panel she chaired at LASA in Montreal (“Ficción y hegemonía: Algunos usos recientes del pasado”). An article based on this research, “Requiem for a Yiddishkeit” is currently under review at the *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*.

**Selma Vital** teaches Port 101, 103 (during the Fall) and Port 102, 104 (during the Spring). This current Spring semester, she is also teaching an Intermediate course: Port 215 Reading and Conversation, to be repeated every Fall. She also has created and coordinates a weekly conversational table open to all levels of proficiency. The meetings happen every Wednesday, from 12-1 pm at Holmes Lounge. Selma Vital, along with Professor Pardue and IAS senior Landen Romei organized a Brazil Week at Washington University April 7-10, 2008. The event included a roundtable discussion concerning contemporary issues in Brazil as well as music, dance and *capoeira* workshops and performances.

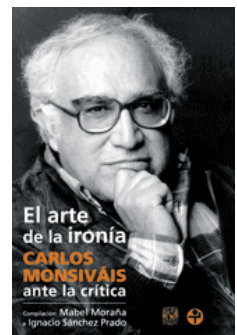
## **RLL and International and Area Studies**



**Mabel Moraña** visited the countries of Chile, Argentina and Uruguay, taught a seminar in Havana, Cuba, on colonial / postcolonial studies invited by SSRC, and traveled to Colombia to give a keynote address at the Cultural Studies Conference at Universidad de los Andes, in Bogota. She gave keynote lectures in Calgary, Canada, at the Latin American Studies Conference, and at the Romance Literatures Conference “Reading Fear” held at University of Oregon. In addition, Professor Moraña was invited to lecture at Duke University / University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and at Ohio State University on recent Latin American social and political movements. Prof. Moraña organized special sessions and delivered papers at LASA (Montreal) and at the MLA (Chicago). In February 2008, she participated at the exhibit “On Rage and Redemption” at the Museum of Modern Art, at Vanderbilt University, which featured a selection of Oswaldo Guayasamín’s acclaimed paintings,

and contributed with an essay to the exhibit’s catalog. Two books co-edited by Prof. Moraña were published in 2007-2008: *El arte de la ironía: Carlos Monsiváis ante la crítica* (Mexico: ERA), and *Colonialidad y crítica en América Latina. Bases para un debate* (Mexico: UDLA). Several articles and interviews appeared at specialized journals on the topics of literary and cultural studies. Three books coordinated by Prof. Moraña are forthcoming: *Cultura y cambio social en América Latina* (which is the first volume of the series South by Midwest, coedited by Washington University and Iberoamericana Editores/Vervuert), *Revisiting the Colonial Question in Latin America*, and *José Carlos Mariátegui y los estudios latinoamericanos*. She is also coordinating the series *Essays on Theory and Culture/Ensayos de Teoría Cultural* with Iberoamericana/Vervuert.

**Ignacio Sánchez-Prado** was co-editor, with Mabel Moraña, of the volume *El arte de la ironía: Carlos Monsiváis ante la crítica*. He published the following articles: “Vanguardia y campo literario: la Revolución Mexicana como apertura estética” (*Revista de Crítica Literaria Latinoamericana* 66); “Bienaventurados los marginados porque ellos recibirán la redención. José Revueltas y el vaciamiento del marxismo” (*El terreno de los días. José Revueltas ante la crítica*. Eds. Francisco Ramírez y Martín Oyata) and “Dying Mirrors, Medieval Moralists and Tristram Shandies. The Literary Genealogies of Fernando del Paso’s *Palinuro de México*” (*Comparative Literature*. Forthcoming). His book *Naciones Intelectuales. Las fundaciones de la modernidad literaria mexicana (1917-*



1959) will appear next year. His current research is focused in a book project on Mexican Film and neoliberalism and a series of articles on Latin American intellectual traditions. Prof. Sánchez Prado will serve as director of the Washington University Program in Puebla in the Summer of 2008.

## History

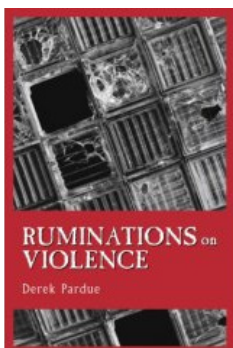
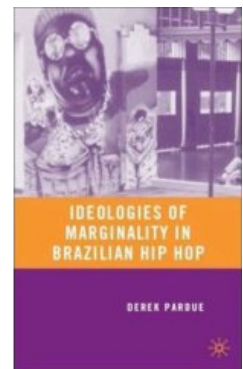
**Rick Walter** presented the paper “Richard Nixon and Peru: A Complex Relationship” at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Association of Latin American Studies (St. Louis on November 3, 2007). Professor Walter was on leave during the fall semester finishing up a manuscript entitled *Peru and the United States, 1960-1975: The View from Both Sides*. He is beginning research on a project that looks at the U.S. Congress and intervention in Latin America over the course of the 20th century, focusing on particular cases (Mexico, Nicaragua, Guatemala - and perhaps more), but this is in the very preliminary stages. Prof. Walter has a book review coming out in the *Hispanic American Historical Review* and did up-date entries on Buenos Aires for *The Encyclopedia of Latin American History* (Thompson and Gale) and the *Oxford History of the Modern World*.

## Anthropology

**David L. Browman's** Latin American activities include working on the results of a small pilot project utilizing a DNA to identify prehistoric domestic camelids in the Andes, with Jose Capriles and colleagues in Bolivia and Spain. As well, he continues to work as the Co-PI on the 2006-2008 NSF Grant “Late Epiclassic Transitional Dynamics at La Quemada, Zacatecas, Mexico” with Dr. Charles Trombold. Relevant publications include: “Titicaca Antiguo: reseña de Stanish” in *Arqueología Suramericana* 2.1. (2006):128-130; “History of Bolivian Archaeology: Geraldine Byrne de Caballero” in *Bulletin of the History of Archaeology* 17.1 (2007):39-40; and “History of Bolivian Archaeology: Max Portugal Ortiz” in the same issue of *Bulletin of the History of Archaeology*: 40-42.

**Bret Gustafson** continues research on the relationship between natural gas extraction, political violence, and the cultural politics of race, nation, and region in Bolivia. Forthcoming work addresses the contest between the indigenous-backed proposal of “plurinationalism” and regionalist clamor for “autonomy”; and a study of how indigenous languages and ethnonyms are used to manipulate cartographic imaginaries and territorial claims in colonial and contemporary Bolivia. Forthcoming is his book entitled *New Languages of the State: Indigenous Resurgence and the Politics of Knowledge in Bolivia* in Duke University Press. He has also written the article “Flashpoints of Sovereignty: Gas and Territorial Conflict in Eastern Bolivia”, in *The Anthropology of Oil*. Eds. Stephen Reyna and Andrea Behrends. Oxford: Berghahn Books.

**Derek Pardue's** new book entitled *Ideologies of Marginality in Brazilian Hip Hop* (Palgrave McMillan Press) is currently in press. He has edited the book *Ruminations on Violence*. (Waveland Press, 2008) and written the article “Hip hop as pedagogy: A look into ‘Heaven’ and ‘Soul’ in São Paulo, Brazil” in *Anthropological Quarterly* 80 (3): 673-708. He was invited to give lectures about Brazilian hip hop at Tulane University and Southern Illinois University in March 2007 and has been invited to give a keynote lecture at Middle Tennessee State University in March of 2008. He organized a panel at the recent American Anthropological Association meetings (Dec 2007) entitled: ““Pop Mediation in Hip Hop and Reggaetón: The Role of Everyday Practitioners, the State and Corporate Media” where he presented ““Battle over Community Radio: Hip Hop Conquest and State Target.” Professor Pardue has submitted a version of this talk as an article for consideration by the journal *American Ethnologist*.



In addition, he presented in the most recent LASA in Montreal a talk entitled: ““Sou Marginal Mesmo (I’m the Real Hoodlum): Using Violence as an Aesthetic Resource in Brazilian Hip Hop.” In March of 2008 he will chair a panel on the narratives of Brazilian funk and rap at the Brazilian Studies Association meetings in New Orleans. Professor Pardue’s course “Kill Assessment” is now part of the Latin American Studies course curriculum. Professor Pardue along with Instructor Selma Vital and IAS senior Landen Romei have organized a Brazil Week to take place at Washington University April 7-10, 2008.



## Political Sciences

**Brian Crisp** continues his research on the functioning of democratic institutions in Latin America – especially as they structure the behavior of legislators and influence interbranch relations. He hosted a conference at Wash.U on Scaling Legislatures where participants focused on multiple indicators of legislators’ preferences and how those could be converted into systematic of their individual policy ideal points and measures of policy space dimensionality. Crisp presented other aspects of his work at the annual meetings of the Midwest Political Science Association and the American Political Science Association. With two Wash.U graduate students, Yael Shomer and Kate Jensen, he published “Magnitude and Vote Seeking” in *Electoral Studies*. He also published “Incentives in Mixed-Member Electoral Systems: General Election Laws, Candidate Selection Procedures, and Cameral Rules” in *Comparative Political Studies*.

**Guillermo Rosas** is spending his sabbatical leave at the Institut Barcelona d’Estudis Internacionals, where he is finishing up his book on political regimes and banking crises. He will be back on campus in the Fall of 2008.

## Music

**John Turci-Escobar**’s primary area of interest is the late Italian madrigal. Secondary areas of interest include nineteenth-century chromaticism, Classical form, the music of Astor Piazzolla, and broader issues in music and meaning. John has presented his work at regional and national conferences. He is currently writing a series of articles on the music of Carlo Gesualdo. The article “Softening the Edges: Cadential Attenuation in the Madrigals of Carlo Gesualdo” appeared in *Theory and Practice* (2007). He is also preparing a book on chromaticism in the late sixteenth century madrigal. John has received a Robert M. Leylan Prize Dissertation Fellowship and a Mellon Dissertation Research Grant. His commitment to teaching has been recognized by a Lilly Teaching Fellowship and a Prize Teaching Fellowship from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Yale University. Before coming to Washington University in St. Louis, John taught at the University of Georgia.

## Defining the Music of Buenos Aires: the 1965 Collaboration Between Piazzolla and Borges

By John Turci-Escobar

Tango or not-tango? In 1960s Buenos Aires, the wrong answer to this question could find you at the receiving end of a left hook. At the center of the battle over the city’s music was Astor Piazzolla, whose daring innovations faced fierce resistance from the tango establishment. Critics, musicians, and a large portion of the public refused to accept his music as tango. Some even questioned his patriotism! Animosity and allegiances ran wide and deep. Some taxi drivers refused to pick up the man who “destroyed the tango;” others refused to charge him for the ride. And Astor gave as good as he got, heaping verbal abuse on his critics and punching more than one, occasionally on a television set.

But the tide was slowly turning. Piazzolla’s burst of productivity during the first half of the 1960s yielded a series of iconic compositions that would form the basis of the new canon of modern tango. His audience was gradually extending beyond a core of loyal devotees. A tour of the United States sponsored by the Argentine government garnered critical acclaim. During this tour Astor discovered an enthusiastic following among North American jazz musicians. In 1965, the composer found a unique opportunity to establish his progressive tango as the music of Buenos Aires: a project with renowned writer, Jorge Luis Borges.

The historic intersection between Borges and Piazzolla took the form of an album. Borges contributed six poems, which the composer set to music. The album cover displays the names of the writer and the composer above a provocative title: *El Tango*. It thus associated Borges, who had redefined the language of the Argentines, and Piazzolla, who was redefining Argentine music. The cover, however, belied significant differences between composer and poet.

Like Astor, Borges had a gripe with the contemporary tango establishment, but his allegiance was with the earlier and simpler milonga and the so-called *Guardia Vieja* (the old guard of Tango). He had no investment in Astor's progressive agenda. This project, therefore, presented a difficult challenge for the composer. On the one hand, he had to accommodate Borges's taste for the earlier tango, lest the poet withdraw his name from the endeavor. On the other hand, however, this project was a singular opportunity to make the case for the modern tango as the music of Buenos Aires.

The album begins with a "musical poem" that, according to Astor's liner notes, was especially composed to "obey and respect" the content of Borges's poem, "El tango." This poem mourns the loss of an epic universe of *guapos*, *compadritos* and *malevos*, male social characters living at the margins of society and the city itself. Long dead, the poem reveals, these characters live on in the old tangos of the *Guardia Vieja*.

Piazzolla's setting of the poem begins in the new style: a bass ostinato lays down the composer's signature rhythmic pattern; the piano interjects striking polychords reminiscent of Stravinsky's *Petrushka*; and a colorful pairing of bandoneon and pizzicato violin unfurls an austere rising gesture. But then things take a surprising turn. The bass ostinato returns, ominously. We hear Borges's text, not as song but as recitation. The elegiac tone of the opening stanzas incites the familiar instruments, which begin to emit a cacophonous array of noises: clicks, scratches, sirens, thumping, wild clusters of notes banged out with palms and fists on the piano. Summoning the spirits of the *malevos*, the beating and wailing instruments rise to a frenzied climax that bursts into silence. Through misty echoes we hear a hovering, spectral chord. We adumbrate mythical Buenos Aires, its dark alleys inhabited by shadows and silent daggers. Slowly, the instruments reassert themselves and, on the words "these dead live in the tango," break into a frenetic and distorted "milonga macabre."

In Piazzolla's reading of "El tango," the temporal passage from present to past Buenos Aires is conveyed through a stylistic shift: the new tango transmogrifies into a refracted version of the *Guardia Vieja* style, illustrated most pointedly in the *milonga macabre episode*. Thus, Piazzolla has set the stage for the *guapos* and *malevos* that inhabit the milonga texts provided by Borges. The laborious strumming of a recalcitrant guitar ushers in the first shadow, Jacinto Chiclana.

Composed in the style of an improvised milonga, "Jacinto Chiclana" and the two songs that follow feature simple melodies and imitate earlier styles. The musical idioms of the new tango are pushed to the background, appearing intermittently in chromatic lines, extended harmonies, and asymmetrical rhythmic articulations. Song by song, however, the grip of the old style loosens. In the penultimate song, "A don Nicanor Paredes, a sober melody based on Gregorian chant dispels the typical tango syncopations, and the introduction of full orchestra casts a nostalgic patina on the past. Nostalgia turns sentimental, and even kitschy, in the last song, suggestively titled, "Oda intima a Buenos Aires." The melodramatic tone of this composition seems suspect, however, and reads as an ironic commentary on misplaced nostalgia.

In *El Tango*, Piazzolla appropriates the musical idioms of the past to invoke a demimonde of shady characters living at the edges of a mythical Buenos Aires. Read as revisionist history, it casts the milongas and tangos of the *Guardia Vieja* as the music of an old Buenos Aires, one that is long gone. Piazzolla's new tango, with its bold assimilation of the old and new, local and foreign, popular and classical, emerges as the music of modern Buenos Aires, of its complex and fractious urban core.

## My experience in ...

### ... Quito, Ecuador

by Grace Van Voorhis

I always envisioned that I would spend a semester abroad during my junior year. However, my coursework in Latin American Studies instantly captured my imagination, and did not want to wait until the time I was an upperclassman to study in a Spanish-speaking country. For this reason, I decided to participate in Wash. U's six-week-long summer program at La Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, and my experience gave me an even stronger desire to continue learning about the languages and cultures of this region of the world.

My most memorable encounters took place when I was exploring the city of Quito, which is nestled in a valley between mountains and volcanoes and sits 9,200 feet above sea-level. I relished the opportunity to be surrounded by Spanish-speakers at



all times, and I challenged myself to strike up conversations with Ecuadorians in cafés, discotecas, museums, grocery stores, and public parks as frequently as possible. I was best able to improve my accent, fluency, and vocabulary when I encountered new and different situations that forced me to find creative ways to express myself. At the same time, the theories and philosophies that had been presented in my Latin American Studies courses in the U.S. became clear within context. As I witnessed youth protests, soccer games, or displays of graffiti, I began to understand the politics of race, class, and gender in Quito.

Finally, the presence of the Andes Mountains, the coast, the tropical rainforest, and the Galapagos Island makes Ecuador incredibly diverse. Our weekend trips gave me an appreciation for the unique challenges and opportunities that people face in different parts of the country. All in all, the six weeks I spent at La Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar exposed me to a plethora of values, ideas, and opinions and ultimately spurred me to reflect on my own place in the world. This summer program was my first extended period of time abroad, and it has made me even more determined to return to Latin America, this time to Chile, for a full semester next year

### ... Santiago, Chile

by Hillary Voth

Summarizing my experience in Santiago de Chile, distinguishing how it changed me and what I learned from my six months there is far from simple. I went because I wanted to improve my Spanish and I wanted to see the world. Mission accomplished. However, I greatly underestimated how much more I would get out of my semester abroad.

It may be odd to say this, but I believe that I ended up loving Santiago in spite of myself. Even though I had really looked forward to the experience, at first, I was disappointed with my situation. I arrived in Santiago and it was not what I had hoped it would be at all. It was a huge, modern city, and it seemed to lack character and culture. The city and the country as a whole appeared to exist without any sense of history. After a few months, I realized that none of this was true, that Chile does in fact have a very complex history. Much of this is avoided though in an attempt to forget the intense and traumatic events that the country recently suffered under the dictatorship of Pinochet. For me, understanding this was key to experiencing the Chilean culture and relating to its people. By the time I left Santiago, I felt strongly tied to Chile and its people.

After six months, not only had I had learned a form of Spanish which was unintelligible in other parts of South America and that Chilean bread was infinitely better than its Bolivian counterpart, but I had also learned that the country has a strong collective memory which it tries to look past and forget, but which still deeply affects it. It was amazing to be able to see another culture in detail, almost as closely as one sees one's own culture, and grow to relate to people who I originally considered very different from myself. I am certain that I would have never had these opportunities if I had not decided to spend a semester abroad.

### ... Puebla, Mexico

by Teresa Biagioni

I chose to go on the 2007 trip to Puebla because the program allowed me to practice my Spanish and to experience living in a Latin American country in a way that fit into my schedule as a 2008 senior. The program is for all levels of students: in the group of students that went to Puebla this past summer, there were those that had completed just the minimum requirement of 101 and 102, to those that had taken up to 300-level grammar and literature classes.

The program is able to encompass a wide variety of students because the curriculum is tailored to the student's skill-level and interests. Students take two courses in the program, one of which is a grammar class, while the other focuses on an aspect of Mexican culture. In addition, students enroll in two talleres, or cultural workshops. The focus of the talleres ranges from Latin dance, to photography, cooking, Capoeira, and a community service program working with children. Classes in Puebla met only Monday through Thursday, giving us plenty of free time to hang out with our host families, go to restaurants and to travel. We traveled visit diverse locations throughout the region, from Mexico City to Oaxaca.

At the end of the trip, all of us had noticeably improved our Spanish and gained experiences that we are continuing to use after returning to Wash U, and at least half of the students in our group have used their experience in Puebla as a jumping-off point for further study abroad experience on Wash U programs in Spain and Chile, as well as in several SIT programs throughout Latin America.



## Latin American Courses (Spring 2008)

**Latin America in the 20th and 21st Century:  
Reform or Revolution**  
Richard Walter

**Race, Class and Gender: Cultural  
Readings of Brazil and Its Cities**  
Derek Pardue

**Hispanic Art/Arte Hispano**  
Virginia Braxs

**Spanish American Literature I**  
Catalina Andrango-Walker

**Spanish American Literature II**  
Nicolás Poblete Pardo  
Andrew Brown  
Eloisa Palafox

**Anthropology and Development**  
Bret Gustafson

**Seminar on Urban Cultures in Latin America**  
Ignacio Sánchez-Prado

**Advanced Seminar: Latin America and the US  
in the 20th Century**  
Richard Walter

**Cities of the Past Future: Literary Institutions &  
Peripheral Modernity in the Latin Am. Avant-Garde**  
Ignacio Sánchez-Prado

**Cuban Literature. Cuba On My Mind: From the  
Revolution to the Special Period**  
Elzbieta Sklodowska

**Studies in Spanish-American Literature:  
Escrituras Colindantes/Colliding Writing**  
Cristina Rivera-Garza

**Major Seminar (Spanish 405): Monsters from  
South America**  
Nicolás Poblete Pardo

**Major Seminar (Spanish 405): Genders in Latin  
America**  
Cristina Rivera-Garza

## Latin American Courses (Fall 2008)

**Nation and Desire in Latin America**  
Mabel Moraña

**Indigenous Peoples and Movements in Latin America**  
Bret Gustafson

**Latin America: From Colonialism to Neo-colonialism  
1492 – 1890**  
Richard Walter

**Vote for Pedro: A Critical Look at Youth and Popular  
Cultures**  
Derek Pardue

**Latin American Politics**  
Guillermo Rosas

**Latin American Disseminations: Migrations and  
Identities in the 20th and 21st Centuries**  
Ignacio Sánchez-Prado

**Reading the Scores: Understanding Brazilian  
Music Through Social Categories**  
Derek Pardue

**Major Seminar (Spanish 405): Latin American  
Literature Beyond Identity**  
Claire Solomon

**Contemporary Issues in Latin America**  
Brian Crisp

**Latin American Film: Argentine Cinema**  
Andrew Brown

**The Inventions of America: Latinoamericanismo  
in the 20th Century**  
Ignacio Sánchez-Prado

**Spanish American Literature I**  
Stephanie Kirk

**Spanish American Literature II**  
Gonzalo Aguiar  
Claire Solomon

**Survey of Latin American Culture**  
Ignacio Sánchez-Prado

**Major Seminar (Spanish 405): The Worlds  
of Julio Cortázar**  
Andrew Brown