



Latin American Studies

The Newsletter of the Latin American Studies Committee

Volume 10, Issue 1
May 2008

Notes from the Director:

Whew, *ya viene el verano!* It's been another full year of events during which students, faculty and community members came to understand better the diverse politics, culture, history, literature and languages of Latin America. Specifically, we held events on Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, the Mexico-US border and Venezuela.

Without a doubt the biggest event of the year was hosting the 55th Annual Conference of RMCLAS (The Rocky Mountain Council for Latin American Studies). RMCLAS was an explosion of Latin American Studies in Flagstaff—sixty panels and nearly 250 participants (from all over the world!) who presented papers on a variety of Latin American topics including film, gender, history, literature, music, political science and sociology. The conference disseminated an impressive array of scholarship and, at the same time, successfully combined the realms of “high” and “popular” culture.

Dr. Dieter Lehnhoff's key note presentation/concert not only spoke to us about baroque Latin American music, it allowed us to hear music from the 16th and 17th centuries. Most of these pieces were compositions that Lehnhoff himself rescued from “oblivion.” Many thanks are due to Cristina Altamira, Kari Barton, Michael Corman and Dr. Frank Scott who played crucial roles—and instruments—in this beautiful musical presentation/performance.

Dr. Freddy Vilches's concert of traditional Latin American music and salsa formed the perfect counterpoint.

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**ROCKY MOUNTAIN COUNCIL FOR
LATIN AMERICAN
STUDIES
55TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

April 9-12 2008
Radisson Woodlands Hotel Flagstaff, Arizona

Keynote Speaker
Dieter Lehnhoff
Composer/conductor/musicologist
University of Leoben (Austria)

For more information
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NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

Sponsored by the Latin American Studies of Northern Arizona University, the College of Arts and Letters, Department of Modern Languages, and the Department of History

Crossings: Border Crossing in Southern Arizona

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The presentation took us on a musical journey of *música folklórica* from throughout the Spanish-speaking world and culminated in a *pachanga de música bailable*. *¡Y sí compa', la gente sí bailó!* Many thanks to Bryan Cooperrider, Steve Gallegos, Julio Jauregui and Fernell López (musicians living in four different cities!) for making this concert happen.

Both of these concerts/presentations were musical and logistical experiments. We brought together musicians who did not know one another, and in some cases musicians from different countries who were not even familiar with each others' music. *¡En los dos conciertos la música cuajó increíblemente bien!*

As if all of the above were not enough (*dayéinu*), Irene Matthews, Susan Deeds, Keith Sherman and I collaborated with students from Patricia Murphey's design class to create a new poster/brochure to promote the Latin American Studies Minor. To Patricia we say *obregado!* Keep your eyes open for these new promotional materials.

Many, many, many thanks to Susan Deeds who has helped so much this year that I cannot possibly thank her enough. And finally, thanks to Keith Sherman, the creator of this newsletter and the LAS student-worker for the 2007-2008 academic year. Serving as LAS student-worker is a complex job, with many starts and stops, uneven times of respite followed by a rush of activities that inevitably fall on a student at the precise moment when his course-work needs attention. Keith took it all in stride and worked like a dog. *¡Gracias!*

Lastly, thanks to those of you who helped organize and/or attended all of this years events!

Bob Neustadt, Director,
Latin American Studies



On October 8th Donna Carrier, educator and one-time recipient of the Arizona Teacher of the Year award, presented "Crossings: Border Crossing in Southern Arizona" to a packed audience in Liberal Arts 135. Her presentation narrated the fatal exodus of two Mexicans from the town of Altar to the T'Ohono O'Odham Nation, where a US Border Patrol Search and Rescue Team recovered their bodies. The lecture next turned to Sasabe, Mexico-- a pueblo whose entire economy is based on human smuggling-- in order to offer a south-of-the-border perspective from migrants and Mexican rescue agents with Grupos Beta. *Mil gracias* to Juliana Suby for organizing Donna's visit, in consequence of which NAU students were able to better grasp the realities of human suffering in the borderlands.

Indigenous Guatemala: From Civil War Resistance to Post-War Community Activism.

Thanks to the efforts of the Latin American Studies Program, the Abya Yala University Association, and Professor Leónardo Alvarado of the Applied Indigenous Studies Department, NAU, had the honor of hosting three members of the Guatemalan Communities of Populations in Resistance- CPR-Sierra. Nazaria Tum Sanic, CPR Administrator and International Spokesperson; Pedro Bernal Raymundo, Lead Health Promoter of CPR communities; and Baltazar Solano Canay, Vice President of the Consejo General/General

Council of the CPR-Sierra, recounted the scarcely-conceivable challenges faced by Mayan indigenous communities displaced and attacked by government forces during the Guatemalan Civil War.

NAU Abya Yala University Association Latin American Studies Program

Presents:

The CPR-Sierra
(Communities of Population in Resistance)

"Indigenous Guatemala: From Civil War Resistance to Post-War Community Activism."

Guatemalan Mayan speakers:

Nazaria Tum Sanic
Administration, Maya Quiche



Baltazar Solano Camay
Consejo General, Itzil Maya



Pedro Bernal
Equipo de Salud, Itzil Maya



When:
Thursday Oct. 11th, 2007

Time:
4:00 - 6:00 PM

Place:
**Rm. 107 - SBS
BLG # 65**



The CPR-Sierra will talk about their current resettlement sites and the ongoing social, cultural, health and economic problems they are still facing - particularly with regards to the increasing pattern of migration to the U.S.

The CPR represent Maya indigenous communities that were internally displaced during the Guatemalan civil war. After the Peace Accords, over ten years ago, they have returned to their homelands or have been resettled after negotiations with the Guatemalan government.

The talk covered a great deal of recent indigenous Mayan history, as the speakers related details of untold sufferings, from initial government bombing of villages, to persecution in the Guatemalan jungles, to survival and trans-tribal solidarity on the basis of improvisation and effective organization. Describing situations in which, for instance, medicinal plants substituted for unavailable medical supplies, CPR-Sierra members conveyed successes, noting, however, that 11 years after the signing of the Peace Accords, indigenous groups are still struggling for rights denied them on their own land.



On October 18th, independent journalist Rob Baggot tripped from Phoenix to present *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised*, a film depicting the April 2002 coup which sought to depose Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez. Directed by Irish filmmakers Kim Bartley and Donnacha O’Briain, the impressive documentary won 12 Film Festival awards, including Best Documentary at the Chicago International Film Festival (2003) and the International Documentary Association’s prestigious IDA Award (2003). *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised* speaks to the continued disregard of the United States for the tenets of International Law, as well as its willingness to endorse violence and perfidy for the attainment of its own ends.

Pedro Pérez-Sarduy

Latin American Studies, in conjunction with the Center for International Education, the College of Arts and Letters, the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, the Commission on Ethnic Diversity, and the Graduate Association of Political Science, also brought Cuban-born poet Pedro Pérez-Sarduy to NAU for a three-day event which included lectures, readings and films. Pérez-Sarduy, renowned for verse drawing on an eclectic assemblage of authors, including Marcel Proust, Allen Ginsburg and Arthur Rimbaud, read from his *oeuvre* in Spanish at an intimate session translated in real-time by Professor Robert Neustadt. At an event entitled “An Afternoon of Cuban Film,” Pérez-Sarduy screened clips from films including *Hasta Siempre: Will the Revolution Survive Tomorrow?* and *With or Without Fidel: Will the Revolution Survive After Castro?* According to Sarduy’s interpretation of these films, the Cuban revolution is in fact sustained by widespread popular support and is on this account likely to endure after the end of Castro’s half-century long rule. Finally, on the last day of his visit, Sarduy presented a lecture called “Loma y Machete: The Symbolism of Race in Cuba Today” to a large audience in Gardner Auditorium. The talk was animated and engaging and provoked a lively question and answer session, in which Pérez-Sarduy and a student hailing from Zimbabwe sparred over the source of US anti-Cuba foreign policy. Thanks to Sheryl Lutjens for inviting Pérez-Sarduy, and for her amazing work at NAU over the course of 20 years!



**Cuban Poet, Scholar and Journalist
Pedro Pérez-Sarduy**

Made in L.A.

To kick off the Spring 2008 semester, Latin American Studies teamed together with the Departments of Political Science and Women’s Studies to present *Made in L.A.*, a documentary by Almudena Carracedo detailing the struggle of three Latina immigrants employed in a Los Angeles sweatshop.



The film follows the women at work and at home, offering an intimate glimpse of

the lives of those whose work fuels and sustains the massive US economy, yet who are repaid with sweatshop wages, foul treatment, 12 hour days, and deplorable working conditions. Against overwhelming odds and despite legal intimidation, Lupe, Maria and Maura eventually join with other workers to wage the nation's first successful struggle holding retailers responsible for the conditions under which their merchandise is manufactured. Present at the screening were several local progressive organizations, including NAU Peace and Justice, the immigrants' rights group No More Deaths, and the pro-labor Coalition for a Sweatshop-Free Flagstaff.



Shown on February 21st was *The Accidental Revolution*, a two-part documentary series on sustainable agriculture and universal health care in Cuba. Skillfully filmed on scene, with attention to the critical details enabling the small island state to survive and prosper despite the US blockade, *The Accidental Revolution* revealed little known facts about Cuba's unexpected successes, a case in point being that Cuban doctors, though renowned as some of the world's finest, are nevertheless compensated at a rate lower than that of

workers at some of Cuba's most successful farm cooperatives. We're very much obliged to Marcus Ford for suggesting this fine film.

The Real Deal

On February 21st, Ecuadorian journalist Óscar Esteban León spoke at great length on the need for alternative media coverage of events transpiring in Latin America. A native of Quito currently residing in the United States, León addressed various issues, including repression, resistance, immigration, environmental crises, indigenous rights, Minutemen, oil company memos, and the rampant consumerism characterizing modern life—which poses so grave a threat to the health of the planet and its inhabitants. The presentation was accompanied by multimedia footage from documentary films that Esteban-León had produced and directed—including telling photos of Sheriff Joe Arpaio and his “tent city” facility for detained immigrants.

Nahuatl Language Preservation in El Salvador



On April 1st, Salvadoran Carlos Cortez, the world's youngest speaker of Nahuatl,

addressed a full LA 135 concerning an ongoing Nahuat language preservation project. Nahuat is a cousin of the major Aztec tongue, and is considered by many linguists to be its most orthodox approximation. Reviewing the history of the Pipil people, and the genocide visited on them during the course of the past several hundred years, Cortez described the importance that a revitalized dialect will have on indigenous community solidarity and rejuvenation. To this end, several dozen schools teaching Nahuat have opened in El Salvador in recent years; about 2,500 students now actively study it. In addition to progress on this front, Cortez intends to expand the accessibility of Nahuat through internet-based language instruction, available free of charge to interested parties. By way of conclusion, Cortez joked that although he was at present the world's youngest speaker of Nahuat, he took pleasure in the thought that he soon will no longer have this honor!



Carlos Cortéz, the world's youngest speaker of Nahuat, seen here with translator Jessica Rehms

Rocky Mountain Conference on Latin American Studies

From April 9-12, we at NAU hosted the 55th Annual Rocky Mountain

Conference on Latin American Studies at the Radisson Woodlands Hotel. The 2008 RMCLAS, representing the country's oldest Latin American Studies Association, was in every respect a huge success. Nearly 250 of the world's finest scholars made their way to Flagstaff for the meeting. Panels addressed themes ranging from colonial ethnohistory, to environmental politics and sustainability in Mexico and Brazil, to Femininity/Feminism/Film, to narratives from revolutionary Nicaragua and Guatemala—among a host of other topics. Guatemalan scholar and composer Dr. Dieter Lehnhoff, of la Universidad Rafael Landivar, gave the Keynote address, "Once Upon a Time in Spanish America: Baroque Music from the New World." The performance featured Lehnhoff on violin, mezzo-soprano Christina Altamira, fellow violinist Kari Barton, cellist Michael Corman, and Frank Scott on harpsichord. Also hugely popular was the live salsa band which performed on Friday evening. Thanks are in order for Professors Bob Neustadt and Susan Deeds, without whose enthusiasm and attention to detail the conference would never have gotten off the ground!



Dieter Lehnhoff and Kari Barton performing during the RMCLAS Keynote Address

Accomplishments

Latin American Studies faculty and staff in 2007-2008 continued a long tradition of scholarly excellence. This, of course, is in addition to shouldering substantial teaching loads— handled by all with the utmost in *ganas!* Below are some highlights from faculty with especially productive semesters.

Dr. Susan Deeds

In 2008, Professor Susan Deeds published an article: “Hechicería en el Norte colonial de México: Reflexiones sobre género y metodología,” in Alicia Mayer, ed., *Mujeres e historia: Homenaje a Josefina Muriel* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2008), 81-102. She also gave three conference presentations: “*Viviendas*, Rustic Spaces, and Social Interactions in Nueva Vizcaya,” Interdisciplinary Methods in Colonial Studies: Nature and Society in the Americas, Third Annual Colloquium, Albuquerque, New Mexico, March 7, 2008; “Visualizing the Historical Tableau,” Rocky Mountain Council for Latin American Studies, Flagstaff, Arizona, April 10, 2008; and “Reflections on Michael C. Meyer’s Contributions to Water and Environmental History,” Rocky Mountain Council for Latin American Studies, Flagstaff, Arizona, April 11, 2008. In April, she was honored as NAU’s Phi Kappa Phi Scholar of the Year. During Semana Santa, she was able to enjoy local religious observances in Tlalistac, Oaxaca. During 2007-2008, Susan also served as vice president and program chair of RMCLAS.

Dr. Juanita Heredia

Juanita Heredia, Associate Professor of Spanish, received an NAU Intramural Summer Grant 2007, for research at the Schomburg Center for Research in African American and African Diaspora Culture in New York City. She was also nominated by NAU for an NEH Summer Stipend 2008. She had two publications: a) “Voyages South and North: Transnational Gender Identity in *Caramelo* and *American Chica*,” *Latino Studies*. U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan. 5.3. (Fall 2007). 340-357; and b) “*Caramelo*: Crossing Borders in Translating Golden Age Mexican Culture,” in *Critical Essays on Chicano Studies*, edited by Ramón Espejo, Juan Ignacio Guijarro, Jesús Lerate de Castro, Pilar Marin and María Angeles Toda Iglesia. Berlin, New York and Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007. 137-148. Furthermore, she participated in two academic conferences: a) as chair/organizer of panel, “Negotiating Identity, Culture and History in Recent Latina Narratives: Sandra Cisneros’s *Caramelo* and Company,” for which she presented a paper, “The Transnational Eyes in Sandra Cisneros’s *Caramelo*: Cultural and Literary Conversations with Poniatowska and Modotti,” and collaborated with two film panels at the 55th Annual Rocky Mountain Council of Latin American Studies in Flagstaff, AZ, April 9-12, 2008; and b) presented a paper, “Neither Here Nor There: Negotiating Afro-Latina Identity in Contemporary Narratives,” for the Latino Studies section at the Latin American Studies Association in Montreal, Canada, September 5-8, 2007.

Dr. Edward Hood

Professor of Spanish Edward Hood had two major publications this year. *La ficción de Gabriel García Márquez, 1947-2004: la Poética de la Repetición*, a revised and updated edition of his 1993 study of intertextuality in the fiction of the Colombian author, is in press. Additionally, an article he penned entitled “La historia de Lluvia en Milagro de la Paz de Manlio Argueta y ‘La lluvia’ de Arturo Uslar Pietri,” will appear in an anthology of critical essays on the testimonial novels of the Salvadoran writer.

Dr. Eric Meeks

Associate Professor of History Eric Meeks’ book *Border Citizens: The Making of Indians, Mexicans, and Anglos in Arizona* was published by the University of Texas Press in 2007.

Dr. Robert Neustadt

Robert Neustadt, Professor of Spanish and Chair of the Latin American Studies Committee gave presentations at the Kentucky Foreign Language Conference, the Latin American Studies Association Congress in Montreal, Canada, and the Rocky Mountain Council for Latin American Studies (RMCLAS) Conference in Flagstaff. He was invited to write the chapter on Chile for the (New York) Museo del Barrio’s bilingual catalog/book on Latin American Performance art, entitled, *Arte ≠ Vida: Actions by Artists of the Americas, 1960 – 2000*. Neustadt’s chapter will appear in Spanish and English with the titles, “Chilean Art and Action:

Subverting Order, Performing Change” / “Arte y acción en Chile: La subversión del orden, la performance del cambio.” Bob was also invited to speak on a panel for the book-release at the Museo del Barrio on May 15, 2008. For information on the exhibit and Museum, see <http://www.elmuseo.org/>

This year, Neustadt also published several major articles:

“Reading Indigenous and Mestizo Musical Instruments: The Negotiation of Political and Cultural Identities in Spanish America.” *Music and Politics* 1.2 (2007) : n. pag. Online. Internet. Available: <http://www.music.ucsb.edu/projects/musicandpolitics/past.html>

“Bone Flutes and Quechua Love Songs: Excavating Traces of Colonial Trauma in Néstor Taboada Terán’s *Manchay Puytu*.” *Confluencia: Revista Hispánica de Literatura y Cultura* 23.1 (Fall 2007) : 29-42.

A version of the above article was published in translation in Portuguese in Brazil:

“Tocando os ossos do trauma colonial no romance *Manchay Puytu* de Néstor Taboada Terán.” Trans. Ricardo Araújo Alkimin and Márcia de Fátima Xavier. 12 *Caligrama* (2007).

A Spanish edition of this article, “Tocando los huesos del trauma colonial en la novela *Manchay Puytu* de Néstor Taboada Terán,” is forthcoming in the book, *Abordajes. Intersecciones de lo popular in América Latina*. Ed. Zulema Moret. Isla Canarias, España: Editorial La página.

Dr. Cecilia Ojeda

Cerro Jazmin, in Oaxaca, Mexico for the next 2 years.

Dr. Cecilia Ojeda's article "Arte en la zona de histéresis: Quebrada. Las cordileras en andas de Guadalupe Santa Cruz," was published by the journal ALPHA, Revista de Artes, Letras y Filosofía from the Universidad de los Lagos, Chile in December of 2007. Dr. Ojeda was promoted to the rank of full professor and completed her first year as Chair of the Department of Modern Languages during AY 07-08. She also presented refereed papers in the following conferences:

"Mujeres transatlánticas. Cruces de lenguas. Zonas de encuentro." XVII Congreso de la AILCFH, 24 to 26 of October 2007, Sevilla, Spain.
Latin American Studies Symposium, "Persistent Divides: Marginalization and Exclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean" Grand Valley State University, Michigan.
Rocky Mountain Council for Latin American Studies, Flagstaff, AZ

Dr. Verónica Pérez Rodríguez

Assistant Professor of Anthropology Verónica Pérez Rodríguez published an article entitled "Nicayuju, Oaxaca" in the March 2008 issue of *Arqueología Mexicana*. Forthcoming from the University of Colorado Press is her book *Origins of the Nuu*, co-authored with colleagues Stephen Kowalewski, Andrew Balkansky, Laura Stiver, Thomas Pluckhahn, John Chamblee, Verence Heredia and Charlotte A. Smith. She has also recently received a highly prestigious and widely sought Senior Archaeology grant from the National Science Foundation to conduct archaeological research at the site of