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The Minority Languages and Cultures Project (MLCP) was pleased to host its Spring Institute “Rethinking Popular Cultures” on Friday and Saturday, May 10-11, 2013, in Bloomington, Indiana. The purpose of the Institute was to bring together faculty from colleges and universities around the state of Indiana to share ideas and practices related to conducting research on and teaching about minority languages and cultures in Latin America. This year’s theme asked participants to reexamine notions of popular culture and the spaces of overlap with indigenous, minority, and elite cultures.

The Institute featured presenters from Purdue, IUPUI, Franklin College, IPFW, Ball State, IU Northwest, Butler, University of Southern Indiana, and IU South Bend and discussants from IUB. The disciplinary homes were likewise quite diverse, including Spanish, Anthropology, English, American Studies, History, Folklore and Ethnomusicology, and Modern Languages. This variety was reflected in the four panels: “Movement, Sex, and Rights,” “Elite and Folk Ideas of Country and Nature,” “Popular Languages,” and “Race and Nation.” Finally, the Institute featured a keynote address by IUB Professor of Folklore and Ethnomusicology, John McDowell, entitled: “The Promise (and Pitfalls) of Expressive Culture on YouTube.”

Within this diversity of topics and disciplines, interesting trends emerged regarding popular, folk, and elite cultures, media use and communication, contested spaces, and dynamics of inclusion versus exclusion. Several presenters discussed minority groups using various forms of media, such as graphic novels, hip-hop, social media, and literature to contest dominant ideologies. Likewise, other presenters focused on how important texts, scientific discourse, and archeological records have been foundational in shaping national imaginaries. Finally, other presenters asked us to reexamine the human-environment separation that has been constitutive of science and to perhaps consider the generative properties of violence in creating new forms of humanitarianism.

The two-day conference was a tremendous success in bringing together Latin Americanists from across Indiana and provided an excellent opportunity to build connections across disciplinary and institutional divides. In addition, junior faculty members had the opportunity to present their research and to network with other faculty working with minority languages and cultures. The Institute was made possible thanks to sponsorship from the School of Global and International Studies, Associate Dean for International Programs, Maria Bucur-Deckard, the Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology, and the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies. Additional thanks are owed to everyone at CLACS for their invaluable support and planning with all aspects of the conference. Finally, hearty thanks are owed to the MLCP Faculty Coordinator, Jason McGraw, for all his hard work planning the conference and for an excellent and productive first year at the MLCP helm.
While many printed publications are going out of business or choosing to publish only electronically, a new literary, arts, and culture magazine is born near the Indiana University main campus. Hiedra Magazine, a bilingual publication edited and published in Bloomington, IN, was launched October 5th, 2013 at Rachael’s Cafe in downtown Bloomington. Despite the stormy weather, nearly 100 people packed the trendy coffee shop to take part in the evening’s program which featured a variety of talented local musicians and poetry readings. After a short introduction about Hiedra, IU students Quinn Barney and Johnny Trubshaw performed a blend of R&B and hip-hop music for the growing audience, and then gave the floor to Shane Greene, singer-songwriter, anthropology professor, and director of CLACS. Against a burlap backdrop and with a punk rock look, Dr. Greene played an acoustic set of blues and folk-influenced original compositions. The final musical performance of the evening featured the Brazilian and Latin American rhythms of Bramus Trio, a musical group made up of professional musicians from the IU Jacobs School of Music.

In addition to music, the launch party included readings and poetic performances of works featured in Hiedra’s first issue. Assistant Professor of the IU School of Fine Arts, Grant Whipple and his wife Amanda Mignonne, a PhD student from Johns Hopkins University, recited a selection of works by Beat generation poet Bob Kaufman. With the lights dimmed, Guillermo López, Melissa Ballesteros, and Giancarlo Huapaya read poetry by Forrest Gander, Róger Santiváñez, Luis Felipe Fabre, and Huapaya himself. Positioned in a large triangle, the reciters moved around and among the crowd, creating a three-dimensional sound effect. After a musical interlude, Hiedra editor Giancarlo Huapaya concluded the literary performances with a work of sound poetry accompanied by reverberating heartbeat recordings and visuals of an echocardiogram.

In its first edition, Hiedra Magazine features a dossier of American poet Bob Kaufman (New Orleans, 1925-1986) with unpublished Spanish translations by poet Zachary Paine. Also printed are bilingual versions of North and South American poets, Forrest Gander (United States, 1956), and Róger Santiváñez (Peru, 1956). As for narrative works, Hiedra includes prose by Chilean writers Andrea Jeffanovich and Felipe Becerra Calderón, and by Bolivian novelist, Sebastián Antenaza. The publication also includes photographs of different cities like Oakland, San Francisco, Bloomington, Santiago de Chile, and Temuco as seen through the lens of different photographers, original paintings by Eduardo Verdecia (Cuba) and Ale Wendorff (Peru), an interview with Shane Greene about his new book on the underground punk movement in Peru during the armed conflict of the 1980’s, an article by Luis González Barrios on the eco-social and political difficulties that peasants face with their crops and land in La Punta (Valencia, Spain) as shown in the documentary A tornallom (2005), and unpublished works by Mexican poet Luis Felipe Fabre, and much more.

The magazine will be available, free of charge, in Bloomington at the following locations: Boxcar Books, Café Django, El Norteno, and La Casa and CLACS at IU. Hiedra’s editors (Eric Carbajal, Mark Fitzsimmons, Giancarlo Huapaya, and Guillermo López) plan on publishing the magazine quarterly with its next issue coming out in January 2014. For more on Hiedra see HiedraMagazine.com.
On September 26 and 27, 2013, Stuart Schwartz, the George Burton Adams Professor of History at Yale University visited IU to give two lectures hosted by the Center for Latin American Studies and the Brazilian Studies Program. Thursday the 26th was a Horizons of Knowledge lecture co-sponsored by the Department of History, the Department of Religious Studies, the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, and the Department of African American and African Diaspora studies titled “Padre Vieira: Prophet of a Sugar Empire.” Padre Vieira was a Seventeenth-Century Jesuit missionary who Schwartz described as a “priest, preacher, diplomat, theologian, prophet, and writer,” whose literary accomplishments are so well-known in the Portuguese-speaking world that he can be compared to William Shakespeare. In addition to Vieira’s literary accomplishments, he was an influential figure in Portuguese and Brazilian social and economic development. Vieira is especially notable among theologians for his outspoken religious tolerance. Vieira approached the issue pragmatically: Portuguese Jews (often called New Christians when recently converted) were linked to important international trade networks, and he fought the Inquisition to protect their place in Portuguese society. It is possible that Vieira’s tolerance was shaped by his initial years as a Jesuit in Brazil. While in Brazil he ministered to indigenous people and African slaves and strongly advocated for the ethical treatment and religious education of these populations. Toward the end of his life, Vieira expressed his understanding of Portuguese empire in a simple poem:

“Without Brazil, no empire
Without sugar, no Brazil
Without Slaves, no sugar
Without Angola, no slaves”

On Friday the 27th, Professor Schwartz presented a talk for the Latin American Research Forum titled “The Rains of Lares: Sovereignty, Disaster and Revolution in the 19th-Century Caribbean.” In this talk Schwartz examined how societies and governments in the Caribbean have historically responded to natural disasters. In this particular case, the Spanish colonial government had failed to respond to hurricanes and relieve the suffering of the Puerto Rican people. In 1867, the Grito de Lares insurrection was partially inspired by outrage over the colonial government’s shortcomings. Ironically, a devastating hurricane hit the island right before the insurrection was planned to take place, disrupting coordination efforts and causing debilitating logistical issues for the insurrectionary front. For Schwartz, the natural disasters were not the primary actors in the story, but formed the context in which Puerto Rican political events took place. This lecture was co-sponsored by the Department of History and the Latino Studies Program.
On November 8th, visiting Associate Professor Elizabeth Roberts gave a lecture as part of the Latin American Research Forum entitled, “White Beauty: Gamete Donation in a Mestizo Nation.” Roberts, a Professor of Anthropology at the University of Michigan, examined how egg donors in Ecuador have become new actors in the historically ongoing project of whitening the Andean nation. Roberts analyzed egg donor advertisements, like the one shown below, which typically features lighter skinned females. Not only did these advertisements encourage lighter skinned Ecuadorian women to donate their eggs, but they also show potential recipients what their egg donors would look like. Her extensive ethnographic research at clinics in Quito and Guayaquil was evident throughout her presentation. She developed her argument through a series of interesting and at times humorous anecdotes.

There was the dark-skinned seamstress Teresa who, despite initial worries over the possibility of appearing to cuckold her husband, was delighted to birth a whiter child. Beauty in the Ecuadorian context, Roberts informed us, is a trait inseparable from whiteness. That child would become the great hope of the family whose future now depended on cultivating the child's lightness. Roberts showed how whiteness in Ecuador is not limited to skin color but extends to class-marked behavior such as dress and education.

Interestingly, and maybe not too surprisingly, Roberts discussed how egg and sperm donors differed in that women typically did not like to talk about the donations whereas men often boasted about their virility and sexual prowess. In contrast to Ecuadorian women, men were eager to discuss their genetic charity. Sperm donation, like egg donation, was intrinsically associated with race. Roberts told the story of how a blue eyed white Chilean sperm donor often joked with his family back home about how his skin and eye color were in high demand in Ecuador. Roberts argued that these 21st century efforts of whitening offspring are similar to the whitening processes that their ancestors underwent transforming from Indians into mestizos.

It should be noted that Professor Roberts’ talk was one of the best attended in the lecture series and was followed by a robust question and answer session. Roberts’ visit was co-sponsored by the Department of Anthropology.
John Mraz, Research Professor of the Instituto de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades at Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (Mexico), visited Bloomington from October 28th to 30th for the Looking for Mexico Film Series at the IU Cinema. Organized by Joshua Malitsky, Associate Professor in the Department of Communication and Culture in conjunction with the IU Cinema, the film series highlighted a trilogy of films about the Mexican Revolution and the construction of Mexican identity. The Departments of Communication and Culture, History, Spanish and Portuguese, and Film and Media Studies, along with the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, Horizons of Knowledge and the IU Cinema sponsored Mraz’s visit.

On Monday, October 21st the Cinema screened El Compadre Mendoza, directed by Fernando de Fuentes and released in 1934. Voted the third best Mexican film of all time, the film is unique within de Fuentes’ film collection by explicitly identifying which side of the revolution each character supports through their costuming, actions, and goals. The second film, screened on Tuesday, October 29th, was ¡Vámanos con Pancho Villa! Released in 1936, the film returns to de Fuentes’ ambiguous political affiliations. The final film, ¡Que viva México! was screened on Wednesday, October 30th. It was directed by Sergei Eisenstien and released in 1932. Structured as a multi-part anthology, the film focuses on a range of subcultures and visual imagery across Mexico from 1930 to 1932.

History, Mraz extrapolated from these three films, is the context that defines the types of decisions that the characters make during the plot of the film. These decisions, as highlighted in his Jorgensen Guest Filmmaker Lecture titled “Reading Historical Photographs,” are also made by the producers and directors that create and edit the film and the audience members who experience the final product. The relative importance or greatness of a film within its historical context is difficult to authoritatively define. Mraz commented in his remarks preceding the screening of El Compadre Mendoza, “since film is such a short experience, it is often the kiss of death to say that a film is a great film.”
On November 05, 2013, Dr. Victor Clark-Alfaro visited Indiana University through an invitation from the Minority Languages and Cultures Project (MLCP) to give a presentation entitled "Indians, Coyotes, and Human Rights on the Mexican Border." His talk was attended by numerous faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students and was followed by a lively question and answer session. Dr. Clark-Alfaro is currently a lecturer at San Diego State University and Director of the Bi-National Center for Human Rights in Tijuana, Mexico. He received his PhD in Anthropology from the University of California San Diego in Anthropology. His research interests revolve around border issues. He is also currently working on a book which discusses issues sex workers face on the Tijuana border.

Dr. Clark-Alfaro began his talk by discussing the presence of indigenous communities on the Mexican border. He explained that many indigenous communities arrive to Tijuana in search of a better life. Yet to be indigenous in Tijuana means to carry a stigma. He then went on to explain the different types of coyotes. The first are indigenous coyotes which are known for three characteristics: they are safe and trustworthy (they often times take people across the border from their own pueblos); they charge in payments (there is a sense of trust between the coyotes and their clients); and they are also known to respect women.

Other types of coyotes are those from three different generations, beginning with the first coyotes that began to work after the Bracero Program ended in 1979. According to Dr. Clark-Alfaro, the third generation of coyotes is the most irresponsible one. They tend to view the people they cross as mercancía, goods to be bought, sold, or exchanged.

Dr. Clark-Alfaro focused on deported immigrants next. He explained that while the undocumented experience discrimination in the United States, they are also criminalized in Mexico. Many view them as the cause of violence and unemployment. It is also extremely difficult for them to find jobs in Mexico because they often do not have the documents needed to work. Thus these individuals become homeless or begin to work with the cartels.

On November 14th, renowned Peruvian sociologist, historian, and journalist Nelson Manrique Gálvez gave a lecture on “Migrantes, Redes Sociales, y Racismo en el Perú.” Presented in Spanish, Manrique Gálvez analyzed how Peruvian constructions of race and racism are propagated within virtual spaces. He focused specifically on the cultural phenomenon of amixer as a symptom of a larger digital racial discourse that differentiates Peru from other Latin American countries. Amixer is an imposed social category assigned mostly to the grandchildren of the Andean migrants to Peru’s coastal cities. Characterized aesthetically by a specific typography and by bright colored texts and images on photographs that are uploaded onto social media sites, los amixer are racialized within a new category using historical means. Specifically, people deemed to be amixer are attacked based on a lack of educational or social capital and the notion that they chose to deviate from “normal society.” The brightline, however, between normal and amixer society is difficult to define because the majority of the characteristics that identify someone as amixer are not physical. Instead, this division is propagated in calls for amixer to only use hi5, a social media site that preceded the now dominant social media site – Facebook. Attendees asked questions about the potential development of amixer and the relationship of other ethnic minorities to this social category. The event was sponsored by the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies.
On November 22nd Christopher Gaffney, Visiting Professor in the Graduate School of Architecture and Urbanism at the Universidade Federal Fluminense in Niteró, hosted by the CLACS Sustainability and Development Initiative, gave a lecture as a part of the Latin American Research Forum. Gaffney is an academic geographer, investigative journalist, and social activist working with a number of academic and civil society institutions in Rio de Janeiro. He has conducted research in Brazil since 2004 when he began to work on his book, _Temples of the Earthbound Gods_, which investigates the history and culture of football stadiums in Rio and Buenos Aires, using them as lenses to observe the shifting urban landscape from the late 19th to the early 21st century.

Currently, among other research projects, Gaffney is focusing on the social and urban changes associated with the 2016 Olympics in Brazil. In his talk entitled “A Maravilha Perdida: Rio de Janeiro’s Olympian Troubles,” Gaffney argued that instead of the mega-events being an opportunity for Brazilian cities and Rio de Janeiro in particular to improve the fundamental conditions of urban life, in reality it has been a lost opportunity. He compares the arrival of a mega-event in a city to the invasion of a country, emphasizing the idea of “shock and awe” that exists on both fronts. Instead of shocks from bombs, there are shocks from the media campaigns. He demonstrated how Brazilian media markets the city in a particular way to manipulate Rio’s reality in order to convince its citizens and international onlookers that this “invasion” is in the best interest of Rio de Janeiro and its inhabitants. For instance, in the media the bay of Rio de Janeiro has been glamorized and depicted as a picturesque beach, while in reality swimming is prohibited due to over-pollution and inadequate sewage. Gaffney focused on this discursive framing process, highlighting the mechanisms implemented by the myriad of players in this operation and the aftermath of their schemes. Some examples include: hostile pacification of entire favelas, exile of thousands of families from their homes for event construction, and all of the other negative effects, some of which have yet to be seen, as a result of what he calls “bad urbanism.” Gaffney is at the heart of confronting this phenomenon both as an activist and a Brazilian-based academic. The impact his research has had on his daily life and the passion he has for it is truly inspirational.
Undergraduate Open House

On November 13th CLACS hosted an undergraduate open house. The purpose of the event was to open the doors of 1125 East Atwater to current and prospective CLACS students. The open house also served to open a relationship between undergraduate and graduate students. Attendees included students with an interest in Latin America and the Caribbean and a curiosity to learn more about our undergraduate certificate and minor. Also present were current certificate students like Matthew Cesnik and Brett Hamm who spoke about their travel and study experiences in Latin America and the Caribbean. We were also very happy to welcome recent CLACS certificate graduate Madeline Makielski. Many thanks to the CLACS graduate students: Eddie Brudney, Stephanie Huezo, Denisa Jashari, Kathryn Lehman, Marie Suding, Diana Velazquez, and Nick Tschida-Reuter, who all helped make sure the open house proceeded without a hitch.

Students enjoyed casual conversations over delicious Mother Bear’s pizza, ranging in topic from language study and travel to CLACS’ many exciting course offerings. A special thanks to Maya instructor Quetzil Casteñeda and undergraduate advisor Emily Williams for helping make the open house a well-attended, fun and educational event. Due to its success we plan on making the open house an annual event!

Undergraduate Student Spotlight

Allison Yates is a senior majoring in International Studies, Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, and Spanish, with concentrations in Latin America and Human Rights and Social Movements. She is the outreach coordinator for Movement Exchange at IU, the IU chapter of the national organization that aims to work with at-risk youth in Panama through dance and to promote cross-cultural understanding. As outreach coordinator, she aims to incorporate the work that the group does in Panama to Bloomington and has helped organize a Panamanian Dance Workshop and other community events such as dance classes at Boys and Girls Club. She teaches Zumba classes and is also involved in the Organization for Human Trafficking Awareness at IU, the Kinsey Institute, Middle Way House, and the International Studies Undergraduate Association.

During the 2012-2013 academic year Allison studied in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where she interned with the human rights organization Madres de Plaza de Mayo and became involved in feminist organizing at the University of Buenos Aires. She is currently writing her International Studies Capstone paper on the Argentine National Campaign for Legal, Safe, and Free Abortion and her Spanish honors thesis on Argentine variational pragmatics in service encounters. After graduation, Allison hopes to relocate to Latin America and work in the nonprofit sector, focusing on gender equality and reproductive rights.
On Thursday, October 24 the Minority Languages and Cultures Project hosted a graduate student roundtable. The purpose of the event was to provide a supportive and productive setting in which graduate students could present research in its early stages. Kathryn Lehman presented on the field work she conducted this past summer (2013) in Bolivia. Kathryn’s research centers on indigenous identity before and after the rubber boom. She specifically focuses on how the rubber boom created a shared experience among indigenous and non-indigenous workers. During her time in Bolivia, Kathryn conducted research in the Archivo Historico, Casa Suárez and explained the dilapidated condition in which the documents were found. Despite the archive’s condition, she was still able to find a plethora of information. She also spoke about her visit to Cachuela Esperanza, the former headquarters of the Suárez rubber company. She showed photos that highlighted the large differences between the luxurious homes of the Suárez family and the wooden barrack-style housing for ordinary workers.

Sarah Foss’s research focuses on the expression of indigeneity. She conducted her summer 2013 research in Guatemala, where she spent the majority of her time visiting different archives such as Cirma and the Archivo General de Centro America. Through this experience, Sarah became aware of the importance of networking and reciprocity in order to gain access to certain forms of information. This became evident when she went to El Municipal de Solola and asked for permission to access their archives. Solola has a dual form of governance in which an indigenous and a non-indigenous municipality function together but are separate entities. In order to gain access, she had to get permission from both authorities and had to explain how her research would positively impact the community. Sarah also discussed how her research has evolved and narrowed over time.

The presentations were followed by a lively question and answer session with professors and other graduate students in attendance. The event was a great success, and the MLCP hopes to continue to host roundtables on a semesterly basis.
Matthew Lebrato

I am pursuing the CLACS minor as part of my PhD in sociocultural anthropology. Geographically, my focus is Mesoamerica, and particularly Oaxaca, Mexico. Thanks to funding from the Tinker Foundation and a FLAS award during summer 2013, I was able to spend time in various Ayuuk (Mixe) indigenous communities, participate in cultural forums, and renew existing and establish new contacts with numerous individuals and organizations working on intercultural education. My original project for the summer aimed to investigate intercultural education as a potentially counter-hegemonic process that seeks to strengthen indigenous practices, traditions, and knowledge in order to alter the relationship between indigenous peoples and the state. While I did spend significant time with educators and students in Oaxaca City and various Mixe communities, I was unable to make a longer visit to the Instituto Superior Intercultural Ayuuk (ISIA), which I had hoped would be the focus of my investigations. While disappointed at having my research plans changed, the shift forced me to step back from education and see how cultural elements, such as the farming, the compadrazgo (godparent for various socially important events) relationship, community obligations, and spirituality inform daily life. Particularly helpful in gaining a broader perspective was spending time in Mixe communities and speaking with community members and family of colleagues and friends working on Mixe language and cultural issues. These discussions helped me gain an understanding about what things are important to community members as well as to understand some of the knowledge and practices from which intercultural education seeks to draw. While I view education as a salient arena for the reconstitution and strengthening of indigenous identity, at this stage it was productive to focus on other, less institutionalized sites.

Denisa Jasahri

I spent six weeks in Santiago, Chile during Summer 2013 on a Tinker grant to research the Lautaro Youth Movement in Chile’s Transition to Democracy. My project sought to contextualize Lautaro in Chile’s concurrent transition to democracy and the hardening of neoliberal economic reforms. Part of the driving force for this project was to bridge the gap between the radical early 1970s and the post-Cold War 1990s. I spent most of my time at different archive centers collecting and analyzing newspaper articles, legal documents, victims’ testimonials, and Lautaro pamphlets and newsletters. In addition, at the University of Chile I spent time with Chilean academics whose research interests parallel my own. These contacts facilitated my access to ex-members of the movement for semi-structured interviews. The archival research and oral interviews allowed me to see the Lautaro movement in nuanced ways.

Oral history will be fundamental to this project to remedy the marginalization the group faced, socially as well as in the historical record. The initial interviews have challenged me to grapple with issues of memory and oral history methodology. My project has shifted direction toward placing Lautaro’s ideology, activities, and practices in the context of a changing youth culture in Chile. Seen in this light, Lautaro emerges not solely as another anti-dictatorial splinter of the Chilean left, but as precursors to new forms of protests and subjectivities. Thanks to support from CLACS and the Tinker Foundation, I am now well positioned to apply for future funding and to continue making progress toward my History PhD.
Cara Caddoo is an Assistant Professor in the department of American Studies. Her research and teaching areas include popular culture, print and visual media, religion, and historical intersections of race, gender, and ethnicity. She is particularly interested in nineteenth and twentieth century social, political, and institutional formations organized around the idea of blackness. Currently, she is completing a study of early black cinema that asks why the first mass black protest movement of the twentieth century—the transnational campaigns against the Birth of a Nation—occurred in response to the moving pictures. In order to answer this question, she begins by examining the role of cinema in black efforts for racial progress at the turn of the century, which fueled the emergence of a modern conceptualization of freedom and natural rights based on demands for visual self-determination. Her book on this subject, tentatively titled, *Visions of Freedom: Motion Pictures and the Making of Modern Black Life*, will be published by Harvard University Press in the fall of 2014. Her next research project will continue to track the circuits of black cinema culture across the U.S. South and West, Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean in the early twentieth century.

Kalim joined IUN-SPEA this August, arriving from Toronto, Canada where he’s resided for the last few years, although he is originally from Trinidad & Tobago. He has done extensive Caribbean based research on environmental policy, corporate sustainability, public policy and international development. He is currently working on several projects with Caribbean, US and Canadian colleagues on adaptation to climate change, institutional environmental governance and corporate sustainability in small economies. He received his Ph.D. in Public Policy and Environmental Science from George Mason University where he was a Fulbright Scholar. His research appears in Policy Sciences, Energy Policy, Business Strategy and the Environment, and Sustainability among others.

Over the last ten years Kalim has straddled the worlds of academia and public policy practice. He was an Assistant Professor of Environmental Policy at the University of Trinidad and Tobago and more recently Adjunct faculty member at both York University and Ryerson University in Toronto. He has also served as a Senior Policy Advisor with the Government of Ontario; was Director of Caribbean Programs at Caribbean Central American Action, a prominent Washington DC based economic development association; and Lead Consultant to the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC) on corporate social responsibility.

Here at IUN, Kalim hopes to collaborate with other CLACS researchers and generate more faculty and student interest in Caribbean/Latin American issues especially in the areas of environmental policy and sustainable development.
Dr. Claudia N. Avellaneda joined the School of Public and Environmental Affairs as an associate professor this year after serving as assistant professor in the Department of Political Science and graduate coordinator of Latin American Studies at the University of North Carolina–Charlotte. Dr. Avellaneda's main research interests include comparative politics, public policy, and public management with a regional focus on Latin America. Specifically, she investigates the determinants of local governmental performance in Latin American municipalities by focusing on the role of the local chief executive (the mayor). She conducts field research in Latin American countries. For her doctoral dissertation, which assessed the impact of mayors' education and experience on social service delivery and public finance, she conducted personal interviews with 200 mayors from 12 Latin American countries. Currently, she is extending this line of research to 830 municipalities in Brazil, all the municipalities (1,100) in Colombia, and most of the municipalities in El Salvador and Honduras. Dr. Avellaneda's research has been published in the Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, Public Administration Review, Public Management Review, and Journal of Management Studies. She received her MA (2002) and Ph.D. (2007), both in political science, from Texas A&M University, where she obtained the 2007 Bryan D. Jones Award, which is presented to the outstanding graduate student in Political Science at Texas A&M University.

Lucia Guerra-Reyes recently joined the Department of Applied Health Science, in the School of Public Health as Assistant Professor. She holds a PhD in Anthropology and an MPH in Behavioral and Community Health Sciences from the University of Pittsburgh. Her research focuses on understanding health inequality from a sociocultural perspective. Her most recent study has evaluated the implementation of an intercultural birthing policy for indigenous Andean women in Peru. Her other areas of research interest include the local effects of global health policy, the effects of gendered hierarchy in health care provision, reproductive governance, and the construction of pluricultural citizenship. Lucia also holds an MA in Gender, Sexuality and Reproductive Health from the School of Public Health at the Cayetano Heredia Peruvian University, and a BA in Anthropology from the Catholic University of Peru.
Writing a word or two about Ricardo Valdez provokes a certain sensation of easiness. You met him and it was as if you already knew him from somewhere. You worked with him and it was as if it didn't feel like work at all. You asked him to help you out on something and it was as if he thought the world might stop turning if he didn't do everything in his power to make sure you got the help you needed. It was also as if he had some special purchase on the non-cynical worldview, which, as we know, is an unfortunately rare commodity in and around academia. It was as if kindness was an art he had mastered and patience a trait he carried. We miss you over here already! -Shane Greene

It was always a pleasure to work with Ricardo, and it's actually rather difficult to imagine the Center without him. In my time at CLACS, I looked to him as a sort of central nervous system, keeping the place running while taking care of the never-ending work behind the scenes. And not only was he great at what he did, but he did it with a warm and friendly demeanor that helped make CLACS feel like a second home for many of us. His new home on campus is very lucky to have him there. CLACS will miss you, Ricardito! -John Kroondyk

Ricardo, Richard, Ricardito, Ricardo...even the occasional Rich...he went by many names at CLACS, and that says a lot about his profound impact on the Center. Ricardo was always looking to meet people wherever they happened to be, and to help them with whatever they happened to need. I once observed him toil for days on processing a particularly complicated foreign wire transfer, to save one of our student grantees from out-of-pocket expenses. He pulled it off— a minor, trilingual administrative miracle, worked by Ricardo's inimitable mix of adroitness, determination, and good cheer. Such things were more the rule than the exception when Ricardo was involved. More times than I could count, I saw him push everything on his overfilled agenda to the side when a student or a visiting scholar or a faculty affiliate appeared, needing help with health insurance, visas, travel reimbursements...you name it, Ricardo would sort it out for you, even when it was arguably someone else's issue and even when it required him to master yet another recondite corner of the IU bureaucracy.

Ricardo came to us in late 2008, at a time of near-total administrative transition at the Center; and in his nearly five years as Administrative Secretary, he overhauled accounting and payroll procedures, battled files into submission, and created a system for tracking grant expenditures that he probably should have patented. The solid administrative foundation on which CLACS now rests is, in large part, of Ricardo's creation, and in that sense his contributions will endure well into the future. Personally, I would be unable to express fully how grateful I am to have worked alongside someone so capable, so dedicated and generous...and so ready to share so many good laughs. Arriba, Ricardito! -Matt Van Hoose

“I still remember the day that Ricardo came into CLACS to interview with me and AD Matt Van Hoose for our job opening. We’d warmed up to one another considerably over the course of nearly an hour, and in summarizing his stance, Ricardo said, “I really think we could hit the ball out of the park here.”

Such was Ricardo's enthusiasm for our work at CLACS. He came on board in the Fall of 2008 at a time of great flux, when both I and Matt had just taken over the reins, and the economy was about to tank. He stayed on through Andrea Siqueira’s return as AD, then the switch back to Matt when Andrea left, the switch in directorship to Shane Greene, and then yet another AD in Melissa Britton. Through all these changes, Ricardo provided stability, grace, and humor. He learned the intricate details of his job with remarkable competency, and he was the consummate team player. I also think that Ricardo was often tickled by the work we do at CLACS. It was a chance for him to speak Spanish on a daily basis and re-connect with his Mexican roots, and he became an avid student of Latin American Studies, often attending lectures and other events out of personal interest.

Many people don't know that Ricardo (aka Richard!) spent most of his childhood in Mexico, that he served as an officer in the U.S. Air Force before returning to civilian life, or that he is an accomplished pianist who provides lessons in Bloomington. What a fabulous life. Mis respetos, capitán. Enhorabuena! -Bradley Levinson

Over the course of the transition-ridden hectic busyness that was Spring 2013, I would often pop in Ricardo's office to ask for his help. After expressing my thanks for yet another example of his efficient administrative expertise, I would hear in response, “Nooo... gracias a ti!” Whether through assisting me in navigating the jungle of FLAS and Tinker or through demonstrating that picking up the phone to make a personal connection could accomplish more than an e-mail, Ricardo was the living embodiment of a team player during his time at CLACS. También por la práctica de hablar español y por todo de su trabajo de CLACS, ¡gracias a ti Ricardo! -Katie Novak
Another academic year is half over by the point Enfoque goes out over the network. And en la casita de CLACS we are faced with the usual mix of retos y oportunidades. I seriously doubt anyone anywhere looks forward to a Title VI re-application year but that’s the spot we find ourselves in and it represents the primary challenge to meet for this academic year. Despite some personnel turnover at CLACS in the last year, I feel total confidence in the new team I’m lucky enough to work with over on Atwater. Everyone at CLACS was truly sad to break the news of Ricardo Valdez’ promotion and transfer into a different unit at IU. For several years Ricardo represented the perfect combination of a gentle voice and a dedicated team member and he continues to participate in the broader CLACS ethos – only now operating from a different desk across campus. I’m happy to announce that in our search to fill the Administrative Secretary position we were lucky enough to find (or arguably “steal”) Michael Dauro, who just joined la familia de CLACS after his time working in the Department of Sociology. ¡Bienvenido Michael!

Our main programming this Fall, the Latin American Research Forum, has resulted in a series of wonderfully well-attended talks from both IU faculty reporting on recent research and a handful of invited visitors: Stuart Schwartz (Yale History), Elizabeth Roberts (Michigan Anthropology), and Christopher Gaffney (Universidade de Federal Fluminense). I’m also extraordinarily pleased to deliver the news that IU has recently added several new faculty with research interests in the Latin American and Caribbean region (be sure to check out their profiles in this issue).

We purposely planned a Fall semester somewhat light on programming, knowing that Spring semester will hit hard and require substantial energy. There is, of course, that deepening feeling of the calm before the storm of Title VI (the build-up has already begun, the discussions are underway, the heavy lifting begins in January). But, I’d also like to announce that the storm will be followed with some much needed relief in the form of a large end of the year fiesta. There’s good reason to celebrate since we find ourselves in the historical contingency of CLACS 50th year as a center for Latin American Studies. And we plan to do so all day Wednesday, April 9 – please mark it in your calendars now. Before throwing a large reception full of live music, food, and spirits – osea, una de esas fiestas de CLACS, pero de esas fiestas de CLACS que son más que una simple fiesta de CLACS – we’re making room for some insightful conversation about the pasts and futures of our interdisciplinary enterprise. A solid dose of local academic talent and nationally-renowned Latin Americanist scholars will be on hand to participate in that discussion. Watch for the announcements and don’t miss out. We’ll see you there… -Shane

Ps. Oh yeah, I almost forgot. We have a new website and it’s cyberspectacular thanks to the K-man. Thanks Johnny (we were long overdue).
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Attention Alumni! Please send us updates on your activities to share in our next edition of Enfoque. Email us at clacs@indiana.edu.