My summer research investigated the knowledge politics of the Quinoa Boom through ethnographic fieldwork in Peru. After conducting interviews with various kinds of quinoa ‘experts’ (e.g. agronomists, policy makers) in Lima, I spent a month engaged in participant observation with development practitioners and quinoa producers in the highland region of Puno, where 82% of the nation’s quinoa is produced. Support from a Tinker Field Research Grant allowed me to conduct preliminary fieldwork that serves as a foundation for my dissertation work. During my time in Peru, I was able to build relationships with diverse organizations, producer groups, and individuals, and sharpen my research questions.

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I found that Limeños often discussed the Quinoa Boom in relation to the politics of indigenous representation in the nation-state and often implicitly, or explicitly, invoked a racial geography of Peru. Quinoa was often hailed as the miracle crop that can "modernize" the highlands, a region long lamented as culturally backward and economically unproductive, while attending to "local customs." Now that "tradition" (in this case a traditional food) is marketable and exportable, growing quinoa demand is seen as a lucrative opportunity to transform highland subsistence farmers into "proper" neoliberal citizens who produce and consume market products. Participant observation with NGO workers, quinoa buyers, and farmers provided insight into complex, and often tense negotiations between these actors. Producing quinoa for markets requires drastic changes in production practices in order to transform this exceptionally genetically diverse, low-yield crop into a homogenous, high-yield commodity crop, and farmers often resisted the recommendations of NGO workers. As buyers preferred the large, white quinoas, they often rejected quinoa that was not "pure," meaning multiple varieties of quinoa mixed in with the white. Farmers were enraged when their quinoa was rejected for "impurezas," especially since intercropping 4-5 varieties of quinoa is considered a critical risk-mitigation strategy in a region with increasingly fickle climate. I was surprised by the constant talk about climate change by both farmers and development practices. The prolonged droughts and erratic precipitation patterns that plagued the Andean highlands in recent years figured centrally into negotiations about production practices. I was profoundly affected by the primacy of climate change in the lives of my informants and intend to reformulate my dissertation project to grapple with the emergent risks associated with climate change.

Left: Emma helps to get the impurezas out of quinoa
Pictured here, a quinoa seed bank
Photos by Emma McDonell
The community of Bloomington got together to celebrate La Fiesta del Otoño 2014 (Fall Festival) on September 20th as part of the National Hispanic Heritage Month. The Latino community of Bloomington set up cultural tables to represent different Latin American countries. The volunteers in charge of each cultural table engaged in conversations with passerby, enthusiastically sharing their personal experiences in those countries. The children (and grown-ups as well!) that attended the Fiesta had fun having their faces painted with the flag of any Latin American or Caribbean country of their choice or learning how to make Ojos de Dios (God’s eyes): brightly colored yarn weaved on a simple frame of crossed sticks.

Passerby could also savor samples of Mexican cuisine provided by a local Mexican restaurant while enjoying live Latino musical performances. This event was a great success thanks to the collaboration of our wonderful volunteers that were ready to give us a hand setting up the tables and tents, providing some food samples, and sharing their personal experiences and passions about Latin America.

Contributed by Sonia Calpanchay
This fall CLACS once again hosted a successful undergraduate open house geared towards bringing people together. The focus was to create a time and space where students, staff, and faculty could come together to share ideas and get to know each other in a non-academic setting. In attendance were students interested in CLACS’ undergraduate and graduate academic programs, current CLACS graduate students, CLACS faculty and instructors, the CLACS academic advisor and secretary, and CLACS director, Shane Greene. The majority of the event was an unscheduled, open space filled with conversations about previous experiences studying abroad in Latin America, current research interests, and future career plans. As a center that functions as an umbrella organization uniting Latin Americanists from all campuses of Indiana University, CLACS fosters the collaboration of students and faculty from across departments, and we are proud to do so as a key element of the School of Global and International Studies in the College of Arts and Sciences. We look forward to hosting future events where students can make connections with each other and find mentors that can help them reflect on their goals and consider ways they can incorporate the study of Latin America into their future.

Contributed by Raul Gross
Language is an important part of any culture; CLACS has personally invested in the preservation of languages, and so too has the first El Foro speaker of the fall semester. Dr. Albert Valdman came to speak for CLACS on September 26th about his research on the “Réforme Bernard”, a program that allowed for Haitian Creole to be the primary language spoken in elementary school in Haiti in order to further education in the country and open it to more than just the rich classes of Haitians who spoke French. However, the Réforme was never fully implemented, and Dr. Valdman broke down the reasons for this as well as what it would take to have the Réforme implemented once more in the present day. These reasons included the assessment of monolingual children’s access to French; the evaluation of the implementation of article 40 within the 1987 Constitution, which declared Haitian Creole both co-official language with French and the country’s true national language; and finally, the investigation of attitudes of various groups towards Haitian Creole and the review of pre-reform programs that instituted the use of Haitian Creole as a primary instructional language.

Dr. Valdman is a Rudy Professor Emeritus of French Linguistics at IU. His research interests include French linguistics, pidgin and creole studies (especially Haitian Creole), second language acquisition, foreign language teaching, and French in the United States.
Near the end of October, IU assistant professor Lucia Guerra-Reyes gave the second Foro lecture for the fall semester. Now in her second year with the Department of Applied Health Science at IU, she brings a strong knowledge of reproductive health, reproductive policy, health disparities, indigenous groups, and cultural competences, much of which she has researched firsthand in Peru and other Latin American countries. Her presentation, titled “Remaking Health Care in Latin America: The Challenges of Applying Intercultural Policy”, traced the trajectory of interculturality in healthcare within Latin America. Peru, as one of the first countries in Latin America to enact intercultural legislation, provides an instructive case study for examining both the strengths and limitations of national policies advocating healthcare that incorporates minority groups into national policy paradigms. Her presentation highlighted the historical process by which this change in policy occurred, and she emphasized how this change in official policy has not always lead to an even application of its ideals. Namely, though many healthcare practices have gained broader acceptance, the rural and urban power dynamic still pits largely urban ideals against predominantly rural minority practices. One of the presentation’s most striking elements was the inclusion of firsthand accounts of healthcare providers and their patients. These accounts underscore the diversity of approaches to implementing policy in Peru, and they reveal the serious challenges that face the successful implementation of intercultural policies locally, regionally, and nationally.

Contributed by Raúl Gross
At the Foot of the Beast
Gangs, Labor & Immigration in Honduras
A lecture by Jon Carter
On Wednesday October 8, Dr. Jon Carter of Le Moyne College in Syracuse, New York visited IU to deliver a talk on his anthropological research into Latin American gangs titled “At the Foot of the Beast: Gangs, Labor, and Immigration in Honduras.” Twenty-five people from the IU community gathered in the Indiana Memorial Union’s Persimmon room for the lecture. Dr. Carter explained that during the summer of 2014, record numbers of young people from Honduras began fleeing increasingly dangerous cities to work in the United States. The phenomena increased tensions at the U.S./Mexican border but little effort was provided to contextualize the worsening of living conditions in Honduras itself. Dr. Carter explained that despite Honduran government efforts to crack down on gang activities, over the last decade Honduras has experienced an explosion in the growth of complex international criminal syndicates whose scope and influence have transformed daily life and forced many people to make the perilous journey north. Through firsthand accounts of local people in the region and the experiences of those who have made the perilous journey atop trains and through miles of desert, Dr. Carter painted a melancholy portrait of the lives of ordinary people who are doing their best to thrive in an environment that has become increasingly inhospitable due to gang activity.

Contributed by Jordan Reifsteck

Professor Jon Carter is a socio-cultural anthropologist interested in criminality, aesthetics, and politics. His current research focuses on transnational gang communities between the US and Central America, and their reinvention of political subjectivity through the deconstruction of everyday notions of law, beauty, and violence.
buying into the regime

A lecture by Heidi Tinsman

grapes & consumption in cold war chile & the united states
On October 16th, Professor Heidi Tinsman came to IU to give a talk on her current research, dealing in the production and consumption of grapes between Chile and United States in the Cold War era. Professor Tinsman’s talk focused not only on the unique relationship between an American boom for ‘healthy snacking’ and a demand for new, fresh fruit, but the advertisements and politics involved in the creation and distribution of this new Chilean cash crop. Chilean grapes filled a market void thanks to opposing seasons, and the American market eagerly gobbled them up.

Factory work for the grape industry was typically done by women, giving women a sense of financial independence in the family setting. This was conveyed via advertisements for grapes, where beautiful, thin women from the US were shown eating grapes, compared to simple, more businesslike advertisements on the Chilean side. Using this unique blend of gender, labor and visual history, Dr. Tinsman illustrated a unique industry and partnership in a period of US-Latin American contention and highlighted the involvement of women on either side of the equator in order to provide a frame of reference of the contemporary consumer.

Heidi Tinsman is a professor of history at UC Irvine. Her focus is on 20th Century Latin American social history, gender history, and labor history. In particular, she is concerned with the way sexuality and race interface with class relations, popular culture, and social movements to shape working class lives. She seeks to place both the history of women and men and the history of workers within a broader context of community, national, and transnational dynamics.
MUCH OBLIGED:
Amazonian Ritual Dependencies

A lecture by
CHRISTOPHER BALL
In early November CLACS welcomed guest lecturer Dr. Christopher Ball from the University of Notre Dame. Dr. Ball completed his PhD in anthropology from the University of Chicago in 2007, and his dissertation research involved the Wauja people, a group of roughly 350 speakers of an Arawak language from the Upper Xingu of Brazil. In his presentation titled “Much Obliged: Amazonian Ritual Dependencies,” Dr. Ball examined how peoples of the Xingu translate ritual techniques for managing the relations of sorcery, witchcraft, disease, and death into techniques for protesting pressing political, social, and environmental issues. He brought to life his firsthand knowledge of the people of the Xingu, highlighting unresolved environmental challenges and the economic and societal impact those challenges have on their communities. His presentation was highlighted by pictures of the region, and he used the audio of recorded conversations to reveal contrasting perspectives related to contested issues. In his discussion of deforestation and regional hydroelectric dam projects, Dr. Ball explained how local rituals of gift giving and reciprocation create a web of unclear expectations and communication amongst local, regional, and national actors which, in his fieldwork, he has worked to explain and potentially overcome.

Dr. Ball’s other areas of interest include language in culture, the political economy of language in society, ritual performance, possession and exchange, Amazonian development, discourse and power, dialect and multilingualism, relationality and alterity, grammatical categories and mind, the anthropology of space and place, indigeneity, and language shift.

Contributed by Raúl Gross
In mid-November CLACS helped coordinate the screening of IU Maurer School of Law Professor and Associate Vice Provost for Faculty & Academic Affairs Christiana Ochoa’s documentary *Otra Cosa No Hay*. Sparked by urban protests in 2011 concerning gold mining rights in Colombia, Ochoa and her colleagues from Enlalucha Films began digging below the surface to find the sources of this deeply contentious conflict. Their resourcefulness lead to interviews with local, regional, national, and international stakeholders with interests in the exploitation of Colombian mineral deposits. The debate has centered on issues of rural livelihood, national development, and environmental impact. After the screening IU professor Dr. Jeff Gould offered commentary of the conflict, commending the film’s ability to reveal a landscape where opinions of what should be done do not always pan out according to ones proximity to or distance from the source of contention. In an open forum, Dr. Ochoa discussed the challenges of representing the complex web of relations which continue under great pressure. The region has been shut down, and tensions remain high due to a moratorium placed on mining. Pending decisions will establish ecological limits which mining companies and artisanal miners will be required to respect. The film elicited a variety of responses from those present, including locals originally from Colombia. It also provided a golden opportunity for students, faculty, and community members by inviting them to become stakeholders in the well-being of global communities, separated by distance but no different in their desire for peace, prosperity, and justice.

Contributed by Raúl Gross
LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Fall 2014 came and will have already gone by the time Enfoque begins to circulate. With the start of the new semester came an entirely new group of students to matriculate into the CLACS MA program and four of them working as GAs to help us keep el centro up and running. So, I’d like to first welcome our new MAs (Amanda Ferstead, dual with Public Health) and those who are also GAs: Sierra Funk, Jordan Reifsteck (dual with ILS), Sonia Calpanchay, and Raul Gross. Despite no continuity in GAs from last year, thus no one playing the role of experienced leader of the group, each one has gone beyond simply assuming their duties. In fact, they’ve all brought with them a great degree of self-directedness and creativity to lend to their respective tareas. We’re greatly thankful to them as a result. Some of this initiative is taking on what we hope to be exciting new directions proper to our technological times, e.g. the idea to begin digitally recording visiting lectures and circulate them as podcasts via the CLACS website; the idea to brand our Latin American Research Forum as simply “El Foro,” a vocalization more than adecuado because it sounds vastly more appealing than the unfortunate English language acronym.

El Foro this semester has already been a space to hear about some of the research of IU’s most experienced and most promising new faculty. Professor Emeritus in French and Italian, Albert Valdman, shared some of his on-going research on the role of Creole in the Haitian educational system. Meanwhile, Professor Lucia Guerra Reyes spoke about her research project, the problematic trajectory of interculturality and health care in the Andes. CLACS also sponsored the visits of Christopher Ball and Heidi Tinsman. Ball, a linguistic anthropologist from Notre Dame, shared some of his research on how Brazilian Amazonians incorporate outside agents of the state and non-governmental sector into a ritual logic of shared social obligations in response to the global imperative of development. Tinsman, historian from University of California Irvine, gave a talk about the historical role of gender and labor in Chile’s transnational grape industry.

We look forward to even more exciting events in the Spring semester – a mini-conference on Caribbean Studies, a panel on recent presidential politics in South America, and of course another iteration of the graduate student conference. We hope you’ll join us.

Shane G.
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