



# L.A.S. noticias

the latin american studies newsletter

bowdoin college

número 3, july 2011

## A note from the director

Dear Alumni, Students, and Friends:

The past year has been a busy one for the Latin American Studies Program at Bowdoin. We have welcomed some new faculty members and said goodbye to long time colleagues and mentors. We have had students participating in several new courses, in service learning and study away trips to various parts of Latin America, and in various curricular and co-curricular activities on and off campus. Several highlights from this year are collected in the pages of this newsletter. We hope that you will enjoy reading about faculty, friends, alumni, and colleagues and that you will write to us with your own news, ideas, adventures, and insights.

Over the past decade the Latin American Studies Program has offered many courses, endeavoring to introduce and deepen understanding of the cultural production, social relationships, history and politics of the region. The program has always cast a wide net around "Latin America" including Central and South America, the Caribbean, Mexico, and Latino/a communities in the United States. This year LAS offered a total of 33 courses and almost one-third of the Bowdoin student body (539 students) participated in these courses. The courses were cross-listed with departments and programs including Africana Studies, Anthropology, Economics, Education, Film, French, Gender and Women's Studies, History, Music and Spanish. New courses such as "Black Musics in Latin America and the Caribbean," "Transnational Cosmologies: Andean Examples," "Dress and Body Politics in Latin America," "New Waves in the New World: Latin American Cinema," and "Latinos and Latinas in the United States" enrich our curriculum with attention to scholarship from diverse disciplinary perspectives. Our students have also benefitted from the pedagogical innovation of our permanent and visiting faculty and the interdisciplinary perspective inherent in LAS at Bowdoin.

This year the Latin American Studies faculty have pursued exciting research and teaching agendas and collaborated on several discussions about the current state and future goals of the program. In the Fall 2010, we were very pleased to welcome Michael Birenbaum Quintero (tenure-track in Music), Sarah Childress (visiting in Film Studies), Esmeralda Ulloa (visiting in Spanish), and Mariana Cruz (visiting in Education). We were thrilled to congratulate Gustavo Faverón (Spanish) on his promotion to Associate Professor of Spanish with tenure. We look forward to enjoying several more years of his "distinction in scholarship and excellence in teaching" as well as his insight and amiability.

We also celebrated the accomplishments of our friend, teacher, and colleague, John Turner, who retires after almost 30 years of teaching Spanish. Co-founder and chair of the Latin American Studies Committee since the 1970s, John helped to make the LAS Program a reality and was one of the driving forces in the creation of our major in 1999. In his honor, the prize given to the graduating major who best exemplifies outstanding academic achievement and passion for Latin America has been renamed "The John Harold Turner Senior Prize in Latin American Studies."

This short letter would not be complete without words of thanks. On behalf of faculty, students, and staff I would first like to express appreciation for Enrique Yepes who has been such a wonderful director of LAS over the past several years. His energy and enthusiasm are unsurpassed. The organizational skills and good humor of Emily Briley and Lori Quimby, who have acted as coordinators for the program this year, have been invaluable. Finally, thanks to all of you who have kept in touch, contributed photos or updates, supported LAS through your presence and interest in courses, events, and programs, and in a myriad of ways have shared a passion for learning about the literature, landscapes, cultures and societies, art, music, history, and political and economic relationships of the Americas.

Krista Van Vleet  
Associate Professor of Anthropology



*Olokún, Orisha mayor.* Painting by Cuban Artist Elio Vilva  
His work was exhibited as part of *Cuba Week* last April, organized by the Brunswick-Trinidad Sister City Association

**MICHAEL BIRENBAUM QUINTERO's** article "Las poéticas sonoras del Pacífico Sur," on the relationship of music and sound with the social, spiritual, and natural environment of the black inhabitants of Colombia's Pacific, was published in Colombia in the edited volume *Músicas y prácticas sonoras en el Pacífico afrocolombiano*. He gave academic presentations on related themes, "Resounding Surroundings in Colombia's Black Southern Pacific" and "Mapear el sonido, sonar el mapa: La construcción sonora de una región afrocolombiana," at the "Ambience in the Humanities" conference in New York and the International Musicological Congress in Mexico City. He presented a paper on music's role in psychological trauma and memory, entitled "Between the Unspeakable and the Ineffable: Violence, Music, and Memory in the Colombian Pacific" at the Society for Ethnomusicology's meeting in Los Angeles and at Bowdoin's Faculty Seminar Series. He was invited to lecture on "Blackness and Cosmopolitanism in Colombia's Black Pacific" at the "Alternative Ethnographies" colloquium at Colby College. For Colombia's Ministry of Culture, he drafted a report outlining a framework for establishing regional meetings of musical investigation.

**NADIA CELIS** worked mainly on her book-projects, *La rebelión de las niñas: cuerpos, poder y subjetividad en el Caribe hispano* and *Lección errante: Mayra Santos-Febres y el Caribe contemporáneo*. She spent part of her sabbatical leave in Cartagena de Indias, where she completed an article on the folkloric dancers of the historical plazas, and interacted with street artists and performers who embody practices of citizenship she is currently studying. She also worked on policy making, as an academic consultant for the Instituto de Patrimonio y Cultura de Cartagena.

**MARIANA CRUZ**, Puerto Rican, completed her second year as a Consortium for Faculty Diversity Dissertation Fellow and Lecturer. Mariana's doctoral research explores the interplay between the coloniality of power and decolonial possibilities in education. This year she taught courses on education and Latino/a studies, organized a brown-bag lunch speaker series, and presented with students at a conference. Her Latino/Latina studies course had a community-based research component where students partnered with and created projects for local organizations serving Maine's Latino/a community in the areas of women's advocacy, public health, and migrant education. Her recent projects include a study on what it means to teach, mentor, and advise Latino/a students in higher education in collaboration with emerging and established scholars in the field of Latino education.

**JULIÁN P. DÍAZ** presented his paper "Trade Integration and the Skill Premium: The Case of a Transition Economy" (co-authored with Stanley Cho from the University of New South Wales) at the 2011 Colby-Bowdoin-Bates Annual Economics Conference held in Brunswick in April. Using a variety of macro- and micro-level data, this article documents the pattern of the skill premium in Slovenia for the periods prior and following Slovenia's accession to the European Union, and analyzes the impact of the increase

in international trade between Slovenia and the European Union on the declining path of the Slovenian skill premium. After helpful and valuable feedback from the conference participants, an updated and revised version of the article will be presented at the Southern Economic Association to be held in Washington, DC in the fall.

**GUSTAVO FAVERÓN PATRIAU** was promoted to the position of Associate Professor at Bowdoin. His book *Contra la alegoría. Hegemonía y disidencia en la literatura latinoamericana del siglo XIX* was approved for publication by Olms Verlag for the series Theorie und Kritik der Kultur und der Literatur / Teoría y Crítica de la Cultura y de la Literatura (Leipzig). He published the article "Especulaciones sobre la ciudad letrada y el intelectual latinoamericano" (*Revista Hispánica Moderna* 63.2, December 2010). His first novel, *El anticuario*, published in Lima by Editorial Peisa, was considered by many critics to be among the best books of fiction appeared in Peru in 2010.

**STEPHEN MEARDON** saw two articles from his project on the history of international trade agreements published in academic journals. The first ("On the Evolution of U.S. Trade Agreements: Evidence From Taussig's Tariff Commission"), which discusses in part the legal background of negotiations for a 1926 agreement with El Salvador, was published in the *Journal of Economic Issues* in June 2011. The second ("Reciprocity and Henry C. Carey's Traverses on 'the Road to Perfect Freedom of Trade'"), which studies why the preeminent U.S. protectionist thinker of the 19th century finally endorsed the substance of U.S. trade agreements in Latin America, is forthcoming in the *Journal of the History of Economic Thought* in September 2011.

**KRISTA VAN VLEET's** article, "On Devils and the Dissolution of Sociality: Catholics Voicing Ambivalence in 21<sup>st</sup> century Bolivia" will appear in a special issue of *Anthropological Quarterly*, "The Ethics of Dissolution" this fall. She also completed her second book, *Making Families through Adoption* (Sage 2012, co-authored with sociologist Nancy E. Riley). Although focused on the United States, the book integrates discussion of child fosterage and adoption in parts of Latin America, Asia, the Middle East, and Europe in order to show how (all) families are socially created and how the movement of children from one family (and sometimes one country) to another is tied to broad social and economic inequalities. She presented papers entitled: "Engendering Care, Revisioning Complementarity: Teen Mothers, Service Tourism and the Circulation of Youth in the Andes" at the American Anthropological Association meetings (New Orleans) and "Producing the 'Teenaged Mother' in Peru" at the American Ethnological Society meetings (San Juan). She also taught a new course in the Fall 2011 called "Transnational Cosmologies: Andean Examples," which explored how global flows of people, ideas, and commodities have influenced religious beliefs and practices in the Andean region at different historical moments.

## Faculty news

**SUSAN WEGNER** incorporated more of the arts of the Aztec and Inca world into her classes on Renaissance Italy and Baroque Spain. This included analysis of the impact of imports (dyes, pigments, gold, silver) and imperial gifts (Aztec acrobats, feather mosaics and semi-precious stone masks). The experimental Art History 100: Introduction to Art History included ancient Mexico and Peru in Art History's efforts to broaden the world view that introduces beginning students to the discipline. For Art History 130: Introduction to the Arts of Ancient Mexico and Peru, she invited Mexica philosopher Luis Rodríguez Cedillo to campus for a public talk on the continuity of ancient Maya cosmology into the 21st century. She also offered students doing research papers access to original West Mexican ceramics from the Bowdoin College Museum of Art collection.

**ALLEN WELLS** co-authored with Steven Topik, "Commodity Chains in a Global Economy, 1870-1945," for *A New History of the World* (Akira Iriye and Jürgen Osterhammel, Eds., 5 vols. Cambridge and Munich: Harvard University Press and C. H. Beck Publishers, forthcoming); and with Gilbert Joseph, "Rivalidad económica e inquietud rural durante los últimos años del Porfiriato en Yucatán," and "El 'Porfiriato prolongado' de Yucatán: La resistencia popular y de las élites, 1910-1915," *Historia General de Yucatán* (Eds. Jorge I. Castillo Canché, Inés Ortiz Yam and Sergio Quezada. Mérida: Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán Press, forthcoming). He gave lectures on *Tropical Zion* at the University of North Carolina, Pomona College, the University of Texas-El Paso, the Paul Cuffee School in Providence and the Bowdoin College Los Angeles Alumni Club. It was the featured book for the College's Mellon Mays Fellowship program. *Tropical Zion* was used as a reference work by a group of Dominican and Jewish high school and middle school theater students in New York City, who under the direction of noted off-Broadway Director Liz Swados, conceived and performed an original musical, "Sosúa: Dare to Dance Together." This musical was a way to bring together two ethnic groups in Washington Heights (NYC) who often have little to do with each other. Ten Dominican and ten Jewish students met over the course of 2009-2010 to rehearse the play. The show was held over with a different cast during the 2010-2011 school year and was performed at a number of venues in NYC during the spring of 2011, including the Schomburg Center and the Museum of Jewish Heritage.

Photograph of **JOHN TURNER's** "Mexican Novel" class in 1976. John offered the first course at Bowdoin fully devoted to Latin American literature in Spanish in 1971, chaired the LAS Committee since the 1980s and was chair when the proposal for the major was approved in 2000. He also brought world-wide renowned Latin American authors to campus in the 1980s and 1990s, including Carlos Fuentes and Mario Vargas Llosa, and served as Faculty Mentor for LASO throughout the 1980s and the mid-1990s.

**GENIE WHEELWRIGHT** helped organize the activities for Cuba Week, the week in April sponsored by the Brunswick-Trinidad Sister City Association. Genie solicited the participation and support of the LAS Program, which contributed funds for the Afro-Cuban Drumming Workshop led by Michael Quintero (Bowdoin, Music) and Dylan Blanchard (Olas band). This event was open to the public and exemplifies the Bowdoin and LAS commitment to the greater Brunswick community.

**NAT WHEELWRIGHT** continued his long-term research in Costa Rica on the ecology of tropical trees. Currently he has a manuscript in review in the *Journal of the American Botanical Society* on differences in leaf traits in male and female trees. Unrelated to his work in Latin America was a Mellon grant to work on the population genetics of irises on islands in the Bay of Fundy, in collaboration with a molecular evolutionary biologist at Colby College.

**CAROLYN WOFENSON** has recently published the article "*El mundo alucinante* de Reinaldo Arenas: la historia como trampa inmóvil" (*Chasqui*, May 2011). Two other articles by her are now forthcoming: "*El Tercer Reich* de Roberto Bolaño: la historia como juego de guerra" will be published in the second edition of the book *Bolaño salvaje* (edited by Edmundo Paz Soldán and Gustavo Faverón Patriau), and "*Batallas en el desierto*: la inversión del melodrama cinematográfico como estrategia crítica sobre la Revolución Mexicana" will appear in *Confluencia* (May 2012).

**ENRIQUE YEPES** received the 2011 McKeen Center Faculty Award for Public Engagement in May. He also wrote the piece "Poetry: A Way to Peace and Pluralism" for the *Americas* magazine (Organization of American States, Dec. 2010). Last May he presented his work on Colombian poet María Mercedes Carranza at the National Colloquium on Literature and Regions in Colombia. Next fall he will be offering a new seminar, "Ecological Thought in Latin American Literature," which will read twentieth-century Latin American narrative and poetry in connection to the region's environmental history and consciousness.



Keep track of our faculty and their web pages at: [www.bowdoin.edu/latin-american-studies/faculty/](http://www.bowdoin.edu/latin-american-studies/faculty/)





*Michael Birenbaum Quintero, Assistant Professor of Music, studies music and political movements in Colombia, focusing on the Afro-Colombian music of the Pacific coast. He began his tenure track position at Bowdoin in Fall 2010. He teaches courses on Black Musics in Latin America and the Caribbean, Latino Music in the U.S., Ethnomusicology, and the Afro-Latin Music Ensemble.*

### What got you interested in studying Afro-Colombian music of the Pacific?

I was really interested in questions of racial identity in Colombia. I actually started off working on the Caribbean coast with a popular music called *champeta*, a local version of Nigerian, Congolese and Haitian music played on these huge sound systems. That music was super interesting and a lot of fun. Then in the summer of 2001, while I was waiting to hear if I would get into graduate school, I taught English in Japan. On the way out there, I visited a friend in San Francisco, where I ran into a CD of music from Colombia's Pacific coast, a kind of music that I'd never heard of before. I didn't actually *listen* to it until I was in Japan, but when I put in this CD ...I'd never heard anything like it before: it was very strange, but absolutely gorgeous. The music was love at first hear.

### How long have you been doing research on this music?

I've been visiting river communities on the Pacific coast since 2002. The Pacific coast is the heart of the black social movement in Colombia. I started researching how discussions of "tradition" and "culture" were used in the movement. And, in fact, the black social movement in Colombia is about territorial claims, and those territorial claims are based on particular cultural practices that involve music.

### Can you tell us a little more about how music and territory work together?

Territory is essential to how music works among Afro-Colombians. People live along rivers in the rainforest; it's a very particular kind of sound environment. Singing, for example, uses a lot of leaps to falsetto because of how that sound reverberates off the river. The construction of the instruments also depends on people's knowledge of their environment. So, the bamboo used to make marimbas needs to be cut when there is no moon: the full moon brings up the tide and the water table in the bamboo so that it takes longer to dry. Pacific coast riverbank communities also have particular relationships with the spirit world and with saints. Their musical practices bring all of these aspects of culture, environment, and sound together.

### What is this kind of music called?

It's usually called *currulao*. It's played on the marimba and percussion instruments, with harmony singing. It's beautiful, complex, very distinct, very spiritual music – deep stuff.



### How is *currulao* linked to social movements in Colombia?

In part because of the pressures of the Afro- and indigenous movements, Colombia passed a new constitution in 1991 that recognized a pluri-ethnic and multicultural nation. Afro-Colombians mobilized themselves politically around the idea of themselves as a cultural minority that should be recognized by the state. In Colombia, in general, people understand (ethnic and racial) difference through indigenous people – different languages, different cultural practices. Black Colombians are not seen as different enough to be Indians but are viewed as too debased to be full citizens.

In the Constitutional Assembly, Afro-Colombians faced a lot of skepticism from politicians who thought the idea of black cultural rights was just opportunism. In response, the activists made a cultural demonstration of music, local language, and oral poetry, right there on the floor of the Assembly to show that Afro-Colombians *do things differently* – and their right to collective territory is based on this cultural difference.

These questions are not just academic musings – there is a lot at stake here. Afro-Colombian communities have been deeply affected by Colombia's internal conflict – a war that's been going on 50 years. Drastic human rights violations have affected black and indigenous populations disproportionately. Culture is one of the few resources they have to defend themselves, but it's also one of the elements most threatened by the conflict.

### So what will your book be titled?

*Rites, Rights, and Rhythms: A Genealogy of Musical Meaning in Colombia's Black Pacific.* I'm in the process of writing it up. The book basically goes through the history of the last 300 years and asks how this music *became* the black music of the southern Pacific: How did this music become black? How did it become linked to the Pacific? How did local intellectuals make a place for themselves and for this political movement in the context of the Colombian state's own nation-making? And, finally, how do local people react to all of these large-scale processes in their musical practices?

## Exploring Issues in Latin American Studies with the Global Citizens Grant

The Global Citizens Grant, initiated in 2007 by Willy Oppenheim '09, and awarded through the McKeen Center for the Common Good, provides Bowdoin students travel funding to spend 8-10 weeks learning about issues such as public health, elder and disability rights, education and environmental sustainability through serving with grassroots organizations outside of the United States. Since the grant's inception, eight recipients have worked with organizations in Latin America, building on their experiences through academic and service work on their return.

**Jamilah Gregory '11**, the winner of this year's Latin American Studies Prize, was awarded the Global Citizens Grant in 2010 to support her work with [Camp Hope Foundation](#) in **Quito, Ecuador**. Located in an underprivileged, industrial area of the city, Camp Hope provides attention, recreation, rehabilitation, education, spiritual support, and vocational resources to economically, physically, and mentally challenged children to enable them to attain their goals of independence and integration into society. *"This internship at Camp Hope was one of the most incredible experiences I have had the privilege to enjoy. It has profoundly impacted my future goals and career plans - affirming my desire to be a teacher and serve in underprivileged communities."*

**Sheela Turbek '13**, a Latin American Studies student who won this year's sophomore Spanish prize, also received a Global Citizens Grant award in 2010 to carry out service work in Ecuador. Sheela assisted [Fundación Brethren y Unida](#) in promoting sustainable development and providing instruction in natural resource management in the **Intag and Pedro Moncayo regions of Ecuador**. *"In the future, I eventually hope to work as a wildlife biologist and conduct ecological field research in the rain forests of Central and South America."*

Latin American Studies major **Kate Leifheit '12**, spent January and February of 2011 working with [La Fundación Abuelitos y Abuelitas de la Calle \(FABC\)](#) in **Quito, Ecuador**. The Foundation supports marginalized elderly people, often living without the support of families, income of any sort, and government aid. FABC provides these people with the resources to better their own quality of life, addressing both health and social needs through programming. Kate volunteered with the center's medical staff, working in its free clinic and doing public health outreach.

If you have ties with a grassroots NGO in a Latin American country and would like to add that organization to our list of international non-profits with Bowdoin community connections, please contact Janice Jaffe ([jjaffe@bowdoin.edu](mailto:jjaffe@bowdoin.edu)). To learn more about this fellowship, and read all our grantees' stories: <http://www.bowdoin.edu/mckeen-center/fellowships-beyond/global-citizens-grant/index.shtml>

Look for stories about the work of these three 2011 Global Citizens Grant recipients in our next newsletter:

**Elena Crosley '13** will be spending this summer in **Granada, Nicaragua** volunteering with [Building New Hope](#), an organization that seeks to provide support and partnership to communities in Central America. Elena will work in Casa Lupita as an assistant to a local veterinarian, teaching people to reduce health risks by getting appropriate care for their animals. She'll also help elementary through high school students develop their math skills.

**Abby Suresh '12** will be working with [Compas de Nicaragua](#) in **Managua, Nicaragua**. Compas is involved in many public health initiatives to support the poor single mothers in Nicaragua as well as try to improve access to water resources. In addition, Compas is involved in promoting sustainability practices in cities neighboring Managua. Abby will work with Compas' Women in Action program on sustainable food production and improving irrigation systems.

**Ben Richmond '13**, a Latin American Studies major, will spend January and February of 2012 working with [Teach Huaraz Peru](#) in **Huaraz, Peru**. Teach Huaraz is a local, grassroots organization that supports the community of Huaraz by providing English lessons for children in local schools and educational programs for at-risk youth. Ben plans to work as an English tutor and to help Teach Huaraz establish a youth outdoor education program, consisting of short overnight trips in the area's surrounding mountains.

## NEWS FROM Latin American Students Organization (LASO)

Mariana Cruz, 2009-2010 Faculty Mentor of the Latin American Student Organization writes, "This year, the Latin American Student Organization worked, in a variety of ways, to educate and celebrate Latino/a and Latin American culture and identity. Through a number of on-campus partnerships with various academic departments, student groups and campus offices, we were able to broaden the scope of our yearly activities and focus on developing networks for our group members. Our annual "Valentine's Day Date Auction" brought in over \$500 for Safe Passage. We hosted salsa music in Jack Magee's Pub thanks to local band Fuego de la Mente, and screened Amores Perros, in addition to other films. Furthermore, we reached out to the Latino/a community in New England and beyond, inviting David Morales '97 and renowned poet Tino Villanueva, among others. Along the way, we had numerous meals, discussions, and group activities, and tried to pay extra attention to the well-being of our group members, culturally and socially. Thanks to our dedicated group of board members, and our inspired regular attendants, LASO had a productive year, and is happy to gear up for Latino/a Heritage Month 2011, and everything that lies beyond!"

By Janice Jaffe

Three of the **ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK TRIPS** and a **Weekend Service Trip** organized with the assistance of the McKeen Center for the Common Good worked with organizations that involve Latin American or Latina/o populations.



Immokalee, Florida

**“Harvesting Communities in Immokalee”** spent a week working with and learning from the migrant workers of Immokalee, Florida. Students helped address issues of inequality, wage disparities, human rights and poverty with community organizations and political action groups.

*Leaders: Sean Campos '11 and Macy Galvan '13*

**“Providing a Safe Passage in Guatemala”** worked with Safe Passage, an organization that creates opportunities for Guatemala City's poorest children through the power of education. Students worked directly with children, assisted Guatemalan teachers, met the families that make their living off the Guatemala City dump, and learned about the legacy of Safe Passage's founder, Hanley Denning '92.



Guatemala City



Camden, New Jersey

**“When I Say Urban, You Say Promise in Camden”** worked at Urban Promise in Camden, NJ while exploring issues of urban education and poverty. Students worked with children in classrooms and volunteered with school maintenance projects that help keep the organization's operational costs low.

*Leaders: Teresa Arey '11 and Julian Leung '11*

**Weekend Service Trips to Mano en Mano.** Students spent one weekend in the fall and another in the spring in the town of Milbridge, Maine, working with Mano en Mano, an organization directed by Ian Yaffe '09, that advocates for social justice and works with diverse populations, including 600 Latino residents, in Down East Maine, to provide affordable housing, educational opportunities, and better access to health and social services.

*Leaders: Samantha Collins '11, Mariya Ilyas '13, Sandra Martínez '13 and Elsie Thomson '11*



Milbridge, Maine



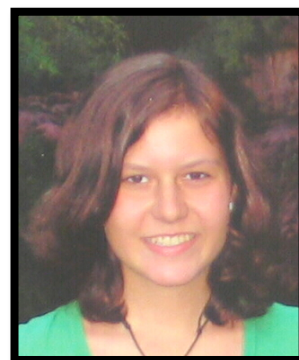
### Latin American Studies Research Grant 2011 Recipients

Established in 2000 by the Latin American Studies Committee, and funded by the office of the Dean for Academic Affairs, these competitive grants support student research in Latin America and the Caribbean that contributes to a subsequent independent study for a semester or a year, under the direction of a faculty member. You may read grant awardees' reports at:

[www.bowdoin.edu/latin-american-studies/research/research-grants/previous-years.shtml](http://www.bowdoin.edu/latin-american-studies/research/research-grants/previous-years.shtml)

#### **ANNABEL BOEKE, '12** *"Tisis en la ciudad: Examining the Medical Discourse on TB in Turn of the Century Buenos Aires"*

Annabel will examine the medical discourse on tuberculosis during the great wave of immigration to Buenos Aires, Argentina between 1870 and 1914. At that time, tuberculosis was linked to vice and the presumed genetic inferiority of immigrant groups. Thus, understanding racial hierarchies and the built environment of the old city center will be key aspects of her project. In Colección Candiotti, she will read doctoral theses from the University of Buenos Aires Medical School dating back to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. She will analyze her findings in an Advanced Independent Study with Professor Wells in the Fall 2011.



#### **ELI GARRARD, '12** *"Body Politics in Contemporary Argentine Cinema"*

Eli will be investigating the ways in which "body politics" are manifest in contemporary Argentine cinema. Recent political economic and social changes in Argentina—particularly since the severe economic crisis in 2001—have created a context in which traditional power relationships based on gender, class, religion, sexuality, and ethnicity/nationality are reconfigured. How do onscreen physical representations of bodies and identities communicate entrenched or transformed relationships of power? After completing his semester abroad program with IFSA-Butler in Buenos Aires in July, he will conduct library research, interviews, and film analyses. Upon his return to Bowdoin he will conduct an Advanced Independent Study with Professor Yepes on the portrayal of social minorities in the *Nuevo Cine Argentino*.



#### **LAURA TILL, '12** *"The Voice of Conflict: Mapuche Poetry and Identity in Southern Chile"*

Laura will explore the ways in which Mapuche poetry is perceived by non-Mapuche who may or may not support the broader political claims of this ethnic minority. Comprising about 4% of Chile's population, the Mapuche are engaged in an ongoing struggle for state recognition of territorial rights and cultural heritage. Mapuche poetry is often a voice of protest. In the Fall 2011, Laura will conduct further research on poetry as a tool of social activism and Mapuche poetry in the context of 21<sup>st</sup> century Chile.



### The John Harold Turner Prize in Latin American Studies

Named after Professor Emeritus John H. Turner, this prize is awarded to a graduating Latin American studies major who, in the judgment of the Latin American Studies Committee, has achieved academic distinction and has contributed to an understanding of the region.

In 2011 the John Harold Turner Senior Prize in Latin American Studies was awarded to **Jamilah Banu Gregory**.

Jamilah impressed the LAS Committee not only with her outstanding academic record but also with her commitment to service work in Latin America.



Campos working with children in Immokalee, Florida.

## How did you get involved with Latin American Studies and the Latin American Students Organization?

When I first came to Bowdoin, I was unsure of what I wanted to study, and what I wanted to do with all of this opportunity. Around this time, my first-year social house buddy, then a co-president of the Latin American Student Organization, told me personally I should consider coming to their weekly meetings. With that, I launched down a path of involvement with the group that has, in many ways, opened my eyes to where my interests and greatest potentials lie. My first year at Bowdoin, I also took a course entitled “Chicano/a Literature After WWII,” which was taught by a visiting Consortium for Faculty Diversity Fellow. The course dramatically heightened my interest in pursuing academic work in addition to the civic involvement with which I was becoming more familiar.

This first year proved to be very positive for me, even though I had the typical anxieties of beginning a college career, because it sketched out a blueprint of the things I could pursue and offered me a strong network of diverse individuals to provide support. Though my years at Bowdoin were spent darting around from class to meeting, and back and forth, it was very much through LASO that I became familiar with the school and its operations, and the students that make it a rich, distinct place.

## Tell us a bit more about your involvement with LASO.

Over the years, I served as Vice President and President for the organization, going through levels of heightened activity and moments of re-evaluation. Repeatedly, we would have to ask ourselves collectively, “why are we, as students, organizing around these issues?” These questions led to extreme growth as both a student and a leader for which I am infinitely grateful.

## How does your academic and personal involvement come together?

Also, through the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship which I was awarded in 2009, I planned several individual research projects related to Chicana/o and Latina/o art and culture, some of which will guide my work as I plan for post-graduate education. Perhaps most important to me are the two Alternative Spring Break programs I participated in and organized in Immokalee, Florida (which received continual funding from the McKen Center for the Common Good and Latin American Studies). During week-long trips, we worked with a group of students and community members in Florida in a number of social services oriented around the large migrant worker population. During these trips, I saw many of the struggles and injustices I read about in my Latin American Studies-impacted coursework firsthand, while simultaneously blended the two complex notions of “service” and “learning.”

## What are your plans for after graduation?

Currently, I am applying for a PhD in Anthropology, and I hope to study intersection of rural/urban Latino/a communities, and the art and debate that these cross-cultural conversations produce. In the meantime, I’m hoping to work in the general field of community development in areas of mostly Latina/o residency. Of course, I would have never made it this far without the help of Latin American Studies and LASO, and I can only imagine how this trajectory will benefit me in the near future.”



Latin American Students Organization, 2010-2011.



## How did you come to Bowdoin and where are you going after graduation?

I went to a large public high school in Concord, New Hampshire and as a member of the first generation of my family to attend college, I am very grateful to now be a recent Bowdoin graduate with a degree in Latin American Studies and Spanish with a Minor in Teaching!

## Tell us about some of your experiences with community service in Latin America.

My sophomore year I led a spring break service trip to Ecuador where I helped build a playground at a school with an indigenous community in a rural region of the country. I never expected that I would return to Ecuador about a year later! During my junior year I began taking Education courses in combination with courses for my Spanish major and I discovered my passion for teaching....To combine my love for Spanish, working with kids, serving in an international setting, and my new-found love for teaching, I opted to gain fluency in Spanish during a summer volunteer experience at La Fundación Campamento Cristiano Esperanza (Camp Hope) in Ecuador. A Preston Public Interest Career Fund Summer Fellowship and the Global Citizen's Grant funded my 11-week internship during the summer of 2010.



Gregory teaching at Camp Hope, Quito, Ecuador.

## Tell us more about Camp Hope.

Camp Hope is an educational non-profit and orphanage for children with disabilities in Quito, Ecuador. Located in an underprivileged, industrial area of the city, Camp Hope provides attention, recreation, rehabilitation, education, spiritual support, and vocational resources to economically, physically, and mentally challenged children to enable them to attain their goals of independence and integration into society. I taught lessons to K-7 students in English, Photography, and Bodily Systems, translated for visiting medical professionals, developed an English curriculum for future volunteers, co-taught CPR and First Aid, and assisted with daily routines and therapy for children with severe autism, cerebral palsy, and other disabilities.

## Do you have a particular experience that you would like to share about Bowdoin or LAS?

I am so thankful for the opportunities Bowdoin has provided me with over these past four years to really be engaged in the community in profound ways and to build lasting connections...The internship at Camp Hope was one of the most incredible experiences I have had the privilege to enjoy. It has profoundly impacted my future goals and career plans - affirming my desire to be a teacher and serve in underprivileged communities. I learned how to better teach students with special needs and accommodate students at different levels in the classroom, and I gained a deeper understanding of the unique strengths and faults of non-profit organizations.

One of the most memorable aspects of my internship at Camp Hope is the quality of the relationships that I built with the children and staff at the foundation. Having a great relationship with the kids, earning their respect and love, and setting a good example is so important in one's ability to teach. I believe the positive relationships I shared with the students contributed to their desire to learn. Also, through strong ties made with the teachers and staff, we mutually dismantled cultural stereotypes and stigmas...Working with children who could not hear, speak, or feed themselves, let alone smile or hug me, made me confront the deeper issues surrounding my personal motivation to serve.

## What are your plans for the future?

This summer I am working as the Maine Summer Program Associate for Let's Get Ready, which is a non-profit organization that aims to expand college access for motivated, low-income high school students by providing free SAT preparation, mentorship from college students, and college admission counseling in Massachusetts, New York, and now Portland, Maine. As a Bowdoin Teacher Scholar, I will begin my student-teaching in January 2012 to earn a Maine Teacher Certification in Spanish and then we'll see where God takes me from there!...I am considering long-term careers in teaching Spanish, educational non-profits, collegiate civic engagement, and higher education.

We loved receiving the following messages from Bowdoin graduates who majored or minored in LAS, or who concentrated in Latin America for some other major. Due to space considerations, some entries have been edited or condensed. We look forward to hearing from these and other alums for future issues of *L.A.S. noticias*! Keep us updated: [newsletter@bowdoin.edu](mailto:newsletter@bowdoin.edu)

## BLAKE, STANLEY "CHIP" '90

Chip just received tenure and promotion at Ohio State University-Lima. His monograph, *The Vigorous Core of Our Nationality: Race and Regional Identity in Northeastern Brazil*, has just been published by the University of Pittsburgh Press (for more, see Alum Bookshelf section).

## BROADDUS, SAM '73

Sam was presented a Volunteerism Award for International Outreach by the American Council of Surgeons. The national award, given to one surgeon a year, is in recognition of Sam's remarkable and longstanding surgical work at Konbit Sante in Cap Haitien, Haiti.

## COFFIN, EMILY, '08

"I am the Entrepreneurship Advisor/*Asesora de Emprendimiento* and work within the Adult Literacy Program at Safe Passage (Guatemala City, Guatemala). My principal focus (since I arrived in June 2010) has been supporting the women's recycled jewelry collective, CREAMOS (Creaciones con Reciclaje Esperanza y Amor por Madres Organizadas y Solidarias). Over the past three years, the company has grown from a small workshop for Safe Passage mothers to now a thriving company with 25 women that sells jewelry throughout Guatemala and is beginning to export to the US (soon to be in the Bowdoin Bookstore!) Most importantly, almost all of women have been able to leave working in the city garbage dump and now support their families through jewelry sales--on average earning about 40 percent more than they would in the dump. To offer opportunities for more mothers, we just launched a sewing initiative and already have orders pouring in...Last fall, the Adult Literacy Program completed an impact assessment that showed while education for parents has significant positive impact on their children, it has had relatively small outcomes in terms of better employment opportunities...Consequently, we have redoubled our efforts to develop self-sustaining economic opportunities for parents as they continue their education."



Gladys Hernández, a CREAMOS jewelry designer, is helping lead the sewing initiative.

## CONTI, ASHLEY '07

From the April 2011 issue of the *Bowdoin Magazine*: "I recently left investment banking to join a Spanish-speaking microfinance institution that provides small loans to women in Latin America."

## CRANDELL, RUSSELL '94

Associate Professor of Political Science, Davidson College has published two articles this past year, "The Post-American Hemisphere: Power and Politics in an Autonomous Latin America," *Foreign Affairs* 90:3 (May-June 2011), 83-95; and, with Caroline McDermott, "City on a Hill: A Letter from Medellín," *The American Interest* 6:5 (May-June 2011), 117-122. He is returning to the classroom this fall after serving in the Obama administration as Director for Andean Affairs in the National Security Council.

## EDGECOMB, SARAH '03

"I have been practicing law in Miami for a few years and now I am about to wrap up a Masters in International Legal Studies at NYU School of Law in May 2011."

## AMELIA FISKE '06

"This summer I am studying for my comprehensive exams for my PhD program in Cultural Anthropology at the University of North Carolina. I received a grant from the Social Science Research Council to conduct my dissertation research on the impacts of oil exploration on human health and environment in the Ecuadorian Amazon. I will be travelling there in November."

GOULDER, SHELLEY '07 writes while on the road: "I'm on a two-month travel break through Peru and Bolivia ... Last summer, I worked at Experiment in International Living, the high school branch of SIT. I led a group of 12 students through Argentina with a long home-stay component in Posadas. It would be a great travel opportunity for rising seniors (as you have to be 21 to lead). I had a great experience and am planning on leading again this summer."

## GUERIN, EMILY '09

"After graduation, I led wilderness trips in New Mexico and then taught environmental education at Ferry Beach Ecology School in Saco, Me. Then I interned for the public radio show "Living on Earth" in Boston. I then moved to Portland where I became a freelance journalist and waitress at a Latin American restaurant. I'm now a reporter for *The Forecaster* newspaper covering Brunswick and Harpswell."



## GREET, MICHELLE '93

"I received tenure at George Mason University and am now Associate Professor of Art History and Latin American Studies. I'm currently working on a book on Latin American artists in Paris between the world wars. Lectures given in 2010 include: "Transatlantic Encounters: Latin American Artists in Paris between the Wars" at the Miami Art Museum; "Indigenism as a Modernist Strategy in Andean Art" at Georgetown University; and "César Moro's Transnational Surrealism" at the "Surrealism and the Americas" Conference, Rice University, Houston."

## JOSENEY, CASSANDRO, '07

"I graduated from Columbia Law School in May 2010 and started at the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) where I am a consultant in their Haiti Response Group. This group was created to plan and execute all of the Bank's activities in Haiti. The Bank has committed to spending 2.2 billion dollars in Haiti over 11 years. Projects that I am involved with include the construction of the largest industrial park in the area, and an education reform project that will provide free universal education in Haiti, among other changes."

## MELIA, MICHAEL, '99

A correspondent and editor for *The Associated Press* in San Juan, Puerto Rico, for the last ten years, recently has been named administrative correspondent for the news cooperative in Hartford, Connecticut, where he will oversee news operations. While in San Juan, he covered the Haiti earthquake, corruption in Puerto Rico and terrorism trials at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

## LETTIERI, MIKE '05

While finishing up his dissertation research thanks to a Fulbright-Hayes grant on the transport sector in Mexico during the mid twentieth century (at UC-San Diego), Mike created this stunning blog filled with beautiful images of *el verdadero* Mexico, UC-San Diego), Mike created this stunning blog filled with beautiful images of *el verdadero* México, ¡Disfruten!  
<http://todoescuautilan.blogspot.com/>

The title of the blog refers to the expression, "Fuera de México, todo es Cuautitlán," which *chilangos*—residents of Mexico City—use when they want to poke fun on those who live in the sticks.

## O'KONEK, TIANA GIERKE, '03

"I work for the legal department of the United Farm Workers Union. My husband and I live in Tehachapi, CA – 5 minutes away from UFW headquarters...[The UFW] has summer internships and spring break opportunities [for those interested in] organizing college students. Both are great opportunities for students to learn about César Chávez, dig through some of the historic documents that need to be organized at the UFW headquarters, practice their Spanish, and learn more about farmworkers' rights and struggles."

## PEARSON, MARCUS, '05

"I'm still in law school in Seattle, but now I have been able to focus my studies on something a little more stimulating than Contracts and Civil Procedure. In addition to serving as the Associate Editor in Chief for University of Washington's *International Law Journal*, this January I was awarded a month-long travel grant to research a controversial proposed hydroelectric dam project in Chilean Patagonia ... I met with environmental lawyers, project officials, local government officers, and affected members of the community to gauge the dams' environmental and social impacts in Aysen, a pristine but economically depressed region. I'm currently writing ... a legal analysis of Chile's newly minted environmental ministry and regulatory structure to see whether it will exercise meaningful enforcement power over this project. Otherwise, I'm just enjoying a rainy Seattle winter and looking forward to seeing the sun again soon."

## REED, ALEX, '10

"After four months in Washington, DC writing about Latin America for the Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA), I began an 8-month Fulbright grant in Uruguay. Though I (still) don't know all the details, I'll be spending my first three months in the interior (either Salto or Paysandu), and my last five months in Montevideo. While I'm there, I'll be teaching English, volunteering, and drinking as much mate as possible. I hope to have some time to explore Brazil and Argentina, and revisit Chile (where I studied abroad in '08) before I return to the U.S. Bowdoin visitors and traveling companions are welcome!"

RENIERS, MAGGIE who spent three years at Bowdoin during the mid 1990s is currently teaching ESL, and is the owner of this lovely B&B in Otavalo, Ecuador: <http://www.posadaquinde.com/>

## ROTH, CASSIA, '08

"I am in my second year of the PhD program in Latin American history at the University of California, Los Angeles. This year I've been writing up my dissertation proposal, which connects socioeconomic changes during turn-of-the century Brazil to women's reproductive practices, while focusing on the structural inequalities inherent in a class- and race-based society. My thesis will address three questions: what was the scope, reach, and timing of changes in women's birth control practices before modern methods became available; how did demographic changes—in particular rural to urban migration and increased numbers of women in wage labor—affect women's reproductive choices; and, how and why did the state monitor, control, and ultimately, criminalize these practices? I plan to begin my thesis research in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil next fall."

## SHERMAN, RICHARD, '02

"Since completing a Master's Degree program in Latin American Studies at Indiana University, I've been working in the Admissions Office of California University of Pennsylvania. One of my chief responsibilities is improving access to higher education for Hispanic/Latino students. My wife and I live near Pittsburgh, and we welcomed our first child in July 2010."



*Nell Sears is Principal of Paul Cuffee School in Providence, Rhode Island. She graduated in 1997 with a BA in History. (At that time Bowdoin did not offer a major in Latin American Studies).*

## Tell us about Paul Cuffee School and your work there.

Paul Cuffee School is a public charter school in Providence, RI, founded in 2001 and named for Paul Cuffee (or Cuffe) who was a ship captain in the late eighteenth century. His mother was a Wampanoag Native American and his father was a freed slave, originally from Ghana. Cuffee is credited with founding one of the first integrated schools in the country in nearby Westport, MA. I've been at Paul Cuffee School for eight years; I helped to design and start our middle school. Our school reflects the demographics of the Providence Public School district; roughly 70% of our students are Latino, and over 75% qualify for free or reduced lunch. It's been exciting for me personally to be able to stay connected with Latin American cultures through my students and their families. We provide an engaging and rigorous academic program with a heavy emphasis on developing a thoughtful and supportive community and fostering the desire and the tools to affect positive change in the world.

**What are your biggest challenges as principal of the school?** One major challenge is resources. In Rhode Island, charters do not receive funding for capital costs, which translates into insufficient buildings. Though our amazing teachers can work in almost any conditions, space impacts teaching and learning in many important ways. A great way to illustrate the inequities in our education system is to look at the educational spaces in poor districts next to those in wealthier districts. Poverty is also a huge challenge for our students and for our families. Students from poor backgrounds often come to school with more stress and fewer resources, which means that they have to work much harder to succeed academically.

**How did Bowdoin prepare you for your current position?** There are three main aspects of my Bowdoin experience that come to mind. First, I think Bowdoin helped develop my ability to prioritize. During my four years, I participated in a lot of activities outside of the classroom. Juggling those demands on my time meant that there wasn't always time to do everything as perfectly as I would have hoped, but I learned how to make reasonable choices about where to focus my time and energy (don't worry, Professor Wells, I always read every word of the books you assigned). In education, the job literally never ends. Teachers and principals could work twenty-four hours a day and still not be finished. It's critical to be able to decide when to stop or what needs to take a backseat for the time being.

Second, the love for Latin American history and culture I developed at Bowdoin and through my study abroad program has

definitely given me more context for my Latino families' experiences and culture than I would have had otherwise. Studying Latin American history also fuelled my passion for working for social justice through education. Finally, the Bowdoin College Upward Bound (UB) program was extremely influential in my career path. That is where I first encountered up close the class-based inequities in our education system and came to understand how essential college preparation is for poor students. I learned the basics of teaching and learning, and it was at UB that I first became hooked on the power of a supportive, engaging, and challenging educational community to change students' lives. I imported many wonderful traditions from UP to my own school; in many ways Paul Cuffee's middle school was modeled after Bowdoin Upward Bound.

**What path did you take to Cuffee after leaving college?** I guess I'd say it was a circuitous trip. When I graduated, I really couldn't have predicted that I would go into teaching. I had worked at summer camps and at Upward Bound, but until I spent some time working in an office at a nonprofit, I thought I would go to law school. Frankly, I just couldn't get through the day sitting at a desk. I really missed working with young people. After that experience, I made my way toward teaching; I worked at an adolescent crisis shelter in Lewiston, a private boarding school outside of Philadelphia, and a public school in rural New Hampshire.

**What goals and aspirations do you have for Cuffee for the near and the long-term future?** We're currently building out our high school program. We added our first class of 9th graders in the 2010-2011 year, and we'll be adding 10th grade next year. One near-term goal is to see my students graduate from our 12th grade and go on to fabulous colleges. In the middle school, we are continuing to work to strengthen our culture of scholarship in a number of ways. Ultimately, I want Paul Cuffee School to offer the kind of rigorous, enlightening, challenging, inspiring K-12 education regularly available to children from wealthy families.

**What suggestions do you have for current undergraduates about how to succeed in teaching?** The first thing to realize is that teaching is extremely demanding--both intellectually and technically. The public perception of teaching right now is a very negative one, and it doesn't do justice to the intellectual and creative skills that good teaching requires. I would encourage current undergraduates to take full advantage of everything Bowdoin has to offer; study anything and everything that is exciting and interesting. In my view, a solid liberal arts background is the best foundation for teaching. Before graduation, spend some time with children--work at a summer camp, volunteer in a classroom, or walk down to McClellan and talk to Bridget Mullen about working at Bowdoin Upward Bound for a summer or two. After Bowdoin, look for a teaching program that is very practice-based rather than theory-based. Being a good teacher takes experience and exposure. It's like riding a bike; reading about how to push the pedals doesn't get you up the Pyrenees in the Tour de France.

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