



L.A.S. noticias

the latin american studies newsletter

bowdoin college

número 5, june 2013

A note from the Director

Dear Alumni, Students, Colleagues, and Friends:

The past year has been a busy and productive one for Latin American Studies Program. Several highlights from this year are collected in the pages of this newsletter. In particular, this volume of *LAS Noticias* is filled with the stories and successes of several students and alumni. Our students—not just our majors and minors—have participated in several new courses, engaged in independent research, participated in service learning trips and study away programs to various parts of Latin America, received fellowships and awards, and contributed to a myriad of curricular and co-curricular activities on and off campus. This issue includes two “Student Focus” interviews with graduating seniors Juan Del Toro and Call Nicols as well as shorter pieces highlighting several other students’ accomplishments.

Bowdoin students’ profound engagement with the region is indicated by what they do during their four years at Bowdoin and by their continuing work, study, travel in Latin America after graduation. This year’s newsletter also highlights two alumni, Teona Williams ('12) and Amelia Fiske ('06). Teona writes of her work in Brazil while on a Watson Fellowship and Amelia’s “Alumni Focus” interview describes her dissertation research on the oil industry in Ecuador. Please look through the “Alumni News” to find notes from other alumni ('94 to '12).

The Program has grown substantially since a major in LAS was established just over a decade ago. This is in part due to the engaging courses and the innovative scholarship of our faculty members. This past year, a total of 31 courses were taught in LAS, and 484 students were enrolled in these courses. The social science curriculum was enhanced by new courses such as “The Caribbean in the Atlantic World” and “Children and Youth in Global Perspective.” New courses in Music, French, and Spanish explored the intersection of literary and artistic production and social inequalities such as race and gender, including “Music and Race in Latin America,” “Voices of Women, Voices of the People,” “Bad Girls on Stage in Early Modern Spain and Spanish America.” Attention to transnational and global relationships in contemporary and historical periods was strengthened by courses such as “Dictatorship, Human Rights and Memory in Latin America,” “Indigenous Identity and Politics in Latin America,” and “Demons and Deliverance in the Atlantic World.” Students chose from both electives and required courses focused on the French- as well as Spanish-speaking Caribbean, on indigenous, African, and Hispanic populations in Latin America, and on communities of Latin@s in the U.S. Finally, service learning, hands-on research, bilingual pedagogy, and co-curricular events continue to be an important

part of LAS curriculum. “Translating Cultures” and “A Journey around Macondo” were just two of the courses that provided students opportunities to learn beyond the classroom.

This year we were very happy to have Greg Beckett begin teaching in a tenure-track position in Anthropology; he is a political anthropologist whose research focuses on the Caribbean region, particularly Haiti. We were also pleased to welcome Margaret Boyle, a specialist in early modern women’s literary and cultural history in Spain and Latin America, to a tenure-track position in Romance Languages. We have appreciated the pre- and post-doctoral fellows and visiting faculty who have so successfully brought attention to areas of scholarship that both support and enhance continuing offerings. Laura Premack’s (Mellon Predoctoral Fellow, Africana Studies and Latin American Studies) research and teaching on Brazil has enhanced understanding of this important region of Latin America; she will continue as a post-doctoral fellow for a second year. Elizabeth Shesko (Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, History and Latin American Studies) brought attention to state violence, human rights, and indigenous histories of Latin America, and we are very happy that she will continue as Research Associate in the coming year. In the Fall 2013, Marco Lopez will join us in a tenure-track position in Sociology teaching courses on Latinos in the US, immigration, and class. A Consortium for Faculty Diversity Fellow, Melissa Rosario, will teach courses in Anthropology on Puerto Rico and on new media and technology. The accomplishments of our faculty members are detailed in “Faculty News.”

As this is my final year as Director of LAS, I would like to thank all of my colleagues for their willingness to contribute time and energy to the Program; their work to support LAS reflects their commitment to their scholarship and students and their love for the region. I have also learned a tremendous amount from our students—their intellectual curiosity and public engagement are inspirational. I have relied upon the exceptional organizational skills, good humor, and very hard work of Jean Harrison; the Program would not be what it is without her work as Department Coordinator. 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

Faculty News

Greg Beckett taught a new course in Fall 2012 called "The Caribbean in the Atlantic World." His chapter "Rethinking the Haitian Crisis" will appear in the edited volume *The Idea of Haiti* in May 2013. Greg's chapter urges us to think about crisis and emergency response in new ways that are attentive to the human experience of suffering and social vulnerability. His article "Sustaining Slums: The Problem of Planning in Port-au-Prince" is currently under review. In it, Greg explores the failures of two urban renewal projects and the emergence of slums and vulnerable communities in Haiti. This year he has also attended and spoken at several events celebrating the life and work of Caribbean scholar Michel-Rolph Trouillot and is currently writing an article on Trouillot's contributions to the anthropology of the Caribbean.

Michael Birenbaum Quintero was awarded a Fulbright Core Scholar Fellowship to spend his sabbatical year 2013-2014 in Cali, Colombia, where he will be offering a seminar in the Universidad del Valle's doctoral program on Afro-Latin American Culture, Society and History. Primarily, though, he will be hard at work to finish his book on Afro-Colombian music - *Rights, Rights, and Rhythms. A Genealogy of Musical Meaning in Colombia's Black Pacific*, forthcoming on Oxford University Press.

Margaret Boyle spent the last year completing her book, *Unruly Women: Performance, Penitence and Punishment in Early Modern Spain* (forthcoming from the University of Toronto Press). She continues her research on early modern women's literary and cultural history, offering for the first time at Bowdoin a course on women's roles in theater in Spain and Latin America. In October 2012, she gave a talk entitled "Return to Eden: Monastic Women Writing Nature" at the Grupo de Estudios sobre la Mujer en España y las Americas, and in April 2013 she spoke about sumptuary laws, morality narratives and the Peruvian actress Michaela Villegas at the American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies. Professor Boyle was also recently awarded a grant from the Los Angeles County Arts Commission for her translation (English to Spanish) of the play *Querida Gabby: las confesiones de una ambiciosa*. During the academic year, she served as a committee member for Juan Del Toro's honor's project "Gay Latino Life Writings: Narrative and Identity at the Intersection of Ethnicity, Gender and Sexuality".

Nadia Celis worked primarily on the completion of her book manuscript *La rebelión de las niñas: El Caribe y la conciencia corporal*, which is currently under review. Her chapter "The Rhetoric of Hips: Shakira's Embodiment and the Quest for Caribbean Identity" was published in the collection *Archipelagos of Sound: Transnational Caribbeanities, Women and Music*; and a second article, "A 50 años de El hostigante verano de los dioses: Fanny Buitrago y la 'autenticidad' Caribe", is forthcoming in *Revista Iberoamericana*. Professor Celis took students in her course on Gabriel García Márquez' *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in "A Journey Around Macondo", a faculty-led

trip aimed to introduce them to the actual locations and cultural trends that inspired the Nobel Prize winner's work. Celis also directed two exciting Honors projects for LAS, with graduating students Juan Del Toro (on Gay Latino Writers) and Matthew Sifton (on Nuyorican Identities). As a re-elected member of the Caribbean Studies Association's Executive Council, Prof. Celis continues to lead their initiatives to promote trans-lingual exchange.

Elena Cuelo Asín traveled to Panama where she followed the steps of Spanish writers Vicente Blasco Ibáñez and León Felipe who spent time in the country during the 1920s and 1930s.

Gustavo Faverón spent most of the the year in Peru. He was an invited speaker for the Peruvian Literary Association and the Psychoanalytic Society in Lima. He taught a three-session course on Literature and Cannibalism at Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, the oldest university in the Americas. He was invited as a guest speaker for two events in Guayaquil (Ecuador). The second edition of his co-edited book, *Bolaño Salvaje* was launched in Barcelona in May. He has been researching for a book-length project on Chilean writer Roberto Bolaño as well as writing his second novel. The English language edition of his first novel, *The Antiquarian*, will be published in January in the US by Grove/Atlantic

Stephen Meardon presented his research-in-progress on an episode in the history of U.S.-Mexico trade relations, "The Doomed Trade Deal of Messrs. Ulysses S. Grant and Matías Romero," at two conferences last summer: the biennial Policy History Conference in Richmond, Virginia, and the annual History of Economics Society conference in St. Catharines, Ontario. In Fall 2012 he taught a new upper-level Economics course called "Trade Doctrines and Trade Deals," culminating in a discussion and several student essays about the recently-implemented U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement.

Laura Premack devoted the 2012-13 academic year to designing and teaching three new seminars and to finishing her doctoral dissertation, "Hope and the Holy Spirit: The Global Pentecostal Movement in Brazil and Nigeria, 1910-2010." The seminars – on Afro-Brazilian culture, global Pentecostalism, and demons and deliverance – relate to her ongoing research interests in religion and culture in the Atlantic World. She also chaired a panel on colonialism and Christianity at the annual meeting of the African Studies Association and prepared a chapter on a Nigerian Pentecostal church's outreach efforts in Brazil for inclusion in a forthcoming edited volume on African new religious movements in diaspora. She is looking forward to spending the summer pursuing her research on Brazilian Spiritism and to returning to Bowdoin in the fall to spend another year as Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in Africana Studies and Latin American Studies.

Faculty News

After successfully defending her dissertation at Duke University in July 2012, **Liz Shesko** joined the Latin American Studies faculty at Bowdoin for a year as a Mellon postdoctoral fellow. Her research focuses on the effects of obligatory military service on citizenship and ethnic identity in Bolivia. She taught "Colonial Latin America," "Indigenous Identity and Politics in Latin America," and a seminar on "Dictatorships, Human Rights, and Memory in Latin America," all of which were crosslisted in History and Latin American Studies. Throughout the year, she worked with an honors student on a project about the work of University of Chicago-trained neoliberal economists during the Allende and Pinochet era in Chile (The Chicago Boys). She also gave papers at the annual conferences of the American Historical Association (New Orleans), the Latin American Studies Association (Washington, D.C.), and the New England Latin American Studies Association (New Haven). She has recently completed an article on the 1932-1935 Chaco War between Bolivia and Paraguay. In June, she traveled to London to complete research in the archives of the British Foreign Office.

Krista Van Vleet continues research and teaching on popular religion, gender, sexuality and family in Latin America, especially Peru and Bolivia. In the Fall 2012 she taught "Global Sexualities/Local Desires" which was cross-listed for the first time with LAS. In the Spring 2013, a course on "Religion and Social Transformation in South America" and a new course on "Children and Youth in Global Perspective" also contributed to the Program. Throughout the year, she enjoyed working with an Honors student in Anthropology on reproductive health in Ecuador. In May she traveled to Cusco, Peru to conduct follow-up fieldwork for a research project that analyzes single motherhood, modernity, and global discourses of reproduction. Funded by a Gibbons Fellowship she will be working with a student this summer to develop a qualitative database integrating visual (photographs, videos, and websites) and audio data from her fieldwork. She acted as a discussant for the panel "Transnational Masculinities and Heterosexuality" presenting a commentary entitled, "Rethinking Sex and Gender in Transnational Contexts" at the American Anthropological Association Meetings in San Francisco in November 2012.

Hanétha Vété-Congolo has had a productive academic year. She hosted *Caribbean Interorality in the New Millennium* on campus from October 11-12, 2012, a symposium where prominent experts revisited core aspects and questions related to the Caribbean oral tradition. In November 2012, she was also invited to the *Rencontres caribéennes de l'oralité* in Martinique where she gave a talk entitled, "L'interoralité caribéenne: sa raison, son sens". She attended the 39th African Literature Association Conference in Charleston, South-Carolina where she chaired a session *Social Change and Natural Disaster in the French Caribbean* and gave a paper, "Le mot caribéen".

The following articles were published in refereed journals and book chapters: "The Ripening's Epic Realism and the Tragic Martinican Unfulfilled Political Emancipation" (*The CLR James Journal: A Review of Caribbean Ideas*, Vol. 18, No.1: 153-179) and "L'Acomat, le Féal. Edouard Glissant"

(*Revue de Sciences Humaines* n°309/janvier-mars, Paris: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2013) while "Tuer le statu quo et faire naître l'Homme neuf du couple nègre d'Amérique insulaire: les exemples de D'eaux douces et Fado" (*Frantz Fanon: un héritage à partager*. Paris: L'Harmattan) is forthcoming in Spring 2013. Additionally, Hanétha published a foreword: "Montrer pour dire l'intériorité ou parler la Pawòl anba fèy" (Rudy Rabathaly. *Pawòl anba fèy: Ecrits d'imaginaires créoles*. Pointe à Pitre : Editions Jasor, 2012. Her entry "Maryse Condé" in *Blackwell Encyclopedia of Postcolonial Studies* is forthcoming in 2013.

Susan Wegner traveled to Portugal in June, 2012 to research connections forged between that maritime nation and the "New World" by fisherman, explorers and colonists in the early modern period. Materials collected from this trip will be incorporated into Art History 130 (1300): Introduction to the Arts of Ancient Mexico, Peru and the Caribbean; Art History 232 (2320): Art in the Age of Velazquez, Rembrandt, and Caravaggio; and Art History 332 (3320): Painting and Society in Spain: El Greco to Goya.

While on leave during 2012-13, **Allen Wells** conducted research in Caracas, Venezuela and San José, Costa Rica. He published "Playing God: Choosing Central European Jewish Refugees for the Dominican Republic during World War II," in *Exile and the Politics of Exclusion*, eds., Luis Roniger, James Green, and Pablo Yankelevich (Portland, OR: Sussex Academic Press, 2012), 80-99; and, with Steven Topik, "Commodity Chains in a Global Economy, 1870-1945," in *A World Connecting: 1870 to 1945*, ed., Emily Rosenberg, *A History of the World* (Cambridge, MA and Munich: Harvard University Press and C. H. Beck Verlag, 2012); HUP 5:591-812, 1051-1077; C. H. Beck Verlag "Warenketten in einer globalen Wirtschaft," trans. Thomas Atzert, in *Geschichte der Welt: Weltmärkte und Weltkriege, 1870-1945* (Munich: C H. Beck Verlag, 2012), V: 589-814 and 1042-1063. In addition, Wells delivered two lectures: "EE UU y la democratización en el Caribe: Charles Porter, Rómulo Betancourt, Pepe Figueres y Luis Muñoz Marín," at the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (Caracas); and, "Charles Porter and the Latin American Crusade for Democracy," at the University of California, Irvine.

Genie Wheelwright taught Spanish 203 and 102 this year. Her 203 class was a community-based course and all the students volunteered as English tutors at the Centro Latino in Portland. This was a big commitment on their part, as every student committed to one night a week for half the semester. Many of the Latinos attended all 3 nights every week, so they clearly felt they were learning. Genie will be on half sabbatical, half leave next year. She hopes to spend a month of that time in Argentina working on her southern cone 'sho' pronunciation.

Enrique Yepes has spent his sabbatical leave conducting research on his book project on ecological thought in Latin American poetry. He has presented his work in several venues, the City University of New York Graduate School and the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese among them. He has also submitted part of his work to be published as articles and reviews.

Faculty Focus: An Interview with Carolyn Wolfenzon

with Stephen Meardon



Carolyn Wolfenzon, Assistant Professor of Spanish, brings Latin American history to life by studying literature. A native of Peru, she has lived through and experienced many important historical events - the Shining Path and the Fujimori Regime in Peru, and the "Special Period" in Cuba.

How does your own history help explain what you study and teach?

Some of my historical sensibility came from my grandparents. My grandfathers came to Peru, my home country, from Turkey and Romania and my grandmothers from Austria and Poland. For my paternal grandmother, emigrating from Poland meant escaping Auschwitz. Their stories were part of my life growing up, even though they spoke in Yiddish, and sometimes I did not understand what was going on. History, politics, migration, and immigration were in the air at home.

Violence appeared in my life again when I was five years old. One day I woke up and saw all the dogs from the city in Lima hanging up from the street lights. Even though I was a child and did not understand what was going on, that image has stayed in my mind for years. The Shining Path began during the 80s, and Peru lived in a perpetual state of emergency.

When I was thirteen years old, I traveled to Cuba on a three month ballet scholarship. We stayed with Cubans, so we lived the way they lived. This was during the Cold War and the Soviets were helping Cubans. I later asked my parents how they allowed me to go when I was so young, and my father said, anything was safer than being with the perpetual violence of the Shining Path. Many years later in 1999, I traveled to Cuba again to practice modern dance at the Theater of the Revolution and I saw and experienced *El período especial* (the Special Period).

History and politics were unavoidable during my first career, in journalism, in the years of Alberto Fujimori's presidency. I had studied communications at the Universidad de Lima, and after graduation, started working for a major newspaper, *El Comercio*. I was responsible for the content of a weekly insert, *Visto y Bueno*. My stories were cultural, including reviews of the arts, theater, dance, and cinema. The pay was horrible but the work was fulfilling. To me, the arts and literature have always been the most satisfying ways of studying history. They help me to understand history.

Stories of the Second World War told by my grandparents, events of the Shining Path active throughout my childhood and adolescence, my experiences in Cuba, and later the Fujimori Regime were key moments of my life, and key moments in the history of the twentieth century.

Beyond the connection of literature to history, what is the common thread in your courses? Which one is your favorite?

I'll take the last question first. My favorite course is "Guerra de los Mundos Latinoamericanos" ("War of the Latin American Worlds"). The "war" in the title may be seen most vividly in one of the striking images of the course, one of architecture as represented in literature. The image is that of a Spanish construction on top of an Incan temple in the isolated city in Vilcashuamán (Ayacucho). The new society imposed something alien on top of the old without supplanting completely what is underneath. The image shows how we cannot get away from tradition, how tradition and modernity are fighting all the time.

In their own ways my other courses explore the connection between politics, literature, violence, and history. "Andean Modernities," "Imaginary Cities/Real Cities in Latin America," "Historical Novels in Latin America," "River Plate Writers": all of these courses open windows into the clash between tradition and modernity.



Vilcashuamán Church, Ayacucho

You taught in a variety of places before coming to Bowdoin in 2006. The University of Lima, the University of Colorado, Cornell University (during your Ph.D. studies), Ithaca College, Colby, and the Middlebury Language School. Did that make adjusting to teaching at Bowdoin easier or harder?

The amount of experience helped, but the variety didn't matter. Teaching at the big research universities was not so different from teaching at the liberal arts colleges – not for me anyway. I teach what fascinates me and try to show students why it's fascinating. I will say that Bowdoin students, especially in Spanish, have a passion for knowledge and exploring other countries. They are curious and motivated, love to study abroad and live different experiences, and I encourage them to do that.

Besides your many published journal articles and book chapters you have a book in progress. I've had a peek at the title. *A Marooned Discourse*, you call it. What is it about?

You need to peek at the subtitle too! The part after the colon is, *Latin American Novels Entangled in History*. My book analyzes seven contemporary novels, by Antonio Di Benedetto, Reinaldo Arenas, Enrique Rosas Paravicino, Carmen Boullosa and Abel Posse, that simultaneously represent the writing of history in the colonial period (sixteenth-eighteenth centuries) and in the present. In their novels, the colonial power structures that shape race, gender, the notion of time, and how history is written, far from being destroyed in the present, persist as the foundation on which Latin America's marginalized and problematic modernity has been constructed. These writers intentionally refer back to the colonial past to highlight their respective countries' entrapment and to reveal two themes of particular interest. Through the metaphorical or literal figure of the island, they illustrate the notion that, in spite of globalization, Latin America and its inhabitants still remain on the periphery in relation to the great centers of power. Also, by framing the present from the trap of the past, these texts bring to light an ahistoricism constant in Latin American historical novels. The passage of time does not exist, or when it does occur it is circular, thus denying our conception of history as understood in terms of collective crises that inspire progress and positive change.

To read the entire interview with Carolyn, visit our webpage www.bowdoin.edu/latin-american-studies

The John Harold Turner Prize in Latin American Studies

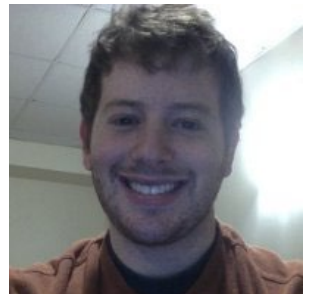
Named after Professor Emeritus John H. Turner, this prize is awarded to a graduating Latin American studies major who, in the judgment of the Latin American Studies Committee, has achieved academic distinction and has contributed to an understanding of the region.

Two students, **Juan Del Toro** and **Matt Silton**, were awarded the John H. Turner Senior Prize in Latin American Studies this year for outstanding scholarship and public engagement related to the discipline.



Juan Del Toro completed an Honors project under the direction of Nadia Celis which explores how gay Latino authors narrate their multiple social identities within their memoirs with attention to the intersections of race/ethnicity and sexuality. The project is entitled, "Gay Latino Life Writings: Narrative and Identity at the Intersection of Ethnicity, Gender and Sexuality." With Professor Desi Rios, Juan has also presented scholarly work at conferences. Their most recent paper, "The experiences of queer men of color in higher education: Managing multiple identities in college" was presented at the Biennial National Latina/o Psychology Association (NLPA) Conference. Juan will begin a PhD in psychological development at NYU in the fall.

Matt Silton completed an Honors thesis in Latin American Studies under the mentorship of Nadia Celis. His thesis is entitled, "Identidades en conflicto: Nacionalidad, raza y género en la narrativa nuyorriqueña (Conflicting Identities: Nationality, Race and Gender in the Nuyorican Narrative)." Matt's research focuses on the writings of Puerto Ricans who move between the island and New York City and examines the ways nationality, race and gender impact the lives and creative processes of these writers. Matt will be traveling to Brazil in the coming months to work for the Department of Commerce in Brasilia (and to learn some Portuguese)!



We wish both of these students congratulations for excellent work during their time at Bowdoin and continued success in the future.

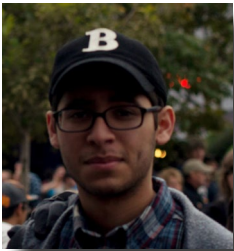
To read more about our students, including information on our 2013 graduating seniors, visit www.bowdoin.edu/latin-american-studies/student-research/index.shtml

L.A.S. Research Grants

Established in 2000 by the Latin American Studies Committee, and funded by the office of the Dean for Academic Affairs. These research awards are given on a competitive basis for students wishing to conduct independent research in Latin America, the Caribbean, or Latino communities in the United States. Students engage in a semester-long independent study or year-long Honors project under the mentorship of a faculty member upon their return to campus.

This year Latin American Studies Research Awards were given to **Chris Robleto** (2014) and **Elizabeth González** (2015).

Chris will be conducting research in Nicaragua during the summer of 2013 under the mentorship of Prof. Greg Beckett (Anthropology). Chris' project is entitled, "Narratives of Nationalism in Nicaragua: A Multi-Level study of Nationalism in Managua, Bilwi, and Bluefields." His proposed research explores the ways that ideas of nationality and especially national belonging are shaped by varying parameters of who is included and who is excluded, all of which are marked by language, ethnicity, geography and race. A significant aspect of his project is that he integrates attention to Miskito (indigenous) Nicaraguans through attention to the city of Bluefields and to Caribbean coast Nicaraguans through his attention to the city of Bilwi. He hopes to collect information in various contexts including didactic texts from public schools (which particularly impact children), everyday talk about the nation that he will access through observation and interviews, local government policies and statements, and art and cultural production including music. Chris has been influenced by courses such as "The Caribbean in the Atlantic World" and "Modern Latin America" as well as by several Government courses including "International Relations." Chris plans to use this research in an Honors project in Latin American Studies in the 2013-2014 academic year.



Liz González will be conducting research in Bogotá, Colombia under the mentorship of Professor Nadia Celis (Spanish). Her project is entitled, "Prostitution and 'narcocultura': Violence, Sexuality, and Beauty in Colombia." Liz intends to study the connections between drug related violence and women, focusing on the representation of female bodies in written texts such as testimonies and novels and in visual texts such as telenovelas and films. Many of these representations of narcocultura, or the culture around narcotrafficking, have emerged in the last decade as the government has relaxed repression of public discourse on this issue. Liz will travel to Colombia this summer in order to gather material unavailable in the United States including primary sources (such as telenovelas) and secondary sources such as works of criticism, newspaper articles, and books published in Colombia. She also plans to talk with scholars in the Escuela de Estudios de Género in the Universidad Nacional de Colombia and the Instituto Pensar in the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana. Liz has taken several courses in Latin American studies and has been influenced by scholarship on media representation of Latinos in Prof. Celis' "Latino Fictions" course and on notions of beauty in Brazil in Prof. Premack's "Beyond Capoeira" course. She will develop her research into an Independent Study with Prof. Celis in the Fall 2013.



2012 Global Citizens Grant Update

In our 2012 newsletter we reported that **Emma James '13** had been awarded a Global Citizens Grant and would be spending the summer living and working in Sucre, Bolivia working with a grassroots organization. Here is a summary of her experience.



Emma spent two months volunteering for BiblioWorks, a Bolivian-based nonprofit that funds, builds, and stocks community libraries in the rural areas surrounding Sucre. Emma spent half her time in the BiblioWorks office, grant writing, and the other half working in Pampa Aceituno, a small school with a brand new BiblioWorks library. She taught English, read to children, started a school garden, and did arts and crafts with the children to encourage reading. *"Waiting at the bottom of a dusty road for a truck to drive by and start the climb up the mountain to Pampa Aceituno, the school I worked in, was how I started many of my days in Sucre, Bolivia. With no transportation provided, the children either walk the two miles uphill, or wait to hitch a ride. The determination and dedication they exhibited in simply getting to school was one of the many ways they demonstrated the value they place on education. It seems like everyone shares one goal, and that is to make sure that the children of Pampa Aceituno receive the best education possible. The joy that a simple story can bring to them, or a silly arts and crafts project is heartening. Their absolute friendliness, incredible determination, and innovative spirit is contagious and inspiring."*

2013 Global Citizen Grant Recipients

In the spring of 2013, two students, **Marcus Karim '14**, and **Maggie Acosta '16**, were awarded Global Citizens Grants, and both, coincidentally, will spend this summer working with organizations in Peru.



Marcus Karim '14 will be working with Changes for New Hope in Huaraz, Peru. Since its start in 2009, Changes for New Hope has been working to improve the educational, economic, and health conditions of local children and their families.

Maggie Acosta '16 will be working with Expand Peru in the mountains of Huancayo, Peru. This organization provides shelter, emotional support, and education to families struggling with AIDS. Expand Peru emphasizes improving healthcare and teaching English to its residents as well fostering a strong and supportive community.



Learning through Community Engagement in Latin American and Latino Communities

With the support of the McKean Center for the Common Good, each year students take advantage of opportunities such as community-engaged courses, the Global Citizens Grant immersion fellowship or the Alternative Spring Break trip program to deepen their understanding of issues such as food security, environmental sustainability, public health, education, immigration in Latino communities and in Latin America.

Alternative Spring Break

Two of this year's Alternative Spring Break trips worked with organizations serving a Latino or Latin American community.

Harvesting Communities in Immokalee, Florida

Led by Leovanny Fernández '14 and Macy Galvan '13, participants spent the week working with and learning from the migrant workers of Immokalee, Florida by tutoring youth, assisting in a soup kitchen, and advocating for their fair and humane treatment. During their time in Immokalee, the group also met with Bowdoin alumni, Primitivo Garza '12 (an Immokalee resident), and Allen Ryan, who serves on the Board of the Guadalupe Center, which provides support and educational opportunities for the children of Immokalee.

Spring to Safe Passage in Guatemala City

For the ninth consecutive year, Bowdoin students spent a week working at Safe Passage, which was founded by Bowdoin alumna Hanley Denning '92. Led by Sandra Martinez '13 and Tasha Sandoval '13, participants engaged in cross-cultural exchange and participated in discussion, worked in English classrooms, and facilitated creative projects focused on education and support for the children and adults of the Guatemala City garbage dump community. During the week the students also met with a Bowdoin Alumni Service Trip at Safe Passage, which included Latin American Studies alum Jennie Kneeder '98.

Community-based Partnership With El Centro Latino De Maine

During the fall semester of 2012, Genie Wheelwright's students in Spanish 203: Intermediate Spanish I, spent one evening a week at El Centro Latino in Portland, Maine, tutoring Latino immigrants in English. Through the tutoring sessions the Bowdoin students also developed their Spanish skills and learned about the immigrants' home communities and the challenges they face here in Maine. The partnership was so successful that after the course ended, the students continued driving to Portland to work with the Latino students weekly throughout the spring semester, and they have made a commitment to carry on the work next fall.



Experiences Abroad

An integrated approach to local development in Jardim Canada, Brazil.

A Reflection by Teona Williams, class of 2012.

While on my Watson Fellowship, I wanted to reach out to organizations that are committed to social change as I travelled from country to country trying to understand how developing communities understand their environment. One of the countries that made it on my list was Brazil, where I was fortunate to connect to Bowdoin alum Joanne Durchfort '99.'

Joanne co-founded and directs The Institute for Local Integrated Development Casa do Jardim, an education and local development organization that serves youth in the developing community of Jardim Canada, located in the outskirts of Belo Horizonte Minas Gerais, Brazil.

The organization works with youth age 6-14, providing academic support, sports and arts activities, capoeira angola lessons, local and personal identity projects, and community integration events for the students, families, teachers and partners. Casa do Jardim works closely with each student's family and local public schools to develop the learning potential of each child. The organization also conducts research on the Jardim Canada region, documenting history, socio-demographic data; mapping local resources and analysing challenges and threats the region faces. Joanne was born in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, and decided that the area was the perfect place to start an organization that could help an already resilient community face the challenges of recent development. I decided to connect to Casa do Jardim because I thought it would be the perfect to observe how tradition and local identity can be integrated into social change, and to participate in a community based organization that uses puts ideas into practice in order to accomplish a goal. While working with Joanne I have been able to forward my personal project, while contributing to the mission of Casa do Jardim.



My time at Casa do Jardim has been bitter-sweet. On one hand, I see how passion and dedication to a cause can further a dream. While working at Casa do Jardim, I have met so many people committed to improving their community. I have met women staff members who worked their way through universities. Against some of the biggest odds, the children excel at capoeira, and dream of brighter futures. I worked closely with Joanne, and saw how her shared vision with her partner Arubio has blossomed into a beautiful space where children can really focus on their development. On the other hand, running a small organization in Brazil is not without its challenges. I have seen Joanne juggle many responsibilities. During my own travels, I often linked up with small organizations that had a small team to handle the management aspect of their organization. This was my first organization where I saw one of the founders take on roles of three different staff positions. She directs, fundraises, plans, manages, and helps to teach classes. She is constantly working towards a way to consistently fund and maintain the standards of excellence that inspire seventy two children to excel mentally, physically and emotionally. The staff at Casa do Jardim also tirelessly work towards creating a safe and challenging place for their students to grow and develop. They all are role models of how, no matter what your current circumstance, with focus and patience, anyone can achieve their dreams. It was an honor to take time from my own personal journey to connect to a Bowdoin alum, and learn about different issues facing Brazil. I have learned so much about consistency and commitment while volunteering at Casa do Jardim, and I realized from watching Joanne that, one day, I too will be able to find a way to implement social change. I am sad to leave such a passionate organization, but I am happy to know that all over world you can find Bowdoin alumni who are committed to social change.

For more information on Casa do Jardim, or to learn about the many ways you can contribute please visit the Casa do Jardim website at www.casadojardim.org.br , or contact Joanne Durchfort at joanne@casadojardim.org.br.

Student Focus: An Interview with Juan Del Toro

with Krista Van Vleet



Juan Del Toro is an Honors Student and Latin American Studies Major. He was born in Jalisco, Mexico and raised in Richmond, California, just outside of San Francisco. "As a working-class, first-generation student, I have grown to be proud of my background, because through the challenges my family and I face, I have learned the value of resilience as well as time management, which was commonly shared among my siblings as we all worked to contribute to the family. Additionally, my parents and older siblings have always emphasized the value of education and played a tremendous role in my decision to apply to college. "

What made you choose to attend Bowdoin?

Three of my siblings graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, where they would invite me to visit them in their dorms and instill in me the value of a college education. During the college application period in my senior year, I heard about Bowdoin through the multicultural visitation programs. After visiting, I realized I loved the learning environment and the College's emphasis on community and, after I was admitted, I knew my choice would be an obvious one, having these aspects of Bowdoin in mind.

What is your Honors Project about and how did you come up with the idea?

My honors project with Dr. Nadia Celis examines how gay Latino authors narrate their multiple social identities within their memoirs with attention to the intersections of race/ethnicity and sexuality. I came to the idea from previous research experiences examining intersectionality. Since my sophomore year at Bowdoin, I have been performing research with Dr. Desdama Rios in psychology examining how gay and bisexual men negotiate their social identities at the intersection of race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and social class. From reviewing the literature in psychology, I have found research on male Latinos, including gay male Latinos, to be overlooked and sparse. Thus, going into my senior year, I knew I wanted to pursue an honors thesis in relation to these topics of social identities, especially among gay Latino men.

You are off to graduate school in the fall 2013. Tell us about the program, how you chose it, and what you are looking forward to.

From my previous research projects, I have found research on social identities, such as identity development and identity negotiations within marginalizing and stigmatizing contexts, to be stimulating. This influences my pursuit of a research emphasis for the future. The concepts that I have found interesting include stereotype threat, intersectionality, narrative development as well as identity development. I have kept an eye out for faculty who are also passionate about these topics and from whom I could learn more. Such faculty members included Drs. Selcuk Sirin, Niobe Way, and Joshua Aronson at NYU! When Dr. Selcuk Sirin at NYU congratulated me on my acceptance and learning about his great mentorship and scholarly productivity, I knew my decision would be an obvious choice. The biggest reason is that there are multiple superstar faculty and collaborators at NYU who do research on topics I am interested in. I find having this community of scholars to be essential for my

scholarly endeavors, because both a supportive community and great mentorship are keys for success in graduate school. At the same time, because I have access to this community and these research labs, I am very thrilled and looking forward to the collaborations with faculty and other graduate students to contribute to the fields of psychology and social justice!

Have other kinds of community engagement shaped your academic and personal growth?

Yes! My research with Dr. Rios has been a huge influence in my decision to pursue research in psychology and graduate school. Another resource that contributed to my academic growth is working with Dr. Stephen Quintana, at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, who is very well-known for his research on ethnic perspective-taking ability among Latina/o adolescents. I am forever in debt to Drs. Rios, Celis, and Quintana who have contributed to not only my scholarly pursuits, but also challenged my understanding of what it means to be Latina/o at a predominantly White institution and who have provided me with skills on how to turn these challenges into opportunities. I am grateful to my mentors, because they have provided me spaces to communicate these challenges as well as to help me channel my goals in applied psychology to contribute to the common good.

Any advice to share with incoming first years or LAS majors/minors?

My advice to first years is to find a staff/faculty mentor that you can connect with, not only in terms of academic interests, but also connecting on a personal basis. From my mentors, we shared our Latina/o identities, grew up in urban neighborhoods, and have common narratives of upbringing. My mentors have shared their wisdom with me on how to succeed at Bowdoin, challenged me academically to prepare me for graduate level work and have provided spaces to have meaningful conversations.

Any dreams or plans for your future?

Dreams! My biggest dream and future plan is to provide the same mentorship I have received from my parents, siblings, professors, and others, to future first generation students and students of colors. I seek to collaborate with other scholars to contribute to the fields of Latina/o- and LGBT-Psychology and apply research to inform social policy and address social justice issues.

Student Focus: An Interview with Call Nichols

with Krista Van Vleet

Call Nichols is a senior Anthropology major and French minor from Mill Valley, California. During his time at Bowdoin he has served as a captain of the Men's Soccer team and has been a member of the Bowdoin Outing Club. He has also volunteered locally with Big Brothers Big Sisters and the Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program.

What role has the Caribbean played in your time at Bowdoin?

My first semester at Bowdoin I enrolled in a course called Writers of the Caribbean. This first-year seminar, taught by Dr. Jarrett Brown, featured books like *Banjo* by Claude McKay and Edwidge Danticat's *The Dew Breaker*. This course was the foundation for what has since become an intense interest and appreciation of all things Caribbean.

Set off by my first-year seminar, I have since seized any opportunity to include the Caribbean in my studies. Through various research projects I have looked at Jamaican dancehall music, the presence of soccer in Cuba, and the effect of departmentalization in the French Antilles. As an anthropology major I have found that the Caribbean offers incredibly diverse opportunities to explore and attempt to understand the human condition.

Another key moment in my Caribbean education was a symposium at Bowdoin on the topic of Caribbean Interorality. Hearing such a wide range of outstanding academic perspectives on the region furthered my curiosity and understanding of the complexity of the Caribbean experience.

What experience do you have in the Caribbean? Have you traveled there? What did you learn from your time there?

My first real Caribbean experience wasn't on an island but rather in Brooklyn, New York during a field trip with Professor Brown and my first-year seminar. After a weekend spent exploring the Flatbush neighborhood, talking with local radio djs and sampling bits and pieces of New York's transplanted Caribbean culture, I couldn't get enough and wound up in New York whenever I had the chance.

My most significant experience in the Caribbean was a two-week trip to Cuba during spring break of this year. Due to the technicalities involved with Americans traveling to Cuba, I went through Jamaica and spent several days exploring Kingston on the tail end of my visit. While it is difficult to draw any sweeping generalizations about such a diverse region, I think there are certain themes that are relevant across the Caribbean. As my experiences in Kingston and Havana reflect, strikingly different contexts can reveal certain similarities that are reflective of equally turbulent and dynamic histories. One of my biggest takeaways from the time I spent with people in both cities was their shared survivalist mentality, which extends throughout their respective cultures. The Habañeros and Kingstonians I had the pleasure of interacting with seemed to share a certain creativity and will to innovate and make meaning out of very little in the material sense.

I believe it is this disposition upon which the Caribbean was founded and has since developed. This is really what drew

me to the Caribbean in the first place and has captivated my attention ever since. In many ways the Caribbean is situated at the center of the modern world, where possibilities abound as a result of its greatest resource, the people.

How did you incorporate your experiences abroad into your academic work at Bowdoin?

My visit to Cuba coincided perfectly with an open-ended research project for my Anthropology senior seminar. The idea originally stemmed from a New York Times article, which prompted me to get in touch with an official from the Cuban Football Association; I ended up staying with him in Havana. I was able to gain valuable first-hand experience in the country and a genuine idea of the role soccer plays there. From an academic perspective, the project demanded a multifaceted approach to the issue in question. With little to no academic material on soccer in Cuba, I geared my investigation towards the centrality of sports such as baseball within the Cuban socialist program and role soccer has played in other Latin American contexts. With this background I was able to formulate a case for the possibility and implications of a "footballing future" in Cuba.

Other than Cuba, what Caribbean issues are particularly captivating to you?

One topic that I have returned to several times while at Bowdoin is French departmentalization of the Antillean islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe. This issue has been a great way to combine my minor in French with my Anthropology major. The intellectual tradition born out of these islands poses and addresses questions that are relevant across the world as far as postcolonial relationships and paternalism are concerned. The example of departmentalization provides an interesting perspective with which to consider these relationships, their historical contexts, and the implications they carry in people's lives today. Throughout my research I came to realize just how complex the question of Antillean identity is and how many different, and often opposing, factors contribute to its creation in a variety of social contexts.

Any dreams or plans for your future?

The Caribbean is always on my mind and I look forward to a future there. Through my study of and experience in the region, I have become aware of the unbounded potential that comes from a uniquely Caribbean combination of people, history, geography, and resources. In the meantime, though, I will be focusing my efforts in pursuing a business that I started while studying abroad in Dakar, Senegal making neckties with traditional West African fabric.



Alumni News

Kali Erickson, '94

I have had the good fortune to work in many contexts in Latin America, from being a social worker, to studying micronutrient deficiencies, to now working with local and international nutrition and health experts to address the most intractable problems of undernutrition (especially stunting, which affects nearly 90% of children under five in some regions). In Peru, I worked in communities that were a 10 hour drive from their reference hospital, after up to a 12 hour walk, where health posts communicated on radios powered by solar batteries, in areas of the Andes so high that not even quinoa will grow. Interestingly, I worked in the Guatemala City dump before Hanley Denning began her wonderful program there. We missed each other by a few months--but we traveled in each other's footsteps, including the fact that the road she died on was my daily commute to work.

Esther Kim, '04

After graduation, I returned home to New York City where I worked as a health advocate for people on Medicare, which gave me the opportunity to work with underserved populations in the Latino and Asian communities and to bring services and counsel to people whose English is limited. The experience convinced me to pursue a degree and career in public health. Before grad school, I spent a summer at Safe Passage in Guatemala City – one of the best things I ever did. I fell in love with the kids and the country. I went on to complete a Masters in Public Health in the sociomedical sciences at Columbia University with a focus on urbanism and the built environment. After some language study (Korean)/work/volunteer/travel in Korea and Southeast Asia, I'm back in NYC working as a Research and Evaluation Associate at an urban community health center that serves the Asian immigrant population. I evaluate various programs in our health center that address issues ranging from early childhood development, sexual health, physical activity, and community health workforce development. I believe my foundations in the Latin American Studies program at Bowdoin inform my work and how I understand culturally and linguistically appropriate interventions here in the U.S. and abroad.

Yanna Muriel, '05

After graduation I immediately returned to Puerto Rico's warm climate. I worked as a teacher for two years, then as an outreach specialist for PathStone, a non-profit dedicated to assisting farm workers. However, only now am I fulfilling my true vocation. I am now pregnant with my second child and I work with the local Organic Farming Movement in Puerto Rico. For more information, visit our website: <http://www.organizacionboricua.org/>.

Cassia Roth, '08

I am currently a Ph.D. candidate in Latin American History at the University of California, Los Angeles. During 2012, I spent the year doing research in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil with support from the Fulbright IIE Student Grant and the National Science Foundation Law and Social Sciences Dissertation Improvement Grant. I am currently working on my dissertation tentatively titled, "Reproduction, Medicine, and the Law in Rio de Janeiro, 1850-1930."

Jess Britt, '10

After two wonderful years working for Safe Passage/ Camino Seguro, I left Guatemala in August 2012. I am now an Assistant Project Manager at an international development contractor in Burlington, VT called Tetra Tech ARD. The majority of projects I support are funded by USAID and are in the Democracy and Governance Sector. I use my Spanish everyday as I work primarily on projects in Latin America--right now in Mexico, Guatemala, and Peru!

Shana Natelson, '10

Since graduating from Bowdoin, I have served as the producer, writer and actor for *Speak About It*, a performance-based educational program about consent, boundaries and healthy relationships. *Speak About It* was originally created at Bowdoin in the summer of 2009 and has since has been operating independently and performing at dozens of colleges and universities across the country. As a producer, I've helped encourage thousands of students to have a dialogue about sex with their peers and partners, inspiring audiences to eradicate sexual assault on their own campus through communication and peer education. We encourage them to converse with each other long after the performance has ended.

I am currently based in Portland, ME, as is *Speak About It*, and more information can be found on the web at www.speakaboutitonline.com or at [Facebook.com/SpeakAboutIt](https://www.facebook.com/SpeakAboutIt).



The Speak About It cast (back row L to R: Erik Moody, Benjamin Row, Director Dave Surkin. Front row L to R: Ellen Almirol, Emma Verill '10, Shana Natelson '10.)

Alumni News

Liz Pedowitz, '10

I am a second year medical student at Mount Sinai School of Medicine in NYC and the Physician Recruitment Chair for the East Harlem Health Outreach Partnership (EHHOP), the school's student-run free clinic that provides care for the uninsured patients of East Harlem. My Spanish knowledge has been extremely useful for communicating with the many Spanish-speaking patients who come to Mount Sinai and EHHOP. I am also the co-leader of the Mount Sinai School of Medicine's Women's Network, connecting female medical students with the school's physicians, engaging in advocacy for the advancement of women and science in medicine, and providing a community of support. I miss Maine and Bowdoin's campus and especially the dining hall with the unlimited freshly baked bread and salad bar!

Alexandra Reed, '10

I am still enjoying my work as a case manager at Bergmann & Moore, a DC-area law firm that represents disabled veterans in their claims before the Veterans Administration (VA). I have the privilege of interacting with Veterans from all different eras, backgrounds, and conflicts--from World War II, to Iraq and Afghanistan. One of my favorite job duties is translating for our large volume of Spanish-speaking clients--I was lucky enough to be sent to Puerto Rico four times this past year to help run the Veterans' workshops that Bergmann & Moore holds around the island. When I'm not working, I'm following the immigration debate and trying to take advantage of all the multicultural opportunities DC has to offer (I recently discovered pupusas, and I am trying to make up for lost time).

Emily Schonberg '10

This May will be the official three year mark after graduating from Bowdoin. I'm not sure where we last left off but I've been working at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston a little over a year and a half in the I.T. Department (haha yes, despite my Art major). Believe it or not, my minor in Spanish has aided my day to day much more than my Art major. There are so many Spanish speakers here, including the woman who hired me. I worked a short stint in the bakery here as well, and found that I relied on Spanish even more than English while working. I've been so glad to be a part of such a diverse community where I can practice my Spanish often, and where I've formed truly wonderful friendships. Sometimes, I consider going back to school for a masters in Art Education and if I do end up pursuing it, I know that being a multilingual teacher will give me a great competitive edge. Considering I hear its tough finding teaching jobs, this skill is indispensable! Remember that whenever it is you graduate, no matter what opportunities come your way, to keep an open mind and try new things! If what end up trying isn't quite your slice of torta then adapt, overcome and keep pushing for what you know will make you happy and be grateful for any stepping stone you find.

Kelly Schussler, '10

After leaving Bowdoin, I returned to Ecuador, where I studied abroad junior year. I worked as the volunteer coordinator for an Ecuadorian NGO called the

Yanapuma Foundation. I supported groups of volunteers that came from Europe and North America on gap year expeditions, as well as individual volunteers who wanted to do some good while they travel. I was lucky to be able to travel all around Ecuador and work with some great small communities. After living there for 2 years I came back to Maine in 2012 and am now studying for my Masters of Social Work at USM.

Tana (Scott) Krohn, '10

I am still happily teaching Middle School Spanish in Gorham, Maine, trying hard to get kids excited about learning the language and culture. My Spanish language skills have also helped me assist a Guatemalan student who recently moved to our school. She speaks no English and is struggling to learn. I have been blessed to be able to help her with this transition and support her in her classes. Outside of the classroom, I've been directing the school musical, tutoring, exercising when I can, dabbling in music, and teaching Sunday School. I dream of traveling to South America soon!

Brooks Winner, '10

I am currently living in Rockland, Maine, about an hour up

the coast from Brunswick, and working at the Island Institute, a nonprofit that works to sustain the year-round island and working waterfront communities of Maine. As the Community Energy Associate,

I get to work with islanders to help them tackle their biggest energy challenges (high fuel costs, leaky houses, etc.) through energy efficiency, renewable energy and education programs. I also volunteer as the Co-Director of Few for Change/Unidos por el Cambio, a scholarship fund that I founded with my class mates from my study abroad program in Panama. I will be traveling to Panama in February to celebrate the beginning the beginning of the school year and award six new scholarships, bringing our total to 16 students! Check us out online at www.fewforchange.com or on Facebook at [facebook.com/fewforchange](https://www.facebook.com/fewforchange). I've also been teaching Spanish lessons to friends in my spare time, a great way to keep my speaking chops up.

Zulmarie Bosque, '11

I am the college counselor at the Urban Prep Academies - Bronzeville campus in Chicago. This is my second year at Urban Prep - Bronzeville and first in this position. I am tasked with preparing our rising seniors to graduate and get accepted into colleges, hopefully I can send some to Bowdoin. Alongside college counseling, I am teaching English Composition to juniors. Both responsibilities are challenging but rewarding.



Brooks Winner, '10 on a recent trip to Panama with Few for Change

Alumni News

Sarah Pritzker, '11

I have continued learning about the Latin American world through my job as a biking and hiking guide for Backroads. In the past year, I've worked in many of the US National Parks as well as all over Europe and South America. Looking to put down roots a bit more, I'm searching for my next opportunity and hoping to land in the non-profit world.

Laura Armstrong, '12

I currently live in San Ramón and am working as a teaching assistant in the "English Teaching" department (which prepares students to become English teachers) at Universidad de Costa Rica, Sede de Occidente on a Fulbright ETA fellowship. We have students pursuing bachelors and licenciatura degrees. My schedule and tasks vary from week to week, but generally include creating and running help sessions for oral communication courses, giving presentations in other professor's courses, and tutoring. My grant also includes an individual project, which currently includes volunteering in community-run English conversation groups and in youth-outreach programs at a local domestic abuse shelter. I hope to collaborate with some of my colleagues here at the university on a research project studying academic ethics and plagiarism on our campus, with the goal of creating a more ethical, intentional campus culture and set of official policies.

Christina Curtin, '12

Since graduating in May with a degree in Government and Latin American Studies, I have moved to Washington, DC where I am a Communications Fellow for the President's Office at Partners of the Americas. Partners of the Americas is a network of grassroots volunteer organizations spread throughout the hemisphere. We focus on strengthening North-South and South-South partnerships and implementing development projects in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Nicholas Fenichell, '12

I accepted a job offer in Shanghai working with a startup which markets international property to Chinese investors. I'm their Latin American business development manager, so I'm getting to use my Spanish and Chinese on a daily basis! The team is small, young, and very dynamic. I'm still volunteering twice a month at a homeless shelter; I usually organize a group of 10 people to go to the shelter, spend time with the residents, wash clothes, and help with shelter renovations.

In terms of next steps, I'm considering applying to public policy grad school next year. In the future, I'd love to create something similar to a fair trade seal but geared towards private equity and venture capital (VC) firms. This international "seal" would represent VC firms' commitment to donate not money but time & expertise to social enterprises.

Elijah Garrard, '12

After graduating last May, my first seven months in the adult world were spent traveling, performing as a storyteller, and learning to cook. In January, I completed a certificate in TESOL, in preparation for my Fulbright grant trip to Argentina. In March 2013, I traveled to the city of Salta, where I'll be working as an English teaching assistant.

Kate Leifheit, '12

This year, I'm working to complete a masters in public health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. I'm in the Department of International Health, studying global disease epidemiology and control. Presently, I am laying the groundwork to do an independent study, researching the issue of late entry to HIV care among Latino men in Baltimore. Also, as part of my degree program, I am required to live abroad and complete a public health practicum. To fulfill this requirement, I am planning to serve as a health volunteer in the U.S. Peace Corps in Peru next year. Ultimately, I hope to use my degree to improve health and standards of living among U.S. Latino populations.

Christina Pindar, '12

I'm currently living in Boston and working at Mass General in an infectious disease lab which focuses on intestinal infections. We're also working on different vaccine forms and delivery methods to improve transport/delivery in resource limited settings, which is really cool. I'm also taking a domestic violence course so that I can volunteer at a homeless shelter for families. I also started the med school application process, so I'm getting to think and talk a lot about my LAS grant and independent study paper. I may revise it and submit it to a student journal--there's just so much there and it would be great to share it, and maybe do even more with the hours of recordings I have!

Laura Till, '12

Since graduating last May, I was accepted to the Public Health Associates Program, a fellowship through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It's a two-year program that matches applicants to various local health departments throughout the US, where we try to learn as much as possible about the "nuts and bolts" of public health. I was matched to the divisions of Reproductive Health and School & Adolescent Health in the Cincinnati Health Department, far from rural New England, and the move was perhaps even more of a culture shock than "el Sur" chileno or even the "proyectos" of Managua. I've felt a little more at home of late while helping out with a whooping cough outbreak in one of the schools on the West side, which is a predominantly Guatemalan area. It does wonders to be called "Laurita" again, and being the only hispanohablante on hand does have its perks. When I'm not knocking on doors in the barrio, I get to do some document translating, HIV counseling, grant writing, data crunching, and patient interviewing for collaborating researchers. I'll admit to missing the Chilean summer right about now, as I'm sure I'll miss the Nica winter come July, but this is yet another leg of the same adventure, and I know it's only a matter of time before heading south again.

An Interview with Amelia Fiske, '06

with Krista Van Vleet

Tell us where you're from, and what you're up to now.

I'm from Appleton, Maine, about an hour and a half north of Brunswick. I graduated from Bowdoin in 2006, and I am now a Ph.D. candidate in the Anthropology program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I'm currently living in Ecuador, conducting dissertation research on the impacts of oil development on human health and the environment.

You were an ES/LAS major at Bowdoin. How have your majors shaped your life after Bowdoin? What have you been doing since you graduated?

Bowdoin provided me with a number of exceptional opportunities, most important of which was to work closely with faculty members during my time there. After returning from a study abroad program in Mexico in 2004, I applied for a grant through Bowdoin to work with the Maine Migrant Health Program, which provides health services to migrant farmworkers in Maine. The majority are disenfranchised workers from Mexico, who travel from harvest to harvest and have minimal access to basic social services or health care. While with MMHP that summer, I conducted outreach to camps of blueberry rakers throughout the Mid-Coast area, translated in on-site health clinics, and conducted pesticide safety trainings. This experience convinced me that I wanted to work at the intersection of health disparities and immigration issues. I returned to Bowdoin renewed enthusiasm that fall and worked with my advisor, Krista Van Vleet, on an independent study about health disparities among Latinos in the US. This opportunity later led me to pursue a graduate program in Medical Anthropology at UNC Chapel Hill. Working with Bowdoin faculty allowed me to explore topics I was curious about and gain a first hand glimpse into what anthropology might be like in practice.

Tell us about your dissertation research. Where specifically are you working? How do you see yourself making a contribution to the scholarship on Latin America? How has the research been funded?

Oil production in the northeastern corner of the Ecuadorian Amazon began in the 1960s through a consortium between the Texaco Corporation and the Ecuadorian government in large section of previously undeveloped jungle. Life with oil has since become a way of life for many people in this area, with oil pipelines, gas flares, and production stations branching throughout the region. It has also resulted in widespread harm to human health and the environment. In response, state, non-governmental, and scientific entities are invested in documenting the consequences of oil production. One of the most prominent examples of this is the *Aguinda v. Texaco* class action lawsuit, in which a group of Ecuadorian plaintiffs sued Chevron for damages to human health and the environment that occurred in the first two decades of oil production in Ecuador.



*Amelia Fiske, '06 and team lago working on a project to dig up and photograph buried crude oil
Photo © Kayana Szymczak, 2012*

An Interview with Amelia Fiske, '06 (continued)

My research deals with how we make evidence of harm from oil, both harm from past oil activities as well as present, or ongoing forms of harm. There are many forms of harm that result from oil operations – untreated pits of oil waste, oil spills, health problems, deforestation, or changing cultural practices – to name a few. I am investigating how residents, activists, scientists, and educators go about mapping, measuring, photographing, and documenting these examples of harm, and how they turn them into the images, facts, and reports that are used to make sense of what oil does to people and places.

A possible contribution of this research is not only a rethinking of what counts as harm, but also an investigation of the tools we use to document the effects of extractive industries. Extractive industries such as oil and mining are reshaping the lives, landscapes, economies, and politics of many Latin American countries. While this study looks specifically at the consequences of oil development, my hope is that it can speak to concerns of extraction and harm across the region. I have been very fortunate to have been funded and supported by a variety of institutions in this research, including the Social Science Research Council, Wenner-Gren Foundation, National Science Foundation, the UNC Institute for Latin American Studies, and the UNC Graduate School.



Students wait on roadside pipelines during a toxi-tour

Can you give us a sense of what you do on a day-to-day basis?

My work is different every day! Since November of 2011, I have been living in Lago Agrio, a city in the north-eastern Amazon of Ecuador that was founded with the advent of oil exploration in the 1960s. It is a fascinating area to work in, ripe with history of multinational and state oil companies, state-sponsored colonization and subsequent deforestation of rainforest, missionary groups trying to win over the souls of indigenous groups, two contentious borders with Colombia and Peru, all in one of the most bio-diverse places on the planet. My project is multi-sited, so this means that I might spend two weeks following a photographer as she documents old oil pits throughout the region, while another day I'll be out on a "toxic-tour" observing how plaintiffs in the Aguinda trial show an oil spill to journalists, or the next day knee-deep in water catching insects with scientists assessing the quality of oil-affected rivers. This project design means that I get to meet a variety of people – farmers, oil workers, activists, state workers, scientists, lawyers – that live and work in

the north-eastern Amazon, but it also means that it won't tell a singular ethnographic story of one community and their relationship to oil. It has been a wonderful challenge to imagine this project while a graduate student at UNC, and then to move to the Amazon to try answer the questions I proposed about harm, evidence, and daily life with oil. Ethnography is full of surprises.

Is there anything you know from your experiences in Ecuador that you wish more people knew about?

Oil activities often only make the news when there is a major disaster, such as the Exxon Valdez crash, the BP explosion in the Gulf of Mexico, or the more recent Keystone pipeline ruptures in the US. But the reality of oil production is very different, and the consequences are much greater than these isolated moments of crisis. What I hope to convey through my research are some of the day-to-day effects of oil: the dynamics of communities formed around a single industry, what it is like to live next to a gas flare and suffer from chronic respiratory problems, or how one deals with ongoing small spills from the pipeline that runs through your farmland. While oil might be characterized in the media by moments of disaster, I'm asking what happens when that disaster becomes a way of life. I think anthropology is well suited to bringing these everyday consequences of oil into dialogue with the politics of energy choices or corporate accountability.

What comes next for you?

I'll be in Ecuador through December of this year, and then I head back to UNC to begin writing my dissertation research. My hope is to turn this research into a book on oil in the Amazon, and to find work – hopefully as an Anthropology professor at a school like Bowdoin! I'd love to continue working on issues of the environment, energy, and extractive industries in Latin America.



An open waste pit of crude oil, 3 meters deep in Sushufindi, Ecuador

Event Highlights

September 25, 2012 - Bowdoin Spanish alumna and Ph.D. candidate in Educational Linguistics, Sarah Lipinoga Gallo '03, presented a lecture, "*Mexican Immigrant Fathers: The Effects of Gendered Immigration Policy Enforcement*".



October 11&12, 2012 - A two day interdisciplinary and international symposium was held on campus, *Caribbean Interiority in the New Millennium*. Key note speaker, Henry Paget, professor of Sociology and African Studies and director of graduate studies at Brown University, presented a lecture titled "*Afro-Indian Interiority and Caribbean Philosophy*".

October 18, 2012 - Barbara Weinstein, professor of history at New York University, presented a lecture, "*Marianne into Battle? The Paulista Woman and the War of Sao Paulo*".

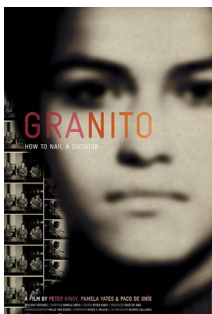


October 18, 2012 - Jason DeLeon, Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the University of Michigan, presented a lecture, "*Citizenship, Materiality, and Necroviolence Along the U.S.-Mexico Border*".

October 22, 2012 - Percussionist *Hector Morales and the Afro-Peruvian Ensemble* held a concert and workshop demonstrating the sultry rhythms of Afro-Peruvian land, festejo, and more.



October 29, 2012 - Filmmakers Pamela Yates and Paco de Onis held a screening and discussion of their film, "*Granito: How to Nail a Dictator*".



November 19, 2012 - Peruvian Sociologist and the Director of the Truth and Memory Program, Eduardo González Cueva, presented a lecture on *Internal and Armed Conflict in Peru*.

January 28-31, 2013 - Bowdoin hosted the Latin American and Spanish Film Festival with screenings and discussion of films *Lope, Tambien La Lluvia, A Contracorriente, and Chico Y Rita*.



May 1, 2013 - Bowdoin's *Afro-Latin Music Ensemble*, under the direction of LAS Professor Michael Birenbaum Quintero, held a concert highlighting the scintillating rhythms and cultural richness of the descendants of Africans in Latin America, including music from Colombia, Cuba, and Peru.

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