The carved statue portrays the populace of Caicara, the fishermen and women who settled in the region following the arrival of the Portuguese to the Atlantic rainforest coastal land of present-day Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo. As a herald to one's arrival in Ubatuba, the carving is situated in one of the central commercial hubs along the Costa Verde. The Caicara, along with the local indigenous villages of Guaraní, are the earliest settlers along this coastal plain and remain a vibrant ethnic presence in the region with festivals and religious holidays dedicated to their historic and cultural traditions.
The past 12 months have been tumultuous across Latin America, from the economic and political crises in Brazil to the resurgence of drug violence in Mexico, from the thawing of US-Cuban relations to the gang-led paralysis of San Salvador and continued revelations about military abuses in Pinochet's Chile. Under the able leadership of Faculty Director Mauricio Tenorio and Associate Director NatalieArsenault, CLAS played its part in bringing the UChicago community beyond the headlines, placing current events in their deeper contexts and calling attention to the compelling societies, histories, and cultures obscured by the cacophony of contemporary crises.

Bookending the academic year, three conferences developed CLAS initiatives on a broad public stage. In September 2014, CLAS assisted the Katz Center in hosting the XIV Reunión de Historiadores de México, a three-day event that brought together hundreds of the world's leading Mexicanist historians and reaffirmed UChicago's longstanding tradition as a leader in Mexican studies. In May, CLAS Faculty Associate Cécile Fromont worked with Africanist colleague Emily Lynn Osborn to organize “Color in the Early Modern Atlantic World,” a two-day conference in which scholars from three continents discussed issues of race, aesthetics, slavery, religion, and colonialism. A scarce week later, CLAS and UChicago's Urban Network sponsored “Cities and Spectacle in Modern Brazil.” In this two-day urban forum, over a hundred participants explored the impact of contemporary mega-spectacle on urban Brazil and considered the role of spectacle in shaping urban landscapes and social relations across time and space. Together, these events dynamically reaffirmed the vitality and creativity that academic work on Latin America brings to issues of broad public interest.

Throughout the year, CLAS extended that mission in dozens of public forums. Current events received ample analysis in talks and symposia focused on issues of human rights, migration, drug violence, urban informality, Mexican economic inequality, Brazilian political protest, Colombian post-conflict reconciliation, Afro-descendent and indigenous social movements, and Bolivian socioeconomic policies. CLAS events also explored issues of memory, violence, spectacle, and protest through photography, dance, music, and cinema. Interdisciplinary workshops on Latin American culture and history analyzed a steady stream of stimulating work-in-progress by anthropologists, cultural scholars, and historians from around the world. In these workshops, in particular, our scholars came to appreciate anew the degree to which intellectual work requires collaboration from a demanding and supportive community.

Beyond UChicago, CLAS undertook a number of collaborations and outreach activities, ranging from cooperation with local consulates and universities to workshops for secondary educators. CLAS-affiliated faculty published and presented their work across the globe, CLAS graduate students pursued research and forged collaborative ties with new generations of scholars throughout the region, and CLAS undergraduates studied abroad in Oaxaca and pursued language, research, and internship opportunities across South America.

Thanks to the able leadership of Natalie Arsenault, Dain Borges, and Mauricio Tenorio, CLAS and the University of Illinois's Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies received Title VI funding from the US Department of Education's National Resource Center and Foreign Language and Areas Studies (FLAS) programs for 2014–18. Because of this funding, which the UChicago-UIC partnership has received continuously since 1976, we look forward to supporting study, research, and community outreach with renewed energy in the years to come.

In 2014–15, CLAS affiliate faculty and alumni also received generous recognition within and outside of the University: teaching awards, book awards, article awards, and research fellowships. An outstanding cohort of graduate and MA students completed their studies, and both they and many of our recent alumni went on to hard-earned postgraduate fellowships and academic appointments. A generation on the verge of completing their graduate studies received prestigious research and write-up fellowships. We are proud of all of these achievements, both the outstanding individual effort they reflect and the collective work that helped support them.

In 2015–16, we welcome many new members to our community. Rising seniors will write their BA theses in Latin American Studies, and a new cohort of MA and PhD students will inject our programs with renewed vitality. Tinker Professors Keila Grinberg, Diego Pol, and Anna Caballé will expand our students’ intellectual horizons and allow our community to forge links far beyond our Chicago campus; visiting scholar Geraldo Luján Cadava will bring us his insights on borderlands and Latino history; and visiting students from Brazil and Mexico will help us deepen extant collaborations there. Pablo Palomino will join us from Berkeley to lead our MA Proseminar and teach broadly on Latin America's contemporary cultural history. Valeria Escrariaza López Fadul (History) and Edgar García (English Language and Literature) will join us as Provost's Postdoctoral Scholars. New professors Maria Angelica Bautista Duarte (Harris), Larissa Brewer-García (Romance Languages and Literatures), P. Sean Brotherton (Anthropology), Angela García (Social Service Administration), Ellis Monk (Sociology), James Robinson (Harris), Victoria Saramago (RLL), and Salomé Aguilera Skvirsky (Cinema and Media Studies) will greatly strengthen our Latin Americanist faculty across the disciplines. We could not be more thrilled to welcome so many new colleagues as we continue to demonstrate the value of deep research and vigorous debate about Latin America, both at UChicago and around the globe.

The coming year will also bring new challenges, most especially concerning the expansion of University engagement in Latin America to fields beyond the humanities and social sciences, the deepening of our ties beyond the UChicago campus, and the strengthening of our core commitment to deep regional research. I look forward to advancing our collective mission as CLAS director in 2015–16.

Brodwyn Fischer, Professor of History
Brazilian Cities Take Center Stage
Examining Social Mobilization and the Meanings of Spectacle

José Juan Pérez Meléndez
PhD Candidate, History

Lush rain forests and pristine beaches are still among the images most synonymous with Brazil. But with 85% of the country’s population living in urban areas according to the World Bank, Brazilian cities have moved to the forefront of international attention. In recent years, Brazilian society has been featured prominently in global media because of the profound transformations taking place in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, as well as Manaus, Recife, Salvador, and many other cities. The incredible preparations for the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympics have put Brazil in the spotlight as much as the social movements that have arisen to protest these global events. This past year CLAS hosted a series of events that examined contemporary Brazil in light of its social manifestations, political transformations, and urban landscapes.

Sociologist Marcelo Ridenti (Universidade de São Paulo) explored the onset and significance of recent protests, whose beginnings he dated to 2013 when Brazil hosted the Confederations Cup soccer tournament. A surprise hike in the cost of São Paulo’s bus transports triggered the Movimento Passe Livre. Although the “Free Pass Movement” consistently couched its claims in terms of pressing needs for transportation, education, and housing, the movement was novel in that it was not planned in union headquarters or political offices, but rather digitally orchestrated through social media. Ridenti also noted that the protests against fiscal irresponsibility and the prioritization of private interests garnered widespread approval, surmounting class and age divisions, until the Black Blocs, an anonymous faction of protesters espousing violence, began disrupting otherwise peaceful protests.

Initially led by young, educated middle-class Brazilians, the protests were unprecedented on another level. Many of the youth involved in the initial movements were unemployed, which marks their distance from the worker mobilizations of the 1980s that were at the center of two presentations by historian John French (Duke University). French presented a chapter from his book manuscript on Luiz Inácio “Lula” da Silva and provided a glimpse into the unlikely politicization of Lula. Although Lula was politically noncommittal as a young man, the workers’ politics of the era combined with his brother’s torture at the hands of military in the 1970s compelled him to move beyond the sidelines and into the spotlight. As French further explained, the future president burst onto the political scene as a trade unionist with an incandescent penchant for public speaking and as a born negotiator. Perhaps this is one of the reasons that after his landmark electoral victory in 2002 he was able to gain the trust of the populace and the private sector alike, French suggested.

The eight years of Lula’s presidency witnessed an extraordinary transformation of Brazilian society. Brazil’s refurbished image as an “emergent economy”—the world’s seventh largest—was linked to improved access to education, increased consumer spending due to cash-transfer programs, and the skyrocketing use of communication technologies. Yet Lula was unable to forestall the return of longstanding socioeconomic issues. According to Ridenti, it is not by chance that the youth spearheading the 2013 protests belonged to the middle classes that, having enjoyed expanded access to higher education under Lula, had come of age with a considerable degree of digital literacy and a resistance to...
what Ridenti called the “commodification of everyday life.” The 2013 mobilizations, while different from their predecessors in the workers’ movement, formed part of a long tradition: the use of “spectacle” in the form of public protest to advance claims.

“Cities and Spectacle in Modern Brazil,” a two-day conference hosted by CLAS and the Urban Network, examined the concept of spectacle as a building block of Brazilian society. Panels about the global stage, social and racial politics in cities, violence, urban culture, and the effects of mega-events explored how spectacle is an old, and constantly evolving, phenomenon in Brazil. Visiting Tinker Professor Mariza Soares, for example, looked at the street processions of colonial religious brotherhoods, which gradually lost ground to official celebrations controlled by the archbishopric and government. While some popular traditions have faded away, others have endured: Isabel Guillon (Universidade Federal do Paraná) addressed the resurgence of the Northeastern performance genre of maracatu in Recife. Guillon pointed out that the staging of popular culture during large urban festivities allows residents from the peripheries to periodically take over the city center. Gabriel Feltran (Universidade Federal de São Carlos) also focused on soundscapes, but at the edges of São Paulo: reflecting on 1960s–1970s Jorge Ben lyrics (“Robin Hood of the favela”) and more recent hip-hop, Feltran spoke about how Brazilian music in urban peripheries presents crime as a means of justice, equality, and other values that would otherwise appear antithetical to it.

Other presentations engaged worlds of spectacle throughout Brazilian history. Aila Levey (PhD candidate, History) showed how the construction of the Teatro Municipal in Belle Époque São Paulo was framed as a symbol of “cultural progress,” evidenced by the spectacle of erudite programming, fashionable audiences, and world-class architecture. Courtney Campbell (University of London) offered the fascinating story of Martha Rocha, who became the undisputed beauty standard of Salvador’s women, but only after she narrowly lost the Miss Universe pageant as Miss Brazil in 1954. Daniel Gough (PhD candidate, Music) focused on the Virada Cultural, a 24-hour music festival in São Paulo in which urban planning and cultural programming seem to merge seamlessly. Gough contended that, while popular, the Virada masks “spatial inequalities of spending on cultural programming throughout the urban fabric.” The vast symbolic repertoires of urban spectacle exclude few arenas of cultural and social life.

Presenters also engaged the problem of escalating waves of violence in Rio de Janeiro. Ignacio Cano (Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro) and Benjamin Lessing (Political Science) offered analyses of the pacification strategy that appeared to be working to reduce violence from 2008 until 2013, when homicide rates in favelas began to rise suddenly. Questions of efficacy aside, Cano argued that pacification seems to serve best communities with strong tourism and services sectors whose “postcard views” have attracted countless visitors.

Favela tourism was the subject of two presentations that interrogated a relatively new phenomenon that is somewhat reminiscent of the practice of “slumming” in fin-de-siècle Paris or New York, as Bianca Freire-Medeiros (Universidade de São Paulo) noted. One of the things that set favela tourism apart from earlier incursions of middle- and high-class individuals into poor neighborhoods is the economy that has emerged to meet the demands of the tourists’ gaze. As Medeiros showcased, favela tourism has given rise to performances of stereotypical favela life by outside tour guides, while local residents produce artisanal souvenirs that communicate their own ideas about what their communities mean. In a similar vein, Erica Robb Larkins (LACS MA; University of Oklahoma) described how favela violence itself is transformed into a brand through spectacular displays of power by police and traffickers, which outsiders witness through the embodied experience of tourism and the disembodied form of the media. Beatriz Jauguaribe (Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro) was prescient in underlining that branding—a strategy that enables cities to become competitive on the world stage—ultimately rules our views of the city, especially when it comes to publicity-heavy mega-events.

Issues of informal urban settlements lie at the very core of Brazilian urbanism. Edésio Fernandes (Lincoln Institute of Land Policy) made the point that speculative market-driven urban policy, planning, and management have long determined informality, gentrification, and socio-spatial segregation. Land rights, allocation, policy, and markets are the long-neglected key issues of Brazilian cities. Concentrating on one case study, that of the Barra Olimpica, in Rio de Janeiro, Mariana Cavalcanti (Anthropology PhD; Fundação Getúlio Vargas) investigated how the 2016 Olympics have spurred real estate speculative practices in both “formal” developments and nearby favelas, with new high-end condos being marketed in relation to their proximity to the Olympics while one-room rental studios proliferate in the favelas for those working in construction or services catering to the construction industry. Even good urban redevelopment can be contentious. Examining the design of and public responses to Parque Madureira, a new public space in Rio’s often neglected north zone, Bryan McCann (Georgetown University) illustrated how this project has garnered a significant level of approval among local residents despite protests over the removal of favelas to make space for the park. Despite these criticisms, the park is generally lauded because it “serves a low-income population, and does so with verve and environmental ingenuity.”

Rio de Janeiro may be the most famous Brazilian city, but by no means was it the sole focus of “Cities and Spectacle.” Brodwyn Fischer (History) discussed racial and political identity in Recife’s informal city, outlining how residents of traditionally black settlements called mocambos employed different aspects of their racial and class identities to demand resources and to address political challenges from the 1920s on. Keisha-Khan Perry (Brown University) spoke about her research on neighborhood movements against police violence and forced evictions in Salvador and highlighted the leading role that black women play in them. Perry credits women’s grassroots organizing against class- and race-based issues as key to giving prominence to their communities’ problems.

Considering all the challenges Brazilian cities and their resourceful inhabitants confront, it might be wise to exercise caution with the old adage that “Brazil is the country of the future,” as Bruno Carvalho (Princeton University) hinted. The past, after all, seems weightier than any promised future and keeps getting bigger. The present, in turn, is complicated enough in Carvalho’s view: street demonstrations adopt attitudes and behaviors commonly found in stadiums, while the new stadiums become the ultimate metaphor of urban experience—showcase arenas of global investment that have little to do with erstwhile fans and what is happening in the streets. With these things in mind, it might be worth pointing out, as “Cities and Spectacle” did, that it is not the future itself but what type of future that remains in question.
During the Spring Quarter, CLAS organized a series of events around issues of race and dispossession in the Americas. They featured scholars as well as activists on small, engaged panels, each to an active audience.

The events, as well as the series as a whole, spoke to both historical as well as current debates around race and dispossession. How does dispossession cut across both rural and urban areas, and how might urban and rural dispossession be related? How has dispossession been racialized in particular ways in different parts of the Americas? What is the relationship of racialized dispossession to rural and urban environments? How do indigenous and Afro-descendent communities and activists grapple with these questions? What are the politics and consequences of articulating claims to property or citizenship in the face of dispossession, and what kinds of relationships to the state do these claims imply? What relationship do today’s debates around race and dispossession have to historical racialized dispossession across the Americas? And how can scholars work both collaboratively and ethically on these questions?

Gastón Gordillo (University of British Columbia) and Kregg Hetherington (Concordia University) addressed some of these questions in their joint panel “Ecologies of Conflict: Violence, Agribusiness, and Land Dispossession in Latin America,” moderated by Meghan Morris (PhD candidate, Anthropology). Both speakers addressed the multilayered conflicts emerging around the soy boom, drawing on recent fieldwork in Argentina and Paraguay to speak to the shifts in rural life, ecology, and peasant relationships to the state that are emerging in the wake of expanding soy production. The conversation on the panel spoke to the ways that soy is both destructive and productive, transcending borders, transforming environments, and shift-
ing movements’ orientation toward law and regulation. The panelists also spoke to the ways that even as soy is a catalyst for current shifts, it is also part of deeper environmental and political histories in the Southern Cone.

Tianna Paschel (Political Science) moderated an event titled “Racialized Dispossession in the United States and Brazil,” in which Keisha-Khan Perry (Brown University) and Kee-anga-Yamahtta Taylor (Princeton University) explored struggles by Afro-descendant communities for land and housing. Perry articulated how historical efforts by black people in Brazil, Jamaica, and the United States to gain land rights undergird contemporary struggles for access to land, while Taylor outlined similar historical relationships between the institutions that stymied efforts by black women to gain access to urban housing in the United States in the 1960s and the roots of today’s “urban crisis.” The panel as a whole underscored the ways that property can both advance and frustrate black communities’ efforts to achieve justice and inclusion.

In a later event, Afro-Colombian leaders and activists provided an account of efforts by black communities in Colombia to achieve inclusion in contemporary state efforts to achieve peace, in the face of historical dispossession. “Colombia’s Peace Process and the Problem of Inclusion” featured Richard Moreno (Foro Interétnico Solidaridad Chocó), Carlos Rosero (Proceso de Comunidades Negras), Marino Córdoba (Asociación de Afrocolombianos Desplazados), and Javier Marrugo (Consejo Laboral Afrocolombiano) on a panel moderated by Tianna Paschel. The panelists addressed the historical exclusion of the Afro-Colombian population, emphasizing their collective efforts through the Afro-Colombian Peace Council to gain a voice in the current peace dialogues in Havana between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) guerrillas.

Finally, Carmen MartínezNovo (University of Kentucky) and Laura Graham (University of Iowa) discussed the challenges and efforts by indigenous communities and activists to participate in political and media spaces, on a panel moderated by Eric Hirsch (PhD candidate, Anthropology) titled “Researching Indigeneity in the Americas.” MartínezNovo drew on recent research on the minimization of the indigenous population in Ecuador’s census, noting the political challenges to indigenous inclusion, while Graham discussed efforts by indigenous media and documentary activists in Venezuela to gain openings to spaces where indigenous participation is often marginalized. Both speakers addressed the ways that these events emerged as part of particular histories of indigenous politics in the region. The panel also opened a conversation around method, considering different modes of researching questions of indigeneity and their implications.

This series brought diverse research and political work to bear on crucial questions around race and dispossession, provoking much productive discussion and debate on campus. The events provided the kind of historical, comparative, and political analysis that enriches debates around these issues.

Color in the Early Atlantic World

The conference “Color in the Early Modern Atlantic World,” organized by Cécile Fromont (Art History) and Emily Lynn Osborn (History), gathered 13 speakers from France, Brazil, and the United States on May 1–2, 2015, at the Franke Institute for the Humanities.

The goal of the conference was to bring together scholars from different fields, disciplines, and continents to explore how color travels and translates over time and place in the early modern Atlantic World. Conference participants followed one of two broad paths in their explorations. The first approached color as a material form—as in fabrics and textiles, paintings and sculptures—whose uses and meanings change over time and place. The second considered color as a marker of race or ethnicity, which can likewise assume different valences and codes according to context.

Agnes Lugo-Ortiz (Romance Languages and Literatures) delivered a vivid and compelling keynote lecture, “Slave Portraiture at the Limits of Emancipation: A Caribbean Counterpoint” on the evening of May 1.

The following day, participants and audience members shared ideas in four panels and one roundtable. Tinker Visiting Professor Mariza Soares presented “The Meaning of Colors in Catholic Baroque Devotion,” which analyzed the color used on Marian devotional figures in Brazil over two centuries. While written historical sources and documents of material culture demonstrate that saints can be adorned with diverse hues, the association of Mary with the color blue appears remarkably consistent. Considering the rich array of cultural, material, and metaphorical significance of the color, she argued, greatly enriches knowledge of Catholic devotion in baroque and modern Brazil.

By gathering scholars from different continents, the conference bridged a still surprisingly deep gap between academic conversations on the early modern Atlantic World in different national academies. While innovative research on color is taking place in South America, Europe, and the United States, it tends to follow parallel tracks. Participants found this event to be thus doubly invigorating: it gave scholars an occasion not only to share findings and debate sources and methodologies, but also to take stock of the state of the field internationally.

The audience consisted of about 35 attendees from the University, other academic centers in the city, and the greater Midwest. Non-academic members of the local community also joined and took part in the proceedings. The conference was made possible by the generous support of various institutions on campus, including CLAS.
CLAS Explores Current Affairs

This year CLAS organized several events that addressed some of the most pressing issues in Latin America. Faculty members, students, scholars, and policy makers were invited to reflect on the socioeconomic trends of the region, ranging from the growth of inequality, left-wing politics, and organized crime, to the geopolitical changes between the United States and Latin America and the emergence of alternative models of production, public policy, and governance.

Inequality was a central component of the Center's agenda. Despite a decade of economic growth and poverty reduction efforts, inequality still afflicts the smallest and largest economies of the region, including Mexico and Brazil. In Mexico, according to the World Bank, 64 million people continue to live below the poverty line, and more than 20 million cannot meet basic household needs. In the winter, CLAS organized a panel titled “The Challenge of Inequality in Mexico,” with leading experts from the United States and Mexico, to reflect on the problems, conditions, and consequences that inequality poses for Mexico.

The participants on this panel were Fausto Hernández (Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas), Guillermo Trejo (University of Notre Dame), Gerardo Esquivel (El Colegio de México), and Luis Felipe López-Calva (World Bank). The event sparked a lively conversation among panelists and the audience on the complex relationships among social policy, economic growth, informality, and inequality, among others, and also enabled students to grasp the different disciplinary angles of approaching such phenomena. As Emilio de Antuñano, PhD candidate in History, commented, “First of all, I was very interested in seeing how economists understand inequality, poverty, and growth (or lack thereof) as analytically distinct yet connected categories. Secondly, it was very revealing to see how a debate about inequality among economists turned into a larger and more interdisciplinary conversation about the ‘weakness of the state.’ (E.g., how can we tax the rich? How can we put in place policies that threaten powerful private interests?) This change made me realize how important it is to engage with social scientists from different disciplines in order to gain a richer understanding of the world.” Tania Islas, PhD candidate in Political Science and moderator of this panel, added, “One of the most important aspects of this event was having people of different expertise (economists, political scientists, and policy makers) talk to each other about the topic of inequality. Although there were several points of agreement, it was quite interesting to see how there was also divergence, not simply in the way in which the ‘problem of inequality’ was being addressed but also in the way ‘inequality’ as a concept was defined in the first place.”

In the fall, CLAS also brought together experts from Mexico and the United States to examine the economic and human
The geopolitical shifts in the region, particularly the normalization of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States, also captured public attention during the 2014-15 academic year. In December 2014, after more than 50 years, both governments announced measures to ease restrictions on travel, remittances, banking, telecommunications, and bilateral trade, and on July 20, 2015, reopened their embassies in Havana and Washington. In conjunction with the Institute of Politics, CLAS organized a panel titled “US-Cuba Diplomatic Thaw: What’s Next?” with María de Los Angeles Torres (University of Illinois at Chicago) and Ana Carbonell (The Factor Inc., a Miami-based political consulting firm). The debate explored the likelihood of lifting the US embargo and easing other restrictions on Cuba, as well as the political, economic, and social consequences that these measures could have on Cubans and Cuban-American communities. The panelists and the audience also debated the extent to which this shift could promote political transformation on the island and alter US foreign policy toward Latin America.

While it is uncertain what will happen in the coming months, this event allowed students to stay informed and rethink the political significance of this shift for the region and the United States.

Latin American left-wing politics and critiques of neoliberal policy were also discussed in a Latin American Briefing Series event with Luis Alberto Arce Catacora, Minister of Economy and Public Finance of Bolivia and a central figure in planning the country’s growing economy. Since 2006, the Bolivian government has worked to design a new economic model that stems from a commitment to change the prevalent situation up to that time, characterized by the economic and social exclusion of most Bolivians. Under this new model, the Bolivian government strengthened the role of the state in the economy and expanded public investment, social assistance programs, and hydrocarbon infrastructure. In front of a packed room of UChicago students and faculty, area residents, and members of the local Bolivian community, Arce outlined the basis and structure of the new model, as well as an impressive array of economic and social results and published research on Bolivia’s model. As Hong R. Zhang Durandal, student of the Master’s in Public Policy program, noted, “Bolivia can position itself to be one of the major energy players in Latin America through the industrialization of fossil fuels, exports of lithium, and the development of hydroelectric plants and renewable energy. …Mr. Arce made a compelling case on his new economic system to many scholars and students at the University of Chicago. But much more needs to be studied on the Economic Social Communitarian Productive Model to call it a successful reform.”

Although the policy implications of such discussions are still to be seen, these types of occasions reassert the importance of generating discussion on current affairs. “Universities such as Chicago,” de Antuñano said, “enjoy the advantage of analyzing issues from a privileged position vis-à-vis Latin America since there are so many experts from so many countries working here together. For better or for worse, many students from the University of Chicago will end up designing public policies in the US and Latin America, so we have the responsibility to tackle issues such as inequality in a committed and serious manner.” The Center for Latin American Studies will continue to move toward this direction by bringing together policy makers and academics to study, debate, and shape the big questions surrounding Latin America and the Caribbean.

“Addressing these topics at U of C might help students realize that perhaps they had misconceived the way they thought about Latin America. It might also help them see (this goes for both American and Latin American students) how they (or their world views) might be part of the problem, but also how they might be (or start thinking about being) part of the solution.”

— Tania Islas
PhD student, Political Science
In 1981, CLAS hosted its first Tinker Visiting Professor—Alberto Escobar (Peru)—after receiving an endowment from the Tinker Foundation “to enhance the experience and training of students and fellow academics.” Since then, we have hosted 111 Tinker Visiting Professors from Latin America and the Iberian Peninsula, and they have taught more than one hundred courses in departments across the University.

Sharing their research, scholarship, and diverse disciplinary perspectives, Tinker Visiting Professors make an invaluable contribution to the scholarly life of the CLAS community. They also have provided students and faculty at the University of Chicago with the opportunity to understand and examine the most recent discussions and debates generated at the top universities and research and cultural centers that focus on Latin America. Here we profile our cohort of 2014–15 Tinker Visiting Professors and announce our incoming Tinker Visiting Professors for 2015–16.

Eduardo Manzano, from the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, is a leading historian of Islamic Spain. His first book, La Frontera de al-Andalus en época de los Omeyas (1991), regrounds political and institutional history of Islamic Spain. Since then he has published numerous articles on topics from settlement patterns to pottery, as well as two massive magisterial volumes reframing the medieval history of the Iberian Peninsula.

In Autumn 2014, Manzano taught “The Social Memory of Convivencia: Muslims, Jews, and Christians and Historical Nationalism in Contemporary Spain,” which examined the social environment created by Muslim, Christian, and Jewish communities in medieval Spain, and how contemporary historical narratives have dealt with it. “Despite the fact that some students were not acquainted with Iberian history,” Manzano said, “they became rapidly familiar with the main concepts and key events of medieval and modern Iberia, which led the way to stimulating discussions and excellent essays and class presentations. At present I am planning to write a book based on this topic, as it became evident the important dimensions that this issue has on our understanding of the role that history plays in our social perceptions.”

Verena Stolcke is professor emerita of social anthropology at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Stolcke’s cutting-edge books and essays on social inequalities based on sex, gender, and race have sparked a generation of sociologists, historians, and anthropologists to work on similar topics. Her first book, Marriage, Class and Colour in Nineteenth-Century Cuba: A Study of Racial Attitudes and Sexual Values in a Slave Society, based on several years of archival research in Cuba, explored how Spanish men differentially valued the virtue (or sexual purity) of women of every class and race. Originally published by Cambridge University Press in 1974, it was reprinted by the University of Michigan Press in 1989 and 2003.

Stolcke’s Autumn 2014 course, “Identities Are Not Born but Made: What Has Race to Do with Sex?,” focused on the category, political meaning, and use of “race” in relation to sex. While in residence, Stolcke advanced another research topic, reflecting, “I was also able—thanks to the excellent libraries at [UChicago]—to update my research into biotechnology, contrasting new anthropological approaches to the body with the critical comparative analysis of the modern binary opposition of nature and culture and ethnographies of ontologies of Amazonian peoples.”

Mariza Soares is a history professor at the Universidade Federal Fluminense. She has published widely on slavery, ethnicity, and Catholicism in colonial Brazil. One of her books, recently translated into English, People of Faith: Slavery and African Catholics in Eighteenth-Century Rio de Janeiro (2011), makes significant theoretical and empirical contributions to our understanding of colonial Brazilian history. Soares elaborated findings about the devotional and church lives of “Mina” slaves (those who came from the Guinea Coast in West Africa) with archival research in both Brazil and Portugal, and a merging of Anglophone and Lusophone historiographies of ethnicity and slavery.

In Spring 2015, Soares taught “Slavery in Brazil: Historiography and Trends,” which sought to present a landscape of the recent Brazilian historiography related to slavery in Brazil. The course was very well received, with one student commenting, “Mariza was a great professor and incredibly knowledgeable about the subject material. It was a privilege to study with such an important figure in her field.”

Evani Viotti is a professor of linguistics at the Universidade de São Paulo. Viotti is an accomplished linguist who works on Brazilian Portuguese, especially how it evolved, what particular structural peculiarities the variety identified as Popular or Vernacular Brazilian Portuguese has retained, conservatively, from sixteenth- to eighteenth-century nonstandard European Portuguese, and to what extent it might have been influenced by African languages. She is now leading an interdisciplinary research team to examine the extent of African contributions to Vernacular Brazilian Portuguese and Brazilian culture.

In Spring 2015, Viotti offered the course “Aspects of Brazilian Portuguese Grammar” which, due to popular demand, she taught in Portuguese. In reflecting on her residency, Viotti said, “However important all the activities I carried out during my visit may have been, the one most directly relevant to my research was my contact with Professor Salikoko Mufwene. … His ideas on language evolution have been one of the fundamental bases for my investigations. As always, my conversations with him have been very enlightening and will certainly have an impact in my work.”

### 2015–16 Tinker Visiting Professors

#### Autumn 2015 & Winter 2016
Keila Grinberg, Universidade Federal do Estado do Rio de Janeiro

#### Winter 2016
Diego Pol, CONICET/Museo Paleontológico
Egidio Feruglio

#### Spring 2016
Anna Caballé, Universitat de Barcelona
Faculty Publications & Awards

Michael Albertus  
Political Science

*Autocracy and Redistribution: The Politics of Land Reform*  
(Cambridge University Press, 2015)

"The Role of Subnational Politicians in Distributive Politics: Political Bias in Venezuela’s Land Reform under Chávez," *Comparative Political Studies* forthcoming.


Chad Broughton  
Harris School of Public Policy

*Boom, Bust, Exodus: The Rust Belt, the Maquilas, and a Tale of Two Cities*  
(Oxford University Press, 2015)

Brodwyn Fischer  
History


Claudia Brittenham  
Art History

*The Murals of Cacaxtla: The Power of Painting in Ancient Mexico*  
(University of Texas Press, 2015)

Robert Kendrick  
Music

*Singing Jeremiah: Music and Meaning in Holy Week*  
(Indiana University Press, 2014)

Emilio Kourí  
History

"La invención del ejido," *Revista NEXOS* (January 2015)

Benjamin Lessing  
Political Science

"Logics of Violence in Criminal War," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* forthcoming

Ana Maria Lima  
Romance Languages and Literatures

Won the Janel M. Mueller Award for Excellence in Pedagogy, which recognizes outstanding pedagogical contributions from lecturers and senior lecturers in the Division of the Humanities and Humanities Collegiate Division.

Cécile Fromont  
Art History

*The Art of Conversion: Christian Visual Culture in the Kingdom of Kongo*  
(University of North Carolina Press, 2014)

Won the 2015 Albert J. Raboteau Book Prize for the Best Book in Africana Religions, given each year to an academic book that exemplifies the ethos and mission of the *Journal of Africana Religions*. Also won the 2015 Award for Best First Book in the History of Religions, American Academy of Religion.

Mauricio Tenorio  
History

Won two book awards for *I Speak of the City: Mexico City at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (University of Chicago Press, 2012). The University of Chicago Press awarded the 2015 Gordon J. Laing Prize, which is given annually to the UChicago faculty author, editor, or translator of a book published in the previous three years that brings the Press the greatest distinction. In addition, the Society of Architectural Historians (SAH) awarded the 2015 Spiro Kostof Book Award, which is given to a work in any discipline related to urban history that has made the greatest contribution to our understanding of historical development and change.

Melvin Butler  
Music

"Performing Pannkotis Identity in Haiti," *The Oxford Handbook of Music and World Christianities*  
(Oxford University Press, 2015)

Stephan Palmié  
Anthropology

*The Cooking of History: How Not to Study Afro-Cuban Religion*  
(University of Chicago Press, 2013) has won the Society for the Anthropology of Religion’s 2014 Clifford Geertz Prize, and has been the subject of a book symposium in *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* in 2015.

Singing Jeremiah: Music and Meaning in Holy Week

(Indiana University Press, 2014)

Emilio Kourí  
History

"La invención del ejido," *Revista NEXOS* (January 2015)

Benjamin Lessing  
Political Science

"Logics of Violence in Criminal War," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* forthcoming

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(Oxford University Press, 2015)
November 2014 marked the 25th anniversary of the assassination of Ignacio Martín-Baró, the Spanish-born Jesuit priest, distinguished scholar, and UChicago alumnus slain during the Salvadoran Civil War by the right-wing Salvadoran Army.

In 1991 the University of Chicago established the Ignacio Martín-Baró Endowment. Originally administered as a series of major public lectures, the lecture series transformed into a prize lectureship competition in 2005. This annual award for advanced graduate students supports the teaching of one undergraduate-level course focusing on a major political issue or question pertaining to human rights in Latin America. To date, 11 individuals in Anthropology, Art History, Comparative Human Development, History, and Political Science have been awarded the lectureship, teaching courses whose emphases span from the politics of art to the Cuban diaspora, and from questions of environmental human rights to medical practices. These courses provide a unique space for students to study, debate, and engage in discourse surrounding important themes in Latin American Studies.

The 2014–15 Ignacio Martín-Baró Prize Lectureship was awarded to Emilio de Antuñano (History), whose Winter Quarter course, “The Right to the City in Latin America,” explored the role of twentieth-century Latin American cities as spaces of emancipation and inclusion, and as spaces of political and social exclusion. In a February 2015 interview with CLAS, de Antuñano reflected upon the course—his reasons for applying, his relationship to the material, and the lessons he learned from teaching it.

Q: Why were you interested in teaching through the Martín-Baró Prize Lectureship?
A: The focus on human rights of the Martín-Baró Lectureship gave me the opportunity to think about the different modes of exclusion and injustice that take place in Latin American cities. I have often reflected on these matters, as a historian, as a citizen, and as a resident of both Mexico City and Chicago. However, teaching a class forced me to do this in a more systematic manner.

Q: What makes this course valuable to an undergraduate education? How do students benefit from it?
A: My course deals with a very important and relatively unexplored part of Latin America’s recent history: the transformation of rural into urban societies. I also expect this course to help students think about the poverty and segregation that American cities suffer as well. Hopefully, they can think about these problems with a broader perspective.

Q: How does the course relate to your own research? How has it helped you to think/rethink about the topics you discuss and research?
A: I am writing a dissertation on mid-century Mexico City, looking at government actions—such as urban planning and the creation of clientelistic political networks—that sought to deal with dramatic, unexpected urban growth. Part of my research studies poor neighborhoods (colonias proletarias) that were integrated into the city’s infrastructure network (drainage, electricity, roads, etc.) in a slow and incomplete way. These neighborhoods were often seen by contemporary middle-class observers as terrible and depressing places. Those who lived in them, however, thought of them differently, as stepping-stones towards better lives. This is not, I think, a simple full-glass/empty-glass problem but one of historical perspective: it is vastly different to view these neighborhoods as a contemporary problem versus a historical one.

This course has helped me to open my lens, both spatially (to all of Latin America) and temporally (to include all of the twentieth century). I hope it helps me to insert my research into a much larger history of urban growth and reform. And it has forced me to think about themes that interest me, such as political clientelism in cities, in a more conceptual fashion.

Q: What is the most rewarding aspect of teaching this course? What will you take away from the experience?
A: This is the first time I have put together a syllabus and taught a lectureship alone, so the experience has been humbling, exciting, and very rewarding. Planning a course related to human rights forced me to look at cities—my site of study—through a new light: thinking about the changing meanings and content of justice, equality, or freedom through time. Finally, after spending a year doing research on my dissertation, the classroom experience has been very welcome; I am most grateful for the students’ engagement and enthusiasm.
Each year CLAS offers competitive grants such as the Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowship and the CLAS Tinker Field Research Grant (CLAS TFRG), which encourage students in their early years of graduate school to explore language, archives, and terrains. As a result of these preparatory grants, CLAS-affiliated students gain early practice in proposal writing and have a high success rate in national grant competitions administered by Fulbright-Hays, Wenner-Gren, and the National Security Education Program Boren Fellowship. From 2010 to 2014, seven individuals who received both a CLAS TFRG and a FLAS fellowship received awards through Fulbright and Wenner-Gren.

One such student is Dunlap, who received a 2014 Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad award to spend 11 months in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Brasília, and Buenos Aires. He will have the opportunity to share some of his research with UChicago undergraduates during the 2015–16 academic year when he teaches his CLAS-sponsored Ignacio Martín-Baró course, “Science(s) and Solutions to Latin American Challenges, 1500–2000.”

My dissertation research focuses on the nuclear energy programs of Brazil and Argentina, and specifically the role of scientific communities in constructing the infrastructure that sustained these programs. I am also interested in the extent to which a productive domestic policy on energy took shape around these communities and the role that nuclear energy played in international diplomacy in the Southern Cone in the late 1970s through the early 1990s. The final chapter of my dissertation will deal with how the role of nuclear energy and the scientific community has changed under democratic rule (mid-1980s to present) and after the signature of a landmark bilateral nuclear verification agreement in 1991.

An astonishing amount of time went to making connections on the ground in both Brazil and Argentina before any archives or institutions could open to me for research. Without the international reputation of Fulbright, I think it is safe to say that some people I talked to would have been more skeptical of my project and of me as a foreign researcher, and without the financial support, the amount of travel and logistics required to make this project happen would have been simply impossible for me to fund on my own, forcing me to do several shorter trips...in order to gather enough data to write a dissertation that had something new to say.

I was pleasantly surprised by the openness of people, archives, and libraries to a foreigner seeking access to information about nuclear energy programs—to an American, this generosity was nothing short of astounding. Being a long-term dissertation researcher truly becomes a key part of your identity, and I loved feeling fluent in both the language and culture and negotiating my way around. The iterative process of explaining my dissertation over 11 months was also a reward I did not anticipate—and unconsciously, I began speaking in terms of possibilities for the dissertation based on the documents I had collected, and not simply parroting a 30-second version of my proposal to anyone who would listen. My facility in explaining the project and how it had changed while abroad was, in summary, an unexpected reward of my Fulbright travels, simply because I had to do it so often and to so many different audiences.
During the 2015 CLAS Tinker Field Research Grant competition, 16 students received awards to support summer research in nine Latin American countries. Though the CLAS Tinker Field Research Grant is open to students across the University’s divisions, award recipients are often housed within the Social Sciences or Humanities Division. This year’s recipients, however, include two Biological Sciences students from the Committee on Evolutionary Biology: Natalia Piland will travel to Peru and Brazil to conduct research for her project “Does Urbanization Increase Biodiversity?,” and Laura Southcott will travel to Costa Rica for her project “Mate Choice and the Origin of Neotropical Butterfly Species.” CLAS asked both recipients about their decisions to apply for the grant and their research plans and expectations.

**Natalia Piland:** The TFRG fellowship was a great opportunity for this preliminary work. As an opportunity to travel to my region of academic interest, it allows me freedom to conduct preliminary research that may not yield hypothesis-based results, and to establish the necessary contacts for the rest of my dissertation work. This type of academic freedom is almost unheard of in the biological sciences community.

My research is motivated by an interest in how urbanization is affecting nature, and how urban populations relate to this nature. Iquitos, Peru, and Manaus, Brazil, are the largest Amazonian cities in their respective countries and are interesting because they are large urban areas completely surrounded by forest, allowing for interesting comparisons to be made between the city and its surrounding area. I have a strong commitment to collaborative and applicable science, so I hope my research will be influenced by the priorities of the citizens of each city in which I will be conducting research. Additionally, in order to set up useful, relevant, and feasible questions about the processes of evolution in a place, there needs to be empirical evidence shaping the considerations going into the research. I hope that this summer I will be able to set up a baseline on which to base my dissertation research.

**Laura Southcott:** I will be collecting butterflies in several parts of Costa Rica, and then I’ll be studying these butterflies in captivity at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute’s insectaries in Panama, which I visited in May to prepare for my fieldwork. Costa Rica contains the only known point of contact between two of the species I am studying, and I’m interested in examining what happens when these two close relatives interact. The facility I’ll be using in Panama is ideal for this research because it allows me to conduct experiments in naturalistic settings.

I suspect that watching my focal species in the wild will give me many new ideas about their behavior and evolution. I hope this trip will also help me improve my Spanish and develop my skills in behavioral research.
2014–2015 GRADUATES

BA MAJOR IN LATIN AMERICAN & CARIBBEAN STUDIES

Brittany Ramos-Janeway
Latin American and Caribbean Studies, with honors
“The Traditionally Excluded Majority: Women in the National Teachers Union of Mexico and the Democratic Transition”

Yevanit Reschecktko
Latin American and Caribbean Studies, Comparative Literature, with honors
“Disruptive Gaps: Multilingualism and Double Narrative as a Means of Problematizing the Power of Language”

BA MINOR IN LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES & CARIBBEAN STUDIES

Haley Johnson
Public Policy Studies, with honors

Lauren Li
Economics

Ryan O’Donnell
Biological Sciences

PhD

Andrew Cashner
Music
“Faith, Hearing, and the Power of Music in Hispanic Villancicos, 1600–1700”

Laure Doering
Sociology, Business
“The Social Determinants of Economic Growth: Microenterprise and Microfinance in Latin America”

Falina Enriquez
Anthropology
“Composing Cultura: Musical Democracy and Multiculturalism in Recife, Brazil”

Daniel Gough
Music
“Listening in the Megacity: Music in São Paulo’s Cultural Policy Worlds”

Jaira Harrington
Political Science
“Re-Conceptualizing Rights and Labor Union Politics at the Intersection of Race, Class, and Gender through Domestic Work in Brazil”

Amanda Hartzmark
History

Patrick Kelly
History
“Sovereignty and Salvation: Transnational Human Rights Activism in the Americas in the Long 1970s”

MA IN LATIN AMERICAN & CARIBBEAN STUDIES

Ben Jalowsky
“Loyalty and Legacy: The Modern Significance of the Chaco War in Paraguay”

Clayton Oppenhuizen
“Quino & Mafalda: Cultural Production, Social Criticism, and Politics in Argentina’s Middle Class”

Alexander Slater Johnson
“Call Me Euclides: Art, Science, and Politics in Euclides da Cunha’s Os sertões and Herman Melville’s Moby-Dick”

Mary Leighton
Anthropology
“Uneven Fields: Transnational Expertise and the Practice of Andean Archaeology”

Jason Ramsey
Anthropology
“Spaces of Possession: Negotiating ‘Ruin’ at the Mexican Periphery”

Claudia Sandoval
Political Science

Thomas Stewart
Organismal Biology & Anatomy
“Novelty and Homoplasy in Organismal Evolution: An Analysis of Adipose Fin Diversity”

Jaclyn Sumner
History
“National Autocracy, Regional Governance: Tlaxcala, Mexico, 1885–1909”

Jolyon Ticer-Wurr
Sociology
“Routines, Race, and Social Control: Coordinating Action and Constructing Identity as Neighborhood Majority Transitions from White-Ethnic to Mexican-American”

Manuel Videma
Political Science
“The Social Origins of Authoritarian Institutions: Bosses and Elites in Postrevoluntary Mexico and Bolivia”
Reflections on the BA Colloquium

The BA thesis is a required component of the undergraduate major program in Latin American and Caribbean Studies. Each year, fourth-year majors work with the BA preceptor, an advanced graduate student, to develop, research, and write an original thesis paper. In the Autumn Quarter, students take the BA Colloquium—a research methods course that helps students think through their topic ideas and create a writing and research plan.

Seventh-year History PhD candidate Diana Schwartz led the 2014–15 BA cohort through the colloquium and thesis process. Schwartz and fourth-year student Brittany Ramos-Janeway provided CLAS with insights into the thesis writing process from the unique perspectives of the thesis guide and the thesis writer.

On the BA Colloquium and BA thesis challenges

**Schwartz:** Students are smart and engaged, but I find that in general we face two challenges when they commence the project. Students rarely have experience developing a research project and seeing it to fruition. Writing such a long, original piece of scholarship is exciting but can often be daunting. I find that one of the biggest challenges is knowing (and learning) how to pace the researching and writing processes. The other major challenge has to do with framing and deciding on the scope of the project. As an interdisciplinary major, Latin American and Caribbean Studies allows students to draw on a variety of disciplinary strengths to tackle tough questions, but often students struggle to find the methods and theoretical frameworks that best suit the questions students want to answer in the thesis.

**Ramos-Janeway:** I didn’t know what to expect at the start of my fourth year. To a certain extent I was intimidated by the prospect of writing (what in my mind was) a very long research paper. I would have been more nervous had I realized how difficult it would be to construct an original research question. My biggest obstacle was staying true to my topic/research interests while trying to come up with a research question with the information available to me. Many of the questions I wanted to ask would have required access to archives or interviews. Staying within the information I had access to and still coming up with an original idea was extremely difficult at first. The access I had to information online or through the library definitely shaped the overall direction of my thesis; however, I feel like I answered a question that was, ultimately, derived from my original research interests.

On favorite aspects of the BA Colloquium, thesis process, and lessons learned while working together

**Schwartz:** Hands down, my favorite part of the colloquium is working with the students through the writing process. I find I learn as much about my own strengths and weaknesses in the research and writing process as I do theirs. Brittany has taught me that consistent dialogue and encouragement are essential ingredients for an excellent thesis. As I worked with her this year, I also improved my skills in mentoring students through the learning and writing processes. This year I’ve gained a new appreciation for the ways a research question informs the methods we use, and in turn how our methods and analysis often reconfigure the questions we ask in our research. Lastly and certainly not least, I learned an immense amount about her research topic—Mexico’s main teachers’ union and women’s roles within it.

**Ramos-Janeway:** The one-on-one sessions with Diana permitted me to adjust the frequency and type of meeting to allow for what I needed depending on where I was in the writing process. I also really liked the free-writing exercises that we did during the colloquium on occasion. It helped me get out of my formulaic short-essay style of writing and focus more on molding my information with my ideas and speculating, even if it was just a hunch and I didn't actually have the information to support it. Diana really knew what questions to ask in order to help me gain direction and understand what, for me, would be the logical next step in my research and writing. With many of the questions she asked me, she helped me to realize the crux of what I wanted to know instead of the vague questions that floated around in my head. In the way that she was able to guide me through this process, Diana taught me how to think more like a scholar. Some of the questions she asked me I eventually learned to ask myself.

Ramos-Janeway completed her thesis, “The Traditionally Excluded Majority: Women in the National Teachers Union of Mexico and the Democratic Transition,” and graduated from the University in June. In the coming months she plans to travel to Oaxaca, Mexico, to spend time volunteering. She is contemplating future applications to graduate school. Schwartz has received a Quinn Dissertation Write-Up Fellowship for the 2015–16 academic year to work on her dissertation project, “Transforming the Tropics: Development, Displacement, and Anthropology in the Papaloapan, Mexico, 1940s–1970s.”
Ciclo de Charlas en Español

This spring the Center for Latin American Studies and the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México–Chicago launched “Ciclo de Charlas en Español.” This new outreach program consists of monthly talks led by faculty and affiliated members with the purpose of connecting with residents of Chicago’s Latino neighborhoods and teaching Latin American topics in Spanish.

The first session was led by Mauricio Tenorio (History) in the Rudy Lozano Public Library, located in the landmark neighborhood of Pilsen. In his presentation, “Historia de las ciudades,” Tenorio spoke about the way cities shape past and present societies and how they constitute a “living textbook” through which we can better understand collective identities, political systems, literary traditions, and aesthetic tendencies. By examining the urban plans, public monuments, and civic celebrations in Mexico City circa 1880 and 1930, attendees learned how this megalopolis became a testament of nationalist consciousness and a metaphor of economic, scientific, and social progress.

Rosario Granados (CLAS Postdoctoral Lecturer) led the second session at Morton East High School in Cicero. Her talk, “Entre ríos y volcanes. Un viaje pictórico a través de la geografía mexicana,” examined the depiction of landscape in Mexican visual art. The brief survey linked geography with history and identity embedded in visual works from the colonial period (religious paintings by Baltasar Echave Ibia and Miguel Cabrera, but also indigenous maps), as well as from the nineteenth (José María Velasco) and twentieth centuries (Joaquín Clausell, Diego Rivera, Dr. Atl, and Francisco Goitia, among others). The interactive discussion provided an opportunity for high school students to reflect on the possibility of continuing their studies at the college level and enhanced Cicero’s Mexican network by bringing together community leaders and librarians of the area.

Finally, Dain Borges (History) delivered the third talk of the Spring Quarter at La Casa Student Housing Resource Center in Pilsen. His talk, “De una religión para las muchas,” presented a brief sociocultural history of religions in Latin America and the Caribbean. The talk explored not only why Hispanic colonialism was able to establish Catholicism in the Americas, but also how indigenous and African belief systems were able to articulate with and in some cases resist the work of missionaries and church leaders. The erosion of the link between state power and the church during the nineteenth century created the conditions for other religious organizations to gain influence in the region. And, as Borges asserted, this explains the diverse religious landscape we witness in the region today.

“Ciclo de Charlas en Español” has broadened the presence of CLAS in Chicago, a city with a diverse Latino population and a vibrant Latino cultural scene. This outreach program has also restated our goal of providing opportunities for Latin Americanist faculty and students to engage with the community off campus, and vice versa.
Alumni Profile: Ben Jalowsky
MA in Latin American & Caribbean Studies, 2015

Ben Jalowsky, an alumnus of the Latin American Studies master’s degree program and a CLAS Tinker Field Research Grant recipient, recently returned from a year of study and research abroad supported by the National Security Education Program (NSEP) Boren Fellowship. NSEP Boren Fellowships provide graduate students from a variety of disciplines with financial support to study through immersion the less commonly taught languages of the world. These fellowships focus on geographic areas, languages, and fields of study deemed critical to US national security—the scope of which spans from traditional concerns of protecting and promoting American well-being to understanding the environmental challenges of existing within a global society. When receiving an NSEP Boren Fellowship, awardees commit to working in the federal government for at least one year after graduation.

After conducting research in Paraguay and writing his thesis on the Chaco War, Jalowsky used the Boren Fellowship to focus on Brazil. He spent 2014 traveling between Rio de Janeiro and Salvador da Bahia, learning Portuguese and conducting research on drug policy and public security in Brazil. “I’ve always been academically interested in Brazil,” he said, “but due to other research interests I’d never had time to explore the country or subject of my research as much as I’d hoped. The Boren Fellowship was a great opportunity to really flesh out some of my initial interests and take them in concrete directions. It’s a very flexible fellowship that lets you really tailor your research to your desire, and not necessarily as rigid or narrow in scope and structure as other academic endeavors.”

In addition to taking him to Brazil, the Boren Fellowship allowed Jalowsky to shift his academic interests to contemporary issues. “It really charged my interest in letting me talk to the people who create, administer, and are recipients of the public policies in which I was interested. It’s one thing looking at the statistics and having a political understanding of the situation, but getting a personal view and seeing the visceral ways in which people’s lives are affected lets you appreciate the field in a very distinct way.”

Having completed his fellowship, Jalowsky is working as a program analyst at the State Department in Washington. “I’ve wanted to work for the State Department since I interned there a few years ago, but the Boren Fellowship definitely gave me a lot of experience that I draw from in my current job. I would guess that my research in Brazil made me a more attractive candidate for my current position, and will likely help guide the decisions I make going forward in my career.”
Calling All Alumni: Stay Connected to CLAS

If you are a CLAS alum—with an LACS BA major/minor or MA, or a UChicago PhD with Latin America-related interests—we want to stay in touch with you!

(1) Tell us what you’re doing. We are interested in creating new alumni profiles on our website and in our publications. We also plan to integrate alumni updates into the 2015–16 issue of *Latin America Chicago*.

(2) Like us on Facebook. We regularly share updates and photos of our events, and post about student and faculty research and publications, on Facebook. You can also follow us on Twitter and LinkedIn.

(3) Volunteer to talk to current students about your career. Does your professional life focus on or relate to Latin America? Did your study of Latin America lead you down an unexpected career path? Please consider becoming an alumni mentor. We want to put current students in touch with alumni and to feature our alumni in a series of career videos that promote the value of a degree in Latin American Studies.

Please visit clas.uchicago.edu, scroll to the Quick Links menu on the left side of the page, and click Submit an Alumni Update to submit an update, volunteer for career advising, and/or sign up for the CLAS alumni mailing list.

**Katz Center for Mexican Studies**

The Katz Center for Mexican Studies promotes original research and informed international and interdisciplinary discussion on Mexican culture, history, arts, and politics. Its work seeks to engage and bring together the academic community of the University, the Mexican-origin populations in the city of Chicago, and our fellow scholars in Mexico and beyond. Founded in 2004, it is named in honor of the late Friedrich Katz, an eminent historian of Mexico and longtime professor at the University of Chicago.

On October 30, 2015, the Katz Center will host the inaugural meeting of the Cátedra Internacional Friedrich Katz and the conference “El siglo del ejido: una revisión.”

Six universities in the United States, Mexico, and Europe came together to create the Cátedra, an annual, rotating academic colloquium devoted to the research themes that animated the scholarly work of Friedrich Katz, including agrarian reform, indigeneity, diplomatic history, and international relations. The Cátedra will meet annually for a short colloquium to explore a topic that the hosting institution will determine. Participating institutions include CIESAS, Columbia University Center for Mexican Studies, Free University of Berlin, Instituto de Estudios Latinoamericanos, and the University of Vienna.

Given the centenary of the law of 6 of January, ley del 6 de enero, which ushered in Mexico’s agrarian reform best known as the ejido, the Katz Center is collaborating with former Tinker Visiting Professor Antonio Azuela on a project to reflect on the history, impact, and conceptions surrounding this type of land ownership. The first phase of the project consists of a conference that will take place at the Katz Center on October 23–24, 2015. During the conference, panel presentations and discussions will allow participants to begin crafting the elements required to “revise” the ejido.

To obtain more information about these conferences, or any other Katz Center events and opportunities, contact mexicanstudies@uchicago.edu or 773.834.1987.

**BA/MA: New Degree Program Option**

The Center for Latin American Studies is pleased to announce that it now offers a BA/MA degree program option. This program enables highly qualified students in the College to combine a BA program in an undergraduate major with an interdisciplinary MA program in Latin American and Caribbean Studies. This option will provide students with a thorough knowledge of cultures, history, politics, and languages of the region, as well as augment their undergraduate studies by placing knowledge of a particular field in an interdisciplinary context. Undergraduate students pursuing this option are expected to have completed 39 of their 42 required undergraduate courses by the end of their third year of study; MA program requirements are then completed during fourth year.

BA/MA students admitted to the program will participate with MA students in all aspects of the LACS program and will pursue a specific course of study depending on their research and professional interests. The program is open to students with interests across the humanities and social sciences.
LOOKING AHEAD

As the 2015–16 academic year approaches, CLAS is working closely with faculty and students to prepare events, courses, and workshops that will continue our long-standing tradition of encouraging scholarly inquiry and lively debate. Here are highlights for the upcoming year! Please visit our website for more info.

CLAS Postdoctoral Lecturer

Pablo Palomino joined CLAS in September 2015 as our new Postdoctoral Lecturer, teaching the MA Proseminar as well as three courses of his own design. His teaching interests include a conceptual and social history of twentieth-century globalization from a world-history perspective; the history of progress in Latin America; music and society in Latin America; and history, memory, human rights, and state terrorism in Latin America.

New Faculty

Maria Angelica Bautista Duarte (Harris School of Public Policy) works on the policial and social consequences of repression and comparative politics. Larissa Brewer-García (Romance Languages and Literatures) specializes in colonial Latin American studies, with a focus on cultural productions of the Caribbean and Andes and the African diaspora in the Iberian empire. P. Sean Brotherton (Anthropology) teaches and conducts research on health and the body in post-soviet Cuba, science and technology, governmentality, and theories of post-socialism. Angela S. García (School of Social Service Administration) explores the consequences of socio-legal inclusion and exclusion for marginalized immigrant groups in the United States and Spain. Ellis Monk (Sociology) focuses on the comparative examination of social inequality, particularly with respect to race and ethnicity, in global perspective. James Robinson (Harris School of Public Policy) is a renowned political scientist and economist and an expert on Africa and Latin America; his best-known work looks at the conditions and institutions that shape national and global economic outcomes. Victoria Saramago (Romance Languages and Literatures) covers twentieth- and twenty-first-century Brazilian literature within a Latin American framework. Salomé Aguilera Skvirsky (Cinema and Media Studies) studies Latin American cinema, documentary film, film theory, ethnographic film, race and representation, and melodrama.

Cutting-Edge Courses

Slavery and Freedom in South America Keila Grinberg (Tinker Visiting Professor, History) This seminar, to be taught in Fall Quarter 2015, will examine the historiography of African slavery in South America. It will compare the responses of Africans and their descendants with the experiences of enslavement and freedom from the sixteenth century to the nineteenth century.

Human Rights in Mexico Susan Gzesh (Senior Lecturer and Executive Director, Pozen Family Center for Human Rights) Gzesh is revising this course, to be taught in Winter Quarter 2016. Given the deterioration of the human rights situation in Mexico in the past decade, the increased involvement of non-state actors, and the increased activities of (and danger to) civil society organizations and journalists dedicated to human rights, the new course will be substantially different than it was in 2006 when it was last taught. The course will still, however, begin with a historical survey of the religious, secular, and political philosophies and social movements that have shaped contemporary human rights discourse and practices in Mexico.

Public Events

UChicago Presents Performance and Residency: Memories of Rio. Sérgio, Odair, and Clarice Assad. April 2016. Guitarists Sérgio and Odair Assad, Brazilian-born brothers and Latin Grammy Award winners, will be joined by Sérgio’s daughter, Clarice, a composer, pianist, and vocalist.

SUPPORT THE CENTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

There are many ways to get involved with CLAS. A financial gift makes a notable difference with tangible and immediate benefits to our programs. Gifts support public engagement programs, student fellowships and professionalization, and innovative research.

While we welcome financial support, we also seek to engage alumni and friends through inclusion in our events and career advising. Whether you support the Center by contributing your time and talents, or by making a financial gift, you are helping to advance our mission.

If you would like to discuss your giving and volunteer interests, please contact Associate Director Natalie Arsenault at ncarsenault@uchicago.edu or 773.702.9741.

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