LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

As the new Chair of Latin American Studies, I would like to thank my predecessor, Silvia Arrom, Chair for the last fourteen years. She has been instrumental in developing LAS as a thriving program. Thanks also to our donors for their increasing generosity. Their support, together with Silvia’s hard work, has given faculty and students an intellectual home in LAS.

This newsletter is testimony to our expanded role in 2004-05. Read about the lectures, concerts, and films we sponsored that attracted diverse audiences. A record number of forty seven students went to Latin America for research, field trips, or study abroad programs, while our faculty continues to produce outstanding research in the field.

The highlight of the coming year is the presence of Madeleine Haas Russell Visiting Professor Marjorie Agosín. She is a renowned and prolific writer, human rights activist, and a specialist on Latin American literature. She will be teaching and giving lectures open to the Brandeis community. It is an honor to welcome her.

We also welcome assistant professors Nadia Kim (Sociology) and Patricia Tovar (Economics) to the LAS faculty. In addition, we are pleased to announce our search for the Florence Levy Kay Postdoctoral Fellow in Latino Studies for 2006-08. We have an exciting agenda ahead, so look us up on the web and join us at our many events this year.

Angela Pérez-Mejía

PANEL DISCUSSES FAIR WAGES, BENEFITS FOR CUSTODIAL EMPLOYEES

Members of the LAS Program joined in a broad coalition of faculty and students to improve the wages and benefits earned by custodians — most of them Latin American immigrants — who are sub-contracted to work at night cleaning the University. The campaign highlight was a panel entitled “El Salvador to Brandeis: The Search for Wages, Work, and Justice,” organized by the Brandeis Labor Coalition during the Local Action/Global Impact Week sponsored by the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life. Silvia Arrom (History), Kelley Ready (SJD), and workers Francisca Escobar, José Jiménez, and Lorena Segovia spoke to a packed audience, with translation by Javier Urecel (Anthropology) and Claudia Martínez ’07.

A new contract signed this summer with the S.E.I.U., which represents facilities workers, raises the compensation paid contract custodians to the same level as workers employed by the University. It also re-establishes the in-house night shift so that custodians can work directly for Brandeis and receive enhanced benefits. This successful cooperative effort reflects the University’s commitment, rooted in its foundational pillar of social justice, to offer competitive and equitable wages to the men and women who work here.

(Photograph courtesy of the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life)
LAS EVENTS AT BRANDEIS, 2004-05

SUSAN ECKSTEIN (Boston University), ELIZABETH FERRY (Anthropology), and EVA HORNE (Politics): "Globalization and Latin America" panel, October 13.

JOCELYN KNOWLES '06 and BEKKA SAEKS '06 (2004 Jane's Travel Grant recipients): "Drawing in the Darkness: Shedding Light on Pre-Hispanic Aesthetics in Oaxaca." October 16.

"THE HIDDEN WONDERS OF SANTERIA" panel: October 21


AHORA!: "Making History: Afro, Mula, y Siempres," October 30.


SILVIA AREM (History), KELLEY READY (SID), FRANCISCA ESCOBAR, JOSÉ JIMÉNEZ, and LORENA SÉGOVIA (Brandeis casts): "El Salvador to Bandejas: The Search for Work, Wages, and Justice" panel, February 10.

RAY HAMMOND (Africa Methodist Episcopal Church, Boston), AMERICAN JEWISH WORLD SERVICE representative, and BRANDEIS HILLEL students who participated in the 2004 Alternative Spring Break Program in Latin America: "Faith in Action: From Brandeis to Nicaragua. From Boston to Sudan" panel, February 11.


SILVIA AROM (History), MARK KUSLANDER (Anthropology), CINDY ÖHREN (Ethics Center), JUAN MORILLO (manager of Peru Negro), and HEIDI FELDMAN (author): "Globalization, Cultural Identity, and the Music of Black Peru" panel, March 8.


MARIA AGUILAR (Grasån Green International): "Up From the Roots: How Popular Social Movements in Brazil, Haiti, and Mexico are Turning the Tide in Water Rights," March 11.


BRANDEIS HILLEL: "Where in the World is Conny?" panel, April 6. Photo exhibit, April 6-11.


GIUSEPPE ANDRÉU (Mauricio Gaston Institute): "Latinos ignore Organizations in Massachusetts," April 15.


KEVIN GALLAGHER (Boston University): "The Silicon Valley of Mexico? Hi-tech Investment and Economic Development in Guadalajara, Mexico," April 12.

FITT: 
"BEFORE NIGHT FALLS"; October 25.
"QUILOMBLO"; November 3.
"TODOS SANTOS CUCHUMATAN"; November 24.
"CUBA: IN THE SHADOW OF DOUBT"; March 10.
"CAMPAMENTO"; March 24.
"TODOS SANTOS: THE SURVIVORS"; April 7.
"THE TRANSNATIONAL FIESTA"; April 15.

BOSTON AREA CONSORTIUM ON LATIN AMERICA

The Boston Area Consortium on Latin America was headquartered at Brandeis for its twelfth consecutive year. Consisting of nine colleges and universities in metropolitan Boston, BACLA serves as a means for faculty and students with interests in this area to communicate with each other and to supplement their own resources with those available at other locations.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

AHORA! celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month in September for the eighth consecutive year. "Making History: Alecrín, Malinal, y Sietepre (Now, Tomorrow, and Always)" was this year’s theme. Events included traditional and contemporary dances, a procession with students carrying the flags of their home countries, two spoken pieces, and several comedy skits. According to co-organizer Jaymee Salcedo, the goal was to show the diversity of cultures that make up Latin America and the Latino immigration in the United States. The underscored AHORA!’s need to emphasize Latino awareness and social issues on campus relating to the Hispanic community, which is now the largest minority in this country.

THE CARIBBEAN CONNEXION

The Caribbean Connexion is an organization dedicated to exploring the social, political, and cultural customs of countries in the Caribbean. This year’s Caribbean Week was held in April and featured Professor Gerdes Pleuran (Music, Wellesley College) discussing African music traditions of the Americas followed by a performance by the Yamalou Drum and Dance Ensemble. Caribbean Connexion also donated profits from their fall dance to charities in Grenada to help the island recover from damage caused by Hurricane Ivan in 2004.

SENIOR WINS JANE’S ESSAY PRIZE

Jonathan Landsman ’05 received the 2005 Jane’s Essay Prize for his senior thesis, "Rebels into Democrats: The Transformation of Nicaraguan Guerrilla Leaders into Democratic Political Actors." The award is given for the best undergraduate research paper in any area of Latin American, Caribbean, or Latino Studies.

JANE’S FACULTY AWARDS

Six LAS faculty members received 2005 Jane’s Faculty Development Awards. They are: Charles Golden (Anthropology) for archaeological research in Guatemala; Angela Jerez-Mejia (ROCL) to attend a conference in Brazil; Laura Reyes (ROCL) for research on indigenous people in Argentina; Faith Smith (AAS/English) to attend meetings in Colombia; Eva Thomas (Politics) to study Maroon communities in Jamaica; and Javier Uceda (Anthropology) to analyze ceramic materials near the Nayarita cave in Mexico.

JANE’S TRAVEL GRANTS

Two Jane’s Travel Grants were given during the 2004-05 academic year, the largest number given to date. The recipients who received the awards to fund research in Latin America and the Caribbean during winter break are: Mariana Caras (SIS) for "Measuring the Impact of Solar Ovens on Household Welfare in Argentina"; Eric Michael Kelley (Anthropology) for "Nahuatl Music and Language Among the Aviakhans of Eastern Paraguay"; Adam Mendelssohn (NEIS) for "To the Extreme Side of the Habitable Globe: Investigating the Role of Caribbean Jewry in the Emergence of the English-Language Diaspora"; and Yanina Selset Bekerman ’06 for "The Politics of National Identity and Race in Costa Rica: Challenges Presented by Early 20th-Century Caribbean and Current Nicaraguan, Colombian, and Argentine Immigration"; and Troy Tropp ’06 for "Investigating Children’s Health Issues in the Nicaraguan Refugee Communities of La
Carpio and Puente Los Anexos, Costa Rica." Brandeis Hillel received a group grant for its project "Alternative Spring Break in Honduras: Where in the World is Corra- litos?"

The recipients for summer research are Jefferson Arak '07; "Voice Through Film: A Visual Study of the Chiapas Media Project and Its Influence in Rural Chiapas and Guerrero"; Juliana Barrera '06; "Landscape Mod- ulation and Site Dynamics at Medicinal Trail, Orange Walk District, Belize"; Betina Fredlin (Sociology): "Hy- bridizing Eastern Medical Knowledge in Latin America: The Case of Acupuncture in Argentina"; and Robert Mars '06; "Gendereed Liminality in Buenos Aires: Trans- vestites' Internalization of Gender Roles."

2005 Jane's Travel Grant recipients Troy Trejo, Marianna Carazo, Jefferson Arak, and Juliana Barrera (photo by Michael Lovett)

MARIJORIE AGOSIN IS VISITING PROFESSOR

Marjorie Agosín, Professor of Spanish at Wellesley College, is the Madeleine Haas Russell Visiting Professor for 2003-04. A noted author and human rights activist, Professor Agosín has published works of poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and memoirs about growing up in Chile. She received the Latino Literary Prize for Poetry, the Letras de Oro Prize for Literature, the 1998 United Nations Leadership Award in Human Rights, and the Gabriela Mistral Medal of Honor for Lifetime Achievement, among other tributes. She will teach Spanish 192a, "Jewish Women Writers in Latin America," in the fall and LAS 100a, "Chile: A History of Memory and Silence," in the spring. Professor Agosín will speak at the Brandeis conference "Telling the Story: Power and Responsibility in Documenting Human Rights Violations," co-sponsored by the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life, on September 15.

STUDY ABROAD
A record twenty-four Brandeisians studied in Latin America during the 2004-05 academic year. Theyatten- ded universities in Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuad- or, Jamaica, Mexico, and Nicaragua.

VISITING FACULTY
Five visiting professors taught LAS courses in 2004- 05. They are Jorge Capetillo-Prone (Sociology): "The Negotiation of Latinos' Identity and the Formation of Latino Communities in the U.S."; Fabiola López Durán (FAV); "20th Century and Contemporary Latin American Art"; Susana Nudelman (Economics): "Latin America's Economy"; Lucia Reyes (ROCL); "Latin American Boom and Beyond" and "Latinos in the U.S. from History, Literature and Film," and Avinash Singh (AAAS): "Literature of the Caribbean." Professor Reyes returns to our faculty this year and is joined by Lissete Balabarec, who will be teaching Latin American literature.

UNDERGRADUATE DEPARTMENTAL REPRESENTATIVES
Jefferson Arak '07, Lauren Goldstein '06, and Jocelyn Knowles '06 will be the Undergraduate Departmental Representatives for the LAS Program for this academic year. The students' goals are getty, involved with event planning, visiting classes to inform students about the Program, and asking students who are majors or minors in LAS what additional courses they would like to have offered. The Program was represented in 2004-05 by Jocelyn Knowles and Sarah Light '05.

ESSAYS, THESISSES, DISSERTATIONS

Las quechua did not exist before the invading Spaniards arrived, but...
ALUMNI NOTES

Sabrina Assayag ’03 attends the Cardozo School of Law in New York. She coordinates free legal assistance to the elderly and poor for the School’s Battered Women and Legal Services Programs.

Jocelyn Anserbach ’98 is a Staff Attorney at the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society and the Council Migration Service of Philadelphia, where she assists low-income clients in Immigration Court and before Citizenship and Immigration Services, a division of Homeland Security.

Maura Collins ’02 completed her M.A. in Latin American Studies at the University of Chicago. She is a Project Assistant in the Public Education and Advocacy Division of the Catholic Legal Immigration Network.

Clara Estow (M.A. ’74, Ph.D. ’75) is Professor and Chair of the Hispanic Studies Department at the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

Nancy Foner ’66 is Distinguished Professor of Sociology at Hunter College and the Graduate Center, City University of New York. She co-edited the book Black and White: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Immigration, Race and Ethnicity in the United States (2004) and New Immigrants in New York (revised, 2001).

Susanna Glusker ’62 helped organize an exhibit in July in Mexico City honoring her mother, journalist and author Anita Brenner, on the centennial of Ms. Brenner’s birth and wrote a piece for the exhibit’s catalog. She was a consultant for the PBS documentary “The Life and Times of Frida Kahlo” and is currently a consultant on a documentary on Jose Clemente Orozco. She teaches Women’s Studies and Mexican Art at the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City.

Donna Gay ’67 chaired panels on “Networks, Entrepreneurs, and Development in Mexico and Argentina” and “Women, Family, and Society in Cuba and Argentina” at the LASA meeting in Las Vegas in October. She is a Distinguished Professor of History at Ohio State University.

Frances Hagopian ’75 was the discussant on the panel “Rethinking Democratic Legitimacy in Latin America” and chaired the panel on “Contemporary Challenges to Catholicism in Latin America” at LASA. She is a Professor of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame.

Daniel Handel ’02 works at the Family Health Centers of San Diego, a non-profit organization that specializes in assisting the area’s low-income Latino population.

Elsa Hinojosa ’68 directs the Department of Test Development at the Tecnológico de Monterrey, Mexico which developed an admissions test used in Latin American countries. She wrote Evaluación del Aprendizaje (2001).

Neil Hodo ’96 works in a Salt Lake City community health center providing primary care to an indigent, predominantly Spanish-speaking community.

Lauren Kander ’04 conducts clinical research at the Boston Puerto Rican Center on Population Health and Health Disparities, interviewing people with limited English proficiency as a key contributing factor for health problems in the elderly Boston Puerto Rican community.

Peter Kornbluth ’79 chaired the panel “Truth, Justice, and Accountability: Declassified Documents as Legal and Historical Evidence in Latin America” and organized the lecture “The Pursuit of Justice for Human Rights Crimes in Chile, A Special Presentation by Judge Juan Guzman Tapia” at LASA. He is the Director of the Chile and Cuba Documentation Projects at the National Security Archive.

Deborah Meyers ’93 is a Policy Analyst at the Migration Policy Institute in Washington, D.C. and directs its internship program. She wrote “Keeping the Promise: Immigration Proposals from the Heartland,” a report for the Immigration Task Force of the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, and co-authored “Immigration: Mapping the New North American Reality” for the MPI.

Sarah Reynolds ’01 works for the Southern-Poverty Law Center’s Immigrant Justice Project in Montgomery, AL, assisting workers from Latin America who do daily and farm labor in the south.

Yaser Robles ’03 is enrolled in a Master’s Program in Caribbean Cultural Studies at the State University of New York, Buffalo and the Universidad de La Habana, Cuba. He did graduate work in Brazil.

Jonathan Saxe-Fernandez ’64 directs The World in the XXI Century Research Program of the Center for Interdisciplinary Research in Science and Humanities and is a Professor on the Faculty of Social and Political Science at the National Autonomous University of Mexico. He wrote La Compra-Venta de Mexico (2002) and co-authored Globalización, Imperialismo, y Clase Social (2nd edition, 2004).

Lynn Stephen (Ph.D. ’87) was the discussant at the panel on “La Lucha Sigura: New Trends in Women’s Activism in Latin America” at LASA. She is a Distinguished Professor of Anthropology at the University of Oregon.

Barbara Tenenbaum ’68 was the organizer and chair of the panel on “Elite Patriotism 1850-1920, A Contradiction?” at LASA. She is a specialist in Mexican Culture in the Hispanic Division of the Library of Congress.

Eliana Winer ’03 is living in Lima, Peru, working for an import-export company.
LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES FACULTY

The following faculty members helped guide the LAS Program during the past year and served as advisors for students interested in their fields of expertise: Silvia Arrom (History), Roxanne Dávila (ROCL), Elizabeth Berry (Anthropology), Ricardo Guzay (SID), Charles Golden (Anthropology), Donald Hindley (Politics), James Mandrell (ROCL), Lucia Reyes (ROCL), Wellington Nyangeti (AAAS), Angela Perez-Judías (ROCL), Laurence Simon (SID), Faith Smith (AAAS/English), Ibrahim Suladba (AAAS/History), Eva Thorne (Politics), Javier Urcid (Anthropology), Destina Williams (Sociology).

2005 LAS GRADUATES

The LAS Program extends its congratulations to its graduating seniors.

The LAS majors are:

Lindsey Fararsworth — additional major in Sociology, minors in Peace, Conflict, and Coexistence Studies and Spanish Language and Literature; Phi Beta Kappa; Rachel Carson Award for Environmental Citizenship; magna cum laude;

Sarah Light — minors in Spanish Language and Literature and Peace, Conflict, and Coexistence Studies; cum laude;

Kanthi Patroddy — additional major in Politics, minors in Economics and African and Afro-American Studies; Richard Kauffman '59 Memorial Prize for Leadership and Academic Excellence; cum laude;

Yasira Selzer-Bekerman — additional majors in Politics and Economics; with honors in Politics and Latin American Studies; Wies Scheit; Student Life Award; cum laude.

The LAS minors are:

Victoria Broadsus — majors in Politics and International Studies; magna cum laude;

Danielle Davidson — major in Sociology, additional minor in Art History; cum laude;

Jonathan Landesman — major in Politics, additional minor in Economics; honors in Politics; Phi Beta Kappa; summa cum laude;

Carla Schust 'Meklar — major in Economics, additional minor in International Business; magna cum laude;

Rose Sobel — major in Biology, additional minor in Environmental Studies;

Joseph Udell — major in Politics, additional minor in Journalism;

Kathryn Zelenka — major in Economics.

ITEMS FOR THE 2006 NEWSLETTER

Do you have professional information, to share about your work related to Latin America or Latinos in the United States? Send your information to: Marilyn Brooks, LAS administrator and editor of the newsletter. Brandeis University, LAS/M 036, Waltham, MA 02454-9110; fax: 781-736-2733; e-mail: MBrooks@brandeis.edu; web: www.brandeis.edu/departments/las.

Faculty, students, and friends at the LAS luncheon May 2.

(Photoby Michael Loved)
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