LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Las Invenaciones/Señores, adquirid mi producto terciario/Sin mezcla de algodón ni de sustancias lícitas; Os concedo un botón para cambiar el mundo/Adquirid el trí-fásico antes de arrepentirme!

Pablo Neruda (2000)

As one reads news of the impact of Latin America in global economies, or the rippling effect of local politics south of the Rio Grande, or the immigration debate here in North America, it becomes increasingly evident that we need to raise awareness about the cultures, histories, and peoples in this part of the world. The dramatic growth of students in LALS, now at its highest level in forty-four years, is a hopeful sign. We look forward to an increase in the diversity of intellectual interests by our constituency.

The Program’s charter of promoting understanding of Latin American and Latino issues is made possible thanks to the generosity of our donors. Their vision helps foster new landscapes of tolerance and concerted efforts to face challenges in our changing world. It is invigorating to learn what some of our alumni are doing, veritable emissaries of our mission. I am grateful to Silvia Arrom for her mentoring and friendship during my first year as chair of the Program. Her wisdom and experience after having run LALS for fourteen years have eased my learning curve. Special thanks also to Marilyn Brooks for all her help. Faculty and students alike, we all look forward to a productive academic year.

Javier Urcid

 SENIOR WINS “PROJECT FOR PEACE” AWARD

LALS major Jefferson Arak ’07 has been awarded a $10,000 grant by the Kathryn Wasserman Davis Foundation to develop a media lab in Oaxaca, Mexico. It is one of one hundred Davis awards given nationally to college students.

In 2005 Jeff received a Jane’s Travel Grant to travel to Chiapas, Mexico and interned with The Chiapas Media Project that works with Zapatista communities teaching filmmaking. In 2006 he traveled to Oaxaca to work at the 8th International CLACPI Indigenous Film Festival. These trips culminated in his video “Voice Through Film: A Visual Study of the Chiapas Media Project and Its Influence in Chiapas and Guerrero;” the video may be viewed in the Photo Album section of our web site, www.brandeis.edu/departments/lals.

“In the last two years,” Jeff said, “I’ve been struggling intellectually with the implications of Westerners bringing this technology to indigenous communities. A lot of people see academics as separate from activism or advocacy, but I think they share a common interest most of the time. Social scientists are effectively positioned to help the people they study change things about their lives. This is the kind of academic I want to be.”

Jeff Arak on location in Mexico
LALS GRADUATES TWENTY ONE

The LALS Program extends congratulations to its graduating seniors, the largest class in its history.

The LALS majors are:

Jefferson Arak, additional major in Anthropology; highest honors in Latin American and Latino Studies; highest honors in Anthropology; Betty and Harry S. Shapiro Endowed Award in Anthropology; cum laude; Carlos Barletta Vallarino, additional majors in Politics and International and Global Studies; Pesaht Black, highest honors in Latin American and Latino Studies; Phi Beta Kappa; Presidential Scholar; summa cum laude; Naomi Caplan, additional major in African and Afro-American Studies; Presidential Scholar; magna cum laude; Diana Chiang, additional majors in Politics and International and Global Studies; minors in Business and Spanish Language and Literature; Sarah Farhadian, additional major in Politics; minors in Spanish Language and Literature and Legal Studies; magna cum laude; Amber Gonzales, additional major in Politics; Kendra Harrison, additional majors in International and Global Studies and Spanish Language and Literature; minor in Economics; highest honors in Latin American and Latino Studies; highest honors in Spanish Language and Literature; Phi Beta Kappa; Eli D. and Millie Goodstein Prize in Spanish; summa cum laude; Emmajoy Shulman-Kumin, additional major in Spanish Language and Literature; honors in Latin American and Latino Studies; cum laude; Rebecca Winkler, additional major in Psychology; minor in Spanish Language and Literature; Phi Beta Kappa; Presidential Scholar; magna cum laude.

The LALS minors are:

Lauren Abramowitz, major in Health: Science, Society, and Policy; additional minor in Anthropology; magna cum laude; Daniel Duffy, major in Anthropology; cum laude; Satarra Davis, major in Sociology; additional minors in Education Studies and Social Justice and Social Policy; The Dewey-Boye Prize for the Scholarship and Practice of Democracy; the Jacob and Bella Thurman Award for Social Citizenship; Noah Foster, major in Anthropology; additional minor in African and Afro-American Studies; honors in Anthropology; Samantha Levin, majors in International and Global Studies and African and Afro-American Studies; the Rose Schlow Award; Kevin Montgomery, major in Politics; additional minor in Economics; Rebecca Pelfrey, major in Anthropology; additional minor in Peace and Conflict Studies; the Karpir-Hahn Peace Prize Award; Jordan Pollard, major in Politics; Rachel Stamps, majors in Anthropology and International and Global Studies; additional minors in Spanish Language and Literature and Environmental Studies; cum laude; Anderson Thomas, majors in Sociology and African and Afro-American Studies; additional minor in Anthropology; Brady Wheatley, majors in Anthropology and International and Global Studies.

LALS EVENTS AT BRANDEIS, 2006-07


“THE RICHNESS OF MEXICO” (Women’s Studies Research Center exhibit): “The Life and Times of Frida Kahlo,” Elinor Gadon (WSRC), September 19; “Exhibit Reception with Maddu Huaucua” (artist), September 27; “Portraying Mexican Women through Art,” panel with Silvia Arrom (History), Roxanne Davila (ROCL), and Louise Lopman (WSRC); “Celebrate Mexico,” performance by Veronica Robles (musician), November 7.


JAMAICA KINCAID (author): A reading from her novel See Now Then, October 5.


MARJORIE AGOSÍN (Spanish, Wellesley College): Poetry reading, November 30.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN LATIN AMERICA: STOP NOW (panel discussion): December 1.


LUISA PIEMONTESE (Spanish, Southern Connecticut State University): “Palos de ida y vuelta: diálogos musicales entre España y Latinoamérica,” February 6.

THOSE WITH VOICE (An Exploration of Indigenous Communication in Mexico): Alexandra Halkin (founder of The Chiapas Media Project and filmmaker) and Juan José García (filmmaker), February 12-13.

NEENA PATHAK ’08 (2006 Jane’s Travel Grant recipient) and JOSHUA RUSSELL ’06: “The Anatomy of Solidarity: Zapatismo and the Ethics of Travel Activism,” February 14.

MANUEL MENDEZ GUZMAN (human rights representative, Chiapas, Mexico) and CORRY BANTON (Study Abroad coordinator, Mexico Solidarity Network): “Communities Confronting Globalization,” February 28.

WOMEN CROSSING BORDERS: A SYMPOSIUM ON MUSIC AND JOURNEYS OF CREATION: Elizabeth Ferry (Anthropology), Marisol Negrón (LALS/ROCL), Fernando Rosenberg (ROCL), Faith Smith, (AAAS/English), Ibrahim Sundiata (AAAS/History), March 1-3.


FAITH SMITH (AAAS/English) (panel discussion): “Race and Ethnicity in the Classroom,” March 22.


NOAH FOSTER ’07 (2007 Jane’s Travel Grant recipient): “Examining Development: Contextualizing Dam Research in Guatemala City,” April 12.


ELIZABETH COSSER ’07 (2007 Jane’s Travel Grant recipient): “Caught in the Storm: How Multinational Corporations Responded and Adapted During the 2001-02 Argentine Peso Crisis,” April 23.


Films:
“ALAMBRISTA,” September 25.
“QUILOMBO,” November 1.
“MAQUILAPOLIS (CITY OF FACTORIES),” November 30.
“THE ROOTS OF MY HEART,” March 15.
“THUNDER IN GUYANA,” March 15.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

AHORA! celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month for the tenth consecutive year, from September 20 through October 19, with the theme “Breaking Borders: Hablando, Pensando, Creciendo.” Highlights of the month-long festival included the panel “Alambrista”; “Uncovering Myths of U.S. Immigration”; “El Reventón! AHORA!’s Official Kick-Off Party”; “Dancing Across Latin America”; “Mi Casa Es Tu Casa”; “The Art of Being La-
CARIBBEAN CONNEXTION

The Caribbean Connexion celebrated Caribbean Week 2007 in March. The week's theme was "Unity and Peace: Embracing Our Identities." Events included "Feeling the Vibes," an evening of poetry, the spoken word, and musical and dance performance Caribbean style, and a night called "It's Carnival!" featuring Caribbean music hosted by DJ Illabash.

STUDY ABROAD

Twenty-four Brandeis students studied in Latin America during 2006-07. They attended universities in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, and Nicaragua.

SENIOR WINS JANE'S ESSAY PRIZE

Pesha Black was awarded the 2007 Jane's Essay Prize for "Growing in the Spirit: Framing Pentecostalism in Managua, Nicaragua." The Essay Prize is given annually for the best undergraduate research paper in any area of Latin American, Caribbean, or Latino Studies.

JANE'S TRAVEL GRANTS

Nine Jane's Travel Grants were awarded to undergraduate and graduate students in 2006-07. The recipients for research in Latin America and the Caribbean during inter-semester break are: Pesha Black '07, "Growing in the Spirit: Framing the Pentecostal Increase in Managua, Nicaragua"; Elizabeth Cosser '07, "Caught in the Storm: How Multinational Corporations Responded and Adapted During the 2001-02 Argentine Peso Crisis"; Noah Foster '07, "Researching the Xalala Dam Project in Guatemala"; Kendra Harrison '07, "Transnational Dominican-American Identities: Interpretations from 'Home'"; and Brady Wheatley '07, "Within and Without the System: Contemporary Social and Political Movements of Bolivia."

The recipients for summer research are: Melanie Kingsley (Anthropology), "In Search of Nito: Preliminary Survey of Southeastern Guatemala"; Betsy Marzahn-Ramos (Anthropology), "Style, Affiliation, and Regional Political Dynamics: Small Classic Maya Sites in the Usumacinta River Region"; Hannah Ramer '08, "Sustainable Agriculture in the Intag Region of Ecuador"; and Mrinalini Tankha (Anthropology), "Touring Money: Uses and Meanings of Currencies in 21st Century Cuba."

JANE'S FACULTY AWARDS

Eight Brandeis faculty members received Jane's Faculty Development Awards for summer research. They are: Roxanne Davila (ROCL) for archival research; Elizabeth Ferry (Anthropology) for archival research and field work in Mexico; Charles Golden (Anthropology) for field research in Guatemala; Raysa Mederos (ROCL) for field work in Cuba; Fernando Rosenberg (ROCL) for field work in Argentina; Faith Smith (AAAS/English) to attend a conference in Trinidad and Tobago; Ibrahim Sundiata (AAAS/History) to attend a conference in Brazil, and Javier Urcid (Anthropology) for field work in Mexico.

BACLA

The Boston Area Consortium on Latin America, directed by Professor Silvia Arron (History), consists of nine colleges and universities in metropolitan Boston. It serves as a means for faculty and students to communicate and supplement their resources with those available at other locations. The BACLA web site, listing the organization's history, faculty, and courses, may be accessed at http://drclas.fas.harvard.edu/bacla.
ESSAYS, THESIS AND DISSERTATIONS


ETHICS CENTER FELLOWS

Ramon De Jesus '08 and Rachel Kleinbaum '08, both LALS majors, were named as Ethics Center Student Fellows for 2007. Ramon will spend this summer working in Xela, Guatemala with Play for Peace, an organization that connects groups from conflict areas through cooperative play. Rachel will return to Xela for a second summer to work for UTW, a coalition of labor unions.

MURRAY FELLOWSHIP AWARDED

LALS major Maria Tapia '08 was one of eight recipients of the newly-created Pauli Murray Fellowship, named after a former professor in the American Studies Department at Brandeis. The award funds a research project to increase diversity and pluralism at Brandeis or in the community.

FACULTY NOTES


Elizabeth Ferry (Anthropology) published "Memory as Wealth, History as Commerce: Uses of Patrimony in a Central Mexican City" in Ethos: The Journal of Psychological Anthropology (2006). She organized a seminar on "The Politics of Resources and their Temporalities" at the School of American AResearch, Santa Fe and a conference on "The Social Relations of Mexican Commodities" at the Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, UC/San Diego. She presented papers in Milwaukee in May, in Mexico City and Michoacan in November, and in Albany in December.


Marisol Negrón (LALS/ROCL) spoke on "Mixing It Up: Mapping Identities Through Art" at the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs at Harvard University in February.


Ibrahim Sundiata (AAAS/History) presented a paper on "Race Relations in the U.S. and Brazil: The Question of Divergence" at the Caribbean Studies Association in Brazil in May.

Eva Thorne (Politics) is the principal investigator of a Ford Foundation grant on Afro-Latin land rights. She conveyed thirty participants from the U.S. and Latin...
America who met in Progresso, Honduras in March to review the state of Afro-Latin and indigenous relations around collective and communal land rights.


ALUMNI NOTES

Sabrina Assayag Victor '08 recently returned from a year in Israel and South Africa. She worked at the Association of Rape Crisis Center of Israel providing legal and development assistance; in South Africa she offered free legal counseling to central African refugees seeking asylum in Cape Town.

Jason Kohn '01 won the Sundance Grand Jury Prize for Brazil. The film was screened at Brandeis in March.

Kim Coughlin Tellez '85 is a part-time sixth grade teacher at a dual language charter school in California. She is also an insurance agent working mostly with the Spanish-speaking community.

Alex Dupuy (M.A. '76) is the chair of the Sociology Department at Wesleyan University. He is the author of the article "Haiti Election 2006: A Pyrrhic Victory for René Préval?" in Latin American Perspectives (2006) and the book The Prophet and Power: Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the International Community, and Haiti (2006).

Susannah Glusker '62 organized an exhibit for the centennial of the birth of her mother, "Anita Brenner: Los idolos, los altares y el arte de Mexico" and helped produce the catalog for the exhibit, "Anita Brenner: visión de una época." She completed editing her mother's journals for publication by the University of Texas Press.

Temma Kaplan '64 is the director of Women's Studies and professor of History at SUNY/Stony Brook. She published a chapter on "Gender, Chaos, and Authority in Revolutionary Times" in Sex in Revolution: Gender, Politics, and Power in Modern Mexico (2006).

Ramon Barquin III '96 is currently working on his Ph.D. He is the author of management texts and is writing two books about Cuba.

Yaser Robles '93 is a doctoral student in the Department of Latin American, Caribbean, and U.S. Latino Studies at SUNY/Albany. He did research and interned at The College Board Government Relations Office in Albany during the summer and will teach Cultures of Latin America at Albany in the fall.

Amy Palman Price '84 is the executive director of SENG, Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted. One of the goals of the national organization is to further develop its multicultural outreach services.


"Life, Liberty, and The Folks Back Home" and "The Global in the Local" for The Boston Globe in May and "¿Dios Ha Muerto?" and "Transnational Problems Need Translational Solutions" for The Huffington Post in June. She appeared on "On Point" on NPR radio to discuss "Immigration in America, Now" in May.

Luis Rubio (M.A. '73, Ph.D. '78) is the general director of the Centro de Investigación para el Desarrollo en Mexico. He published "Las reiales elecciones de México" in Foreign Affairs (2006) and is the co-author of México: Democracia Ineficaz/Ineffective Democracy (2006) and "Getting Mexico on Track" in The Christian Science Monitor in July.


The Prophet and Power: Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the International Community, and Haiti (2006) and "Getting Mexico on Track" in The Christian Science Monitor in July.

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Deborah Waller Meyers '93 published “The U.S. Needs Immigrant Labor: Unauthorized Immigrants Are Only a Symptom of an Outdated System” in Americas Quarterly (2007). She is directing a project for the Migration Policy Institute involving offering seminars to senior leaders in ministries in the Mexican government.

Jo Ann Wexler '69 is the co-author of Viva Oaxaca, a guidebook about the city where she spends half the year. Her website is www.si-oaxaca.com.

NEW FACULTY MEMBER
The LALS Program welcomes assistant professor Patricia Tovar to Brandeis and to our faculty. Professor Tovar received her undergraduate degree at the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru and her doctorate at the University of Maryland. Her primary research interest is in international trade, with emphasis on political economy and trade policy.

LALS FACULTY
The following faculty members helped guide the Program during the past year, serving as advisers for students interested in their fields of expertise: Silvia Arrom (History), Roxanne Dávila (ROCL), Elizabeth Ferry (Anthropology), Ricardo Godoy (SID), Charles Golden (Anthropology), Donald Hindley (Politics), James Mandrell (ROCL), Marisol Negrón (LALS/ROCL), Lucia Reyes (ROCL), Wellington Nyangoni (AAAS), Angela Pérez-Mejía (ROCL), Fernando Rosenberg (ROCL), Laurence Simon (SID), Faith Smith (AAAS/English), Ibrahim Sundiata (AAAS/History), Eva Thorne (Politics), Patricia Tovar (Economics), Javier Urcid (Anthropology)

IN MEMORIAM
LALS mourns the death of Professor Denah Lida, professor emeritus in ROCL. She taught at Brandeis from 1955-1986 and was instrumental in founding the Latin American Studies Program in 1964, now renamed the Latin American and Latino Studies Program. We remember her with gratitude for her support and enthusiasm for our Program.

THE 2008 NEWSLETTER
Do you have professional information to share about your work that is related to Latin America or Latinos in the U.S.? Send your information to: Marilyn Brooks, LALS administrator and newsletter editor: Brandeis University, LALS/MS 036, Waltham, MA 02454; fax: 781-736-2293; e-mail: MBrooks@brandeis.edu.

Faculty, students, and friends at the LALS luncheon on May 3.
(Photo by Michael Lovett)
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