



**Center for
Latino/a and Latin
American Studies
University of Oregon**

CLlas Notes

CLLAS Newsletter

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Spring 2014

From the Directors

As this academic year comes to a close, we are very excited to announce that CLLAS has gotten tenure! Yes, we use the word “tenure” in the sense that the University of Oregon has made a financial commitment to CLLAS that guarantees our continuation long into the future through the process known as base budgeting. Adding funds every year, UO will be providing CLLAS—by the 2016-2017 academic year—with a base budget of \$120,000 per year of permanent funding. This will allow us to maintain basic staffing and some programming. More importantly, however, this funding is strong recognition and a vote of confidence for all we have accomplished over the six years since we began working on CLLAS in 2008. Thank you University of Oregon! Thank you to the College of Arts and Sciences, the Vice Provost’s Office for International Affairs, the Office of the Vice President of Equity and Inclusion, and the Office of Academic Affairs for their ongoing support and funding, which made it possible for CLLAS to make it through a difficult period.

This new phase of our development now allows us to expand our fundraising activity and to begin thinking about new programming. We are pleased to announce two new initiatives that we will be rolling out next year. First, CLLAS will have its first scholar in residence. Dr. Ana-Maurina Lara, who holds a PhD from Yale University in African American studies and anthropology, will be participating as part of the CLLAS intellectual community next year. She will be working on a book manuscript that is a de-colonial analysis of sexuality and gender, focusing on the role of the Catholic Church in ongoing processes of colonialism vis-à-vis the nation-state in the Dominican Republic. We welcome Dr. Lara to the CLLAS community and look forward to collaborating with her.

Our second new initiative is our first CLLAS research symposium, which will feature the activities of our four research action groups and of recently funded graduate student and faculty research. CLLAS recently received a

Directors’ Letter continued on p. 2

An Artist at Work: César Chávez Victoria Delivers a Full Package during His UO Residency

Whether lecturing on Mexican street art at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, leading a group of public school children in the prepping and painting of a wall mural, or guiding college students through an exercise in designing and carving linoleum prints, César Chávez Victoria was an unqualified success during his four-day residency at the University of Oregon in early March. A graphic artist from Oaxaca, Mexico, who specializes in wood, linoleum, glass, and other forms of engraving and print-making, César was trained in the fine arts school of Oaxaca (Bellas Artes). He has worked with ASARO, Asamblea de Artistas Revolucionarios de Oaxaca (The Assembly of Revolutionary Artists of Oaxaca, ASARO) since its founding in 2006. He has worked with youth in a wide range of contexts producing large public art works and murals and has also experimented with animation. His images have appeared on T-shirts, walls, installations, and even on buttons.

While he was in Eugene, nobody had more fun with the artist than the students at Eugene District



César Chávez Victoria, a graphic artist from Oaxaca, Mexico, spoke at UO’s Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, taught students in Lynn Stephen’s undergraduate class, and led art workshops at an elementary school and other sites.

4J Buena Vista Spanish Immersion Elementary School. Students spent two morning sessions being guided through the prep, design, and painting of a wall mural. Behind the scenes, Chávez spent time

An Artist at Work, continued on p. 8

JSMA Engages Local Latino and Latin American Communities

Museums across the country are exploring ways in which to engage with more diverse audiences. As an institution in the state of Oregon—where Latinos already make up a quarter of students in public schools—building Latino participation at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art (JSMA) is critical for our future, as well as that of the university. In 2012, thanks to a grant from the Oregon Cultural Trust, administered by the Oregon Arts Commission, the JSMA contracted with nationally recognized museum consultant Gail Anderson to draft a Latino Engagement Plan.

We hosted community conversations with Latinos in the Eugene/Springfield area and talked to Latino faculty members about the ways in which they already interacted with the museum and their hopes for the future. Our long-term commitment to strengthening ties with Latin Americans and Latinos was further supported in the spring of 2013 when executive director Jill Hartz and I traveled to Mexico for two weeks to meet with artists, curators, and museum directors in Guanajuato, Oaxaca, and Mexico City. It was while in Oaxaca that we first met César Chávez Victoria and visited ASARO’s studio on the Calle Porfirio Diaz. We looked through all of the prints in the studio and selected several to be reprinted on archival paper. These, which were generously purchased by three faculty members at the university, were on view when César visited the university this spring. We were delighted to see him again and were thrilled to host him for a talk at the museum, which brought in some 80 campus and community members. We are proud to have works by the courageous artists of ASARO in our collection.

—by June Irene Black, Assistant Curator for the Arts of the Americas and Europe, JSMA



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DIRECTORS' LETTER, *continued from page 1*

\$5,200 grant from the UO College of Arts and Sciences to help fund the symposium as well as \$5,000 in other funds from a variety of units on campus. Tentatively titled "Public Engagement in History, Equity, Race/Ethnicity and Human Rights: Lessons from Latino and Latin American Studies at UO," the one-day event on March 12, 2015, features four panels. These include "Advancing Latino Equity in Oregon," "Human Rights and Social Memory in Guatemala: The National Police Archive," "Latino History, Resources, and Public Education in Oregon," and "Afro-Descendant and Indigenous Music and Culture."

We are also pleased to announce one new publication this year and another planned for next year. Now available on both the CLLAS website and the website of the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art is "Teaching Latin America: Teaching Resource Guide." Go to: <http://cllas.uoregon.edu/research/publications/>

The resource guide grew out of the summer 2013 summer institute for Oregon middle and high school teachers titled "Understanding the Many Faces of Latin America through Art and History." The project represents a collaborative effort by faculty and staff at the Center for Latino/a and Latin American Studies, the Latin American Studies Program, and the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art to address the increasing racial and ethnic diversity in Oregon's public schools, in order to be able to understand and incorporate such growing diversity in an enriching way in the classroom. The lessons in this teacher's guide were prepared during the institute by the participating teachers.

The second publication project is under development. "The State of Latinos in Oregon" will be a report compiled by UO scholars studying immigrant integration issues facing Latinos in Oregon. Issues covered in the report will include access to education and health care, the labor conditions of Oregon's Latino communities, and opportunities for increasing civic participation in Latino communities. The report will also provide a historical section and a demographic analysis of the rapid population growth of Latinos in Oregon's communities. The report is part of the CLLAS Advancing Latino Equity in Oregon Research Action Project.

Saludos,

Lynn Stephen, Director, CLLAS; Distinguished Professor, Anthropology

Gerardo Sandoval, Associate Director, CLLAS; Assistant Professor, Planning, Public Policy, and Management

CLLAS SYMPOSIUM

Save the Date

MARCH 12, 2015

"Public Engagement in History, Equity, Race/ Ethnicity and Human Rights: Lessons from Latino and Latin American Studies at UO"

▪ PANEL PRESENTATIONS

"Advancing Latino Equity in Oregon"

"Human Rights and Social Memory in Guatemala: The National Police Archive"

"Latino History, Resources, and Public Education in Oregon"

"Afro-Descendant and Indigenous Music and Culture"

▪ KEYNOTE ADDRESS

▪ RECEPTION AND MUSIC PERFORMANCE.

The symposium will be a space for students, teachers, researchers, and activists to come together to hear about exciting work being done on issues of Latino/a equity, human rights, and culture.

<http://cllas.uoregon.edu>



**Center for Latino/a and
Latin American Studies
University of Oregon**

CLLAS NOTES

SPRING 2014

Mailing address:

Center for Latino/a & Latin American Studies
6201 University of Oregon
Eugene OR 97403-6201

Main office:

337 Hendricks Hall
(541) 346-5286
e-mail: cllas@uoregon.edu
website: cllas.uoregon.edu

OUR MISSION

CLLAS puts the study of Latino/a and Latin American communities in conversation with one another and with the state of Oregon. A knowledge center dedicated to public access and excellence through the integration of teaching, research, community engagement and dissemination, CLLAS is an integral part of the UO's strategy to recruit, retain, and build alumnae relations with a diverse and energized group of students, faculty, staff, parents, and families and to connect the university locally, nationally, and globally. CLLAS facilitates collaborative research, scholarship, intellectual community, and community outreach focused on Latin America and U.S. Latino/a populations.

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Thank You SELCO

SELCO Community Credit Union has agreed to continue to be the community sponsor for the Latino Roots Project for the next three years. This generous grant continues an ongoing relationship between SELCO in support of this CLLAS-administered project. The exhibit, originally displayed at the Lane County Historical Museum in 2009-2010, was duplicated two years ago using funds from SELCO. Now, two portable exhibits feature 17 panels containing information on Latino history and demographics in Oregon, photographs, and stories about seven immigrant families. The program also offers videos and bilingual curriculum materials to schools. SELCO's support has allowed the exhibit to be displayed in more than 18 locations, including schools, libraries, civic organizations, and Latino-related festivals throughout Oregon. Since the project began, the exhibit has reached more than 28,000 viewers.



Latino Roots DVD cover

the Construction of Collective Memory.' The project focuses on how media shape collective memories, and what it means to 'construct' collective/historical memory through media. She will examine how media production can address human rights violations, promote social change and strengthen democratic practices.

UO professor studies effects of climate change in Peru

Mark Carey, an associate professor of history in the UO Robert D. Clark Honors College and a member of the CLLAS Advisory Board, has teamed up with several researchers as part of a National Science Foundation grant. Carey serves as principal investigator with Professor Kenneth Young in the Department of Geography and the Environment at the University of Texas on a project that is studying how environmental changes in Peru's Cordillera Blanca mountains affect downstream water supplies and water management.

CLLAS board member Michelle McKinley honored

UO Law School associate professor Michelle McKinley was one of five from a large pool of applicants to secure a fellowship with Princeton University's Program in Law and Public Affairs (LAPA). The program brings together world-class legal experts to explore the role of law in constituting politics, society, the economy and culture. Her project, "Degrees of Freedom: Intimacy, Slavery, and Legal Mobilization in Colonial Latin America" explores the issues with enslaved women as legal actors within the landscape of Hispanic urban slavery in reference to women who are socially disfavored, economically active, and extremely litigious.

Gentrification: A complicated question of race and class

CLLAS associate director Gerardo Sandoval is one of several experts consulted by *The Oregonian* for an article that explores gentrification in Portland and around the country. Sandoval, an assistant professor in the Department of Planning, Public Policy & Management at UO, is quoted extensively in the article, which is archived on OregonLive.com (March 7, 2014).

Sandoval, whose recent book (*Immigrants and the Revitalization of Los Angeles: Development and Change in MacArthur Park*) details the successful revitalization efforts in the MacArthur Park neighborhood of Los Angeles, where he grew up, is quoted as saying that through policy tools such as inclusionary zoning, it is possible to revitalize an area without pushing out an entire class of people. MacArthur Park, he said, "was a rough area in the 1980s, the center of drug activity, a lot of homicides, a lot of drug violence. Today, it's a vibrant urban place, dense, linked to regional transportation, good access to a bus line, very walkable, strong public spaces. They managed to do it without forcing all the Latino folks out." ■



Gabriela Martínez in Guatemala / photo by Greg Krupa.

Keep Your Eyes On Guatemala

CLLAS board member Gabriela Martínez (associate professor, UO School of Journalism and Communication) was invited to screen her documentary *Keep Your Eyes On Guatemala* for the Border Film Week Series organized by the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice at the University of San Diego in late March. Martínez attended the screening and took place in a Q/A session. Her documentary (RT 54 min.) tells the story of Guatemala's National Police Historical Archive (Archivo Histórico

de la Policía Nacional—AHPN) intertwined with narratives of past human rights abuses and the dramatic effects they had on specific individuals and the nation as a whole. In addition, it highlights present-day efforts to preserve collective memories and bring justice and reconciliation to the country. The film is the result of a collaboration between academic units at the University of Oregon and AHPN.

Martínez selected as Resident Scholar

Gabriela Martínez is one of two UO professors selected as a 2014-15 Resident Scholar by UO's Wayne Morse Center. Each year the center hosts two UO faculty members as resident scholars, one from the School of Law and one from another UO department. Martínez, an associate professor in the UO School of Journalism and Communication, builds on her work in Latin America for her project in 'Media, Democracy and

2014-15 GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY CLLAS

Each year CLLAS provides grants for faculty, students, and community organizations to conduct research. Guidelines can be found at: <http://cllas.uoregon.edu/grant-opportunities/>

Study of Djeoromitxi (Brazil) Language and Culture—Thiago Castro, Linguistics

The primary goal of Thiago Castro's research trip to Brazil this summer is to continue the documentation of the Djeoromitxi language and culture. These recordings will form the basis from which Castro will ask further questions necessary to understand how the forms of the language combine both to encode the universal communicative functions shared by all languages (who did what to whom, when, why, etc.) and to

create the unique kinds of information that the Djeoromitxi speech community found essential for their life before integration.

IPV and Immigrant Women—Kathryn Miller, Political Science

There is a long history, in the United States and elsewhere, of failing to recognize intimate partner violence (IPV) against immigrant women as criminal harm. IPV continues almost unabated throughout the world, affecting all countries, cultures, and economic class. This dissertation examines the ways in which categories of victimhood (e.g. "battered immigrant"), formed through policy and policy implementation, operate on women seeking state intervention.

Hip Hop in Cuba—Charlie Hankin, Music

Charlie Hankin will carry out a preliminary oral history study of the reception and dissemination of hip hop lyrics in Cuba as a means for exploring race and identity on both local and global levels. Hankin will conduct a series of interviews in Havana of young writers, artists, and intellectuals before, during, and after the International Hip Hop Festival in early August. In particular, Hankin plans to examine the reception and dissemination of the lyrics of Los Aldeanos, a group given prominent billing at the festival in 2013 and identified in a 2006 *New York Times* article as part of "Cuba's Rap Vanguard."

Preventing Genocide Grant brings two scholars to campus: Anna Carla Ericastilla and Almudena Bernabéu

Anna Carla Ericastilla: The Latin American Studies program at the University of Oregon, with support from the "Preventing Genocide" grant, invited Anna Carla Ericastilla to be a resident scholar and take part in the seminar "Human Rights in Latin America," on February 5, 2014. She gave presentations on the role of archives in providing documentation and research assistance in the protection of human rights in Guatemala, with some attention to the special case about medical experimentation in the mid-20th century. Dr. John Cutler, infamous for his controversial STD research in Tuskegee, Alabama, with African American men in the 1930s, went on to Guatemala to conduct research between 1946 and 1948. Dr. Cutler intentionally infected Guatemalan prisoners, soldiers, prostitutes, and patients from a mental hospital with syphilis, gonorrhea, and chancroid. Cures were consciously withheld from some of the patients, and women were the least likely to be given any treatment. Many people who participated in these experiments were "paid" with cigarettes—one or a whole pack depending upon the degree of intervention in their genitals. Most were not fully informed about the procedures and the risks of the experiments. It was a horrendous episode of human rights abuse that both the U.S. and Guatemalan governments had approved at the time. In 2010, President Obama apologized for Dr. Cutler's work in Guatemala.

Anna Carla Ericastilla is a historian and the director of the General Archive of Central America (AGCA), which is located in Guatemala City. She came to take part in the seminar on human rights that Dr. Stephanie Wood was teaching as part of a larger collaboration around Guatemalan human rights that includes professors Carlos Aguirre (History), Gabriela Martínez (Journalism and



Anna Carla Ericastilla / courtesy Stephanie Wood.

Communication), Michelle McKinley (Law), and Lynn Stephen (Anthropology). Ericastilla's visit also included a meeting with graduate students preparing to do field research abroad; a meeting with James Fox, archivist and head of UO Libraries Special Collections & University Archives; and a meeting with the collaborative faculty group to help plan a global seminar on human rights that will take place in Antigua, Guatemala, in 2015. The hope is to have global seminar students make visits to the AGCA as well as to the Historical Archive of the National Police (AHPN), which now serves as a human rights archive, providing documents that have been crucial in bringing to justice people who were instrumental in the genocide in Guatemala in the 1980s.

CLLAS is managing the Preventing Genocide grant through the Research Action Project on Human Rights and Social Memory in Latin America.

Almudena Bernabéu: Also with funding from the Preventing Genocide grant, the Guatemalan faculty collaborative organized a visit to the Knight Law School by the lawyer Almudena Bernabéu. On February 12, 2014, Bernabéu provided a workshop for law students of Professor Michelle McKinley, for students in Stephanie Wood's seminar (Latin American Studies 407), and for people from across campus and the community.

Bernabéu spoke about the human rights trials in Spain and in the United States in which she has been a key player, seeking to bring to justice perpetrators of horrific crimes across Latin America. She gave special attention to the Guatemalan genocide trials, such as the one in Spain that she helped carry out on the basis of the tenet of Universal Jurisdiction, and the one in Guatemala, which drew much from her work in Spain and which made history when, for the first time, a head of state was found guilty of genocide in a national court. Bernabéu also described some of her civil trials in the United States, such as those against senior Salvadoran officials who are living here but who were involved in the massacre of Jesuit priests in El Salvador in 1989.

—reported by Stephanie Wood, PhD



Almudena Bernabéu / Sofia Negron Photography

Pulitzer-Prize Winning Journalist Hector Tobar Inspires a Packed Audience

Journalist and novelist Hector Tobar packed the Browsing Room at Knight Library February 13 doing what he does so well, telling stories. But this time, by telling his own story, he also provided encouragement to others seeking a way to give voice to theirs, and to the experiences of marginalized "others."

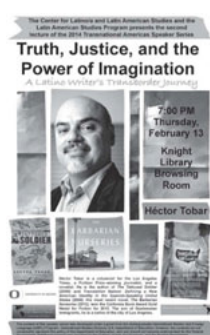
Tobar, the child of Guatemalan immigrants, says he grew up in a household "where education was extremely valued. Books were sacred in this household."

At age 20, his father arrived in the United States in the 1960s with only a 4th grade education, but he eventually earned an AA degree. His father, he said, had carried a burden of shame about his own mother's illiteracy. Tobar was acutely aware of a similar burden of shame born by many immigrants in the area of Los Angeles in which he grew up and developed as a journalist. When working as a bureau manager for the *Los Angeles Times* in Mexico City, Tobar often found himself returning to LA on flights where older women often asked for help filling out the arrival forms, claiming, for example, to have forgotten

their prescription eye-glasses. It was a signal, he said, that they could not read.

Being from a practical immigrant family, Tobar described himself as a pre-med major who never really entertained the idea of being a writer. But when a substitute teacher told him he could write, he felt encouraged. A "wannabe professional Marxist" at UC Santa Cruz, Tobar volunteered at a newspaper looking for writers. He eventually became the editor, took an internship at the *LA Times* just as the paper was beginning to integrate, and began writing articles on immigration for this newspaper that his father had once delivered.

Tobar found that working for the *LA Times*, which he described as an "inherently conservative institution," he couldn't really express in the newspaper the disparities he saw, and so decided to take creative writing classes. He wrote a thesis on the tattooed soldier as his MFA project—soldiers from the genocidal war in Guatemala



were seeking asylum, sanctuary, alongside others who were fleeing the war. It was a story about a refugee who wanted to kill a soldier he saw at MacArthur Park in LA. *The Tattooed Soldier* (2000) was published as a novel and is now in its 14th or 15th printing at Penguin.

Translation Nation: Defining a New American Identity in the Spanish-Speaking United States appeared in 2006. *The Barbarian Nurseries* (2012) won the 2012 California Book Award Gold Medal for Fiction. And most recently, he has been working on a narrative nonfiction book about the Chilean miners who were trapped underground for 69 days in 2010 before being rescued. Tobar was selected as the author of the official book on this story, which is also being turned into a film starring Antonio Banderas and Juliette Binoche.

This second lecture of the 2014 Transnational Americas Speaker Series was sponsored by the Center for Latino/a and Latin American Studies and the Latin American Studies Program with funds from an Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language (UISFL) grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

—reported by Alice Evans / CLLAS staff

Documenting Dignity: Farmworker Testimony and Collaborative Research

by James Daria

According to the Oregon Farm Bureau, agriculture is the second-largest industry in the state, generating about \$5.4 billion dollars annually. More than 100,000 farmworkers labor intensively in the fields to prepare, plant, and harvest the agricultural products so essential to the state's economy. Despite their importance, however, Oregon's farmworkers are subject to powerful economic, political, and discursive practices that render them invisible. This invisibility is part of the symbolic violence at work furthering their suffering and leaving their claims to citizenship and inclusion unheard.

Thanks to a collaborative grant between the Center for Latino/a and Latin American Studies (CLLAS) and the Píneros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN), I am using digital media to help tell the story of an epic farmworker struggle in the heart of Oregon's agricultural and political heartland. In 2000 in Salem, Oregon, a group of 40 to 50 mushroom pickers working at the Pictsweet plant walked off the job conducting a worker-led wildcat strike. Their demand was dignity, an end to mistreatment, and union representation. Unique to this effort was the high level of political agency and self-directed organizing by the workers themselves. For a couple of years, striking immigrant mushroom workers gained widespread media attention as they organized a national campaign to redress their grievances. Although eventually losing their demands, the episode was a catalyst for change in the treatment of farmworkers in the state and an important legacy of struggle.

As a farmworker organizer and immigrant rights activist, I was sensitive to the extreme level of political sophistication and technical skill of the people who harvest our food. Having worked closely with farmworkers, my conversion to their cause was largely the result of hearing their testimony and experiencing their backbreaking labor first hand. As



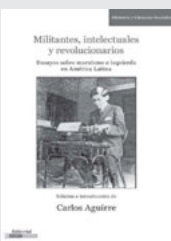
Pictsweet worker organizer Javier Velazquez speaking at a demonstration in support of striking Pictsweet workers in Salem, Oregon / photo courtesy of PCUN.

a researcher, I am interested in using the power of new media in documenting farmworker testimony and its use in the classroom and beyond. Combining collaborative research with digital video production created new avenues of investigation and forms of dissemination. I hope that this project will be a small contribution to the growing body of research being conducted on the campus of the University of Oregon in collaboration with the state's farmworker population. ■

—James Daria is a PhD candidate in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Oregon. Daria received a 2013 Faculty / Collaborative Research Award from CLLAS to work in cooperation with Phil Scher, associate professor, UO Department of Anthropology, and Samantha King, PhD candidate, UO Department of Anthropology.

RECENT BOOKS IN LATINO/A AND LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

Carlos Aguirre, ed. *Militantes, intelectuales y revolucionarios. Ensayos sobre marxismo e izquierda en América Latina* (Raleigh: Editorial A Contracorriente, 2013).



The essays in this volume analyze three aspects of the history of the Left and Marxism in Latin America: first, the need to discuss the “changing times” in the 21st century and its many and varied ingredients as part of a complex history of intel-

lectual practices and policy proposals that have played for more than a century, the aspirations of broad social changes in Latin American sectors. Second, the acclimatization of Marxism in Latin America as part of a series of discussions with other intellectual movements and at the same time, within a process of intellectual production conditioned by political and institutional factors. And third, the construction of certain views on the historical past as a linchpin of the various policy proposals of the left in Latin America. Together, the texts included in this book contribute to enrich the debates around

the relationship between history and politics but also, somehow, to imagine scenarios of growing democracy, justice, and equality in the region.

Carlos Aguirre, professor, UO Department of History and director, Latin American Studies Program, is a CLLAS Advisory Board member.

Lima, Siglo XX: Cultura, socialización y cambio, edited by Carlos Aguirre and Aldo Panfichi (Lima: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 2013)



The essays collected in this book contribute to our understanding of the multiple and changing ways of being “limeño/a” and shed light on several aspects of the urban experience such as socialization, the formation of public spaces, the role of music and enter-

tainment in the shaping of collective identities, the symbolism attached to popular pastimes such as soccer, and the changing configuration of urban spaces. The authors aim to break with the dichotomies (center-

periphery, or local-outsider) that have been used to portray city life in Lima. The result is an approach that conceives the city as an archipelago of interconnected spaces, communities, and cultural and social practices.

Otros Saberes: Collaborative Research on Indigenous and Afro-Descendent Cultural Politics, edited by Lynn Stephen and Charles R. Hale (SAR Press, Santa Fe, 2013)



The six research projects that form the core of the initiative bring together a diverse group of Afro-descendent and indigenous collaborations with academics. The focus of each research project is driven by a strategic priority in the life of the community, organization, or social movement concerned.

Written in English, Spanish, and Portuguese, this book provides an explanation of the key analytical questions and findings of each project.

Lynn Stephen is director of CLLAS and Distinguished Professor of Anthropology at the University of Oregon. ■

Traditional Buildings in the Age of Block

by Collin Eaton

The 1976 earthquake was a defining moment in the building culture of Guatemala. Many of the nearly 23,000 deaths caused by the magnitude 7.5 earthquake were a direct result of the failure of traditional adobe and other earthen building systems to withstand the powerful seismic waves. In many cases the massive unreinforced adobe walls covered by heavy clay-tile roofs collapsed on top of their occupants. In some of the hardest hit areas like Chimaltenango, nearly 70 percent of the adobe homes were destroyed. In the wake of the event, government housing programs and nonprofit housing practitioners promoted steel-reinforced concrete block homes as the preferred, seismically-safe replacement for traditional earthen systems. Now, nearly 40 years later, concrete block homes, referred to locally as block, have become the dominant building technology in much of urban Guatemala and are increasingly expanding into the rural landscape as well.

With the goal of saving human lives, the shift toward a “culture of block” has been positive, for those who can afford it. The desire for and acceptance of block as a durable, high-quality, and seismically stable system is widespread across a range of incomes, and for many the acquisition of a block reflects an increase in social status and greater economic stability. Desire, however, is not matched by financial capacity. Manufactured materials such as block and the imported steel rebar reinforcement are subject to the fluctuating prices of the global market and the rising cost of these materials has outpaced inflation over the last decade. The result is that housing practitioners are concerned that the concrete block homes they promote are no longer affordable for their target market, or they face limitations in outreach due to rising costs. The challenge for housing practitioners in a post-1976 building culture is bridging the resulting affordability gap and addressing the disproportionate risk that results when those who can afford block homes have access to safer housing, while those who cannot remain at the mercy of the traditional building technologies available in their region.

With the generous support of a CLLAS research grant, I spent the summer of 2013 interviewing low-income housing practitioners, homeowners, and local masons in Guatemala in order to better understand the position of traditional building technology within the broader culture of building. Through an environmental lens, the lower embodied energy of traditional systems and their ability to passively regulate the climate in which they have evolved make them alluring candidates for lower-impact housing solutions. Despite my own affection for these systems, I was interested to know where they stand for those who have no other choice but to live in them, and the meaning these systems embody within the broader Guatemalan building culture. In focus group interviews conducted in Alta Verapaz, Baja Verapaz, Chimaltenango and Zacapa, I asked participants about their perceptions of traditional materials and manufactured materials, as well as their individual building strategies and material preferences. I also explored how class and indigenous identity might influence the decision of what to build. The primary goal was to understand the constraints, priorities and cost-saving potential within the building process they use—whether traditional or block—in order to help encourage a more cost-effective and inclusive culture of building, and to provide housing organizations with specific recommendations for how to bridge the risk/affordability gap.

What has emerged from the study is that the transition to a culture of block has not been universal—neither physically in the acquisition of block, nor mentally in the minds of occupants. There are many homeowners who aspire to own a block home, yet there remain many homeowners who recognize the advantages that traditional systems offer, including lower-cost, better thermal buffering, quality control in construction (and even the ability to absorb the impact of a bullet). Many participants also recognize the seismic capacity of traditional systems such as wood and *bahareque* while others have demonstrated the willingness to experiment with hybrid adobe systems that combine structure of concrete columns with the lower-cost and thermal buffering capacity of adobe.



Above left: Concrete block with steel rebar reinforcement. **Above right:** Collin Eaton with focus group participants in Tactic, Alta Verapaz. **Left:** Typical adobe home with heavy clay tile roof, Rabinal, Baja Verapaz / photos courtesy of Collin Eaton.

Although an exploratory study, this project makes a case for reexamining the approach to low-income housing in Guatemala. On the one hand, housing organizations are responding to the demand they correctly perceive when they design and promote concrete block homes. On the other hand, there is a risk that by exclusively promoting block as the ideal material, practitioners unintentionally promote a building culture better suited to the needs of the building industry, rather than the homeowners they serve, while at the same time negating the potential of traditional systems. The result is that the continuous advancement of traditional vernacular systems in parallel to modern materials is ruptured. Manufactured materials evolve while traditional systems are condemned to be built with the same deficiencies that lead to their failure. By bringing “modern” systems back into dialogue with traditional systems there is a potential to leverage the inherent cost savings and performance characteristics of both systems in a way that better supports traditional systems—both literally and figuratively—and, more importantly, their occupants.

This study was also generously supported with funding from the Environmental Studies Barker Award. ■

—Collin Eaton is a second-year master's student in the Environmental Studies Program. His research focuses on the ecology of building materials, traditional building systems, low-income housing and appropriate technology. He has worked in the fields of residential construction, historic preservation, housing, and microfinance.

Inhibitory Control in the Bilingual Brain: Testing the Bilingual Advantage Hypothesis

by Jimena Santillán

It has been proposed that when bilinguals want to speak one of their two languages the representations of both languages get activated. Thus, in order to be able to speak the language they want to speak, the representation of the other language has to be inhibited. If bilinguals are constantly engaging in this process then their inhibitory control, the ability to suppress irrelevant representations to favor relevant ones, might get exercised. This proposal has led to the question of whether the practice in



Jimena Santillán places a cap embedded with electrodes that rest on the scalp and record the electrical activity the brain is producing / photo by Matthew Barnhart.

BRAIN, *cont. from previous page*

inhibitory control that bilinguals obtain translates into benefits that extend beyond the language domain.

Evidence from research studies showing that bilinguals outperform monolinguals in tasks requiring inhibitory control has led to the claim that a “bilingual advantage,” exists. This has received a lot of media attention. However, from a scientific standpoint the bilingual advantage hypothesis remains controversial, as the evidence for it has been inconsistent. Most studies putting this hypothesis to the test have relied on looking at differences in behavioral outcomes, such as accuracy or reaction time on tasks requiring inhibitory control. Some of these studies find that bilinguals outperform monolinguals, while others find no differences between the two groups.

Inhibitory control is a fast occurring process that occurs at the brain level, so being able to look at what is happening in the bilingual and the monolingual brain during inhibitory control processing would provide a powerful test of the bilingual advantage hypothesis. A cognitive neuroscience technique known as “event-related potentials” allows researchers to measure how brain processes unfold in real time. The technique involves using a cap embedded with electrodes that rest on the scalp to measure the electrical activity that the brain naturally produces.

The present study, supported by a summer Graduate Research Grant from the Center for Latino/a and Latin American Studies, employed the event-related potential technique to examine if there are differences between bilinguals and monolinguals at very early stages of inhibitory control processing. Participants consisted of 11 English monolinguals and 11 Spanish-English highly balanced bilinguals who acquired both languages during childhood. The two groups did not differ in terms of age, gender, English language proficiency, education level completed, or socioeconomic status. This ensured that any differences in inhibitory control observed would not be the result of differences between the groups in these variables, which has been a limitation of previous studies.

Participants listened to two different children’s stories presented simultaneously on speakers, one on their left and one on their right, and were asked to attend to one of the stories while ignoring the story coming from the other side. To help them remember which side to attend to, they watched images on a computer monitor that matched the story they were supposed to be attending. Identical sound probes were embedded in both stories, which allowed us to compare the brain response to the exact same probes when they appeared on the attended story to when they appeared on the unattended story. The prediction was that if participants were effectively enhancing the signal of the attended story and inhibiting the signal of the unattended story, their brain responses elicited by the probes embedded in the attended story would be amplified, and the ones elicited by the probes embedded in the unattended story would be suppressed. In line with the bilingual advantage, we predicted that this attention modulation would be observed earlier for bilinguals, reflecting better inhibitory control. As early as 100 milliseconds after they heard the sound probes, bilingual participants showed the expected attention modulation, while monolingual participants did not show a difference at this very early time window. This evidence suggests that bilingual participants were exerting inhibitory control to be able to attend to the relevant story and inhibit the irrelevant story beginning at very early stages of inhibitory control processing, which occurred at three times faster the average rate at which we blink! This early difference could not have been detected without using the event-related potential technique.

My future research will continue to put the bilingual advantage hypothesis to the test, as accumulating scientifically rigorous evidence for its existence could have implications for instigating bilingual education at an early age, and would provide evidence to encourage Latino/a families to raise their children as bilingual. ■

—Jimena Santillan is a second year doctoral student in the Cognitive Neuroscience program at UO. As part of the Brain Development Lab, her research examines the effect of environmental factors on neuroplasticity, with the goal of identifying potential protective factors that counteract the deleterious effects on brain development caused by growing up in poverty.

Championing Undergraduate Research



Undergraduate Niria Garcia conducted research in Brazil through the SIT Study Abroad program.

A UO senior and first generation Chicana born and raised in Oregon, Niria Garcia was working on a philosophy paper on the examined life when she hit a wall in her writing. She found herself daydreaming about a program she hoped to attend. As an environmental

studies and Latin American studies major interested in social justice and sustainable development, she felt drawn to SIT Study Abroad’s Social Justice and Sustainable Development program, which would allow her to begin learning a third language, arrange homestays for her, and provide her the unique opportunity to do original field-based research in northeast Brazil. But submitting an application cost \$50, not an easy amount to come by for a student attending college on scholarships, grants, and loans. The deadline fell in three hours. Niria went for it. Knowing that the program she had set eyes on was priced at almost twice the amount her mother—a seasonal worker—makes in one year’s labor, it was clear to her that if she wanted to make it a reality she would have to work hard to find funding elsewhere.

Niria was assisted by CLLAS assistant director Eli Meyer, who helped her get accepted into the program in Brazil. Ultimately, Niria spent five months living in Brazil, studying and doing research with a group of activist women in a community in the city of Salvador, state of Bahia. After returning from Brazil in summer 2013, she looked for supportive funds to give her the free time she needs to write a complete report, but all she could find were funds for graduate students. She met with CLLAS associate director Gerardo Sandoval, an assistant professor in PPM, who advised her. Ultimately she ended up enrolling in CLLAS director Lynn Stephen’s Spring 2014 class, LAS 399 Post Study Abroad: How to Do Original Research and Write a Paper.

Niria Garcia would like to go back to Brazil to continue her research. A CAS development proposal currently making the rounds of potential contributors would provide exactly the kind of support Niria needs to continue realizing her dream to do original research and go to graduate school. She is an excellent candidate for a proposed undergraduate research grant program for which CLLAS is currently fundraising.

Niria Garcia’s abstract: “This is a brief ethnographic account that explores the crucial role Afro-Brazilian women have played in the struggle for permanence and improvement of the historically marginalized community of Calabar in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil. I focus specifically on the ways in which the social resources women control such as kin networks and the urban material resources such as land and markets women dominate have been crucial in their ability to hold their ground, organize others, and create improvements in their community. In addition I explore how the specific gender roles women occupy in relation to kin networks, land, and markets have been leveraged by women strategically in their organizing efforts. My analysis will be based on a series of interviews I conducted with six women and secondary sources. After I analyze their ability to organize successfully, and why, I will discuss the ways in which the coming of the World Cup competition to Brazil has impacted their continuing struggle for land titles, internal social and urban improvements.”

— by Alice Evans / CLLAS staff



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

CENTER FOR LATINO/A AND LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

6201 University of Oregon

Eugene OR 97403-6201

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An Artist at Work, *cont. from p. 1*

planning and sketching ideas for the mural, focusing on the idea of dancing jaguars because the jaguar is the school mascot. CLLAS board member Stephanie Wood, who helped host Chávez during his visit, noted: "He also had the jaguars playing flutes while they danced, because one day when he visited the school he saw that the students were making clay flutes in art class. He added birds around the jaguars so that a lot of students could participate in painting the mural. Small groups worked with him in rotations. It was a huge hit with the kids, and the result is a beautiful mural."

CLLAS associate director Gerardo Sandoval, who accompanied Chávez to the elementary school, said Chávez was able to link the school's symbol to cultural expressions from his native Oaxaca, allowing elementary school children to gain exposure to Oaxaca culture via art. "While César Chávez painted the mural with a group of students, a teacher, Miss Torres, brought her class to ask César about the cultural meaning of the mural," Sandoval explained. "Students asked César where he was from, why he became interested in art, and what the meaning of the jaguar dance was about. In my opinion, the mural, which is located in the student cafeteria, now represents a cultural symbol of Latin America that allows students in Eugene who are learning Spanish to be exposed also to Latin American culture."



Buena Vista Spanish Immersion Elementary School students spent two sessions being guided through the prep and painting of this wall mural designed by César Chávez Victoria, a graphic artist from Oaxaca, Mexico / photo by Gerardo Sandoval.

Professor Sandoval also accompanied the artist into the local community to create collective artwork with the Amigos group Juventud FACETA. At Juventud, Chávez organized an arts workshop where he asked students to draw portraits of their friends, Sandoval said. "Then mid-way, he asked students to switch the portraits and have students finish representing themselves in the drawings. Hence, the drawings became self-portraits. All students finished the self-portrait by adding positive features. This led to a great discussion about the dreams that Latino youth in Eugene/Springfield aspire to achieve. The students then got into a circle and thanked César for this workshop and for providing a method through which they could express themselves positively."

The intention was to make art together, said Stephanie Wood, which they did. "He told me that a lot of the kids said that they were not good at art, but they all came up with sketches, and he felt that many were surprised to see that they really do have talent. And, of course, it was simply fun. He also told me that he was very moved to hear the youth speak about their migration experiences and their difficulties facing racism in the U.S. He came away with a deeper understanding about the experience of his compatriots who are so far from home, and the offspring of Mexican emigrants who are caught between two worlds and two cultures."

—by Alice Evans / based on reports from Stephanie Wood and Gerardo Sandoval