

American Culture News

The Program in American Culture
at the University of Michigan

Fall 2009



The Latina/o Studies program celebrates its 25th anniversary this year. One of the highlights in year-long programming planned to celebrate this milestone included hosting a major conference to discuss the history and future of Latina/o Studies. Pictured above, George Sánchez, Professor of American Studies and Ethnicity and History at USC, gives keynote lecture entitled, “Population Removals in Times of Crisis: Mexican Repatriation and Slum Clearance in the (Last) Great Depression.” See page 8 for more conference highlights.

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Dear Alumni, Students, Faculty, and Friends of the Program in American Culture,



The Program in American Culture faces the current national and state economic crisis with unprecedented strength. With a larger faculty than ever, and with great strength person for person, we are prepared for a terrific year. Our tenured ranks have thickened, and

our strengths in ethnic studies have deepened. This year, we have launched a search for an Assistant Professor in the area of “Digital Environments,” part of a cluster hire of specialists, one of whom will hold a position in our unit, the others in English, Communication Studies, and the School of Information. Last year we searched for two professors, and by some strange counterintuitive alchemy, we made five fantastic hires. These hires put Latina/o Studies on the soundest of footings, and they solidified our remarkable, but perhaps unheralded, strength in African-American Studies.

Daniel Ramírez, Yeidy Rivero, and Colin Gunckel join our Latina/o Studies faculty in time for its Silver Anniversary. With Professor Silvia Pedraza formally joining our unit by shifting a line from Sociology, and with the successful tenure of Lawrence La Fountain-Stokes, our program in Latina/o Studies becomes a powerhouse, with nine professors, five of them tenured. Maria Cotera will have more to say in this issue about Latina/o Studies and about these welcome additions to our program. For now, let me just point out that more than most such programs, Latina/o Studies at Michigan balances transnational interests in the Caribbean with those in Mexico. This is, I think, quite fitting for a program on the nation’s “third coast”: The Great Lakes. We are eager and ready to host more graduate students in this area.

The other two new faculty to join African American studies in the Program in American Culture: Stephen Berrey from Indiana University, who began teaching with us this September. A historian with interests in performance, Professor Berrey explores the late segregation-era in the South. Brandi Hughes, currently on a post-doctoral fellowship at Stanford, will be joining us next fall from Yale. Professor Hughes, also an historian, studies African-American

missionaries to Africa from the 1850s to the First World War. Last academic year, Professor Xiamara Santamarina shifted part of her position into our unit as well. Depending on how one counts, we can now say that the Program in American Culture boasts ten or eleven African Americanists, all but three tenured, and many affiliated with our close collaborator and neighbor, the Center for Afroamerican and African Studies (headed by current ASA president and AC associate, Kevin Gaines). Many of these scholars are also affiliated with the Departments of History and English. We eagerly accept Ph.D. students with interests in African American Studies.

Last year, again with what at first seems to be against all national and state economic realities, the program was able to expand its summer funding for graduate students and to inaugurate a new graduate orientation. At the same time, we revised our graduate program to insure that our students kept on track for the timely completion of the Ph.D. We have entrenched our practices of “zone mentoring”—workshops and workshop-style courses—and reinvigorated our graduate advising. We admitted a fabulous class of eight students this year.

Our Native American Studies faculty remains powerful, particularly in the area of history, with major prize winners from the American Studies Association in its ranks. Tiya Miles, such a prize winner, is the director. Phil Deloria, just stepping down as ASA president, is a leading member of this program. Our Asian/Pacific Islander American Studies faculty also boast major prize winners, indeed I should mention that Scott Kurashige this year won the Beveridge Award from the American Historical Association, perhaps the most important academic prize won by a member of our faculty last year. Not to be outdone, however, poet, lyricist, and scholar Amy Stillman brought home a Grammy Award, a prize that needs no explanation, yet one few American Studies or Ethnic Studies faculties can boast.

Our graduate program has been central to American Culture since its inception in 1952. We also remain dedicated to improving our undergraduate courses and offerings. The students seem to be responding, as we have growing enrollments and growing numbers of concentrators (or majors). In spite of our very good fortune, we cannot be unaware of the enormous difficulties facing our state and the nation. We are turning attention to doing what we can to carefully deploy the resources at our disposal. In this, we are joining our colleagues across the nation and beyond the borders.

—Greg Dowd

American Culture News

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Ethnic Studies Directors:

Vince Diaz, Asian/Pacific Islander American Studies

Maria Cotera, Latina/o Studies

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The Program in American Culture promotes publicly engaged and socially committed scholarship and teaching aimed at understanding the struggles and creativity that have produced the societies and cultures of America. In particular, we seek to illuminate the significance, the lived experience, and the relation among race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, and class, both within and beyond national borders. The Program brings the history and interpretive strategies of ethnic studies into conversation with critical approaches to literature, history, cultural studies, and social sciences, as well as with knowledge produced outside the boundaries of the university.

President of the University of Michigan: Mary Sue Coleman

Regents of the University of Michigan:

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Katherine E. White

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Faculty

Evelyn Alsultany is serving as the 2009-2010 Center for International and Comparative Studies (CICS) International Security and Development Fellow at U-M. She will teach a small seminar for international studies minor degree students, will give a public lecture, and write a short essay for a CICS publication.

Bruce Conforth has been elected to the advisory board of the National Blues Heritage Foundation, a non-profit that works to preserve the history and current activity of blues artists and to fund blues related research.

Maria Cotera, author of *Native Speakers: Ella Deloria, Zora Neal Hurston, Jovita González, and the Poetics of Culture* has been awarded the Gloria Anzaldúa book prize for 2009 by the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA). The prize is awarded for "groundbreaking scholarship in women's studies that makes significant contributions to women of color/transnational scholarship."

Phil Deloria has been named the Carroll Smith-Rosenberg Collegiate Professor of History and American Culture. Collegiate professorships are one of the highest honors the College and the University can bestow upon an eminent member of the faculty. The named professorship also expresses departmental, College, and University recognition and respect for a former member of our faculty, **Carroll Smith-Rosenberg**.

Mary Kelley has been elected to the Executive Board of the Organization of American Historians.

Larry La Fountain-Stokes has been promoted to associate professor with tenure. He is the author of *Queer Ricans: Cultures and Sexualities in the Diaspora* (University of Minnesota Press, 2009).

Silvia Pedraza has been awarded the 2009 Julian Samora Distinguished Career Award by the Latina/o Section Committee of the American Sociology Association. This honor reflects her long record of impressive scholarly accomplishment, her dedication to students, and her contributions to advancing the sociological study of Latino/as.

Student News

Sam Erman has been offered a clerkship by Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens. Sam will serve as a clerk for a Federal Circuit Judge during 2009-10, then begin his clerkship with the Supreme Court in 2010-11.

Sharon Lee has received two Fulbright fellowships and one Korea Foundation fellowship for her year-long research trip to Korea. Sharon was also inducted into the University's Edward Alexander Bouchet Graduate Honor Society.

John Low has accepted a visiting assistant professor position in American Indian Studies at the University of Illinois - Urbana/Champaign for 2009-10.

Wendy Michael was awarded the prize for "Best Graduate Student Paper" at the Great Lakes American Studies Association Conference that was held last May. Her paper was titled: "The Ford Rouge Tour: Deindustrialization on Display." She attributes a great part of this paper's success to the American Culture Workshop program and the participants' insightful suggestions.

Alumni News

Angela Dillard (PhD'95) has been promoted to full professor in the Center for Afroamerican and African Studies and Residential College at the University of Michigan. She has been awarded a Humanities Institute Fellowship for 2009-10 and plans to work on her next book project, a political biography of James H. Meredith, the civil rights icon turned conservative Republican.

Deborah Kanter (BA'84), Chair & Associate Professor of History, Albion College, has recently published a new book, *Hijos del Pueblo: Gender, Family, and Community in Rural Mexico, 1730-1850* (University of Texas Press, 2009). She states, "The interdisciplinary approach of my undergraduate years in American Culture continues to shape my teaching."

Estevan Rael-Gálvez (PhD'02), has been chosen as the new executive director of the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque. Gálvez has served as New Mexico's State Historian since 2001 and is credited with raising the profile and reach of the Office of the State Historian during his tenure. He developed a nationally recognized research fellowship, as well as high-profile student internship programs. He also created the New Mexico Digital History Project and its nationally award-winning website, newmexicohistory.org. The Digital History Project has shifted the educational and cultural paradigm by making history meaningful and accessible to a global audience.

Congratulations

....to **Paul Anderson** and Sara Konrath on the birth of their daughter, Alice Ziva Lucille. Welcome to the newest addition of the American Culture community!

Faculty Profile:

Scott Kurashige, associate professor in American Culture and History, won the 2008 Albert J. Beveridge Award from the American Historical Association for his first book, *The Shifting Grounds of Race: Black and Japanese Americans in the Making of Multiethnic Los Angeles* (Princeton University Press, 2008). The Beveridge Award is given annually for the best book in English on the history of the United States, Latin America, or Canada from 1492 to the present. He recently discussed his book with associate professor **Matthew Countryman**.

Matthew: Scott, congratulations on your superb book and your well-deserved award. You have, I think, set the standard for a new kind of multiracial and multivocal U.S. history. Can you tell me a little about how you got interested in this type of scholarship?

Scott: Thanks for the props. My work is the product of many influences and sources of wisdom. I found my first scholarly home in African American studies when I was an undergrad at the University of Pennsylvania. I needed to make sense of the black/white racial segregation that was so stark in late-1980s West Philadelphia, and historian Evelyn Brooks-Higginbotham particularly guided me in urban community studies. I also moved into the realm of activism and sought a deep and multifaceted understanding of race as I became convinced that multiracial coalitions were the key to progressive social change.

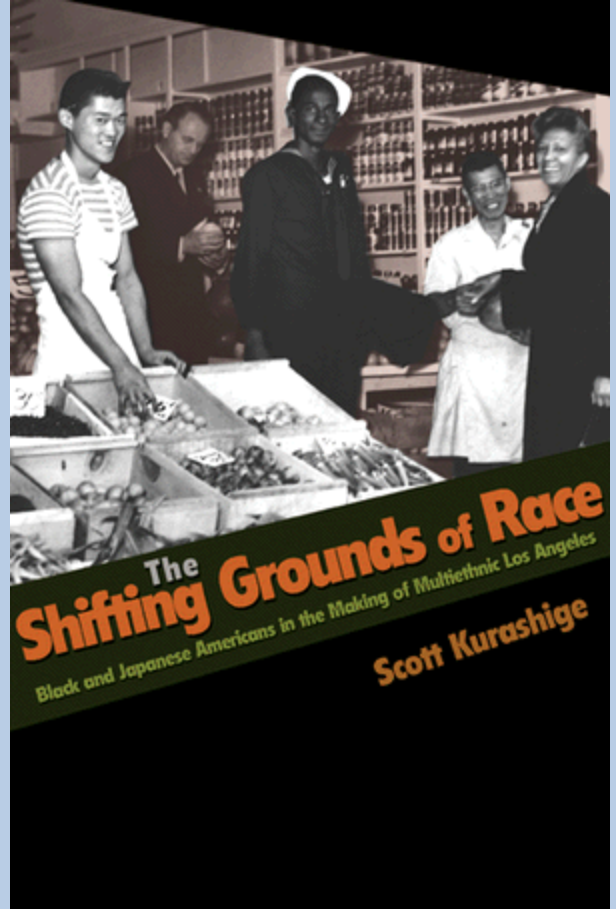
But I also felt a void, since Penn failed to offer a single Asian American studies course during my time there. Thus, in 1991, I began my graduate work at UCLA's Asian American Studies Center, a pioneering site of engaged scholarship that facilitated my connection to diverse peoples and organizations in LA.

Looking back, I had a romantic and naïve view of "Third World" unity drawn from the ethnic studies and national liberation struggles of the 1960s. So the 1992 L.A. uprising not only served as a critical socio-political event; it also prompted an epistemological crisis. The mainstream media could only offer a "clash of cultures" narrative—one that was too frequently rooted in stereotypical depictions of black rioters, brown looters, and yellow vigilantes. Ethnic studies had just begun to think through the new contradictions arising in the aftermath of the civil rights movement, post-1965 immigration, and the decline of the Fordist industrial order.

Matthew: How does this relate to the genesis of the book and your decision to examine the histories of Japanese Americans and African Americans in Los Angeles?

Scott: When the uprising broke out in April 1992, I had already been working on research projects with two scholars (Edward Chang and Kyeyoung Park) focused on Black/Korean American relations in South Central LA. My goal as I moved into the history PhD program (with advising from the late, great urban historian Eric Monkkonen) was to situate relations between African Americans and Asian Americans within a longer historical arc.

I really just started from personal experience growing up in the Japanese American (JA) community of LA. I knew JAs who had successfully



operated small businesses for decades serving primarily Black customers. I knew radical JAs who had been highly active building solidarity with the Black movement. And I knew that thousands of JAs had long resided in the Crenshaw district, which emerged as the center of Black life in LA. So in a very simple sense I knew I could tell a story that proved Blacks and Asians were not only capable of peaceful co-existence but also of building strong mutual bonds.

At the same time, I knew JAs who mimicked the "white flight" impulse, drifting further out into suburbs and sometimes harboring anti-Black prejudices. I felt that understanding and historicizing these countervailing tendencies among JAs would open a window into a more complex understanding of multiethnic relations. And I was blessed to work with the dean of JA history, Yuji Ichioka, another legend who left us far too soon.

Simultaneously, I researched complementary dynamics within the history of Black LA. For instance, the politics of World War II produced a discourse of American nationalism that made both Japanese American internment and African American integration into industrial employment essential components of a "total war" effort. While some community leaders primarily pursued the new and long overdue opportunities that the war afforded for Black advancement, others were moved to advance a vision of multiracial solidarity that directly challenged anti-JA discrimination.

Scott Kurashige

Matthew: You titled the book “The Shifting Grounds of Race.” Can you explain why you chose that title and what it says about the histories of the communities you examine in the book?

Scott: Well, I need to apologize to Robert Self, whose dissertation I recently discovered had a similar title. I think we are both using the seismological metaphor of California as a place that is not simply wacky and unstable but a place that breaks new ground by auguring multiple forms of social change for better or worse.

My epistemological view has been notably shaped by my relationship with Grace Lee Boggs, the 94-year-old philosopher/activist and a Chinese American who has spent most of her adult life as a radical organizer within Black Detroit. She implored me to sense the rhythm of movements as they unfold within conditions distinct to each era. In this we may appreciate the dialectical evolution of history. So through our historical narratives, we may grasp a sense of how our personal and collective trajectories move from past to present and ultimately toward a new future we are actively shaping.

For instance, I discovered a relationship between shifting paradigms of racial discourse and shifting patterns of residential settlement and community formation. I had begun with a premise that Black and Japanese Americans resided in Crenshaw because racism restricted both groups to living in inner-city ghetto neighborhoods. It turns out that was almost entirely wrong.

Crenshaw began as an all-white middle-class suburb on LA’s Westside in the 1920s, a new symbol of sprawl and racial exclusion characterizing the interwar period. From the 1950s to early 1960s, it became the preeminent site for residential integration campaigns led by professional and entrepreneurial Blacks and JAs, sometimes working with white liberals. It was probably the largest JA community in the continental US during this period. By the late 1960s, it was one of the most truly diverse sites around—home base for political ascent of Tom Bradley, an African American who would make his mark with a two-decade mayoral tenure marked by the repositioning of LA as a multicultural city at the nexus of global commerce.

Matthew: This is not the image of Crenshaw that most Americans get from popular media sources.

Scott: Right. That only arises after whites move out. Then, one to two decades later, a significant proportion of JAs leave, facilitated in part by a “model minority” image that renders them more acceptable and less threatening in the eyes of suburban whites. And with a change in the class composition of the African American population, Crenshaw comes to be known as the ‘hood and a cultural referent of an authentic and “indigenous” Blackness. (Ice T and Ice Cube have both called Crenshaw home!) This is mostly happening after my book ends in the early 1970s, and this development links Crenshaw to South Central LA.

But still the district kept changing as Latinos entered in large numbers, some “trading up” from less expensive homes in other neighborhoods and others immigrating to LA to work in growing service and light-manufacturing industries. So we can see in just this one relatively small place a microcosm of the transformations of race, culture, geography, and political economy that have made America in the Obama era so interesting, complex, and surprising.

Matthew: You write at the intersection of three historiographies—Asian American history, African American history and urban history. How do each of these historical narratives change when you put them together into a single monograph?

Scott: US urban historians have been particularly acute at delineating processes of spatial segregation, economic development, and public policy formation that produce and reproduce racial inequality. That field, as your work exemplifies, is in healthy dialogue with Black studies. But it tends to lag well behind the cutting-edge work of Asian American history on issues of multiracial and transnational studies.

As I broaden my frame, I am working at the intersection of these fields to understand how the reconfiguration of global capitalist dynamics, racial politics, migration patterns, and national identity in the second-half of the 20th century lead conterminously to the growth and globalization of LA and abandonment and disparagement of Detroit. Solving these two divergent cases are crucial to the challenge of 21st century social justice.

Scott Kurashige joined the Program in American Culture and Department of History faculty in 2001. He received his B.A. in History from the University of Pennsylvania (1990), an M.A. in History and Asian American Studies from UCLA (1996), and Ph.D. in History from UCLA (2000).

Below: Scott accepts the 2008 Albert J Beveridge award, conferred at the 123rd Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, January 2-5, 2009, in New York City.



Asian/Pacific Islander American Studies

Vicente Diaz published "Historiography Alive: Greg Dening and the Invigoration of Indigenous Pacific History," as part of a tribute to the late Professor Greg Dening, in *The Contemporary Pacific*, 21(2): 308-311. **Diaz**, **Damon Salesa**, and **Michael Spencer** received a grant from the UM National Center for Institutional Diversity (NCID) to convene a series of talks and seminars, entitled "Articulating Difference with the Pacific Islands: Diversity, Innovative Scholarship, and the Advancement of Pacific Islands Studies at the University of Michigan...And Beyond." The objective of the year long program is to produce a proposal to establish a UM Pacific Islands Research Institute. During the 2008-09 academic year, **Scott Kurashige** was a fellow in residence at the Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History at Harvard University. **Grace Lee Boggs**, 94-year-old Detroit-based philosopher/activist and longtime friend of A/PIA Studies, will receive an honorary doctorate from the University of Michigan at the December 2009 graduation ceremony. The CD *He Nani* was released by Daniel Ho Creations on August 18, 2009. This is the follow-up to the Grammy Award-winning CD *Ikena*, by Tia Carrere and Daniel Ho. The CD is co-produced by faculty member **Amy K. Stillman**. **Sarita See** co-edited, with Angel Velasco Shaw, the catalogue for the contemporary art exhibition *Out of the Archive: Process and Progress*, which opened September 18, 2009, at the Asian American Arts Centre (AAAC) in New York City's Chinatown. Curated by Shaw, the exhibition features four artists: Tomie Arai, Swati Khuara, John Yoyogi Fortes, and Albert Chong, all of whom are included in the AAAC's newly-launched digital archive of contemporary Asian American art: <http://artasiamerica.org/>. **See** also contributed an essay on Swati Khurana's work, while Visiting Fellow and A/PIA Alum, **Jan Christian Bernabe**, contributed an essay on John Yoyogi Fortes's work. A/PIA undergraduate, **Tiffany Huang**, published *Taiwan Tiff*, an autobiography of a second generation Asian American girl trying to find her way through the East and West. *Taiwan Tiff* is currently sold on Amazon.com. You may contact Tiffany for more information at huangti@umich.edu for more information.

Latina/o Studies

We are pleased to welcome three new faculty to the Latina/o Studies Program. **Yeidy Rivero** and **Colin Gunkel** (jointly appointed in American Culture and the Department of Screen Arts and Cultures) are both media scholars whose research and teaching focuses on the complex intersection of race and media and explores the ways in which Latina/os have shaped (and been shaped) by cultural representations in television and film. **Daniel Ramírez** (jointly appointed in American Culture and History) is a scholar of Latina/o religious traditions, with an emphasis on evangelicalisms of the Americas. These new faculty will enrich the intellectual fabric of our Program and expand our curricular offerings. We are delighted to welcome them into our community.

We hosted a major symposium in honor of our 25th anniversary in October. The **Latina/o Studies Silver Anniversary Symposium** (October 29-31) featured former faculty and graduate students who have made significant contributions to the field including George Sánchez, Frances Aparicio, Neil Foley, Natalia Molina and many others. Some highlights from the conference are featured on page 8.

Native American Studies

In the spring of 2007, faculty members in the Native American Studies Program began working collaboratively with Amy Harris, Director of the U-M Exhibit Museum of Natural History, on the issue of the dioramas of historical, miniature American Indian scenes that had been on display in the museum since the late 1950s. Native American Studies submitted a letter to the Dean of the College urging removal of the display and stating that "[a]s an elite public university, the University of Michigan has a special charge to inform and enlighten not only its enrolled students, but also the greater citizenry of the state and region. We feel strongly that in their current location and mode of presentation, the dioramas undermine this dual responsibility."

The College of Literature, Science, and the Arts (LS&A), in response to Amy Harris's leadership and a number of campus constituencies (including Native students in the Program in American Culture who had been engaged with this issue for several years), made the decision to support the removal of the diorama exhibit. This fall, those dioramas are in a transitional phase on their way to removal from public view. They will remain available for study by researchers, faculty members, and their students. An overlay exhibit currently in place explains the reasons and process for this transition. At a public event in September unveiling the overlay exhibit, American Culture/NAS doctoral candidate **John Low** (Potawatomi) explained his multi-layered critique of the dioramas as a Native scholar and museum curator. At the conclusion of the event, American Culture /NAS graduate student **Veronica Pasfield** (Anishinaabe) presented Amy Harris with a "storyteller" design Pendleton blanket on behalf of Native American Studies, in thanks for her work on this challenging project.

In addition to this momentous shift in our campus environment, Native American Studies celebrates a number of recent accomplishments within our faculty. **Joseph Gone** has seen success in his efforts to integrate American Indian traditional healing with conventional mental health and substance abuse treatment services. He has received funding from multiple sources for two preliminary research projects on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation in Montana as well as in Detroit, and to convene a public roundtable of healers, clinicians, and academics. **Margaret Noori**, instructor of Ojibwe language and literature (and the current poet laureate of Mackinac Island), accepted the position of Director of the Comprehensive Studies Program on campus. When time permits, she will continue to offer courses in NAS. **Philip Deloria** has begun serving as a trustee for the National Museum of the American Indian. In addition, he recently had the distinctive honor of receiving a collegiate professorship from the College of LS&A. In addition to being Professor of American Culture, **Philip Deloria** is now the Carroll Smith-Rosenberg Collegiate Professor of History and American Culture. And finally, **Philip Deloria**, **Michael Witgen**, **Howard Kimewon** and **Margaret Noori** are all serving as co-hosts of the sold-out Zingerman's Fall Native Harvest dinner!

The Program in American Culture is pleased to welcome the entering class of 2009. These graduate students represent the finest of their cohort and bring to us a wide range of interests and experiences. We look forward to helping these fine students achieve their professional goals.

Yamil Avivi, BA, New York University, Metropolitan Studies, 1999; MA, New York University, Latin American Studies, 2007. Interests: queer diasporas; the queering of space; the intersection between race, nationalism, and sexuality; Hispanic/Brazilian LGBTQ immigrant identities; ethnography; socio-cultural transnational dynamics in immigrant communities; and queer homeland activism.

Jason Coráñez Bolton, BA, Marquette University, Spanish, 2007; MA, Marquette University, Spanish, 2009. Interests: post-structuralism, postmodernism, feminist philosophical thought and theory, feminist and native epistemology, ethnoepistemology, queer of color critique, theories of performativity, Standpoint Theory, post-colonial theory, comparativism, Hispanic literature of the Philippines (José Rizal), Spanish and U.S. empire, and Latin American independence literatures.

David Green, BA, University of Florida, Economics, 2007; MA, University of Wisconsin, History, 2009. Interests: 20th century United States cultural/ social history, history of homo/sexuality, queer studies, theory, & queer of color critique, gay and lesbian studies, critical race theory.

Elizabeth Harmon, BA, Kenyon College, American Studies and Spanish, 2005. Interests: 20th century U.S. cultural history, Left culture and politics, identity politics and historical representation, public humanities, cultural studies and cultural theory.

Frank Kelderman, BA, University of Groningen, American Studies, 2005; MA, University of Groningen, American Studies, 2007. Interests: early national women's history and literature, cultural materialism, theories of culture and ideology.

Jennifer Peacock, BA, Mount Holyoke College, American Studies, 2003; MA, Dartmouth College, American Studies, 2007. Interests: Chicana/o literature, environmental history, eco-criticism.

Mejdulene Shomali, BA, University of Michigan-Flint, English and Philosophy, 2004; MA, Ohio State University, English and Women's Studies, 2007. Interests: Arab American studies, queer theory, non-normative genders and embodiments.

Wendy Sung, BA, University of Southern California, Radio, TV & Film, 2004; MA, University of Southern California, Radio, TV & Film, 2007. Interests: intersections of Asian American and African American popular culture, with particular regard to popular music and performance; subculture and fashion.

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Mark Padilla, Lawrence La Fountain-Stokes, Jossianna Arroyo and Danny Méndez participate in conference panel, “Sexing it Up: New Approaches to Latino Sexualities”



Latina/o Studies Core Faculty at Michigan: Maria Coterá, Lawrence La Fountain-Stokes, Yeidy Rivero, Jesse Hoffnung-Garskof, Silvia Pedraza, Daniel Ramírez, Amy Carroll, Colin Gunckel, Anthony Mora



Conference organizers **Maria Coterá and Anthony Mora** pictured with keynote speaker, **George Sánchez** and College of Literature, Science and the Arts Dean **Terrence McDonald**



Founding members of the Latina/o Studies Program returned to Ann Arbor. Featured here: **Silvia Pedraza, Héctor Delgado, Margarita de la Vega Hurtado, Neil Foley, and John Chávez**



Since its creation in 1984, the Latina and Latino Studies Program at Michigan has educated generations of undergraduates, shaped pioneering graduate students, mentored up-and-coming junior faculty, and served as the intellectual home to renowned senior scholars. To mark the momentous twenty-fifth year of the program at Michigan, the Program in American Culture hosted the Latina/o Studies Silver Anniversary Symposium October 29 to November 1. This symposium drew together a dynamic range of scholars (all of whom are either Michigan alumni or former faculty who helped develop our program) from across disciplines to discuss the past, present, and future of Latino/a Studies in the U.S. As an innovative twist, Latina/o Studies also invited undergraduate students from across the nation to participate as well. Special programming was given to these students about applying for graduate school in Latina/o Studies.

The Latina/o Studies Silver Anniversary Symposium was much more than simply a celebratory homecoming. It acknowledged and renewed the University of Michigan's centrality to the challenging intellectual work facing the next generation of scholars in Latino and Latina Studies. The Symposium stood as an official re-launching of our Latina/o Studies Program that will include a revamped undergraduate concentration/major, expanded graduate curriculum, and outstanding scholarship from our core and affiliate faculty.