



**RESEARCH
CENTER
FOR THE
AMERICAS**

DIALOGUES WITHOUT BORDERS

**Annual Report
2019-2020**

UC SANTA CRUZ

WWW.RCA.UCSC.EDU

FROM THE DIRECTOR



The 2019-2020 academic year closed on an unfortunate note as we rapidly adjusted to the "new abnormal" living with the COVID-19 pandemic. As you will see in this annual report though, the RCA managed to move forward on many fronts, from providing continued research support to faculty and students to implementing wonderful

programs and initiatives, including successfully becoming a [Tinker Foundation](#) institution to support early career graduate students with research projects in Latin America and hosting a Spring webinar series in partnership with [Speak Out: The Institute for Democratic Education and Culture](#). We also published a timely [research report](#) about youth voter mobilization efforts in the Central Valley and we had an incredible inaugural year with the [Human Rights Investigations Lab for the Americas](#). As you'll no doubt note in this report, the RCA continues to support the mission of the University of California by advancing cutting-edge research, analysis, and programs on subjects that matter to the world..

Thank you to the Dean of Social Sciences Katharyne Mitchell, RCA Program and Events Manager Jacquelyn Powell, RCA events assistants Carlos Lucatero and Dyanna Rodriguez, RCA research assistant Monica Estrada Arias, Graduate Student Researchers Alejandra Watanabe-Farro, Francesca Romeo, and Marina Segatti, and the RCA Steering Committee members for contributing to our success. We relied on several amazing campus colleagues to support the RCA's work. Thank you to Travis Becker, Chris Benner, Nathaniel Deutsch, Mykell Discipulo, Saskia Nauenberg Dunkell, Kristy Golubiewski-Davis, Rebecca Hernandez, Ned LeBlond, Darío León, Jennifer McNulty, Stephanie Moore, Susan Moran, Christina Navarro, Ursula Oberg, Marcia Ochoa, Irena Polić, B. Ruby Rich, Virginia V. Rivera, Caroline Rodriguez, Carol Schimke, Linda Scholz, Daniel Story, Lynne Stoops, Jennifer Taylor, Ashlee Tews, Kevin Wasbauer, and Joni White. We also want to thank our 17 campus and community cosponsors for supporting our events.

-Dr. Sylvanna M. Falcón, RCA Director

Thanks to our 2019 – 2020 Program & Event Cosponsors

American Indian Resource Center, College 9, College 10, Digital Scholarship Commons at McHenry Library, Environmental Studies Pepper-Giberson Endowed Chair, Film and Digital Media Department, Kresge College, Latin American and Latino Studies Department, Oakes College, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Politics Department, Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History, Social Documentation Program, Sociology Department, The Institute for Social Transformation, The Humanities Institute, and the UC Santa Cruz Foundation.

AT A GLANCE

GRANTS

27



For students, faculty, and research clusters in any Division.

EVENTS

17



Film screenings, public lectures, online discussions, and webinars.



STUDENT IMPACT

58

Through awards, travel grants, the Human Rights Investigations Lab, and jobs

PROGRAMS

5

Tinker Foundation Awards, Brazil Online, Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program, Photo Contest, and Publications



FUNDS RAISED

Grants	\$88,500
Campus Support	\$20,565

The Division of Social Sciences provides our general operations budget, the Student Fee Advisory Committee funded our part-time staff position, and in-kind support came from [The Humanities Institute](#).

RESEARCH GRANTS

GRADUATE STUDENTS



AARON ARUCK

History

"Policing Sexuality and Migration at the U.S.-Mexico Border: Bi-National Efforts to Control Prostitution, Venereal Disease, and Homosexuality across International Space, 1920-1965"



MICHELAINA JOHNSON

Environmental Studies

"Studying Disparity in Access to Clean Drinking Water in the Salinas and Pajaro Valleys"



PRISCILLA MARTINEZ

History

"By Land and By Sea: Indigeneity, Mestizaje, and Nationalism at the Western-Pacific Borderlands from 1824-1934"



MELODIE MICHEL

Music

"Ars Longa de la Habana, an ensemble from Cuba: Musicians' and communities' strategies in a non-capitalist context"



MONICA MIKHAIL

Anthropology

"Transnational Production of Belonging and Care through Social Service Provision by the Coptic Church in Bolivia"



YVONNE SHERWOOD

Sociology

"Water is Sacred! Womxn are Sacred!": Indigenous Womxn's Embodied Knowledges on the Frontline of Protest"

FACULTY



LILY BALLOFFET

Assistant Professor of Latin America and Latino Studies

"To Make Authentic Cures and Safeguard Life in the Tropics: The Serpentarium of the United Fruit Company"



MATT O'HARA

Professor of History

"The Rivers Merged: A Tale of Amazonian Exploration, Indigenous Knowledge, and Medical Discovery"



JUSTIN PEREZ

Assistant Professor of Latin American and Latino Studies

"Thinking Transactional Sex After Peru's Internal Armed Conflict"



ZAC ZIMMER

Assistant Professor of Literature

"Lasting Impacts in the Campo del Cielo"

Lionel Cantú Memorial Awards

2019 AND 2020 GRADUATE RECIPIENTS

ABOUT THE AWARD



The Lionel Cantú Memorial Award celebrates the life and work of Dr. Lionel Cantú (1965-2002), former Assistant Professor of Sociology at UC Santa Cruz. Professor Cantú's scholarship bridged and advanced Latino sociology, immigration studies, transnational/cross-border studies, gender and sexuality studies, and the study of gay men and masculinity. We collaborate with the Sociology and Latin American and Latino Studies Departments on this graduate student award.

Congratulations

TO THE 2019 AND 2020 RECIPIENTS

2019

Lorraine Affourtit, History of Art & Visual Culture

"Indigenous Worldmaking: Queer and Indigenous Activisms, Embodiment, and Decolonial Resistance"

Andrea Vazquez, Education

"Queer Latinx Youth Negotiating Race, Gender and Sexuality in Social Activism"

2020

Candy Martinez, Latin American and Latino Studies

"Rethinking Structural Inequalities and Emotional Illnesses in Oaxacan Communities"

Marina Segatti, Feminist Studies

"Sapatão é Revolução: Language, Sexuality, and Lesbian Transnational Resistance"

Roxanna Villalobos, Sociology

"Latina Girlhoods in the Rural/Urban Borderlands"

Tinker Foundation Awards

Field Research Grants to Latin America

About the Award

In partnership with the Latin American and Latino Studies Department of UC Santa Cruz, the RCA is offering grants for early career graduate students with research projects in Latin America. These grants are made possible by the Tinker Foundation with additional support from the UC Santa Cruz Foundation's Board Opportunity Fund, Graduate Division, and the Office of Research. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has delayed the start of their field research travels, we are very proud to introduce the first cohort of Tinker Foundation award recipients.



MARIO GOMEZ-ZAMORA
The P'urhépecha Sexualities in the Local and in the Transnational Space
Latin American & Latino Studies
Advisor: Dr. Fernando Levia
Country: México



KATIE LIGMOND
Women and Textiles: A Look at Empire from the Margins
History of Art and Visual Culture
Advisor: Dr. Carolyn Dean
Countries: México, Chile, Argentina



JULIA HAREN CAR
Solving the mystery of a contradictory pattern of beetle damage in Panamanian spiral gingers
Ecology & Evolutionary Biology
Advisor: Dr. Kathleen Kay
Country: Panamá



PIPER MILTON
Spatial and Cultural Transformations: Centers of Religious Devotion in Colonial Central Mexico
History
Advisor: Dr. Matt O'Hara
Country: México



JUAN CARLOS JERI VIDAL
Project Ayniucha: A dynamic and participatory strategy for bycatch prevention and improvement of fishing efficiency in Peru
Coastal Science and Policy
Advisor: Dr. Elliott Hazen
Country: Perú



LUCAS SOLORZANO
Freedom is a Place: Shaping abolitionist geographies in the wake of migrant containment and detention
Social Documentation
Advisor: John Jota Leaños
Country: México



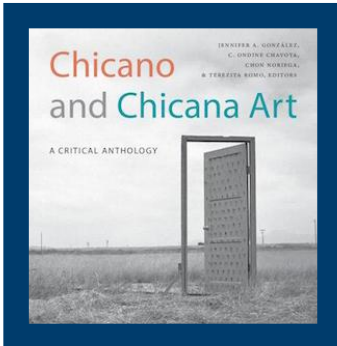
BOYEONG KIM
Miracles Revisited: Developmentalism and the Government of Gendered Citizen in Chile and South Korea
Latin American and Latino Studies
Advisor: Dr. Cecilia Rivas
Country: Chile



LUCIA VITALE
INGOs and National Health Care in Costa Rica: Towards Health for All
Politics
Advisor: Dr. Matthew Sparke
Country: Costa Rica

PUBLIC EVENTS

HIGHLIGHTS

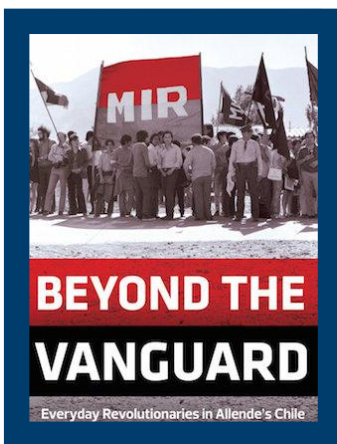


ROUNDTABLE: CHICANO AND CHICANA ART: A CRITICAL ANTHOLOGY

Dr. Jennifer Gonzalez, Professor of History of Art and Visual Culture at UC Santa Cruz, is the editor of *Chicano and Chicana Art: A Critical Anthology*. She hosted a roundtable discussion about the state of Chicana/o art and politics with scholars and artists from the book: Laura Perez, Amalia Mesa-Bains, Catherine Ramírez, and Felicia Rice.

DR. ANDRÉ BORGES: RIGHT-WING POPULISM AND PARTY SYSTEM CHANGE IN BRAZIL

Dr. André Borges, Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Brasília, spoke about Brazil's 2018 elections and the party system changes that led to the reorganization of the political right, which has implications for the future of Brazilian democracy.

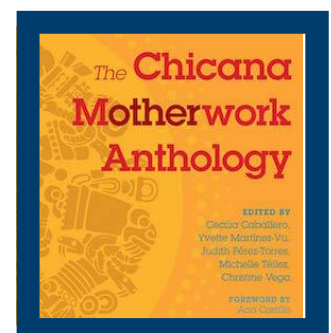


DR. MARIAN SCHLOTTERBECK: HOW TO BUILD A REVOLUTION FROM THE BOTTOM UP

Dr. Marian Schlotterbeck, Associate Professor of History at UC Davis, presented on her book, *Beyond the Vanguard: Everyday Revolutionaries in Allende's Chile*. She explores the decade before Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship since the legacy of this period continues to resonate in Chile and beyond. She accounts for how working-class people transformed the existing social order by embracing radical politics.

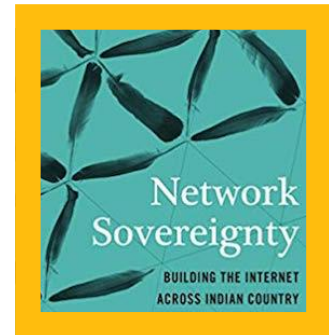
BREAKFAST WITH SCHOLAR: DR. CHRISTINE VEGA, CO-EDITOR OF THE CHICANA MOTHERWORK ANTHOLOGY

Merging the Chicana/Latina tradition of "testimonios," *The Chicana Motherwork Anthology* aims to imagine and realize the ability to thrive in and outside of academia. As a co-editor of this book, Dr. Christine Vega expanded on the feminist concept of Chicana motherwork, which recognizes, validates, and centers the unrecognized forms of labor by Chicana and Women of Color mother-scholars.



**MARISA DUARTE: CONNECTIVE ENGAGEMENT:
INDIGENOUS CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING THROUGH
DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURES**

Author of *Network Sovereignty: Building the Internet Across Indian Country*, Dr. Marisa Elena Duarte spoke about Native American and Indigenous peoples' approaches to information and communication technologies through an emphasis on sovereignty and resisting colonialism.



**PUERTO RICO: FILMING RESISTANCE AND SURVIVAL
FOLLOWED BY Q&A WITH FILMMAKER JUAN C. DÁVILA
SANTIAGO AND ACTIVIST MARISEL ROBLES GUTIÉRREZ**

Over 250 people watched two screenings of documentary films by Juan C. Dávila (filmmaker and LALS Ph.D. student) about the devastating aftermath of Hurricane Maria on Puerto Rico. Marisel Robles Gutierrez, an activist featured in the film, also attended and raised awareness about the social justice issues that continue to face the island.

Photo Scholarship Contest Winners

These photos beautifully captured the theme of "Chosen Family," with their focus on nature, ancestors and friendships, and the beauty of new families.

Stars and Sequoias



by Vanessa Alarcon

The Chosen and the Given



by Michael Lara

I Want To Hold Your Hand



by Carolyn Mock



Human Rights Investigations Lab

Launched in Fall 2019, the Human Rights Investigations Lab *for the Americas* offers digital verification support to NGOs, news outlets, and other advocacy partners that are initiating open source investigations. Our Lab harnesses digital technologies to address alleged human rights violations in order to achieve accountability for communities adversely affected by these abuses. This Lab extends the RCA's rich history of supporting interdisciplinary social justice research into the digital realm.

410 hours of dedication

A total of 410 hours was spent on conducting human rights investigations, open source skill building, and collaborative research efforts: 80 hours of seminar, 120 hours of lab team research, and 210 hours of independent research in the inaugural year.

20 student researchers

Students from diverse backgrounds came together to add to the transnational effort of social justice work. Drawing from 12 departments in the Social Sciences, Humanities, and the Arts, the research team consisted of 3 graduate students and 17 undergraduate students.

5 human rights cases

The Lab completed five human rights cases and also translated/transcribed material from Spanish and Portuguese to English.



Credit: PlanetObserver, South America - Satellite image - South America with country borders, true colour satellite image processed from Landsat data. [CC BY-NC-ND 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/)

NEW WEBSITE COMING IN 2021!

<https://HumanRights.ucsc.edu>

"The emerging field of 'digital verification,' which is taking hold in newsrooms and nonprofits around the globe, is now taking root at UC Santa Cruz."

-University of California News



From Our Students!

"I really see our work as shaping a unique vision of how to resolve human rights violations in the digital age."

"As an undocumented student I feel empowered to be able to digitally transcend borders and to learn open source skills in order to further the work of human rights in the Americas."

"Undergrads spend a lot of time in classes learning about human rights abuses. The Lab gives us a chance to be engaged in a way beyond the classroom setting."

"It is rewarding to know that our research helps to tell the stories of people and communities whose voices are silenced by those in positions of power."

RESEARCH CLUSTERS

We support independent collaborative research clusters comprised of UC Santa Cruz faculty and/or graduate students in any division in the areas of interest to the RCA.

INTERROGATING THE INTERSECTIONS OF GENDER, RACE, AND CLASS TO EXAMINE BRAZIL'S CURRENT REACTIONARY WAVE

This research cluster met regularly to discuss the political crisis in Brazil. The co-organizers - Marina Segatti (graduate student, Feminist Studies) and Patricia Pinho (associate professor, LALS) -- also presented at the University of San Francisco and at a Brazilianist conference in San Diego, California based on the cluster's work.



CRITICAL CULTURAL POLITICAL ECONOMY OF EXTRACTIVISM

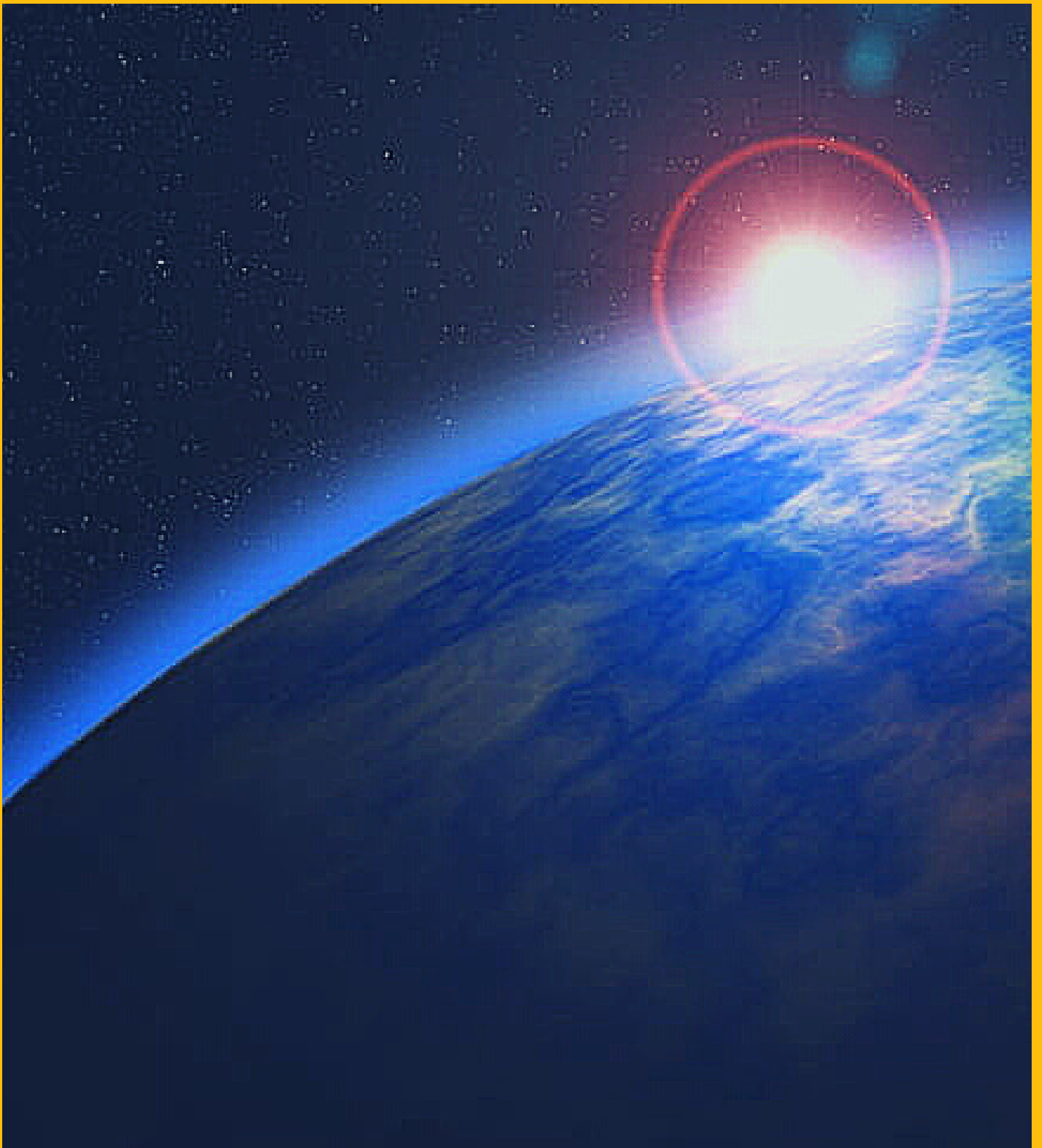


This research cluster explored how a cultural political economy approach unravels the nature of socio-environmental and socio-territorial conflicts in the Americas. They organized two public events: a movie screening of *Daughter of the Lake (Hija de la Laguna)* with film director Ernesto Cabellos and the indigenous protagonist N.lida Ayay and a [Spanish language webinar](#) called "*Las nuevas estrategias del extractivismo, la acción del Estado y la defensa socioterritorial en tiempos del coronavirus*" with 50 people joining from seven countries in the Americas.



LATINA FEMINISTS THEORIZING IN THE FLESH

This graduate student cluster formed a reading group to advance their understanding of Latina feminisms and engaged with several new texts from this subject of scholarly inquiry.



THANK YOU!



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