

Race, Gender, and Power in Latin America

Latino/Latin American Studies Fall 2020 Event Series

Dr. Sandra Aguilar-Rodríguez: "Nutrition, Race, and Gender in Mexico"

Wednesday, September 16th, 7:00 PM



This presentation analyzes cookbooks and nutrition advice published between 1920 and 1930 in Mexico in order to show how ideas of race and gender were reproduced by middle-class experts. Indigenous and rural culture were portrayed as inferior, while practices identified with the United States and Europe were presented as superior and therefore as the ideal to follow.

Dr. Sandra Aguilar-Rodríguez is an Associate Professor in Latin American history at Moravian College. She graduated from the University of Oxford and the University of Manchester. Her research focuses on food and foodways, gender, class, race, and modernization in twentieth century Mexico. Her work has been published in various journals and books, both in the United States, the United Kingdom and Latin America, such as the *Radical History Review*, *The Americas*, and *Food, Culture & Society* and the edited books *Technology and Culture in Twentieth Century Mexico* and *Gastronarratives*.

Dr. Pedro dos Santos: "Women's Empowerment and Disempowerment in Brazil in the 21st Century"

Wednesday, October 14th, 7:00 pm

Few women have been elected president in the history of democratic elections around the world. Latin America became an exception in the 2000s and 2010s when at one point four women were at the helm of countries in the region. Dilma Rousseff was one of these women. Elected president of Brazil in 2010, Rousseff was re-elected in 2014 only to suffer an impeachment in 2016. As the first woman president of the country, what was her impact on the Brazilian political system? More specifically, did the fact that she was a woman affect her decisions? Did it affect how citizens saw women in the country? In this talk, Dr. dos Santos will discuss some of the ways Rousseff tried to empower women in Brazil, how she succeeded in some areas but failed in others.

Dr. Pedro dos Santos is Associate Professor of Political Science at CSB/SJU, where he teaches Comparative Politics and International Relations. Most of his research revolves around the concept of representation in relation to gender and politics and politics in Brazil and Latin America.



Dr. Anita Carrasco: "Culture as Resistance in the Chilean Andes: An Indigenous Community's Struggle for Rights and Recognition in the Face of Mining"

Wednesday, November 4th, 7:00 pm



Likantatay is an *Atacameño* urban indigenous community located in Calama mining town in the Atacama Desert of northern Chile. In 1991, a group of 36 *Atacameño* immigrant families from interior rural villages, driven by the marginal conditions in which they lived in the city, decided to petition land to the Ministry of Government Property and settled down in a former pasturing zone in the poverty belt of the city. It was barren land with no public services or houses to live in. These families had to build their homes from scratch. Most were slum dwellings, with dirt floors, and shantytown construction. From its very beginnings, the people of Likantatay assert that their main objective has been to reproduce their "traditional" *Atacameño* community but in an urban space. In *The Invention of Culture* (1975) Roy Wagner develops an interesting perspective of culture as a work of art, where creation plays a central role in making culture visible. His approach fits the case of Likantatay quite well. Wagner argues that creation is embedded with invention, which is not to say that people are fake, but rather that, the power of invention is what gives the people of a culture some control over the opportunities they create for themselves, in their collective struggles for their rights and recognition. This talk addressed the story of Likantatay. They have struggled against the manifold impacts of copper mining on their community, from displacements from a rural lifestyle because of mining company's voracious extraction of water in the desert, to the threat of a forced resettlement that they are still navigating in the present.

Dr. Anita Carrasco is Associate Professor of Anthropology at Luther College (IA).

Dr. Ann Twinam: "Whiteness and the Casta System in Colonial Latin America"

Wednesday, December 9, 7:00 pm

The colonization of Spanish America resulted in the mixing of Natives, Europeans, and Africans and the creation of a discriminatory *casta* system. Still, members of mixed races could potentially free themselves from such restrictions through the purchase of a *gracias al sacar* – a royal exemption that bestowed the privileges of whiteness. For more than a century, this possibility of purchasing whiteness has fascinated scholars as a marker of historic differences between North and Latin American treatments of race. Dr. Twinam will present from her book *Purchasing Whiteness* and discuss the history of race and the negotiation of inclusion and exclusion in Latin America.

Dr. Ann Twinam is Professor of History at the University of Texas at Austin, She is author of *Public Lives, Private Secrets: Gender, Honor, Sexuality, and Illegitimacy in Colonial Spanish America* (Stanford University, 1999), which received the Thomas F. McGann Prize and honorable mention for the Bolton Johnson Prize. She more recently published *Purchasing Whiteness: Pardos, Mulattos, and the Quest for Social Mobility in the Spanish Indies* (Stanford University, 2015).

