

FALL 2023 NEWSLETTER

Dear Alumni and Friends,



Greetings from the Department of Hispanic Languages and Literature! I hope that this newsletter finds you and yours well.

I am honored to introduce myself as the new Chair of our Department. I came to Stony Brook in 2007, after serving as assistant professor at Princeton University, where I also obtained my PhD.

I am originally from Lima, Peru, and my field of research is the textual cultures of Spanish America from 16th to 18th century, and the discourses of modernity in the Andes. In the last decade, I have been studying the production and circulation of the first printed news sheets in South America by 1700, locally and in a transatlantic context. I teach undergraduate classes and graduate seminars on Latin American literature and culture.

It is a pleasure to direct a department that is nationally and internationally recognized for its academic excellence, vibrant diversity and quality of its students and faculty. I'm happy to share some of the latest news and accomplishments for the Department, our students and faculty. Enjoy!

Best wishes,

Paul Firbas
Associate Professor and Chair
Department of Hispanic Languages and Literature

Welcome to our New Doctoral Students



Our new group of doctoral students arrived on campus this past August! They hold university degrees from Italy, Spain, Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Chile, and the USA and bring their knowledge, skills, and exciting research projects to our community. We are thrilled to have them in the Department!

Pictured left to right (standing): Paulette Rosales, Alessio Arena, Daniela Ruiz, Henry Ibáñez Mogrovejo, Quim Solias, Anita Rescia and Daniela Castello Holguín; (front) Catalina Joseph, Daniel Martínez González and Juan David Parra Cárdenas.

[Click here to read their full profiles](#)

Welcome, Sebastián! Our Newest Post Doc to Join HLL



Born and raised in Chile, Sebastián López Vergara comes to our Department under the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA) Fellows program, a new Stony Brook initiative designed to hire, engage, and mentor postdocs. Sebastián holds a BA in English Literature and Linguistics from the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, and an MA and PhD from the University of Washington at Seattle in Comparative Literature, Cinema and Media.

He specializes in Latinx and Indigenous Diaspora Studies. This Fall 2023 Sebastián is teaching a class in Spanish centered on contemporary issues of land exploitation, Indigenous and feminist politics, racial oppression and justice, and colonial dispossession, as well as on different historical projects of social liberation from Mexico to Patagonia.

¡Bienvenido, Sebastián!

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Undergraduate Workshop for Spanish Medical Students



In April 2023, Professor Elena Davidiak organized a lunch workshop, "Understanding the Hispanic Patient" with her students in the new SPN 214, Intermediate Medical Spanish. The workshop was funded by a Faculty in the Arts, Humanities and lettered Social Sciences (FAHSS) award from the College of Arts and Sciences. The project, created by Davidiak, was inspired by personal communications with foreign-born US residents about their experiences seeking medical care.

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International Collaboration with the Prado Museum in Madrid



In May 2023, Dr. David García Cueto, Prado Museum, gave a lecture about the exhibition, "Guido Reni" formerly on view in Madrid. The event was organized by Fernando Loffredo (HLL) and Karen Lloyd (Art), funded by an FAHSS grant, and hosted by the Center for Italian Studies. The collaboration included a research visit by professors Loffredo and Lloyd to the Prado Museum in Spring 2023, which focused on academic activities linked to the exhibit with curators and organizers.

PhD Students Awarded Summer Travel Grants

A record number of six doctoral students were awarded summer travel grants in 2023! The grants were awarded to provide support for research related to dissertation projects and for conference travel. Congratulations to José Gabriel Alegría, Samuel Espíndola, Mario Henao, Michael McMahon, Valentina Pucci, and Beatriz Solla Vilas; and to Jeannette Rivera Negrón, who received a Turner Summer Research Grant.



Award for Excellence in Teaching to Doctoral Candidate Omar Badessi



Congratulations to Omar Badessi, a doctoral candidate in Hispanic Languages and Literature, who was honored this past August with the Award for Excellence in Teaching an Online Course by the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. Badessi has received multiple awards for his outstanding work and services to the Stony Brook community.

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Congratulations to our New PhDs!

Dissertations Recently Defended:

Maria Paz Domínguez. Re-pensando la identidad ecuatoriana desde el exilio. August, 2023. Advisor: Paul Firbas

Moisés Hassan Bendahan, Visualizing the Gutter: (Non) Belonging in the Asian American and Latinx Experience through Comix, August, 2023. Advisor: Kathleen Vernon.

Martha Chávez Negrete, Juguetes en la narrativa latinoamericana de infancia del Siglo XX: Bitácoras y miradas al sesgo para un ethos de los pequeño, July, 2023. Advisor: Javier Uriarte.



PhD Candidate María Medin-Doce is Named an IDEA Grad for Fall 2023



The Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA) Grads program works on targeted projects to help support and advance the College of Arts and Sciences in its mission. Graduate fellows receive stipend support, participate in professional development activities and engage in mentoring from campus leaders throughout their IDEA Grad appointment. María's contribution within the IDEA Grads program consists of working on different communication projects together with Rachel Rodriguez, Director of Communications for the College of Arts and Sciences. They seek to give more visibility to the great work graduate students do at the University.

PhD Candidate Carlos Vicéns Awarded the 2023 Stony Brook Foundation Board of Trustees Dissertation Completion Endowed Fellowship

PhD candidate Carlos Vicéns won this award to complete his dissertation, "Lenguaje colonizado y proceso creativo en Puerto Rico (1930 - 2023) [Colonized Language and Creative Process in Puerto Rico (1930-2023)]," during the 2023-24 academic year. It analyzes Puerto Rican poetry from 1930 until today. Vicéns argues that there is an urgent need for a comprehensive study of Puerto Rican poetry through the lens of colonialism.



In his dissertation, Carlos analyzes the relationship between politics and poetry and questions the use of what he calls phantasmagorical figures by poets. These figures are political leaders, activists, and important social voices in Puerto Rican society in the 20th and 21st centuries.

PhD Candidate Gisele Blain de Dios Awarded the 2023 Turner Completion Fellowship



Gisele Blain de Dios's dissertation, "The Museological Film Gaze: A Curatorial Approach to Spanish and Latin American Cinema," introduces an interpretive method that draws from museum studies and curatorial practices to study the narratives that evolve in how art and material artifacts are integrated into films. Through this work, she explores how the interplay among objects, people, and the cinematic viewing experience unveil nuances of authority, control, and the cultivation of cultural knowledge that bridge the realms of art and cinema.

Professor Joseph M. Pierce Named Director of New Initiative in Indigenous Studies

The College of Arts and Sciences recently announced that Professor Joseph M. Pierce has been appointed as the inaugural director of a new initiative in Native American and Indigenous Studies (NAIS). The initiative includes a new minor in NAIS and several new faculty hires in the coming year. Pierce is working in close collaboration with various faculty and departments, as well as the College of Arts and Sciences Office of the Dean, on this significant initiative that brings together scholars from a wide range of disciplines with the ultimate goal of centering the lives, experiences, and knowledge of Indigenous peoples.

[Click here to read more.](#)



Professor Lena Burgos Lafuente Receives Schomburg Fellowship



Professor Lena Burgos-Lafuente will be a residential fellow at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York City in Spring 2024, where she will be working on her project, "A la izquierda de la izquierda. Communist Poetry Networks and Cosmopolitanism in the Caribbean, Spain and New York, 1925-1956."

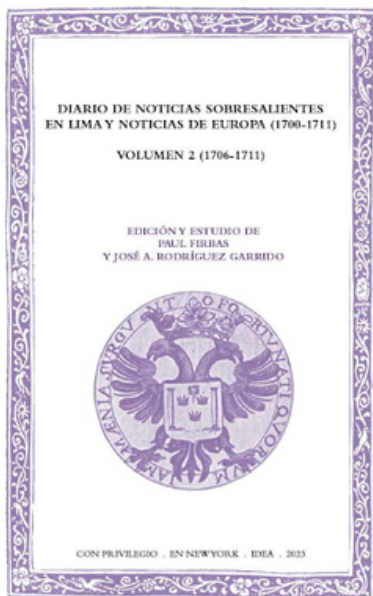
Professor Víctor Roncero López Publishes New Scholarly Edition on Calderón

In Spring 2023 our colleague Víctor Roncero López, specialist in the literature of the Spanish Baroque and in the courtly politics of kings Philip III and IV, published a new scholarly edition of Pedro Calderón de la Barca's play *El postrer duelo de España* (The Last Duel in Spain), one of the lesser studied comedias of one of the greatest European dramatists of the seventeenth century. In 2019, Roncero López also edited Calderón's play *Saber del mal y el bien*, and in 2020, in collaboration with Abraham Madroñal Durán, published a selection of Calderón's short pieces for the celebration of the Corpus Christi.

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Professor Firbas Presents His New Book in Lima



Paul Firbas and José A. Rodríguez Garrido (PUCP) published the second volume of their study and annotated edition of the Diary of Lima and News from Europe, possibly the first periodical newspaper printed in the Americas. The two volumes include the complete set of more than 100 news sheets that were printed regularly between the years 1700 to 1711 in the city of Lima. The original prints are preserved in a unique volume at the New York Public Library. The study analyzes the production of news and use of the colonial press in the context of the European War of Succession.

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Professor Aurélie Vialette in Manila

Professor Vialette traveled to Manila in the Philippines to do archival research at the National Archives for her new book on penal colonies, and was asked by the archive director, Victorino Mapa Manalo, to write a report for each bundle she has worked on. These reports will be officially included in the National Archives records. Vialette is pictured in front of National Hero José Rizal's monument in Manila on National Independence Day (June 12).



Our MA Programs Move Fast!

Students enrolled in our MA programs (MA in Hispanic Languages and Literatures and MA in Teaching) have the option of taking online summer and winter courses to speed up their graduation time. Check our website for more information on our MA programs, courses and events.

[Click here to read more](#)



Resources for faculty and students support and strengthen the educational experience. The Department of Hispanic Languages and Literature depends on our alumni and friends to expand field opportunities for our students and provide seed money for senior honors theses and summer research experiences.

Your generosity, whether it's the renewal of your support or the decision to give for the first time, allows us to do what we do best – innovative, creative research and teaching that's the hallmark of a great public research university. I hope you'll consider investing in our faculty and students by [making a gift today](#) or speaking with [Amanda Sabanos](#), AVP for Development, at (631) 316-0371.



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