RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE AMERICAS*

2021-2022

Annual Report

*NOTE: As of Fall 2022, the research center has been renamed in honor of civil rights icon Dolores Huerta.
My fourth year as faculty director required continuing to navigate the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and being creative about how best to adapt to different modalities of sometimes being online and other times being in-person. As we strive to be a consistent source of research support for faculty and students, we pivoted when we needed to and retained a flexible approach whenever possible.

As you will see in this annual report, we provided continued research support to faculty and graduate students and maintained our programs. We also hosted some excellent webinar and in-person programs on the theme of "Mobilities and Belonging." We secured external funding for our Human Rights Investigations Lab for the Americas and even the attention of Virginie Roels, the Editor in Chief of Amnesty International's La Chronique and filmmaker Paul Moreira of Paris, France. They came to learn about the Human Rights Investigations Lab and their visit to UC Santa Cruz was a huge success.

We proudly released new online resiliency module called “Promoting Restoration and Capacity Building for Human Rights Investigators.” This online project (http://restoreresilience.life) funded by the New Venture Fund, Public Interest Technology Network, included a rich collaboration with UC Berkeley, Nikita Gupta (resiliency expert and coach), and students. Units includes learning about secondary trauma, easing nervous systems, releasing excess urgency, and fostering community. In times like these, the importance of slowing down and restoration are vital.

It has been another tremendous year for the RCA with more excitement ahead as we embark on the final preparation for a grand 30th anniversary event for October 20, 2022 with Dolores Huerta and Cristina Jiménez.

-Dr. Sylvanna M. Falcón, RCA Director
EVENTS
Online discussions, and webinars.

RESEARCH GRANTS
16
To support students, faculty, and research clusters in any Division.

STUDENTS SUPPORTED
97
Through professional development, scholarship awards, and research opportunities.

PROGRAMS
8
Tinker Foundation Awards, Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program, Human Rights Investigations Lab, and Publications

FUNDS RAISED
Grants & Donations: $101,998
Campus Support $6,364

We would like to thank the Division of Social Sciences for supporting the RCA with a general operations budget and part-time staff support.
VIRTUAL EVENTS
Mobilities and Belonging

“Precarity and Belonging” Book Launch

A book launch webinar event with UC Santa Cruz co-editors (Catherine S. Ramírez, Sylvanna M. Falcón, Juan Poblete, Steven C. McKay, Felicity Amaya Schaeffer) of Precarity and Belonging: Labor, Migration, and Noncitizenship (Rutgers University Press, 2021). Dr. Camilla Hawthorne, Assistant Professor of Sociology, served as event moderator.

Archives in Plain Sight: Researching Latina/o/x History

Dr. Rosina Lozano, Associate Professor of History at Princeton University on creating Latino/a/x archives engaged in conversation with Dr. Kirsten Silva Gruesz, professor of Literature at UC Santa Cruz and RCA Executive Committee member about creating Latino/a/x archives, growing up at UC Santa Cruz campus, and the importance of reclaiming history.

Feminist Memories of Resistance in Latin America's Dirty Wars

Dr. MacManus explored narratives of loss, haunting, and trauma in relation to the so-called “Dirty Wars” of Argentina and Mexico (1960-1980s) to bring forth a Latin American feminist theory of justice. She engaged in dialogue with RCA Director Sylvanna M. Falcón.

Holistic Digital Security and Early Career Human Rights Researchers: Inspiring Industry Change

The webinar brought together panelists from academia, industry, and non-profits to discuss the external threats facing digital investigators from under-represented communities and ways to counter those challenges. The webinar proceedings were released as a public report now available online.
IN-PERSON EVENTS

Luis Valdez: Theatre of the Sphere: The Vibrant Being

A book reception for Theatre of the Sphere, Luis Valdez’s exploration of the principles that underlie his creative process as a playwright, teacher, and theatrical innovator. He discusses the unique aesthetic, more than five decades in the making, that defines the work of his group El Teatro Campesino.

Reyna Grande: A Ballad of Love and Glory

An event celebrating the release of A Ballad Of Love and Glory, Reyna Grande’s new historical fiction novel, in conversation with Professor Sylvanna M. Falcon and Professor Micah Perks at the Cowell Hay Barn.

Dr. Jesica Fernández: "Growing Up Latinx: Coming of Age in a Time of Contested Citizenship"

A talk by Dr. Jesica Fernández, Assistant Professor of Ethnic Studies at Santa Clara University, and alumnus of UC Santa Cruz, about her award-winning first book. In this book, Dr. Fernández discusses how Latinx youth understand their evolving social and political identities as they navigate their way in world.

Immigrant Justice Research, Resource Fair and Film Screening

A community project that included interviewing over 100 community advocates and members of mixed-status families, documenting the experiences of immigrant families, their contributions, and the obstacles they face. We aim to elevate immigrant voices, strengthen local community coalitions, and inform policies to ensure all community members belong and thrive. The project is led by Dr. Steve McKay, RCA Executive Committee member and Associate Professor of Sociology.
RESEARCH GRANTS

FACULTY

Josefina Bittar
Department of Languages and Applied Linguistics
"Guarani Corpus Improvement."

Sara Niedzwiecki
Politics Department
"Immigrants’ Access to Social Policy in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, and the Dominican Republic."

Patricia Pinho
LALS Department
"Whiteness and International Academic Mobility of White Brazilians."

Alicia Riley
Sociology Department
"Loss and Survivorship: Social Impacts of COVID-19 Mortality in Latinx Spanish-speaking Communities."

GRADUATE STUDENTS

Theresa Johnson
Sociology
“When We Travel: Transnational black feminist curricula and liberatory geographical imaginaries.”

Alejandra Watanabe-Farro
Latin American and Latino Studies
“Sustainable Development and Environmental Justice in Peru and Colombia.”

Monica Mikhail
Anthropology
"Forget Bolivia, Remember God’: Transnational Belonging through Social Service Provision by the Coptic Church.”

Lucia Vitale
Politics

Marina Segatti
Feminist Studies
“Queer and Trans Digital Activism in Brazil: Democracy and Sexuality.”

Rosa Navarro
Sociology
“Mestizaje and Settler-Colonialism in Mexico: Mestizaje as a Project of Cultural Genocide.”

Rachel Bonner
Visual Studies/ HAVC
“Visual Cultures of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Heritage Sites.”
RESEARCH CLUSTERS
We support research clusters comprised of UC Santa Cruz faculty and graduate students.

Latin American Biopolitics Reading Group
Participants: Jennifer Figueroa and Alejandra Watanabe-Farro, Department of Latin American & Latino Studies; Emily Padilla and Marina Segatti, Department of Feminist Studies.

Concepts of Indigeneity in the Twenty-first Century Reading Group
Participants: Amando Argueta-Vogel, Ana Flecha, Mario Gomez-Zamora and Anastasie Lenoir, Department of Latin American & Latino Studies.

LIONEL CANTÚ MEMORIAL AWARD

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.

Bree Booth, Department of Latin American and Latino Studies
Tracing Queerness through the Atlantic

Rafael Franco-Flores, Literature Department
Monstrous Maps: Transgressing Heteronormative Borders in 19th-Century Monster Literature

Rosa Maria Navarro, Sociology Department
Settler-Colonialism In Mexico: Mestizaje as a Project of Cultural Genocide
The Human Rights Investigations Lab continues to break new ground in training students in vital digital literacy skills and becoming a new generation of human rights investigators. Now part of the UC Network for Human Rights and Digital Fact-Finding, with partner labs at UC Berkeley and UCLA, UC Santa Cruz worked with a cohort of 26 students to complete several investigations, devoting hundreds of hours in research with external partners. We even caught the attention of Amnesty International-France about our work. Go Slugs!

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.

Learn more: [https://humanrights.ucsc.edu/](https://humanrights.ucsc.edu/)

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Learn more: [http://restoreresilience.life](http://restoreresilience.life)
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