Moderator:

Dr. Susan Curtis
Professor of History and Faculty, School of Interdisciplinary Studies,
College of Liberal Arts
Purdue University

Professor Curtis earned an M.A. and Ph.D. at the University of Missouri, where she worked with such scholars as David Roediger, T. J. Jackson Lears, David P. Thelen, and Kerby Miller. Dr. Curtis is currently Professor of History and the Director of Interdisciplinary Studies. She teaches mostly graduate-level courses in U.S. cultural history, American Studies, and the history of religion in America. In recent years, her chief project in the classroom and in research has been to integrate the meaning of American culture in multicultural and multiracial society. She seeks ways to understand cultural collaboration and conflict across racial boundaries and to expose the power of culture to delimit opportunities, expression, acceptance, and citizenship. Dr. Curtis has published three major works: A Consuming Faith: The Social Gospel and Modern American Culture (1991), which demonstrated the interplay between sacred and secular realms in the reformulation of Protestant thought and practice between the 1880’s and 1920’s; Dancing to a Black Man’s Tune: A Life of Scott Joplin (1994), which used the life of Scott Joplin to examine the cross-racial collaboration at the turn of the century that resulted in ragtime, a quintessentially American popular music; and The First Black Actors on the Great White Way (1998), which places the landmark event noted in the title in the cultural context of the United States on the eve of World War I.

Panelists

Dr. Javier Olarte
Director, Film and Television School of the Fine Arts
Faculty of the National University of Colombia

Javier Olarte is an Associate Professor at the Film School of the Fine Arts Faculty at the National University of Colombia where he has been a faculty member since 2000. Professor Olarte received a Bachelor in Communication and Media; then a Bachelor in Film Studies; in 2006 an Specialization in Multimedia Design and Development; in 2012 Magister in Cultural Studies.

His research and artistic projects are focused in issues like: Internal displacement in Colombia; Resilience movements through art languages; visual narratives, transmedia and alternative models of storytelling; art and early childhood; montage as storytelling at film in Latin America. He has been invited to give academic task in art and early childhood at Universidad Complutense de Madrid in 2015; at Channel 10 in San Salvador he was invited to participate like advice counselor in media, transmedia and montage methods; also alternatives film production in La Femis (France); in Decolonialism and neo-colonialism in Latin America at Universidad Nacional de Colombia.

Professor Olarte has been made visual projects that try to cross the borderline between arts and social science expressing his ideas through film, video and experimental moving images.

Two of his last works are: Verde, the most recent, is an expanded documentary based in three formats: concert, installation and documentary. It tell story and draw the relation between nature resources and two cases of civil conflict’s victims in Colombia. Inhabit the body is a documentary that describe the story of four groups of citizen that lives in different regions of Colombia, who were displaced by violence. The film give voice to those victims of the conflict that could get understanding of their tragedy and share their feelings through art.

Dr. Rodolfo Ramírez
Associate Professor, Film and Television School of the Fine Arts
Faculty of the National University of Colombia

Rodolfo Ramírez is an Associate Professor at the Film and Television School of the Fine Arts Faculty of the National University of Colombia where he has been since 1994. Professor Ramírez is Systems Engineer; Magister in Informational Technologies Applied to Education; and PhD ( c ) on Engineering, Industries and Organizations.

His research interests are focused in Seminars such as: Research Methods Oriented to Film Projects; Television Technology; Film and Television Analysis; and Community Television and public mass media access. He has explored strategies to empower communities in the role of making its own television projects and exposing injustice related to mining in different territories. He has been invited to give academic talks about this subjects to directors, screenwriters and producers of Channel 10 in San Salvador, El Salvador; Latinamerican Telecommunications Conference in Galápagos Islands, Ecuador; research methods applied to documentary films in Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM); and Universidad Veracruzana, Xalapa, México; community television channels in Universidad de Zacatecas, México; and Universidad de Guadalajara, México.

Professor Ramírez research works crystallized and found expression in several documentary films, some of them related to the socio-economic injustices of mining process, such as Rasgar su piel para Habitar sus Huesos (Tearing her skin in order to inhabit her bones) as director and researcher; Lo que la tierra no perdona (Things that the land doesn´t forgive) as associate director and researcher; La paradoja del Brillo (Glittering Paradox) as codirector and researcher. His Current documentary Project is: Tierra y Conflictos (Land and Conflicts), his current role is codirector and researcher.
Dr. Elena E. Benedicto
Director, Indigenous and Endangered Labs, Associate Professor of English and Faculty, School of Interdisciplinary Studies, College of Liberal Arts
Purdue University

Professor Benedicto (Ph.D. in Linguistics, Umass-Amherst 1998; Ph.D. Classics, U. of Barcelona 1992) is a syntactician and directs the Indigenous and Endangered Languages Lab (IELLab) at Purdue. Her research interests focus on issues around the Syntax-Semantics interface in the framework of Generative Grammar, in particular on the relation between the abstract core properties observed in human languages and the great diversity in which those properties are manifested. More specifically, she works on morpho-syntactic phenomena that correlate with the syntactic architecture of a language: Switch Reference systems in Serial Verbal Constructions, modality, evidentiality,... She is currently involved in several research projects on Mayangna (a Misumalpan language), on Sign Languages and on (natural) Language Acquisition. Previous work was on the syntax of bare nouns (in Catalan and English), the zero-copula in AAE, verbal classifiers crosslinguistically, and Latin (relative clauses, proleptic accusative and long-distance reflexives). She is involved in promoting the internationalization of undergraduate students and in developing ways to include them in research projects. She teaches courses on Syntax (graduate and undergraduate), on Native American languages and on Field methods in linguistics. She is a member of the Linguistics Program and the English Language and Linguistics Program. She also collaborates on an occasional basis with the Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Program, the Classics Program and the Medieval and Renaissance Studies Program.

Dr. Bill V. Mullen
Professor of American Studies, School of Interdisciplinary Studies, College of Liberal Arts
Purdue University

Bill V. Mullen is Professor of English and American Studies at Purdue. His books include Afro-Orientalism (Minnesota, 2004) a study of interethnic anti-racist alliance between Asian and African Americans, and Popular Fronts: Chicago and African American Cultural Politics 1935-1946 (University of Illinois, 1999). He has edited five other books in collaboration with Sherry Lee Linkon, James Smethurst and Fred Ho. He has been a Fulbright lecturer at Wuhan University in the People’s Republic of China. He is faculty adviser to Students for Justice in Palestine at Purdue. His most recent publication is entitled “Building the Palestinian International” in the Social Text on-line dossier Periscope.


Dr. Kimberly R. Marion Suiseeya
Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Faculty, Ecological Sciences and Engineering Interdisciplinary Graduate Program
Purdue University

Dr. Kimberly R. Marion Suiseeya joins Purdue as an Assistant Professor of Political Science and is part of Purdue’s Building Sustainable Communities initiative. Dr. Marion Suiseeya received her PhD in Environment in 2014 from Duke University. Prior to her doctoral studies, Dr. Marion Suiseeya was a conservation and development practitioner for nearly a decade with stints in the US, Guyana, Thailand, and Laos. She also holds a B.A. in International Relations and German Studies from Scripps College and a M.A. in International Environmental Policy from the Monterey Institute of International Studies.

Dr. Marion Suiseeya’s two main areas of research are Global Environmental Politics and Political Ecology. Her current project focuses on the institutional dynamics, cross scale linkages, and justice implications of global forest governance and its subsequent impacts on forest-dependent communities primarily in developing countries.

More generally, her research interests include global environmental justice, rights and equity in conservation, environment and development in Southeast Asia, and institutions for global environmental governance. She is especially interested in exploring multidisciplinary and collaborative research approaches to address today’s complex environmental challenges.

Dr. Juan Diego Velasquez
Managing Director Strategic Initiatives, College of Engineering
Purdue University
Sasha M. Vega Alvarez
Ph.D. candidate and Emerging Leader in Science and Society Fellow (AAAS), Interdisciplinary Life Science (PULSe) Program
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