

# ANTHONY W. FONTES

Assistant Professor, School of International Service  
American University  
Washington, DC 20016

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## ACADEMIC POSITIONS

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Assistant Professor of Human Security 2017 – Present  
School of International Service  
American University, Washington DC

Mellon Post-Doctoral Fellow 2015 – 2017  
Center for Humanities and School of Geography  
University of Wisconsin, Madison WI

## EDUCATION

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Ph.D. in Human Geography 2015  
University of California, Berkeley, CA  
*Dissertation Committee:* Jake Kosek, Michael Watts, Beatriz Manz, Wendy Brown

Immigration and Criminal Law Accreditation 2004 – 2008  
Intensive law courses conducted by the Immigration Legal Resource Center (ILRC)  
and CLINIC attorneys in immigration and criminal law. Received Immigration  
Board of Appeals (BIA) Accreditation in Immigration Law.

Practitioner Training in Immigration Law 2004 – 2005  
City College of San Francisco, CA

Practitioner training in International Refugee Law 2002 – 2003  
American University in Cairo, Egypt

BA. in Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity 1999 – 2003  
Stanford University, CA  
Individually designed major in Migration and Refugee Studies.

## RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS

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2023 “No Escape from the Criminal State: Transnational Criminal Governance and the Making of Asylum-Seeker Subjects.” Wenner-Gren Foundation, \$22,100, (PI)

- 2023 “Democratic Governance and Migration from the Eastern Region of El Salvador to the Washington Metropolitan Area.” A collaborative effort to build a Migration Observatory in El Salvador. In collaboration with the Center for Latin American and Latino Studies (CLALS), American University, Centro de Investigación para la Democracia (CIDEMO), and Universidad del Oriente. \$95,831 (co-PI)
- 2022 “State-Criminal Fusion in Central America.” An ethnographic fieldwork project exploring the evolving symbiotic relationships between state institutions and organized criminal groups in Guatemalan and Honduran cities. *School of International Service Dean’s Summer Research Grant*, \$4,750, (PI)
- 2022 “Gangs, Gangsters, and Ganglands: towards a global comparative ethnography (GANGS) Project.” Collaborative project with over 40 gang ethnographers from around the world to create a database of gang-associated life histories. Conducted life history interviews with transnational gang members in Guatemala and the United States. *European Research Council (ERC)*, \$2,875,893.75 (co-investigator)
- 2021 “Honduras Violence and Migration Study”. Project to develop innovative analytic tools for assessing the relationship between social violence and forced migration. In cooperation with *Association for a Just Society (ASJ)* in Honduras. \$5,000 (Lead researcher, author)
- 2020 “Northern Triangle Migration Policy Blue-Print.” Researched and authored migration policy plan paper for addressing migration drivers in the Northern Triangle of Central America (Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador) in the post-COVID era. Conducted 40+ interviews with USAID staff; Central American business leaders, NGO leaders, scholars, deportees; and international migration experts. *Center for Democracy in the Americas*, \$20,000. (PI)
- 2018 “The Social Orders of Cocaine.” Ethnographic exploration of how transnational drug-trafficking affects communal order in Central American and southern Mexico cities. *School of International Service Dean’s Research Grant*, \$4,700, (PI)
- 2017 “State Cartels and Narco States: A comparative study of international drug-trafficking violence in Central America and Central Asia.” Lead researcher in a collaborative and comparative research project, conducting fieldwork on illicit drug corridors in Honduras and Guatemala as part of an ongoing study of the relative level and nature of government complicity in drug-trafficking in Central American and Central Asian countries. *H.F. Guggenheim Foundation*, \$34,875, (PI)
- 2015 A.W. Mellon Post-Doctoral Fellowship, a two-year appointment based in The Center for Humanities and the Department of Geography, *University of Wisconsin, Madison*

- 2015 “The Impact of Narcotics on Prison Life.” Designed, organized, and implemented a six-month research project on the impact of illicit drugs and anti-drug policy in and on Guatemalan prisons. Contracted and managed a team of six local researchers composed of prisoners, social workers, and social scientists to carry out ethnographic research and structured interviews with prisoners and prison staff in Guatemala. *Social Science Research Council/Open Society Foundation/Guatemalan Presidential Commission*, \$36,000, (PI)
- 2015 “Life and Death in Guatemala City,” a documentary photography exhibition awarded by the *Dorothea Lange Fellowship for Documentary Photography* by the University of California, Berkeley, \$2,000
- 2013 Harry Frank Guggenheim (HFG) Dissertation Fellowship. Berkeley, CA, \$20,000
- 2013 University of California Institute for Conflict and Cooperation (UCIGCC) Fellowship. In cooperation with the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories risk assessment division, this fellowship provided mentored guidance for conducting policy-level research. I also received additional York Fellowship funding in May 2014 to conduct a month-long research project in Latin American security policy in Washington DC, *UCIGCC*, \$18,000
- 2011 “We Speak for the Streets: An Ethnography of Gangs in Guatemala.” Dissertation fieldwork funding for 13 months of research in Guatemala City, Guatemala. *Social Science Research Council (SSRC)/ Open Society Foundation Drugs, Security and Democracy (DSD) Program*, \$37,000
- 2010 UC Berkeley Center for Latin American Studies Research Fellow. Conducted preliminary research on anti-violence initiatives in Guatemala City, Guatemala; San Salvador, El Salvador; and San Pedro Sula, Honduras

## PUBLICATIONS

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### Books

- 2018 *Mortal Doubt: Transnational Gangs and Social Order in Guatemala City* (November, University of California Press)  
**Winner of The William LeoGrande Award** (2017-2018), for the best scholarly piece in Latin American and Latino studies written by American University faculty.

### Peer-Reviewed Articles

- 2023 “The Kidnappers are the Police’: Forced Migration and the Criminal State” *Political Geography* (Accepted for Publication, October 2023)

- 2023 “Taxation and Incarceration: Prisons and Protection Rackets in Guatemala”, *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* (Accepted for Publication, October 2023)
- 2022 “Carceral Community in the Time of COVID-19: Isolation, Adaption, and Predation” *Punishment & Society*; 14624745221129425.
- 2022 “Becoming Fugitive: Prison Breaks and the Space of Punishment”, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 40.5 (2022): 786-804
- 2019 “Portrait of a ‘Real’ *Marero*: Truth and Fantasy in Stories of Violence.” *Ethnography* (2019): 1466138118805123.
- 2019 “La Visita: Prisons and Survival in Guatemala” Lead author with Kevin L. O’Neill. *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 51.1 (2019): 85-107.  
**Winner of the JLAS Best Article of 2019**
- 2018 “Scam as Survival.” Lead author with Kevin L. O’Neill. *Ethnography* (2018): 1466138118805117.
- 2017 “Making Do: The Practice of Imprisonment in Post-War Guatemala” Co-authored with Kevin L. O’Neill. *Journal of Latin American Geography* 16(2): 31-48. Available at: <http://muse.jhu.edu/article/664386>
- 2017 “Espacios de encarcelamiento en Guatemala” (2017) Co-authored with Kevin L. O’Neill, *Ecuador Debate* 101: pgs 87-97; August, *Centro Andino de Accion Popular*
- 2016 “Extorted Life: Protection Rackets in Guatemala City.” (2016) *Public Culture*, Volume 28, number 3, 80: 593-616

### Peer-Reviewed Book Chapters

- 2021 “Border, Ghetto, Prison: Cocaine and Social Orders in Guatemala.” In *Cocaine: From Coca Fields to the Streets*, edited by Enrique Desmond Arias and Thomas Grisaffi. <https://read.dukeupress.edu/books/book/2949/chapter/3408723/Border-Ghetto-PrisonCocaine-and-Social-Orders-in>.

### Current Book Projects

- “*Prison Power: Kingpins, Exiles, and Innocents.*” Based on over a decade of longitudinal ethnography with Guatemalan carceral communities, this book project maps the politics of survival in one of the world’s most overcrowded and dangerous prison systems through intimate prisoner life histories, tracing the evolution of power in prison and prison’s power in 21<sup>st</sup> century society. (*Completed manuscript June 2024*)

*“No Escape from the Criminal State: Prisons, Borders, and American Dreams.”* Funded by the Wenner Gren Foundation, and drawing from ongoing multi-sited fieldwork in US immigration detention centers, migration routes through Mexico, and sending communities in Central America, this book project explores the entwinement of 21<sup>st</sup> century criminal governance, forced migration, and US immigration politics to analyze the causes and consequences of perpetual border crises. *(Completed manuscript, January 2026)*

### **Working Papers**

“Of Zetas and Other Ghosts: Spectacular Illicit Power and its Afterlives”

“Victim, Witness, Fugitive, Gangster: The Gray Zones of Asylum”

“Angela Valeria and Angel Mothers: Spectacles of Innocent Suffering in US Immigration Politics”

“The Walls Close In: Central American Migration and the Crisis of Containment”

“Spectacles of Security: Police Reform and Public Perception in Central America”

“On Release: Time and Death Across Prison Walls”

### **Selected Scholarly Presentations**

2023 “Transnational Criminal Organizations and Criminal Governance in Northern Central America” Invited Speaker, George Washington University Foreign Area Officer Program, May

2023 “The Kidnappers are the Police: Criminal Cops, Captive Subjects, and Forced Migration” Latin American Studies Association Congress, May

2023 “Prison Power” *Atelier Author Workshop*. University of Toronto, Canada. April

2023 “Bones’ Story” *Ethnographies of Gangs and Gangsters Workshop*. Invited Speaker, Institute for Graduate Research, Geneva, Switzerland, March

2022 “Climate Change, Crime, and Forced Migration in the Northern Triangle” Invited Speaker and Discussant, Wilson Center, Washington DC, October 10

2022 “Violence in the Northern Triangle” Invited Speaker and Discussant, Wilson Center, Washington DC, March 15

2021 “Maras Transnacionales en Guatemala” Invited Speaker and Discussant Central American Anthropology Conference, El Salvador, October 18-22

- 2021 “Breaking ‘spatial rules’: Micro-practices of resistance and refusal against dominant forms of territoriality I and II” (double panel) Convenor and Panel Organizer, International Society for Ethnology and Folklore, June 24-26
- 2020 “Virtual Conscription: Living (or Just Surviving) in the World that Zoom Made” Panelist and Discussant, Annual Meeting of American Association of Geographers (AAG), November
- 2019 “Mortal Doubt” Invited Speaker, Center for Latin American Studies, University of California, Berkeley, November 19
- 2019 “Why They Flee: The Evolution of Extreme Violence in the Northern Triangle” Invited speaker with the National Lawyers Guild of San Francisco, November 21
- 2019 “Violence, Poverty, and Survival in the Northern Triangle” Invited speaker at the 16th Annual International Law and Policy Conference, (sponsored by Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Georgetown University Law Center, and the Migration Policy Institute), October 7
- 2019 “The Walls Close In: The United States, Central America, and the Crisis of Containment” Invited Keynote speaker for the Shepherd Higher Education Consortium on Poverty Conference closing conference, “Immigration and Migration: The Interdependency of Global Poverty and Immigration.” August 3
- 2019 “Central American Immigration in Perspective” Invited Speaker for College of Arts and Sciences, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, May 4
- 2019 “Mortal Doubt” Invited Speaker, New College, Sarasota, Florida, April 15
- 2019 “Spectacles of Security: Gangs, Police, and Politics in Honduras” Paper given at American Association of Geographers conference, Washington DC, April 5
- 2019 “Transnational Imaginaries of Gang Violence” Invited speaker for the School of Geography and Development, University of Arizona, Tucson, February 15
- 2018 “Mortal Doubt: Transnational Gangs and Social Order in Guatemala City” Invited speaker for the Peace, Justice, and Human Rights Initiative, Florida Atlantic University, October 3
- 2018 “Asylum and Country Conditions in the Northern Triangle” Invited Speaker for the Advocates for Human Rights, May 1
- 2017 “Vidas Extorsionadas” Invited speaker for Soberanias en vilo: miradas desde la seguridad ciudadana en América Latina, Colegio de Michoacan, Mexico, October 25-27

- 2017 “Carceral Continuums in Central America’s Northern Triangle” Invited speaker for Imprisonment, Encampment, Incarceration: Prison Studies in a Global Frame. University of Wisconsin, Madison, May 11
- 2017 “Extorted Life: Protection Rackets and Urban Governance in Guatemala City” Invited Speaker, Centre for Transnational and Diaspora Studies, University of Toronto, March 4
- 2016 “Mortal Doubt: Maras and Murder in Guatemala City” Invited Speaker, Institute for Research in the Humanities, University of Wisconsin-Madison, September 20
- 2016 “Extorted Life: Protection Rackets and Urban Governance in Guatemala City” RC21 Urban Studies Conference 2016 Mexico City, July 23
- 2016 “Of Love and Lock-Up: La Visita and Survival in a Guatemalan Prison” In Cleansing, Corruption, and Covert Ops: The War on Drugs in the Northern Triangle. Latin American Studies Association (LASA) 2016. Panel Organizer and Presenter, New York City, May
- 2015 “Of Maras and Mortal Doubt: Gangs and Social Order in Post-War Guatemala” Invited Speaker, Yi-Fu Tuan Lecture Series, University of Wisconsin, Madison. Department of Geography, October
- 2015 “Justice by Riot: Law, Power, and Violence in a Guatemalan Prison” Grasping Everyday Justice Conference, University of Cambridge, Center for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities, February
- 2014 “Beyond the Maras: Violence and Survival in Urban Central America” Invited Speaker, Is There Hope for Central American Youth? Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Latin American Program, September 18. See webcast here: [http://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/CentralAmericanYouth\\_2014](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/CentralAmericanYouth_2014)
- 2014 “Porous Prisons: Flow, Control, and Rupture in Carceral Space” in The Limits of Control: Criminal Sovereignty in Brazil, Mexico, and Central America. Latin American Studies Association (LASA), June
- 2014 “From Civil War to the New Violence: The Rise of Peacetime Crime” Institute for Global Conflict and Cooperation and Lawrence Livermore National Security Council. York Symposium. Lawrence Livermore National Labs, January
- 2013 “Killing Innocents: Maras and Body Politics in Guatemala City” in The Killable Subject: Violent Moral Worlds in Contemporary Latin America.” David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, Harvard University, June
- 2013 “Liminal Redemption: Leaving La Vida Loca” in Geographies of Peace, American Association of Geographers (AAG) Panel, April

- 2012 “Conducting Ethnographic Research on Criminal Networks: Advice and Warnings” Social Science Research Council/ Open Society Foundations Drugs Security and Democracy Fellowship conference. Villa de Leyva, Colombia, July

### Selected Trade Publications and Media Appearances

- 2023 [“Title 42 Explained with SIS Professor Anthony Fontes”](#)
- 2023 [“Title 8 Explained with SIS Professor Anthony Fontes”](#)
- 2022 “Afterword.” In *Two Places on Earth: Works by Chan Chao*. Kazen Art Center, American University Catalogue.  
<https://auislandora.wrlc.org/islandora/object/auislandora%3A97053/datastream/PDF/view>.
- 2021 “Full Frame: Escaping the Northern Triangle with Anthony Fontes.”  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8JpLrA-fjEL>.
- 2019 [“The New Violence and Out-Migration”](#), Invited Speaker, *The Humanitarian & Migration Crisis Originating in Central America*, Migration Policy Institute and National Immigration Law Center, 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Immigration Law and Policy Conference, Georgetown University Law School, October 7. <https://www.c-span.org/video/?464994-3/immigration-law-policy-conference-part-3>
- 2019 “The Long, Bipartisan History of Dealing with Immigrants Harshly.” The Conversation. July 9, 2019. <http://theconversation.com/the-long-bipartisan-history-of-dealing-with-immigrants-harshly-119523>.
- 2019 “Guatemala: Mortal Doubt and Transnational Gangs.” *AULA Blog* (blog). May 23, 2019. <https://aulablog.net/2019/05/23/guatemala-mortal-doubt-and-transnational-gangs/>.
- 2019 “Migrants Aux Portes Des États-Unis : Pourquoi Ils Fuient Leurs Pays.” The Conversation. April 15, 2019. <http://theconversation.com/migrants-aux-portes-des-etats-unis-pourquoi-ils-fuient-leurs-pays-115276>.
- 2019 “Migrants’ Stories: Why They Flee.” The Conversation. April 9, 2019. <http://theconversation.com/migrants-stories-why-they-flee-114725>.
- 2019 “We Must Listen to Migrants’ Stories.” Newsweek. April 9, 2019. <https://www.newsweek.com/migrants-stories-border-ms-13-opinion-1390189>.
- 2018 “Republican Ads Feature MS-13, Hoping Fear Will Motivate Voters.” The Conversation. November 2, 2018. <http://theconversation.com/republican-ads-feature-ms-13-hoping-fear-will-motivate-voters-105474>.



- 2018 “U.S.-Guatemala: Are Donald Trump and Jimmy Morales Brothers in Arms?” AULA Blog. October 2, 2018. <https://aulablog.net/2018/10/02/>.
- 2018 [“The New Violence”](#). *The New American Story Project*
- 2017 “Opinion | The American Dream Meets a Central American Nightmare.” *The New York Times*, April 5, 2017, sec. Opinion. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/05/opinion/the-american-dream-meets-a-central-american-nightmare.html>.
- 2016 “Opinion | The Demise of a Prison Lord.” *The New York Times*, August 16, 2016, sec. Opinion. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/17/opinion/the-demise-of-a-guatemalan-prison-lord.html>.
- 2015 “Beyond the Maras: Violence and Survival in Urban Central America.” Latin American Program. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars Working Paper Series.
- 2015 “El Impacto de Las Politicas de Drogas En Los Carceles de Guatemala (The Impact of Drug Policy in Guatemalan Prisons).” Open Society Foundations and the Social Science Research Council, in cooperation with the Guatemalan Presidential Drug Policy Commission. <https://www.cels.org.ar/web/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/El-impacto-de-las-politicas-de-drogas-en-los-derechos-humanos.-La-experiencia-del-continente-americano..pdf>.
- 2015 “*Matar y Controlar: La Evolucion de Extorsion.*” In *Sembrando Utopia: Crisis de Capitalismo y Refundacion de la Humanidad*. Ed. Marcelo Colussi. Argenpress. Buenos Aires.
- 2013 “The Strong Hand Loses Its Grip.” *Berkeley Review of Latin American Studies*. Berkeley; pp. 12-16.

### Other Publications

- 2012 “El Fish and the General.” *Berkeley Review of Latin American Studies*, Fall. Berkeley, CA; pp. 50-56.
- 2012 “El Salvador holds its breath after day without murders,” *The Guardian* (UK), May 1. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/may/01/el-salvador-murders-gang-truce> (published under pseudonym)
- 2010 “Remembering Romero: Salvaging a Voice of Reason from an Age of War.” *Berkeley Review of Latin American Studies*. University of California, Berkeley. Fall; pp. 68-71.

- 2010 “The Presence of Absence.” *Berkeley Review of Latin American Studies*. Fall, University of California, Berkeley.
- 2010 “Death Dealing in Guatemala City.” *Berkeley Review of Latin American Studies*. University of California, Berkeley. Fall; pp. 56-61.
- 2010 “Refuge from Femicide: Facing Gendered Violence in Guatemala.” *Berkeley Review of Latin American Studies*. Spring; pp. 71-73.
- 2010 “An Everyday Geography of the Global South” By Jonathan Rigg (Book Review) *Journal of Regional Science*, Vol. 50, No 2.
- 2004 “Iraqi Refugees Stranded in Cairo”, *Cairo Times*, 19-25 February.
- 2004 “Too Close for Comfort: Christian aid groups in Sudan”, *Cairo Times*, 26 February-3 March.
- 2004 “Good Neighbors: Confrontation between Coptic Christians and Egyptian military”, *Cairo Times*, 4-10 March.
- 2004 “Police Academy: Egyptian police train Iraqi security forces”, *Cairo Times*, 11-17 March.
- 2004 “Bashar vs. the Hydra: Challenges facing the Syrian regime”, *Cairo Times*, 18-24 March.
- 2004 “Beloved Outcasts; Orphans in Egypt”, *Cairo Times*, 25-31 March.
- 2004 “De Facto Prejudice: Khula laws and Women’s rights”, *Cairo Times*, 8-15 April.
- 2004 “Volunteer Spirit: Profile of philanthropist Sherif Abdel Azim”, *Cairo Times*, 22-28 April.
- 2004 “Border Tension: Israeli-Egyptian border dispute”, *Cairo Times*, 27 May-2 June.

## TEACHING

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- Doctoral Research Design: Methods and Praxis* Spring 2023
- Borders, Migrants, and Refugees in the Americas* (SISU 360) Spring 2023
- Fieldwork, Uncertainty, and the Politics of Fear: Advanced International Studies Research Methods* (SISU 306) Spring 2018- 2024

*Conquest, Cold War, Globalization: Latin America and the World* Spring 2018, Fall 2022-2023

(SISU 380)

*Introduction to International Studies Research* (SISU 206) Fall 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2022

A course in applied qualitative and quantitative research methodologies for SIS majors.

*Contemporary Latin America* (SISU 214) Fall 2019

*Violent Spaces* (SISU 419) Spring 2019, Spring 2021

*Violent Uncertainty: Geographies of Terror and Insecurity* (Geog 475) Fall 2016  
Graduate level seminar. University of Wisconsin, Madison.

*The Geography of Latin America* (Geog 348)

Fall 2016

Geography and International Area Studies, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

*Globalization: Conflict, Inequality, and Ethics in the Age of Hyper-Connection* Summer 2014

Geography 20. University of California, Berkeley.

*Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award* 2015

University of California, Berkeley. Awarded for superlative teaching and mentoring throughout graduate career.

*The Southern Border* Fall 2010, Fall 2014

Geography and Ethnic Studies, Head Graduate Student Instructor, (Instructors: Prof. Beatriz Manz and Harley Shaiken) University of California, Berkeley.

*Environmental Politics: Nature, Identity, and Difference* Spring 2011

Geography, Graduate Student Instructor, (Instructor: Prof. Jake Kosek) University of California, Berkeley

*Geography of Militarism* Spring 2009

Geography, Graduate Student Instructor, (instructor: Prof. Jake Kosek) University of California, Berkeley

*EarthRights International* 2009, 2010

Lecturer, Chiang Mai, Thailand

Taught international human rights to lawyers, journalists, and human rights activists from Thailand, Laos, Burma, China, Vietnam, and Cambodia. Provided research project assistance and engaged with students using a wide variety of teaching techniques and media.

**SELECTED SERVICE**

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American University Institutional Review Board (IRB) member	8/2023-Present
American University Fulbright Interview Committee	various
School of International Service Faculty Awards Committee (Chair)	2021 - 2023
TOP Search Committee	2023
School of International Service Faculty Action Committee	2022 - 2023
Center for Latinx and Latin American Studies Executive Search Committee	2022
American University Vice-President of Global and International Studies Search Committee	2021
American University Anti-Racism Center Executive Search Committee	2020
School of International Service Coordinating Committee	2019 - 2020
Co-Chair, Ethnographies of Empire Research Cluster	2018 - 2019

**AFFILIATIONS**

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Member, Latin American Studies Association (LASA)

Member, American Association of Geographers (AAG)

Member, American Association of Anthropology (AAA)

Faculty Affiliate, Center for Latin American and Latinx Studies, American University

Faculty Affiliate, Ethnographies of Empire Research Cluster, SIS, American University

Member, American University Immigration Lab

**VOLUNTEER AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

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Central American Asylum Expert Witness 2012 - Present  
 Utilizing my expertise and network of contacts in Central America, I have provided *pro bono* research, expert witness affidavits, and court testimony in support of over 200 applications for asylum and withholding of removal for people fleeing Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador.

- Volunteer Advisor 2017 – Present  
*Advocates for Human Rights (AHR)*, Washington DC  
 Advisor for an NGO helping asylum seekers in the United States.
- Volunteer Advisor 2020 – Present  
*Teaching for Change*, Washington DC  
 Advisor for an NGO engaged in educating teachers and other service providers in the Washington, DC area.
- Consultant 2012  
*United Nations Development Program*, Guatemala  
 Conducted life-history interviews with incarcerated narco-traffickers and gangsters. Wrote and edited biographies for UNDP 2011/2012 human development publication *Guatemala: Un país de oportunidades por la juventud?*
- Research Fellow 2008  
*International Accountability Project*, India, SE Asia  
 Liaised with lawyers, human rights activists, and community leaders in India and SE Asia fighting human rights violations caused by development induced displacement. Researched, collected, and wrote case studies for a popular educational handbook designed to provide grassroots activists with the strategic and legal tools necessary to resist development-induced displacement.
- Immigration Caseworker 2004 – 2008  
 Accredited Representative and Media Coordinator  
*International Institute of San Francisco*, Redwood City, CA.  
 Integrated legal expertise and individual client experiences to generate appeal waivers for undocumented Central Americans and Mexicans seeking permanent resident status in the United States. Investigated, analyzed, and managed a caseload of over 700 clients applying for immigration and asylum benefits with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and US Department of State (DOS). Counseled undocumented immigrants in one-on-one interviews and community wide advocacy meetings using fluent, subject-specific Spanish language skills. Identified and adapted legal defenses and appeals before the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS). Conducted group trainings in immigration law and political advocacy for human service providers. Liaised with immigration and criminal lawyers, health care professionals, DHS officials, employers, police, and domestic violence specialists to advance legal arguments and build coordinated advocacy networks. Examined and advocated regional and national policy changes in USCIS practice; remotely investigated DOS and DHS waiver adjudication practices in US consulates in Guatemala, El Salvador, Peru, and Mexico. Provided legal advice and consultation for 30+ new walk-in clients a week. Awarded with Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) Accreditation to practice immigration law in federal court. Independently built expertise in Violence Against Women Act and U-visa provisions of US immigration law to represent victims of crime and domestic abuse. Instigated and organized domestic violence training for internal partners and coordinated

collaborative domestic violence outreach in local immigrant communities. Created media outreach programs on national Spanish language television and radio channels.

Freelance Journalist 2004

*Cairo Times, Middle East Times, Cairo, Egypt*

Investigated and produced feature articles focusing on regional human rights and socio-political issues in the Middle East and Africa. Developed relevant stories, identified and cultivated key sources and informants, and conducted interviews in English and Arabic.

Legal Advisor and Supervisor 2002

*Egyptian Organization for Human Rights Refugee Legal Aid, Cairo, Egypt*

Interviewed and prepared asylum-seekers from various African and Middle-Eastern nations for their refugee status determination interview with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' office in Cairo, Egypt. Recorded and reviewed testimony, generated and adapted legal arguments, and evaluated country of origin information. Accompanied clients to their UNHCR interview to effect proper understanding of their claim for refugee status. Researched and wrote reports on UNHCR Cairo treatment of unaccompanied refugee minors. Other duties included visiting refugee clients in prison and organizing community outreach efforts in impoverished refugee neighborhoods. After three months, I was promoted to the role of supervisor, monitoring activities and performance of other legal advisors to ensure the highest quality services for our clients.

Co-director, Co-writer, Actor 2002 - 2005

*Walking In Circles, La Niña Productions, Bolivia, Peru, Chile, Argentina*

Conceptualized and acted in a non-fiction documentary by La Niña Productions that took place in Peru, Bolivia, Argentina and Chile. The film combined documentary exploration of political history and local mythology with the fictional storyline of an American searching for his roots in Chile. Composed scripted voiceovers, conducted interviews, engaged in background research on relevant history.

## **LANGUAGES**

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Fluent in English and Spanish