

SARAH J. TOWNSEND

Department of Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese
The Pennsylvania State University
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University Park, PA 16802
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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Associate Professor of Spanish and Portuguese, Penn State University (2019–present)

Assistant Professor of Spanish and Portuguese, Penn State University (2013–2019)

American Council of Learned Societies New Faculty Fellow, UC–Santa Barbara (2011–2013)

Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in the Humanities, UC–Berkeley (2010–2011)

EDUCATION

PhD in Spanish and Portuguese, *with distinction*, New York University (2010)

BA in English and Spanish, *magna cum laude*, University of Iowa (1999)

FELLOWSHIPS

American Council of Learned Societies Frederick Burkhardt Residential Fellowship for Recently Tenured Scholars (2021–2022)

Institute for the Arts and Humanities Resident Faculty Fellow, Penn State University (Fall 2016)

American Council of Learned Societies New Faculty Fellow, UC–Santa Barbara (2011–2013)

Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in the Humanities, UC–Berkeley (2010–2011)

PUBLICATIONS

Books

Opera in the Amazon: Culture, Capital, and the Global Jungle (in progress)

The Unfinished Art of Theater: Avant-Garde Intellectuals in Mexico and Brazil. Northwestern University Press, 2018, 301 pp.

- Modernist Studies Association First Book Prize (Shortlisted)
- Humanities Book Prize from the Mexico Section of the Latin American Studies Association (Honorable Mention)
- Reviewed in *Art Journal* (in review essay on “The Challenge of a Global Modernism”), *Latin American Theatre Review*, *Luso-Brazilian Review*, *Modern Language Quarterly*, *Modern Drama*, *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos*, *Revista de Hispánica Moderna* (in review essay on “The State of a Field in Five Books”), *TDR*, *Theatre Survey*

Stages of Conflict: A Critical Anthology of Latin American Theater and Performance. Co-edited with Diana Taylor. University of Michigan Press, 2008, 325 pp.

- Choice Outstanding Academic Title, American Library Association
- Reviewed in *Theatre History Studies*, *Theatre Journal*, *Theatre Research International*

Journal Issue

Special issue of *Comparative Literature Studies* on Redesigning Modernities co-edited with Vinay Dharwadker (for publication in 2022)

Articles in Journals (Peer-Reviewed)

“Opera and Extractivism” (in progress)

“Gold Links: Teaching Culture Through Commodity Chains” (co-authored with Heather McCune Bruhn, in progress for special issue of *Comparative Literature Studies* on Redesigning Modernities)

“Money Mazes, Media Machines, and Banana Republic Realisms.” *American Literary History* special issue on Economics and Literary History in the New Gilded Age 31.4 (Winter 2019): 687-714.

“The Flight of the Bat: Theatrical (Re)production and the Unevenness of Modernism’s World Stage.” *Modernism/Modernity Print+* cluster titled Modernism on the World Stage (October 15, 2019): <https://modernismmodernity.org/forums/posts/flight-bat>

“The Siren’s Song; or, When an Amazonian *Iara* Sang Opera (in Italian) on a Belle Époque Stage.” *Latin American Theatre Review* special issue on Brazil 52.2 (Spring 2019): 149-167.

- Best Article Award from the Nineteenth Century Section of the Latin American Studies Association (Honorable Mention)

“The Spectral Stage of Édouard Glissant’s *Monsieur Toussaint*.” *Modern Drama* 61.4 (Winter 2018): 502-526 .

- *Modern Drama* Award for Outstanding Article of 2018 (Winner)

“Oswald de Andrade’s *Os condenados* and the Decay of the Amazonian Aura.” *Journal of Lusophone Studies* 3.2 (Fall 2018): 104-124.

“His Master’s Voice? A Hemispheric History of Phonographic Fictions.” *Revista Hispánica Moderna* 70.2 (December 2017): 197-216.

“Radio / Puppets, or the Institutionalization of a (Media) Revolution and the Afterlife of a Mexican Avant-Garde.” *Cultural Critique* 91 (Fall 2015): 32-71.

“*De sobremesa*, crónicas ‘revestidas de galas’ y el escenario ausente del modernismo hispanoamericano.” *Revista iberoamericana* 232–33 (July–December 2010): 939-956.

“Total Theater and the Missing Pieces of the Brazilian Avant-Garde.” *Modernism/Modernity* 16.2 (April 2009): 329-355.

“Black Indians and Savage Christians: Unmaking the ‘Other’ in the Performance of Conquest.” *e-misférica* 2.1 (April 2005): http://hemi.es.its.nyu.edu/journal/2_1/townsend.html

Essays in Edited Collections

Under review: "Thinking Through Performance Practices in Nineteenth-Century Latin America." In *Routledge Companion to Nineteenth-Century Latin America*. Edited by Agnes Lugo-Ortiz and Graciela Montaldo for Routledge.

In press: "Manaus." In *Transitions in Latin American Literature*, Vol. 3 (1870–1930). Edited by Fernando Degiovanni and Javier Uriarte for Cambridge University Press (forthcoming in 2021).

"Modernism's Unfinished Stage: Theatre in Latin America." In *The Modernist World*. Ed. Stephen Ross and Allana Lindgren. Routledge, 2015. pp. 417-425.

Reviews and Other Non-Refereed (Invited) Writings

"Teatro da Experiência," "Nelson Rodrigues," and "Teatro del Murciélago." *Routledge Encyclopedia of Modernism*. Available at <https://www.rem.routledge.com>

Review of *Abject Performances: Aesthetic Strategies in Latino Cultural Production* by Leticia Alvarado. *Latin American Theatre Review* 53.1 (Fall 2019): 154-156.

Review of *The Triumph of Brazilian Modernism: The Metanarrative of Emancipation and Counter-Narratives* by Saulo Gouveia. *Hispanic Review* 84.2 (Spring 2016): 241-244.

Review of *Re-Casting Transnationalism through Performance: Theatre Festivals in Cape Verde, Mozambique, and Brazil* by Christina S. McMahon. *Modern Drama* 58.1 (Spring 2015): 145-147.

"Nelson Rodrigues: The Pornographic Angel Comes to NYC." *The Brooklyn Rail* (October 1, 2005): <https://brooklynrail.org/2005/10/theater/nelson-rodrigues-the-pornographic-angel-comes-to-nyc>

Translations (from Spanish and Portuguese)

Excerpts from the Plays of Vivi Tellas and "Kidnapping Reality: An Interview with Vivi Tellas by Alan Pauls." In *Dramaturgy of the Real on the World Stage*. Ed. Carol Martin. Palgrave Press, 2010. pp. 246-258.

Luisa Capetillo, "After Death." In *Stages of Conflict: A Critical Anthology of Latin American Theater and Performance*. Ed. Diana Taylor and Sarah J. Townsend. University of Michigan Press, 2008. pp. 141-144.

Luis Carlos Martins Pena, "The Jealous Officer, or the Fearsome Slave Catcher." In *Stages of Conflict: A Critical Anthology of Latin American Theater and Performance*. Ed. Diana Taylor and Sarah J. Townsend. University of Michigan Press, 2008. pp. 109-121.

Oswald de Andrade, "The Candle King" (co-translated with Ana Bernstein). In *Stages of Conflict: A Critical Anthology of Latin American Theater and Performance*. Ed. Diana Taylor and Sarah J. Townsend. University of Michigan Press, 2008. pp. 152-172.

TALKS & PAPERS

Invited Talks

- “Opera and Extractivism in the Amazon.” University of Leipzig (via Zoom), June 8, 2021
- “Modernist Opera and the Decay of the Amazonian Aura.” Global Avant-Garde and Modernist Studies Forum, Northwestern University (via Zoom), May 7, 2021
- “Opera and Infrastructure along the Amazon River.” Symposium on Water, Infrastructure, and the Americas, Stony Brook University, November 14, 2019
- Invited respondent to essay presented by Adrian Anagnost at “Superlative City: Experimental Urbanity in São Paulo” book workshop, Princeton University, February 2019
- “Brazilian Modernismo and the Operatic Logic of Paulista Exceptionalism.” The São Paulo Symposium, University of Chicago, May 2013

Conference Papers

- “Artists as Producers on (and of) an Uneven Stage.” American Society of Theater Research conference, Arlington, VA, November 2019
- “Money Mazes, Media Machines, and Banana Republic Realisms.” American Comparative Literature Association conference, Washington, DC, March 2019
- “Hilda Hilst’s Theater and a Modernist Politics of Mediation.” Modernist Studies Association conference, Columbus, OH, November 2018
- “Espectros da Revolução Haitiana sobre um palco amazônico: A ópera *Bug Jargal* em Belém.” Brazilian Studies Association conference, Rio de Janeiro, July 2018
- “The Haitian Revolution and Singing the Un-said: An Operatic *Bug-Jargal* in Post-Abolition Brazil.” American Comparative Literature Association conference, Los Angeles, March 2018
- Roundtable presentation on “Diana Taylor’s *The Archive and the Repertoire* at 15.” Modern Language Association conference, New York, January 2018
- “Opera in the Amazon (Redux).” Latin American Studies Association conference, Lima, April 2017
- “Mário de Andrade, Phonography, and Music out of Place.” American Portuguese Studies Association conference, Stanford, October 2016
- “Walter Benjamin’s Radio Puppet.” Modern Language Association conference, Austin, January 2016
- “The Unfinished Pieces of the Avant-garde.” Modernist Studies Association conference, Pittsburgh, November 2014
- “Primitivist Accumulation and Teatro sintético.” Tepoztlán Institute for the Transnational History of the Americas, Tepoztlán, Mexico, July 2014
- “His Master’s Voice: Phonographic Authority and the Modernizing Dictator.” Latin American Studies Association conference, Chicago, May 2014

- “Primitivist Accumulation and Teatro sintético in Postrevolutionary Mexico.” American Comparative Literature Association conference, New York, March 2014
- “The Temporal Drag of Operatic Modernism in Brazil.” American Society of Theater Research conference, Nashville, November 2012
- “Brazilian Modernismo’s Operatic Autonomy.” Latin American Studies Association conference, San Francisco, May 2012
- “Radio / Puppets, or Old New Media and the Afterlife of the Mexican Avant-Garde.” Interdisciplinary Humanities Center, University of California, Santa Barbara, April 2012
- “Radio-guiñol, o las ficciones tecnológicas del pos-estridentismo.” XIV Colloquium on Mexican Literature, University of California, Santa Barbara, November 2011
- “Sound and the Legacies of Liberalism in Mexico.” American Comparative Literature Association conference, Vancouver, April 2011
- “Mário de Andrade, Ethnographic Opera, and the Aural Archive.” American Comparative Literature Association conference, New Orleans, April 2010
- “*Troca el poderoso* and the Radiophonic Pedagogy of the Mexican Avant-Garde.” American Comparative Literature Association conference, Boston, March 2009
- “Teatro sintético and the Vanishing Stage of Racial Synthesis in 1920s Mexico.” Modern Language Association conference, San Francisco, December 2008
- “Taking Another Look at Teatro de Revista and the Mediating Work of Genre.” Latin American Theatre Today conference, Blacksburg, Virginia, March 2008
- “Mass Publics and the Missing Black Body on the Brazilian Stage.” American Comparative Literature Association conference, Puebla, Mexico, April 2007
- “Early Working-Class Performance in the Americas.” International Symposium on the Arts & Society, New York, February 2007
- “Oswald de Andrade’s *O Homem e o Cavalo*, or an Anti-Imperialist Theatre of Totality.” American Society of Theatre Research 50th anniversary conference, Chicago, November 2006
- “Black Indians and Savage Christians: Unmaking the ‘Other’ in the Performance of Conquest.” Latin American Studies Association conference, San Juan, Puerto Rico, March 2006

Talks at Penn State

- “The International Amazon.” Presentation at forum *The Amazon Is Burning! Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on the Current Crisis*, September 2019
- “Histories of Fascism in Brazil.” Presentation at forum on *Fascism across the Americas: The Rise of the Far Right in Brazil and Beyond*, November 2018
- “Opera in the Amazon.” Presentation at Institute for the Arts and Humanities, October 2016

ORGANIZATION OF WORKSHOPS, LECTURE SERIES & SEMINARS

Redesigning Modernities. Faculty Coordinator for Penn State research and curriculum-development initiative funded by the Strategic Plan Seed Grant Program, 2019–2020

Black Narratives in Brazilian Comics. Coordinator of visit by Marcelo d'Saete (graphic novelist from Brazil) for public lecture and drawing workshop at Penn State, January 27-28, 2020

Hemispheric Americas Lecture Series. Organizer, Penn State University, 2014-2019

2018-19: Theater & Performance in the Americas

Julie Ward (U of Oklahoma), Patricia Ybarra (Brown), Katherine Zien (McGill)

2017-18: Brazil in the Americas (co-organized with Krista Brune)

Jens Andermann (NYU), Adriana Johnson (UC-Irvine), Seth Garfield (UT-Austin),

Paul C. Johnson (U of MI)

2016-17: Music, Sound & Image in the Americas (co-organized with Judith Sierra-Rivera)

Ignacio Sánchez-Prado (Washington University in St. Louis), Eduardo Ledesma (U of IL, Urbana-Champaign), Licia Fiol-Matta (NYU), Bryan McCann (Georgetown)

2015-16: Race in the Americas (co-organized with Judith Sierra-Rivera)

Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel (Rutgers), Alai Reyes-Santos (U of Oregon)

2014-15: Intellectual Currents in the Americas (co-organized with Judith Sierra-Rivera)

Pedro Meira Monteiro (Princeton), Marc Hertzman (U of IL, Urbana-Champaign), Jossiana Arroyo (UT-Austin)

The Amazon Is Burning! Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on the Current Crisis. Co-organizer and presenter at forum held at Penn State University, September 19, 2019

Fascism across the Americas: The Rise of the Far Right in Brazil and Beyond. Co-organizer and presenter at forum held at Penn State University, November 7, 2018

Postwar Modernisms and Media in Mexico and Brazil. Organizer and chair of panel for Modernist Studies Association conference, Columbus, OH, November 2018

The International Amazon. Organizer and chair of panel sponsored by the Brazil Section at the Latin American Studies Association conference, Lima, April 2017

The Politics of Sound. Workshop on Sound Studies co-facilitated with Jonathan Sterne and Iván Ramos at the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics encuentro, Concordia University, Montreal, June 2014

Urbanidade sônica. Workshop on Sound Studies co-facilitated with José Batista del Farra Martins and Ramón Rivera-Servera at the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics encuentro, Universidade de São Paulo, Brazil, January 2013

Sound Politics. Seminar organized and co-chaired with Tom McEnaney at the American Comparative Literature Association conference, Vancouver, April 2011

The Aural Archive. Seminar organized and co-chaired with Michael C. Cohen at the American Comparative Literature Association conference, New Orleans, April 2010

Missing Pieces: Theatre, Performance and Circulation in the Americas. Seminar organized and co-chaired with Kahlila Chaar-Pérez at the American Comparative Literature Association conference, Puebla, Mexico, April 2007

TEACHING

Penn State University (2013–present)

Undergraduate:

PORT 497: Luso-Brazilian Theater Workshop
PORT 497: Through the Looking-Glass: Race in the United States and Brazil
PORT 397: The International Amazon
PORT 197: Portuguese for Romance Language Speakers
PORT 097: Soccer and Samba in Brazil (first-year seminar)
SPAN 497: Culture and Social Struggle in the Amazon
SPAN 497: Mexi/Cali Noir
SPAN 497: Avant-garde Primitivisms
SPAN 253: Introduction to Hispanic Literature

Graduate:

CMLIT 597/SPAN 597: Race, Performance, and Possession in the Americas
CMLIT 509/SPAN 597: Brazil and Comparative Modernisms
SPAN 597: Amazonia and Extractivism
SPAN 597: Time, History, and the Contemporary Latin American Stage
SPAN 597: Culture, Capital, and the Global Jungle
SPAN 597: Missing Pieces: Latin American Theater and Performance
SPAN 597: Latin American Modernisms and (Old) New Media

Independent Studies:

Dam-building in the Amazon (undergraduate Engineering major)
Theater and Performance in Brazil (PhD student in Spanish)
Theories of Theater, Performance, and Media (PhD student in Spanish)
Latin American Genre Film (MA student in Spanish)
Race and Social Media in Cuba (MA student in Comparative Literature)

University of California, Santa Barbara (2011–2013)

Undergraduate:

Mexi/Cali Noir
Media and the Mexican Revolution
Contemporary Mexican Literature: 1994–present
Avant-Garde Primitivisms
Introduction to 20th-century Spanish-American Literature
Literature and Slavery in the Americas

Graduate:

Latin American Modernisms and (Old) New Media

University of California, Berkeley (Fall 2010–Spring 2011)

Undergraduate:

Latin American Theater and Performance
Writing Crime in Mexico (writing-intensive)

New York University (Fall 2004–Spring 2010)

Undergraduate:

New World Encounters (discussion sections for general education course)
Theatre in Latin America (stand-alone course for Drama majors)
Introduction to Latin American Culture (discussion sections for Spanish majors)

ADVISING (at Penn State unless otherwise noted)

Dissertation Director:

- Gustavo Herrera Díaz (Spanish, in progress), *Cuando Eshu y Dionisos se encuentran: Mediaciones y encrucijadas afro-griegas en el teatro cubano y brasileño*
- Irenae Aigbedion (Comparative Literature, co-director, in progress), *How to See the Dark: Articulating Blackness in Contemporary Visual Culture*
- Fernando Fonseca Pacheco (Spanish, 2017), *The Theater of Futures Past: Infrastructures of the Latin American Avant-Garde*

Dissertation Committee Member:

- Rebecca Lippman (Comparative Literature, UCLA, in progress), *Boom, Busts, and Borders: Stories of the Rubber and Petroleum Trades across the Americas*
- Ivana Ancic (Comparative Literature, in progress), *Perpetration and Complicity: Beyond the Liberal Humanist Regime of Rights*
- Ricardo Andrade Fernández (Spanish, in progress), *La ciudad sonora en la narrativa contemporánea: Sonidos e itinerarios del espacio urbano colonial en la ficción histórica latinoamericana*
- Molly Appel (Comparative Literature, 2018), *The Students of Human Rights: Literature, Pedagogy, and the Long Sixties in the Americas*
- Wei-Chih Wang (Comparative Literature/Asian Studies, 2016), *Intercultural Bodies: Politics of Performance in Modern Taiwanese Theatre*
- Tomás Hidalgo (Spanish, 2015), *Killing the Father, Killing the Children: Dialogues on Political Violence between Mexican History, Novel and Film (1959-2013)*

Master's or Qualifying Exam Committee Member:

- Gustavo Herrera Díaz (Spanish, 2019)
- Ricardo Andrade (Spanish, 2019)
- Michelle McGowan (Spanish, 2019)
- Victoria Jansen (Spanish, 2019)
- Sara Davis (Spanish, 2018)
- Christopher Andrejcik (Spanish, 2017)
- Alejandra Gutierrez (Spanish, 2017)
- Victoria Lupascu (Comparative Literature/Asian Studies, 2016)
- Veronica Charbonnet (Spanish, 2016)
- Stacey Mitchell (Spanish, 2016)
- Anna Torres-Cacoulllos (Spanish, 2016)
- Joshua Deckman (Spanish, 2015)
- María José Jorquera (Spanish, 2015)
- María Izquierdo (Spanish, 2014)
- Xavier Jiménez (Spanish, 2014)

Undergraduate thesis advisor:

- Amanda Talbot (Spanish, 2021), *Race, Spanish History, and the Translator's Style in Beatriz Alcaná's 'False Friends'*

SERVICE to the Profession

Modern Language Association

Drama and Performance Forum Executive Committee (2020–2025)

Delegate Assembly (2017–2019)

Nominating Committee (2017–2018)

American Society of Theatre Research

ASTR Translation Prize Committee (2021–2025)

Latin American Studies Association – Amazonia Section

Executive Committee (2020–2022)

Book Prize Committee (2020–2021, Chair 2021)

Latin American Studies Association – Brazil Section

Dissertation Prize Committee (2021)

Latin American Studies Association – Mexico Section

Humanities Book Prize Committee (2020)

Brazilian Studies Association

Brazil Initiation Scholarship Committee (2019)

Advisory board member

Bloomsbury/Methuen Drama Agitations series (2020–present)

Routledge Encyclopedia of Modernism (also Field Editor for Hispanic and Lusophone

Theater and Performance) (2013–2016)

Peer reviewer

University of Pittsburgh Press, Vanderbilt University Press, *African Identities*, *Comparative Literature*, *Comparative Literature Studies*, *Estudios: Revista de Investigaciones Literarias y Culturales*, *La Habana Elegante*, *Latin American Theatre Review*, *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, *Modern Drama*, *Romanic Review*, *Theatre Journal*

Managing Editor, *e-misférica: a journal of performance & politics in the Americas*. Hemispheric

Institute of Performance & Politics, August 2009–May 2010

Interviews with performers and other invited guests for inclusion in a digital archive at the

Hemispheric Institute of Performance & Politics encuentros in Belo Horizonte, March 2005;

Buenos Aires, July 2007; and Bogotá, August 2009

SERVICE to Penn State

University:

Reviewer of Limited-Submission External Fellowship Applications (2019–2020)

Faculty Senate Representative (2018–present)

Global Programs Committee member (2018–present)

Chair of Subcommittee on Global Sustainability Curriculum (2019–2020)

Faculty Senate delegate to the HUB-Robeson Student Center (2018–2019)

Judge for Graduate Poster Exhibition (2017)

College of Liberal Arts:

Faculty Coordinator for Redesigning Modernities, a Penn State research and curriculum-development initiative funded by the Strategic Plan Seed Grant Program (2019–2020)

Latin American Studies Steering Committee (2014–present)

First Book Institute Faculty, Center for American Literary Studies (2017, 2018, 2019, 2020)

Faculty Advisor to Penn State Americanists Graduate Student Group (2015–2018)

Consultant for tenure-track searches in Comparative Literature (2013–2014, 2015–2016)

Department of Spanish, Italian, & Portuguese:

Advisor to first-year graduate students (2019–2020)
Promotion and Tenure Committee (2019–present)
Graduate Committee (2018–present)
Portuguese Committee (2018–present)
Creation of new minor in Portuguese (2014–2018)
Activities Committee (2014–2019)
Faculty Advisor to Race in the Americas graduate student conference (2015, 2017)
Search committees for tenured or tenure-track faculty (2014–15, 2015–16, 2017–18)

LANGUAGES

English (native)
Spanish (near native)
Portuguese (near native)
French (reading fluency, basic conversational skills)
Italian (reading fluency, currently working on conversational skills)
German (intermediate reading skills, currently studying)
Yoruba (basic knowledge from two years of study)

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Theater and performance (experimental theater, intermedial performance, opera)
Brazilian, Spanish American, and Hemispheric American literature and culture (19th–21st c.)
Comparative modernisms and the international avant-gardes
Old and new media technologies
Marxist theory and the critique of capitalism
Amazonia and extractivism