

**ANTHONY W. FONTES**  
Curriculum Vitae

Assistant Professor  
School of International Service  
American University  
Washington, D.C.  
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[www.anthonfontesiv.com](http://www.anthonfontesiv.com)

**EDUCATION**

University of California, Berkeley. 8/2008 - 5/2015

PhD, Human Geography, May 2015.

(Dissertation Committee: Jake Kosek, Michael Watts, Beatriz Manz, Wendy Brown)

Immigration and Criminal Law Training (various) 06/2004 - 03/2008

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.

City College of San Francisco 8/04 - 01/05

Immigration Law for Paralegals. Received full honors.

American University in Cairo. Egypt, 06/02 - 12/02

Practitioner training in international refugee law.

Stanford University, 1999 - 2003

BA, Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity

Individually designed major in Migration and Refugee Studies

**RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS**

**American Council of Learned Societies Luce/ACLS Program in Religion, Journalism & International Affairs Collaborative Programming Grants** (submitted 11/11/2019, awaiting decision)

In collaboration with American University's School of Communications, I am Principal Investigator for the proposed project "Living with Sanctuary: Churches and the Experience of Recent Central American Arrivals to the Washington DC-Metro Region", investigating the shifting meaning of and possibilities for sanctuary for undocumented Central American migrants.

**National Geographic Exploration Grant** (submitted 10/9/2019, awaiting decision)

In collaboration with University of Virginia Creative Writing professor and novelist Micheline Marcom and American University sociologist Ernesto Tinoco-Castañeda, I am lead investigator for the proposed project “Central American Migration Stories”. This grant would fund ongoing transnational ethnographic research with Central American diaspora communities and sending communities in the Northern Triangle of Central America. It combines rigorous qualitative research with innovative story-telling methods to communicate Central American migration experiences that illuminate the ties that bind U.S and Central American societies together.

**School of International Service Dean’s Summer Research Fellow** (2018)

Awarded summer funds to conduct fieldwork for a project entitled “The Social Orders of Cocaine” to explore how transnational drug-trafficking affects communal order in Central American and southern Mexico cities.

**H.F. Guggenheim Research Fellow** (2016-2018)

Lead researcher in the collaborative research project “State Cartels and Narco States: A comparative study of international drug-trafficking violence in Central America and Central Asia”. With year-long funding from the HFG Foundation, I conducted fieldwork in 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.

**A.W. Mellon Post Doctoral Fellow** (2015-2017)

*A. W. Mellon Postdoctoral Program at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.* The Center for Humanities and the Department of Geography.

**SSRC Lead Research Consultant** (2015)

*SSRC/OSF/Guatemalan Presidential Commission.* Guatemala City, Guatemala  
As Lead Researcher, I designed, organized, and implemented a two-month research project on the impact of illicit drugs and anti-drug policy in and on Guatemalan prisons. Contracted and managed 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.

**Dorothea Lange Fellowship** (2015)

*Dorothea Lange Fellowship for Documentary Photography.* Received \$1000 honorary award for documentary photography collection entitled “Life and Death in Guatemala City”

**HF Guggenheim Dissertation Fellow** (2013-2014)

*Harry Frank Guggenheim (HFG) Dissertation Fellowship.* Berkeley, CA.

**UCIGCC Research Fellow** (2013-2014)

*University of California Institute for Conflict and Cooperation (UCIGCC)*

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 to conduct a month-long research project in Latin American security policy in Washington DC (May 2014).

**SSRC/DSD Research Fellow (2011-2012)**

*Social Science Research Council (SSRC)/ Open Society Foundation Drugs, Security and Democracy (DSD) Program.* Guatemala City, Guatemala.

In addition to funding my dissertation fieldwork, the SSRC provided mentorship from leading academic and think-tank researchers for research design in violent spaces.

**UC Berkeley Center for Latin American Studies Research Fellow (2010)**

Guatemala City, Honduras, and Southern Mexico

Conducted preliminary research on anti-violence initiatives in Guatemala City, Guatemala, San Salvador, El Salvador, and San Jose Pinula, Honduras

**UC Berkeley Geography Department Funding (2008-2011)**

**BOOK**

*Mortal Doubt: Transnational Gangs and Social Order in Guatemala City* (November 2018, 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.

--Reviewed in the *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, January-June, 2019

**PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES**

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.

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

- 2020 “Border, Ghetto, Prison: Cocaine and Social Order in Central America,” in *The Governance of the Global Narcotics Trade*, eds. Desmond Arias and Thomas Grisaffi, University of Pennsylvania Press. (forthcoming)

### WORKING PAPERS

- “The United States, Central America, and the Crisis of Containment”
- “The Gangster and the President: Identity and Immigration Politics in Washington D.C.”
- “Of Love and Lock-up: Survival in Central American Prisons”
- “Spectacles of Security: Police Reform and Public Perception in Honduras”

### OTHER PUBLICATIONS

- [“The Long, Bipartisan History of Dealing with Immigrants Harshly”](#), *The Conversation*, 7/9/2019
- [“Migrants aux portes des États-Unis : pourquoi ils fuient leurs pays”](#), *Infochretienne*, 4/16/2019
- [“Guatemala: Mortal Doubt and Transnational Gangs”](#), AULA Blog, 5/23/2019
- [“Why they flee”](#), *Newsweek*, 4/9/2029
- [Republican Ads Feature MS-13, Hoping Fear Will Motivate Voters](#), *The Conversation*, 11/2/2018
- [“US-Guatemala: Are Donald Trump and Jimmy Morales Brothers in Arms?”](#) AULA Blog, 10/2/2018
- [“The American Dream Meets a Central American Nightmare.”](#) *The New York Times*, 4/5/2017
- [“The Demise of a Prison Lord.”](#) *The New York Times*, 8/16/2016

*El impacto de las políticas de drogas en los cárceles 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. (June 2015) Lead author with Kevin L. O'Neill and Corina Giacomello.

“Beyond the *Maras*: Violence and Survival in Urban Central America” in *Is There Hope for Central American Youth*. Latin American Program. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars Working Paper Series (December 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.

“The Strong Hand Loses Its Grip.” *Berkeley Review of Latin American Studies* (Spring 2013). Berkeley; pp. 12-16

“El Fish and the General.” *Berkeley Review of Latin American Studies* (Fall 2012). Berkeley, CA; pp. 50-56

“El Salvador holds its breath after day without murders,” *The Guardian* (UK), May 1, 2012. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/may/01/el-salvador-murders-gang-truce> (published under pseudonym)

“Remembering Romero: Salvaging a Voice of Reason from an Age of War.” *Berkeley Review of Latin American Studies*. University of California, Berkeley. (Fall 2010); pp. 68-71

“The Presence of Absence.” *Berkeley Review of Latin American Studies*. (Fall 2010) University of California, Berkeley.

“Death Dealing in Guatemala City.” *Berkeley Review of Latin American Studies*. University of California, Berkeley. Fall 2010; pp. 56-61

“Refuge from Femicide: Facing Gendered Violence in Guatemala.” *Berkeley Review of Latin American Studies*. Spring 2010; pp. 71-73

“An Everyday Geography of the Global South” By Jonathan Rigg (Book Review) *Journal of Regional Science*, Vol. 50, No 2, 2010.

“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, 2004

## **SELECTED PRESENTATIONS**

“Mortal Doubt”

Invited Speaker, Center for Latin American Studies, University of California, Berkeley. November 21, 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 16<sup>th</sup> 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<sup>th</sup>, 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 D.C., April 5, 2019

“Transnational Imaginaries of Gang Violence”  
Invited speaker for the School of Geography and Development, University of Arizona, Tucson. February 15, 2019

“Mortal Doubt”  
Invited speaker for the Center of Latin American Studies, University of California, Berkeley. November 18, 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, 2018

“*Vidas Extorsionadas*”  
Invited speaker for *Soberanías 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<sup>th</sup>, 2017

“Extorted Life: Protection Rackets and Urban Governance in Guatemala City”  
Centre for Transnational and Diaspora Studies, University of Toronto. March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017

“Mortal Doubt: Maras and Murder in Guatemala City” Institute for Research in the Humanities, University of Wisconsin-Madison. September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016

“Extorted Life: Protection Rackets and Urban Governance in Guatemala City” RC21  
Urban Studies Conference 2016 Mexico City, July 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 2016

“Of Maras and Mortal Doubt: Gangs and Social Order in Post-War Guatemala”  
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 2015)

“Beyond the Maras: Violence and Survival in Urban Central America”  
*Is There Hope for Central American Youth?* Woodrow Wilson International Center for  
Scholars  
Latin American Program. (9/18/2014) See webcast here:  
[http://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/CentralAmericanYouth\\_2014](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/CentralAmericanYouth_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) 2014 Panel (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*. (January 2014) Lawrence Livermore National Labs.

“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) 2013 Panel (April 2013)

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

## TEACHING

**Forced Migration, Displacement, and Human Mobility** (SISU 419, Fall 2020)

*Contemporary Latin America* (SISU 214, Fall 2019)

*Violent Spaces* (SISU 419, Spring 2019)

*Conquest, Cold War, Globalization: Latin America and the World* (SISU 296, Spring  
2018)

*Fieldwork, Uncertainty, and the Politics of Fear: Advanced International Studies Research  
Methods* (SISU 306, Spring 2018)

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

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

*Violent Uncertainty: Geographies of Terror and Insecurity* (Geog 475, Fall 2016).

Graduate level seminar. University of Wisconsin, Madison.

*The Geography of Latin America: Conquest, Cold War, Globalization* (Geog 348)

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

*Globalization: Conflict, Inequality, and Ethics in the Age of Hyper-Connection* Geography 20. University of California, Berkeley. Summer Session 2014.

**Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award:** University of California, Berkeley. (2015)  
Awarded for superlative teaching and mentoring throughout graduate career.

*The Southern Border*, Geography and Ethnic Studies, Head Graduate Student Instructor, (Instructors: Prof. Beatriz Manz and Harley Shaiken) Fall 2010, Fall 2014. University of California, Berkeley.

*Environmental Politics: Nature, Identity, and Difference*, Geography, Graduate Student Instructor, (Instructor: Prof. Jake Kosek) Spring 2011, University of California, Berkeley

*Geography of Militarism*, Geography, Graduate Student Instructor, (instructor: Prof. Jake Kosek) Spring 2009. University of California, Berkeley

*EarthRights International*, Lecturer, Chiang Mai, Thailand. 2009, 2010

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.

## SERVICE

### *American University*

**Co-coordinator**, Ethnographies of Empire Research Cluster. School of International Service, American University. 2018-2019

**Olson Scholar Mentor**, 2018-2019

**SIS representative** for Provost's Retreat Planning Committee, 2018

**Fulbright Review Panelist**, 9/19/2018

**Global Leadership Awards Keynote Speaker**, 4/25/2019

### *Profession*

Reviewer for *Political Geography*

Reviewer for *Journal of Latin American Studies*

**Public**

**Volunteer Advisor**, Advocates for Human Rights (AHR), a NGO helping asylum seekers in the United States

**Volunteer Advisor**, Teaching for Change, a NGO engaged in educating teachers and other service providers in the Washington, DC area

**OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**Pro-Bono Central American Asylum Expert:** (*ongoing*) Utilizing my expertise and network of contacts in Central America, I provide expert witness affidavits and court testimony in support of applications for asylum and withholding of removal for people fleeing the Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador.

**Non-Profit Organizations served:**

Brooklyn Defender Services (BDS), New York City, NY

Community Legal Services of East Palo Alto (CLSEPA). East Palo Alto, CA

International Institute of the Bay Area (IIBA). Oakland, CA

Pangea Legal Services. San Francisco, CA

**Senior Policy Expert:** *Social Impact and United States Agency for International Development/Office of Transition Initiatives, Honduras. 5/18-9/18*

Designed and led evaluative research on USAID/OTI anti-gang initiatives in Honduras' 4 most dangerous cities: Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula, Tela, and La Ceiba, distributed and presented to policymakers in the United States and across Central America.

**Consultant**

*United Nations Development Program, Guatemala. Guatemala City, Guatemala. (01/2012)*  
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**

*International Accountability Project, India, SE Asia 01/08 - 09/08*

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/Accredited Representative and Media Coordinator.**

*International Institute of San Francisco, Redwood City, CA. 08/04 - 03/08*

Integrated legal expertise and individual client experiences to generate appeal waivers for undocumented individuals seeking permanent resident status in the United States. Personally 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**

*Cairo Times, Middle East Times, Cairo, Egypt 01/04 - 06/04*

Investigated, adapted 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 both English and Arabic.

**Co-director/Co-writer/Actor**

*Walking In Circles, La Niña Productions, Bolivia, Peru, Chile, Argentina. 04/03 - 08/05*

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 a an American searching for his roots in Chile. Composed scripted voiceovers, conducted interviews, engaged in background research on relevant history.

**Legal Advisor and Supervisor**

*Egyptian Organization for Human Rights Refugee Legal Aid, Cairo, Egypt. 06/02 - 01/03*

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.

## **LANGUAGES**

Fluent in **English** and **Spanish**