

Sound at ASA 2013

Liana M. Silva

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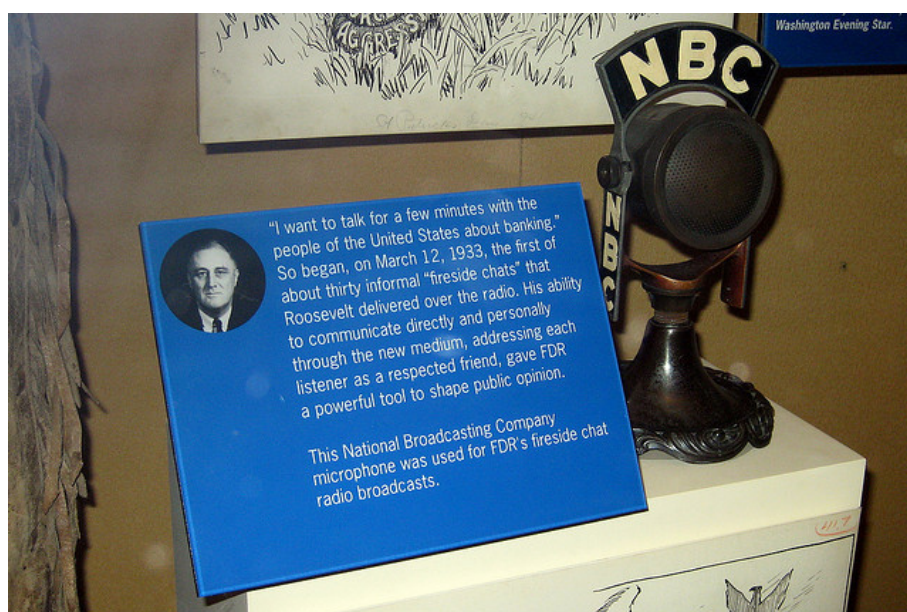
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Abstract

Although this year's American Studies Association conference location is not as warm and sunny as last year's (can we have all November conferences in warm, sunny places, please?), Washington DC has a lot to offer this year's conference attendees.

Keywords

Music (Subfield), American Studies, Black Studies, Chican@/Latin@ Studies, Class, Conferences



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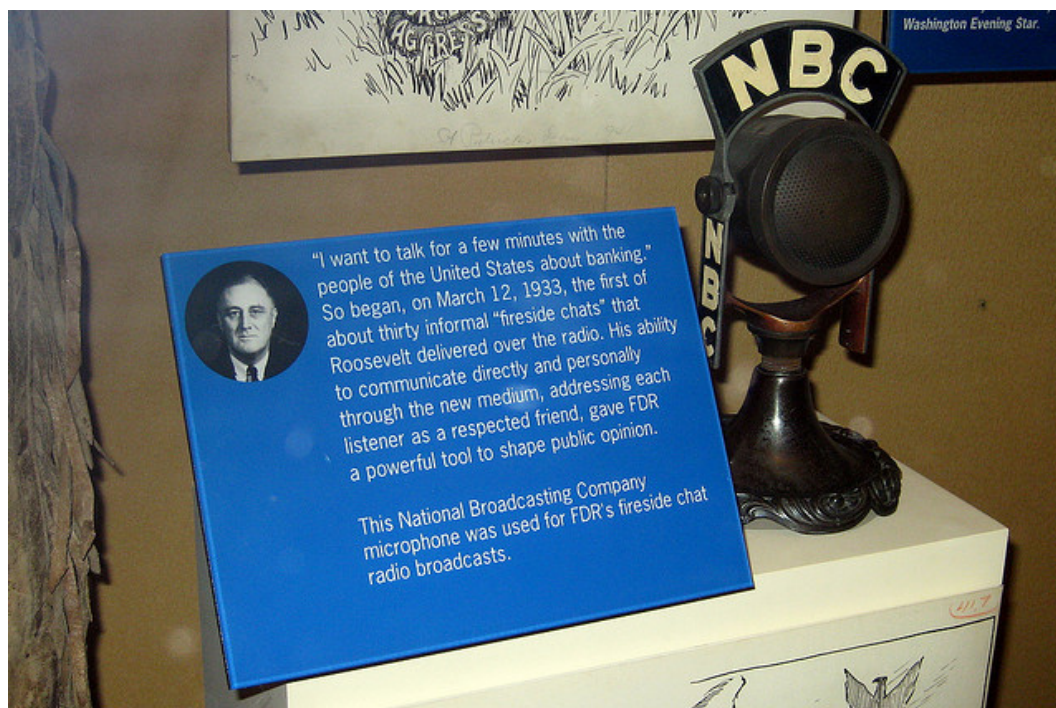
Although this year's [American Studies Association](#) conference location is not as warm and sunny as last year's (can we have all November conferences in warm, sunny places, please?), Washington DC has a lot to offer this year's conference attendees. The title for this year's annual meeting, which takes place from November 21 to November 24, 2013, is **"Beyond the Logic of Debt, Toward an Ethics of Collective Dissent."** The focus on debt in all of its dimensions couldn't be more timely, considering that the conference comes on the heels of a government shutdown that the United States is still getting over, in addition to formal and informal conversations about recovery. In this sense, Washington DC seems an ideal setting for the topic: it's the center of many of these national conversations about debt.

It is no surprise then that, [according to the co-chairs of this year's programming committee](#), **Roderick Ferguson, Lisa Lowe** and **Jodi Melamed**, many of the panels chosen for this year's ASA revolve around keywords such as "debt, obligation, ethics, collectivity, and dissent." The focus on such topics may explain why there are less panels and papers that fall under Sound Studies. The connection between debt and sound may not be immediately apparent for some, which may either keep panels or papers that focus on sound out of the conversation. It may also be the case that the overall topic may not immediately resonate for those who work on or write about sound matters. Sound Studies is still staking its claim, loud and clear. For example, bright and early at 8:00 am on Thursday, November 21st, there's the **Sonic Lives of Debt** panel, which looks at how debt is represented in music and sound in general. Another highlight from Thursday is one of two [American Studies Journal](#) panels, titled **Chocolate Spaceship: Gender Politics and Afro-Futurism in Funk**, with papers on Patti Labelle, Meshell Ndegeocello, and Roger Troutman.

For artists and scholars of Sound Studies, the conference theme summons **Jacques Attali's** famed text, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*. His theoretical arguments about music as an audible mirror of capitalism, a structured representation of noise, and a means of understanding "debt" through sound, serve as an academic companion to this year's lineup of panels and papers that address sound. Some sound-related panels complicate ideas of "dissent" and "debt." **Sonic Ledgers of Dissent** (Saturday, 4:00-5:45 pm), chaired by **Deborah R. Vargas**, focuses on dissent addresses not only the State (FBI), but also gay rapper Caushun, racial musical miscegenation, and Black/Brown alliances in Los Angeles.

However, it's not just a matter of the connection of the theme with sound. Last year, *SO!* Editor-in-Chief **Jennifer Stoever-Ackerman** pointed out [in her ASA 2012 conference round-up](#) that there were less sound studies panels than other years, and suggested that this turn may indicate that the field is entering a moment of reflection. Stoever-Ackerman rightfully argues that academic presentations related to Sound Studies are moving beyond making the presence of the field known and moving toward engaging with sound on a deeper, more complicated level. Consider how some of the panels listed below may not be precisely about sound studies, but include a sound-oriented approach. The panel **Debts of Spirit and Substance** includes a paper that looks at songs of protest: **Glenda Goodman's** "Unsung Songs of the 'Swinish Multitude': Transnational Tunes of Eighteenth-Century Political Protest." Another example is Sunday's **Latinas/os Onscreen and On/Off Air: Rethinking Contemporary Media Audiences and Discourses** panel, which includes a presentation by **Dolores Inés Casillas** titled "Lost in Translation: The Politics of Spanish-

language Radio Ratings." It is encouraging to see how cultural critiques also include sound as a way to analyze and understand cultural phenomena.



"Washington DC – National Museum of American History: Fireside Chat microphone" by Flickr user Wally Gobetz, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

The **ASA Sound Studies Caucus** is bringing it this year with three panels that carry the caucus's stamp of approval. The three panels (two on Friday and one on Saturday) address questions of listening, recording, and memory. The Friday panel at 2:30, chaired by Nicole Hodges Persley, is titled **Sampling Phonographies: Sonic Memory and the Long History of Sampling** and stars two SO! contributors: **Gustavus Stadler** ("Charles Chesnutt, Sonic Memory, and Racial Terror") and **Meghan Drury** ("Across Time and Space: Hearing Sun Ra's Egypt"). Each of the papers on this panel discuss the intimate relationship between music's ritual of sampling and racial memory. That 2:30 presentation is immediately followed by **Musical Debts: Appropriations, Reparations, or New Traditions?**, chaired by **Barry Shank**. Shank [participated](#) in this year's cross-blog (and only!) virtual IASPM-US Conference panel on popular music and Sound Studies, **Sonic Borders Virtual Panel**. **Musical Debts** explores how music trespasses across racialized, global boundaries for capitalist gains. On Saturday, you can catch the last of the SSC panels, on listening and community: **Connected Listening: Re-imagining Community Through Sound**. Chaired by **Michelle Habell-Pallan**, the papers in that panel delve into the role of listening for communities of color.

If you can't make any of the sound studies panels, make sure to check out the **ASA Sound Studies Caucus+Journal of Popular Music Studies Happy Hour Meet and Greet** on Friday, November 22, 2013. We're big fans of the work going on at JPMS, and we're thrilled to see them partner up with the Sound Studies Caucus. The Caucus's co-conveners, [Roshanak Kheshti](#), [Deb Vargas](#), SO!'s

own [Jennifer Stoeve-Ackerman](#) and [D. Ines Casillas](#), welcome colleagues equally steeped in topic of sound to help build this important caucus. From the get go, this Caucus has set out to not only bring scholars together under the umbrella of sound but to also push ideas of gender, race, and sexuality as integral components of Sound Studies. Sadly, the editorial crew of SO! will not be present for this year's SSC Happy Hour, but be sure to swing by and meet some of our guest writers who will be at [Glen's Garden Market](#) from 5:30 to 7:00 pm!

Lastly, if you are not presenting at ASA, not attending the conference, or simply want to check in on the action, take a glance at the official Twitter hashtag [#2013ASA](#) . Hopefully we'll get to meet you at the next ASA meeting: [Los Angeles, 2014!](#)

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Please comment to let SO! know what you think—both before and after ASA 2013. If we somehow missed you or your panel in this round up, please let our Managing Editor know!:
lms@soundingoutblog.com

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This post was co-authored. [Liana M. Silva-Ford](#) is co-founder and Managing Editor of Sounding Out!. [Dolores Inés Casillas](#) is Assistant Professor in the [Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies](#) at UC Santa Barbara this fall. She writes and teaches on Latino media, language politics, and sound practices.

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Featured photo: "[Stormy Salute](#)" by Flickr user Joey Gannon, CC BY-SA 2.0

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"Robert A. Taft Memorial and Carillon" by Flickr user Cliff, CC BY 2.0

[Jump to THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2013](#)

[Jump to FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2013](#)

[Jump to SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2013](#)

[Jump to SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2013](#)

THURSDAY, November 21, 2013

8:00 am – 9:45 am

004. Debts of Spirit and Substance

Washington Hilton, C – Cardozo (T)

CHAIR: **Elisa Tamarkin**, University of California, Berkeley (CA)

PAPERS:

James Deutsch, Smithsonian Institution (DC)

In Debt to The Poor of New York: Dion Boucicault and the Panics of 1837/1857

Gino Conti, University of Southern California (CA)

Oh, I feel, I feel, I feel: Moravians, Wasted Labor, and the Afterlives of Enthusiasm

Glenda Goodman, University of Southern California (CA)

Unsung Songs of the "Swinish Multitude": Transnational Tunes of Eighteenth-Century Political Protest

Tanja Aho, State University of New York, Buffalo (NY)

Wives and/as Debt: Women's Lived Dissent in the Eighteenth Century

COMMENT: **Elisa Tamarkin**, University of California, Berkeley (CA)

007. Sonic Lives of Debt

Washington Hilton, F1 – Fairchild West (T)

CHAIR: **Alexandra Theresa Vazquez**, Princeton University (NJ)

PAPERS:

Ray Allen, City University of New York, Brooklyn College (NY)

Holy Ground: Woody Guthrie's Unsung Lyrics

Elliott H. Powell, New York University (NY)

Sampling among the Margins: Hip Hop, Indian Film Music, and the Sonic Life of Debt

Joshua Jelly-Schapiro, University of California, Berkeley (CA)

Sound Nation Empire: Emory Cook's "Sounds of Our Times"

Mark Krasovic, Rutgers University, Newark (NJ)

Steve Reich's "Come Out" and the Sound of Evidence in the Long Hot Summers

COMMENT: **Alexandra Theresa Vazquez**, Princeton University (NJ)

014. Televising Multiculturalism and its Discontents

Washington Hilton, Georgetown East (C)

CHAIR: **Sharon M. Leon**, George Mason University (VA)

PAPERS:

Allison McCracken, DePaul University (IL)

Blind Auditions and Vocal Politics: Enacting and Exposing Vocal Essentialism on NBC's The Voice

Janani Subramanian, Indiana University/Purdue University at Indianapolis (IN)

Mindy Kaling and Television Multiculturalism

Gregory Zinman, Georgia Institute of Technology (GA)

Nam June Paik and the Aesthetics of Interventionist Media

COMMENT: **Sharon M. Leon**, George Mason University (VA)

10:00 am – 11:45 am

019. Nineteenth-Century Public Lecturing, New Media, and Technologies of Orality

Washington Hilton, D – Du Pont (T)

CHAIR: **Thomas Augst**, New York University (NY)

PAPERS:

Carolyn Eastman, Virginia Commonwealth University (VA)

Speechless: America's First Celebrity Orator and the Origins of Nineteenth-Century Platform Culture

Granville Ganter, Saint John's University (NY)

Anne Laura Clarke, Lecturer on History, 1822–1835

Tom F. Wright, University of Sussex (United Kingdom)

How Silence Spoke for Lucy Parsons

COMMENT: **Thomas Augst**, New York University (NY)

2:00 pm – 3:45 pm

048. Song, Screen, Stomach: Cultural Debt and Transnational Italian Americanism

Washington Hilton, D – Du Pont (T)

CHAIR: **Grace Hale**, University of Virginia (VA)

PAPERS:

Joseph Sciorra, City University of New York, Queens College (NY)

"Core 'ngrato," a Wop Song: Mediated Renderings and Diasporic Musings

Benjamin Cawthra, California State University, Fullerton (CA)

Under the Volcano: Gordon Parks, the Bergman-Rossellini Romance, and Postwar U.S.-Italian Relations

John Gennari, University of Vermont (VT)

The Knife and the Bread, the Brutal and the Sacred: Family Trauma and Retaliatory Gastronomy in Louise DeSalvo's Crazy in the Kitchen

COMMENT: **Grace Hale**, University of Virginia (VA)

050. American Studies Journal: Chocolate Spaceship: Gender Politics and Afro-Futurism in Funk

Washington Hilton, F1 – Fairchild West (T)

CHAIR: **Randal Maurice Jelks**, University of Kansas (KS)

PAPERS:

Tammy Kernodle, Miami University of Ohio (OH)

Deconstructing the Groove: Meshell Ndegeocello and the Politics of Funk in Post-Civil Rights America

Francesca T. Royster, DePaul University (IL)

Labelle: Funk, Afrofuturism, Feminism and the Politics of Flight and Fight

Scot Brown, University of California, Los Angeles (CA)

Roger Troutman and Blues Afrofuturism

COMMENT: **Randal Maurice Jelks**, University of Kansas (KS)

4:00 pm – 5:45 pm

077. Transpacific Dissent

Washington Hilton, Monroe (C)

CHAIR: **Yu-Fang Cho**, Miami University of Ohio (OH)

PAPERS:

Chris Suh, Stanford University (CA)

Beyond the Logic of International Indemnity: How an American-educated Korean Became an Anti-American Leader

Fritz Schenker, University of Wisconsin, Madison (WI)

Imperial Producers: Filipino Jazz Musicians in 1920s Colonial Asia

Elizabeth Son, Northwestern University (IL)

Monuments of Dissent: Transpacific Memorializations of Sexual Slavery and Social Justice Struggles

Jennifer Sun Kwak, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (MI)

Spam, Sex Work, and U.S. Militarism: Consumption and Conscriptations of Empire in Nora Okja Keller's Fox Girl

COMMENT: **Yu-Fang Cho**, Miami University of Ohio (OH)



"Washington DC – Shaw – U Street Corridor: True Reformer Building" by Flickr user Wally Gobetz, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

[Back to menu](#)

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2013

2:00 pm – 3:45 pm

144. Caucus – Sound Studies: Sampling Phonographies: Sonic Memory and the Long History of Sampling

Washington Hilton, Columbia Hall 9 (T)

CHAIR: **Nicole Hodges Persley**, University of Kansas (KS)

PAPERS:

Gustavus Stadler, Haverford College in Pennsylvania (PA)

Charles Chesnutt, Sonic Memory, and Racial Terror

Alexander William Corey, University of Colorado, Boulder (CO)

Collaborative Sampling: The John Coltrane Quartet's Favorite Thing

Meghan Drury, George Washington University (DC)

Across Time and Space: Hearing Sun Ra's Egypt

Jack Hamilton, Harvard University (MA)

Making Beats, Making Wakes: Loss, Memory, and Style in the Music of RZA and DJ Premier

COMMENT: **Nicole Hodges Persley**, University of Kansas (KS)

4:00 pm – 5:45 pm

160. Caucus – Sound Studies: Musical Debts: Appropriations, Reparations, or New Traditions?

Washington Hilton, Columbia Hall 9 (T)

CHAIR: **Barry Shank**, Ohio State University, Columbus (OH)

PANELISTS:

Kirstie Dorr, University of California, San Diego (CA)

Sumanth Gopinath, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities (MN)

Roshanak Kheshti, University of California, San Diego (CA)

COMMENT: **Jonathan Sterne**, McGill University (Canada)

5:30 pm – 7:00 pm

[ASA Sound Studies Caucus + JPMS | Journal of Popular Music Studies Happy Hour](#)

Glen's Garden Market PUB

2001 S Street NW, Washington DC



"50.MakeSomeNoise.Newseum.NW.WDC.17August 2013" by Flickr user Elvert Barnes, CC BY-SA 2.0

[Back to menu](#)

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2013

8:00 am – 9:45 am

180. Caucus – Early America Matters: Commons Democracy

Washington Hilton, F1 – Fairchild West (T)

CHAIR: **Dana Nelson**, Vanderbilt University (TN)

PAPERS:

Joanna Brooks, San Diego State University (CA)

Why We Left: Archives of Common Memory, Martial Power, and Peasant-Class Anglo-American Communities

Elizabeth Maddock Dillon, Northeastern University (MA)

Performative Commons in the Atlantic World

Melissah Pawlikowski, Ohio State University, Columbus (OH)

Endeavors for The Common Good: The Communitarian Foundation of Frontier Republicanism and the Populist Push West

COMMENT: **Dana Nelson**, Vanderbilt University (TN)

181. Repudiating Debt Across the Americas: Latinidades, Embodied Performance, and the Archive as Site of Contestation

Washington Hilton, F2 – Fairchild East (T)

CHAIR: **Ernesto Javier Martínez**, University of Oregon (OR)

PAPERS:

Magdalena Barrera, San Jose State University (CA)

Refusing Pedagogical Debts: Mexican Women in the Verbal and Visual Archives of Americanization

Laura G. Gutiérrez, University of Arizona (AZ)

Sell Your Love Steep: Prostitution, Indebtedness, and other Transnational Transactions in Rumbera Iconography

Marisol Negron, University of Massachusetts, Boston (MA)

Tributo a "El Cantante": The Making and Unmaking of Héctor LaVoe's Abjection

Micaela Díaz-Sánchez, Mount Holyoke College (MA)

From the Page to the Stage and Screen: Queer Chicana Cultural Production, Spectatorship, and Community

COMMENT: **Ernesto Javier Martínez**, University of Oregon (OR)

193. American Studies Journal: Groove Theory: Funk, Feminism, and Afro-Beat

Washington Hilton, Monroe (C)

CHAIR: **Deborah Whaley**, University of Iowa (IA)

PAPERS:

Nikki A. Greene, Wellesley College (MA)

Don't Call Her No Tramp: The Feminist Funk Power of Betty Davis and Renée Stout

Tony Bolden, University of Kansas (KS)

Groove Theory: A Vamp on the Epistemology of Funk

Alex Stewart, University of Vermont (VT)

Funky Drummer: Fela Kuti, James Brown, and the Invention of Afrobeat

COMMENT: **Deborah Whaley**, University of Iowa (IA)

12:00 pm – 1:45 pm

222. ASA Artist in Residence Ricardo Dominguez: Disturbance Research Lab: Digital Disobedience (Practicum)

Washington Hilton, International Ballroom West (C)

2:00 pm – 3:45 pm

246. ASA Women's Committee: Critical Conjunctions of Debt: Women of Color, Healthcare Disparities, and Advocacy

Washington Hilton, Jefferson West (C)

CHAIR: **Alondra Nelson**, Columbia University (NY)

PAPERS:

Shirley Tang, University of Massachusetts, Boston (MA)

Invisible Debt: Digitizing and Voicing The Health Disparities and Experiences of Asian American Women

Jacki Rand, University of Iowa (IA)

Native Dissent and Debts of Imperialism: Choctaw Women, Violence, and Health Disparity in the Southeast

Koritha Mitchell, Ohio State University, Columbus (OH)

Pay Yourself First and Pay it Forward: The Black Girls RUN! Project

COMMENT: **Alondra Nelson**, Columbia University (NY)

4:00 pm – 5:45 pm

258. Caucus – Sound Studies: Connected Listening: Re-imagining Community Through Sound

Washington Hilton, Columbia Hall 9 (T)

CHAIR: **Michelle Habell-Pallan**, University of Washington, Seattle (WA)

PAPERS:

Jessica Schwartz, Columbia University (NY)

No Longer Can I Stay, It's True: The Politics of Hearing Harmony in Marshallese "Free Association" Diaspora

Kevin Fellezs, Columbia University (NY)

You Listen But Don't Ask Question: Listening for the Sounds of Hawaiian-ness

Eric Porter, University of California, Santa Cruz (CA)

Bill Dixon's Voice

COMMENT: **Michelle Habell-Pallan**, University of Washington, Seattle (WA)

263. Sonic Ledgers of Dissent

Washington Hilton, Jefferson West (C)

CHAIR: **Deborah R. Vargas**, University of California, Riverside (CA)

PAPERS:

Andreana Clay, San Francisco State University (CA)

Searching for Caushun: Homo Thuggery and the Search for Queer Black Masculinity

Gaye Theresa Johnson, University of California, Santa Barbara (CA)

The Future has a Past: Spatial Entitlement, Race, and Cultural Expression in Black and Brown Los Angeles, 1940–Present

Sherrie Tucker, University of Kansas (KS)

Following the State on the Dance Floor of the Nation: The FBI at the Hollywood Canteen

Shana Redmond, University of Southern California (CA)

All Around the World, Same Song: The Trials of Black Musical Genre and Racial Solidarity in the Twentieth Century

COMMENT: **Herman Gray**, University of California, Santa Cruz (CA)



"Washington DC_cherry blossoms on the Tidal Basin" by Flickr user robposse, CC BY 2.0

[Back to menu](#)

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2013

8:00 am – 9:45 am

288. Folklorization on the National Mall: Representations of Culture through the Smithsonian Folklife Festival

Washington Hilton, Georgetown West (C)

CHAIR: **William S. Walker**, State University of New York, College at Oneonta (NY)

PAPERS:

Virginia Myhaver, Boston University (MA)

Institutionalizing the Folk: Emergent Neo-Liberalism and the Mixed Legacy of the Bicentennial Folklife Festival

Jesse Pearlman Karlsberg, Emory University (GA)

Participation on Folklore's Terms: Sacred Harp Singing at the 1970 Smithsonian Festival of American Folklife

Olivia Cadaval, Smithsonian Institution (DC)

Negotiating Cultural Representations through the Smithsonian Folklife Festival

Diana Baird N'Diaye, Smithsonian Institution (DC)

Curating Crucial Conversations about Twenty-first-Century African American Diversity at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival

COMMENT: **William S. Walker**, State University of New York, College at Oneonta (NY)

10:00 am – 11:45 am

300. Latinas/os Onscreen and On/Off Air: Rethinking Contemporary Media Audiences and Discourses

Washington Hilton, D – Du Pont (T)

CHAIR: **Mari Castañeda**, University of Massachusetts, Amherst (MA)

PAPERS:

Jillian Báez, City University of New York, College of Staten Island (NY)

Losing Weight, Balancing, and Aging: Intergenerational Readings of the Mediated Latina Body

Dolores Inés Casillas, University of California, Santa Barbara (CA)

Lost in Translation: The Politics of Spanish-language Radio Ratings

María Elena Cepeda, Williams College (MA)

Latinidad as Transnational Marketing Construct and Performative Category: Latina/o Youth Interpret Los Tigres del Norte and Calle 13's "América"

Hannah Noel, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (MI)

Imagining NPR's National Publics: Latinas/os and Neoliberal Models of Social Regulation

COMMENT: **Mari Castañeda**, University of Massachusetts, Amherst (MA)



"Washington DC Day 2 – a bit blurry" by Flickr user H. Michael Miley, CC BY-SA 2.0