What happened to 2016-2017? We’re halfway through Academic Year 2017-2018, and we have yet to get our “annual” newsletter for last year sent out. Wait a minute. I know what it was. The 2016 election happened, and with it, a maelstrom of bizarre speeches, tweets, and events masquerading as governance. New policies that have systemically sought to undo every Civil and Human Rights gain we have made in this country since Rosa Parks, Stonewall, and Roe vs. Wade. As engaged as I, personally, have been in resisting the politics of hate that now dominate the airwaves and hallways and streets and classrooms of our society, I do find myself employing the “bury your head in the sand” mechanism that allows me to cope with hate on a daily basis. It’s no wonder I’m running a year behind.

As always, the students pull me back, their hope for a more inclusive and respectful world infectious enough to help me shake the sand out of my eyes and get back to the important tasks at hand: the next lecture, the next graduate student or McNair fellow, the next conference, the next symposium. The LGBTQ Studies PhD Program Proposal. Adversity (not Diversity) might be the order of the day, but the fact that we survive, that we grow stronger and more committed to our faith in love and peace and justice—this is what matters, and why I admire so much the hard work that our students and staff put into keeping this small freestanding minor alive, organizing the annual QGrad conference that explored the theme of “Queer Mobilities,” issues of gentrification and the loss of community spaces to virtual reality, the QScholars Undergraduate Research Symposium that focused on the intersectionalities that our queer undergraduates learn to navigate, including those who add the military to their list of identities. We honor also those who came before us and opened paths, such as Dr. Tomás Ybarra-Frausto, a queer Chicano scholar who helped establish the field of Chicano/a art history, whose work we paid tribute to at “Otro Corazón 2: Queer Chicanidad in the Arts.”
On Friday, October 28, 2016, Queer Graduates @ UCLA and the LGBTQS Program brought together the latest graduate student research from across the country for the annual QGradConference. The event’s theme “(Re) Mapping Queer Mobilities” explored and examined the old, new and shifting landscapes of LGBTQ space and movement. The keynote duet was presented by Karen Tongson, an Associate Professor of English and Gender Studies at University of Southern California and author of Relocations: Queer Suburban Imaginaries (NYU Press). Bamby Salcedo is a high-regarded, nationally and internationally recognized activist, advocate, community organizer and social justice advocate. QGrad 2016 was co-organized by Audrey Silverstre and Vicente Carrillo, PhD candidates in Chicana/o Studies.

Over 150 participants registered for the conference, which was generously supported by the David Bohnett Foundation. Overall, QGrad 2016 was an intimate and successful event where participants and attendees alike had the opportunity to discuss new and unfolding dimensions of LGBTQ Studies, while networking with faculty and graduate colleagues.

A selection of the proceedings from QGrad 2016 will be published in volume III of Queer Cats Journal of LGBTQ Studies in Fall 2017. To see pictures and the program of the event, check out the Archives link on: http://lgbtqstudies.ucla.edu.

QGrad 2017: Radical Imaginaries: Queer Scholar-Activism Dismantling the Politics of Hate (Re)mapping Queer Mobilities explores and examines the old, new and shifting landscapes of LGBTQ space and movement—leaving home/spaces, re-making home, seeking sexual transnational encounters, migration, cyberspace. locating As and cities dis-locating across the U.S. queer experience demographic and socio-economic shifts many point to gentrification as the principal threat to LGBTQ and other historically marginalized communities.

SAVE THE DATE!
10/27/2017
Bruin Reception Room

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The 4th Annual LGBTQ Studies Undergraduate Research Symposium was held on Friday, May 5, 2017 at the Kerckhoff Hall, was free and open to the public. The event’s theme “Painting Yourself Whole: Navigating Intersectionality in a Divided World”. The symposium featured 12 undergraduate students who showcased innovative LGBTQ+ research. This year’s theme explores the intersectionalities with the LGBTQ+ community and how we navigate, embrace, and negotiate our wholeness in intersectionality queerness and gender identity with military, religion, ability status, and other socio-cultural affiliations.

>>Josh Feldman, keynote speaker presenting at the LGBTQ Studies Undergraduate Symposium

>>Otro Corazón 2

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Photo by Winston Luhur
We would like to thank all of our allies, alums, co-sponsors, staff, students, supporters, and volunteers. Thanks to the faculty who yearly agree to serve as panel moderators at our different events. Thanks to Tomarion Brown for all the behind-the-scenes work that helps everything we do run smoothly.

Thanks to my wife, Alma Lopez, for all the pro-bono work she does for LGBTQ Studies, from logos to programs. Thanks to Humanities Dean, David Schaberg, for his commitment to the growth of the program. Finally, thanks to the David Bohnett Foundation, for their generous annual contribution to QGrad.

Your tax-deductible contribution to LGBTQ Studies at UCLA is greatly appreciated! Please go to our program website at lgbtqstudies.ucla.edu and click on Giving. Through your generosity, we can continue to provide critical, programmatic, educational and research support to the present and future generations of LGBTQ Studies students and faculty.

If you would like your gift to support the upcoming PhD program in LGBTQS, please indicate your wishes in the Comments section.

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