



Department of

# LATINA/LATINO STUDIES

FALL 2016 COLLOQUIUM SERIES

## Dr. Sarah Margarita Quesada

Chancellor's Postdoctoral Research Associate

Wednesday, September 21  
3:30-5:00PM

Room 103, 1207 W. Oregon,  
Urbana



### "Testing the Limits: Approaches to Reading West African Heritage Tourism in Latina Fiction"

At the turn of the millennium, a memorializing era materialized globally despite being unevenly distributed in terms of the Black Atlantic. Regardless of disciplinary and political differences, the United States and Latin America share a lack of federal representation of the effects of slavery and the Slave Trade vis-à-vis the efforts displayed by West African nations. Considering the suppression of these histories in the Latino/a Americas, what is the role of contested and dialectical space within counter-hegemonic Latina/o narratives? Against the backdrop of an increasingly racialized Americas, this research uses anthropological fieldwork applied to literary analysis to argue that memory is textualized through aesthetic and metaphorical form. This paper presents the case of "textual memorialization" in Cuban - American Achy Obejas' queer novel *Ruins* (2006). The novel confronts the effects of both Spanish coloniality and U.S. Empire through the articulation of a metaphorical West African memorial. In the end, the novel steers latinidad in a new direction, towards the African continent.

