



Background image: *Grafite*, Paulo Speto, Museu Afro Brasil, São Paulo; Image right: Alejandra Aguilar Dornelles, Ph.D.

## ALEJANDRA AGUILAR DORNELLES, PH.D., RECEIVED THE MARIELLE FRANCO PRIZE

AGUILAR DORNELLES  
WAS AWARDED FOR  
HER PROJECT "*EN  
NOMBRE DE LA MADRE:  
EL VALOR POLÍTICO  
DEL HEROÍSMO EN LA  
NARRATIVA DE MARIA  
FIRMINA DOS REIS*"

Alejandra Aguilar Dornelles, Ph.D., assistant professor of Spanish in the Department of Languages, Linguistics and Comparative Literature, recently received the Marielle Franco Prize for her project "*En nombre de la madre: el valor político del heroísmo en la narrativa de Maria Firmina dos Reis*" ("In the Mother's Name: The Political Value of Heroism in Maria Firmina dos Reis's Narrative"). The prize was presented by the Gender and Feminist Studies section of the Latin American Studies Association (LASA). Since 2018, the Marielle Franco Prize has recognized the work and research developed by researchers in the field of racial and ethnic studies, African diaspora in Latin America with a special focus on black women, LGBT+ communities, human rights, repressive violence of the State, as well as systemic violence, racism, and marginalization of Afro-descendant communities.

(continued)



**Alejandra Aguilar Dornelles**, Ph.D., assistant professor of Spanish in the Department of Languages, Linguistics and Comparative Literature

Aguilar Dornelles earned her Ph.D. in Latin American Studies from Washington University in Saint Louis. Her teaching and research interests include Caribbean literature, Brazilian literature, and Afro-Latin American Diaspora. Focusing on the Luso-Hispanic Black Atlantic, her research agenda addresses questions pertaining to racial and gender identities *vis-à-vis* the nation-building process and transnational movements for equal rights.

Her project "From Novel to Hip Hop: Afro-Brazilian Women and the Quest for Equality" was selected to participate in the "Making of Modern Brazil 2022 NEH Summer Seminar" to be held at San Diego State University. In this project, Aguilar Dornelles examines women's pivotal role not only as a crucial symbolic component of Brazilian literature, cinema and music, but also as entrepreneurs, political agents and cultural producers.

By recovering unacknowledged Afro-Brazilian women's experiences and examining their role as tropes within antislavery discourses and cultural practices, Aguilar Dornelles's research agenda aims to expand our understanding of the multiple strategies implemented by Afro-descendant women in their struggle for self-affirmation, for the survival of family ties, and for the definition of racial and gender equality. More broadly, her project aims to contribute to the history of women of the African diaspora across the Americas and to develop a theoretical framework for the study of the links between cultural production and political contestation led by Afro-descendants, and the role played by gender constructions in the marginalization of black intellectuals.

Also this year, Aguilar Dornelles published two articles. "Entre la espectacularización y la censura: subjetividades negras en el teatro brasileño de mediados del siglo XIX" was published in *Latin America Theatre Review*, and "La narrativa revolucionaria de Mirta Yáñez: entre la norma y el deseo" appeared in *Latin American Research Review*. Furthermore, she co-edited, along with Claudia Montero, Ph.D., (Professor of History in the University of Valparaíso) and Vanesa Miseres, Ph.D., (Associate Professor of Spanish in the University of Notre Dame), "Sufragio femenino en América Latina: alianzas nacionalistas y políticas transnacionales," a special issue of *Meridional, Revista Chilena de Estudios Latinoamericanos*.

**FAU.EDU/ARTSANDLETTERS/RESEARCH**