Call For Papers
Borders vs Bridges:
(Trans)nationalism in the Americas since 1968
3rd Annual Conference 11-12 May 2017

Keynote Speakers:
Prof. Cathy McIlwaine (QMUL) & Dr. Nick Witham (UCL-IA)

For a long time, transnational trends have inspired social, political, economic and cultural transformations across the globe. In the Americas, and particularly since 1968, there have been numerous examples of bridge-building across borders. From Human Rights and transitional justice processes to solidarity movements and the international trade agreements of more recent times, building bridges between nations has been seen as a means of progress across the Americas.

Today, developments across the region seem to signal a 'centrifugal' tendency towards isolationism and nationalism. Propelled by complex social phenomena such as migration, human displacement, economic instability and political upheaval, many are turning to the erection of barriers -real and imagined- as a means to cope with uncertainty. In the US, discourses based on nationalism are on the rise. Meanwhile, in Latin America, the slowdown of the so-called 'Pink Tide' suggests a clear shift in the incentives to maintain hitherto strong regional bridges.

Yet, amidst this challenging scenario, new opportunities for cooperation are also being devised. Solidarity movements and class-based alliances suggest bridges are once again being built, such as transnational environmental rights movements or allied trade unions. These processes have challenged the validity of the nation-state as the sole unit for analysis. In many cases, the big issues of the contemporary world cross multiple boundaries, prompting academics to approach their work with transnational, comparative, and regionally-based perspectives.

The UCL Americas Research Network would therefore like to invite post-graduate and early-career research papers from any discipline related to the physical, political and cultural formation of transnational bridges and construction of national borders. Some possible panels might be guided by (but are by no means limited to) the following titles:

- Transnational Geographies
- Transpacific and Transatlantic relationships
- Area studies (Caribbean, Southern Cone, Pacific Rim etc.)
- Transnational Environmental Issues
- Migration Displacement and Diaspora
- Transnational Trade (legal or illegal)
- Foreign Policy
- Bridges and Solidarity
- Borders and Isolationism
- Nationalism
- Transnational Social Movements
- Political Cultures

Please send your abstracts of between 250-300 words to ia.americasresnet@ucl.ac.uk by 5pm on Friday 2nd December.