Shifting the geopolitics of trans studies, travesti theory is a Latin American body of work with an extensive transregional history. As a particular body politics, travesti identification is not only a sexed, gendered, classed, and racialized form of relation, but a critical mode and an epistemology. Throughout the Americas, trans and travesti studies take a multiplicity of forms: scholarly work that engages identitarian and anti-identitarian analytical frameworks as well as interventions into state practices, cultural production, and strategic activist actions. These multiple critical approaches—both travesti and trans—are regionally inflected by the flows of people, ideas, technologies, and resources that shape the hemisphere, opening up space to explore the productive tensions and expansive possibilities within this body of work.

This special issue of TSG: Transgender Studies Quarterly prompts a conversation between trans and travesti studies scholars working across the Americas to investigate how shifts in cultural practices, aesthetics, geographies, and languages enliven theories of politics, subjectivity, and embodiment. Contributors to this issue offer a hemispheric perspective on trans and travesti issues to the Anglophone academy, expand travesti studies to engage geopolitical connections, and bring interdisciplinary approaches to topics ranging from policy to cultural production. This issue is an unprecedented English-language collection by Latin American and Latina scholars on trans and travesti issues.

Francisco J. Galarte is an Assistant Professor of American Studies and Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies at the University of New Mexico where he teaches courses in Chicanx, Latinx and transgender studies. He is the co-editor of the special issue of Transgender Studies Quarterly (2010) on Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx Trans Studies (May 2019) and the Translation Section editor of TSG. His most recent articles have appeared in publications such as TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly (2010), GLQ: A Journal of Sexuality, Culture, and Politics (2013), Aztlan: Journal of Chicano Studies (2015), and TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly (2019). In addition to serving as co-editor of the special issue of TSG: Transgender Studies Quarterly on “Trans Studies en las Americas,” he is the author of two books, Queer Latinidad: Bodyscapes of Identity and Power (NYU Press, 2014), and Sexual Futures, Queer Gestures, and Other Latinx Longings (NYU Press 2014) which won the Alan Bray Memorial Book Prize at the Modern Language Association and was a Lambda Literary Foundation Finalist for LGBT Studies. He is currently completing a book on visual culture and Latina sexual labor entitled Puta Life: Seeing Latinas, Working Language Association and was a Lambda Literary Foundation Finalist for LGBT Studies. She is currently working on an extensive transregional history. As a particular body politics, travesti identification is not only a sexed, gendered, classed, and racialized form of relation, but a critical mode and an epistemology. Throughout the Americas, trans and travesti studies take a multiplicity of forms: scholarly work that engages identitarian and anti-identitarian analytical frameworks as well as interventions into state practices, cultural production, and strategic activist actions. These multiple critical approaches—both travesti and trans—are regionally inflected by the flows of people, ideas, technologies, and resources that shape the hemisphere, opening up space to explore the productive tensions and expansive possibilities within this body of work.

Claudia Sofía Garriga-López is an Assistant Professor of Queer and Trans Latinx Studies in the Department of Multicultural and Gender Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. In addition to serving as co-editor of the special issue of TSG: Transgender Studies Quarterly on “Trans Studies en las Americas,” she is the author of two books, Queer Latinidad: Bodyscapes of Identity and Power (NYU Press, 2014), and Sexual Futures, Queer Gestures, and Other Latinx Longings (NYU Press 2014) which won the Alan Bray Memorial Book Prize at the Modern Language Association and was a Lambda Literary Foundation Finalist for LGBT Studies. She is currently completing a book on visual culture and Latina sexual labor entitled Puta Life: Seeing Latinas, Working Language Association and was a Lambda Literary Foundation Finalist for LGBT Studies. She is currently completing a book on visual culture and Latina sexual labor entitled Puta Life: Seeing Latinas, Working Language Association and was a Lambda Literary Foundation Finalist for LGBT Studies. She is currently completing a book on visual culture and Latina sexual labor entitled Puta Life: Seeing Latinas, Working Language Association and was a Lambda Literary Foundation Finalist for LGBT Studies. She is currently completing a book on visual culture and Latina sexual labor entitled Puta Life: Seeing Latinas, Working Language Association and was a Lambda Literary Foundation Finalist for LGBT Studies.