

Ruth Behar

Born November 12, 1956, Havana, Cuba
Citizenship: United States of America

Address

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Academic Position

Victor Haim Perera Collegiate Professor, Department of Anthropology; Faculty Associate in Women's Studies, Latina/Latino Studies, Latin American and Caribbean Studies, University of Michigan, 1989-present.

Founder and Director, University of Michigan Semester Study Abroad Program in Havana, Cuba, 2010-2014.

Michigan Society of Fellows, Postdoctoral Fellowship, 1986-1989.

Johns Hopkins University, Postdoctoral Fellowship, 1985-1986.

Education

Princeton University
Department of Anthropology

Ph.D. October, 1983, Distinction
M.A. June, 1980

Wesleyan University
College of Letters

B.A. June, 1977, Cum Laude, Honors

Awards

Named a "[Great Immigrant](#)" by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, July 4, 2018.

Honored as one of the "40 for 40" at the 40th annual Margaret Mead Film Festival, October, 2016.

Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, June, 2012.

Named to the Victor Haim Perera Collegiate Professorship of Anthropology, September, 2010-present.

Circle Award, La Celebración Latina, University of Michigan, Office of Academic Multicultural Initiatives, April, 2010.

University of Michigan, College of Literature, Science, and Arts, Excellence in Education Award, 2006.

University of Michigan, D'Arms Faculty Award for Distinguished Graduate Mentoring in the Humanities, 1998.

Wesleyan University, Distinguished Alumna Award in Recognition of Outstanding Achievement and Service, 1997.

University of Michigan, College of Literature, Science, and Arts, Excellence in Education Award, 1997.

University of Michigan, Latina/Latino Studies Program, Faculty Recognition for teaching and service, 1997.

John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Award, 1995-1996.

MacArthur Foundation "Genius" Award, July 14, 1988-1993.

Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation Career Development Award, for research and writing on Mexico, 1989-1992.

Grants and Fellowships

Michigan Humanities Award, University of Michigan, January 2020-May 2020.

Henry King Stanford Visiting Distinguished Professor in the Humanities, University of Miami, 2008-2009.

Fulbright Senior Fellowship, for teaching and research in Buenos Aires, Argentina, February-May 2007.

Institute for the Humanities, Hunting Family Faculty Fellowship, University of Michigan, 2003-2004.

American Council of Learned Societies/Social Science Research Council Fellowship, 1997-1998.

Rockefeller Residence Fellowship in the Humanities, Cuban Research Institute, Florida International University, January 1996-May 1996.

Council for International Exchange of Scholars, Postdoctoral Research Award, Spain, 1992.

Books

- 2020 *Letters from Cuba* (historical novel). New York: Nancy Paulsen Books, imprint of Penguin Random House.
- 2018 *Everything I Kept/ Todo lo que guardé* (bilingual book of poetry). Chicago: Swan Isle Press.
- 2017 *Lucky Broken Girl* (coming-of-age novel). New York: Nancy Paulsen Books, imprint of Penguin Random House ([Pura Belpré Author Award](#), American Library Association, 2018).
- 2015 *Un'isola chiamata casa: Ritomando alla Cuba ebraica*, translated by Davide Aliberti. Italian edition of *An Island Called Home: Returning to Jewish Cuba*. Salerno: Edizioni Arcoiris, 2015.
- 2013 *Traveling Heavy: A Memoir in between Journeys*. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press.
- 2013 *La presencia del pasado en un pueblo español: Santa María del Monte*. León, Spain: Cuadernos del Museo Etnográfico de León.
- 2010 *Una isla llamada hogar*. Spanish edition of *An Island Called Home: Returning to Jewish Cuba*. Barcelona, Spain: Linkgua Ediciones.
- 2009 *Cuéntame algo aunque sea una mentira: Las historias de la comadre Esperanza*. Spanish edition with new prologue of *Translated Woman: Crossing the Border with Esperanza's Story*. Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- 2007 *An Island Called Home: Returning to Jewish Cuba*. Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- 1996 *The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology That Breaks Your Heart*. Boston: Beacon Press. Paperback, 1997.
- 1993 *Translated Woman: Crossing the Border with Esperanza's Story*. A Notable Book of the Year, *New York Times Book Review*. Boston: Beacon Press. Paperback, 1994. Tenth Anniversary Edition, 2003.
- 1986 *The Presence of the Past in a Spanish Village: Santa María del Monte*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Paperback edition, with new Afterword, 1991.

Edited Books

- 2020 *Handmade in Cuba: Rolando Estévez and the Beautiful Books of Ediciones Vigía*. Lead editor, co-edited with Juanamaria Cordones-Cook and Kristin Schwain. Gainesville: University of Florida Press.
- 2015 *Bridges to Cuba/Puentes a Cuba, 20th Anniversary Edition*, with new Introduction. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press [orig. 1995]
- 2008 *The Portable Island: Cubans at Home in the World*. Co-edited with Lucía Suárez. New York: Palgrave, 2008.
- 1995 *Women Writing Culture*. Co-edited with Deborah A. Gordon. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

Translation

- 2015 Translation into Spanish of *Matters of the Sea/Cosas del Mar: A Poem Commemorating a New Era in US-Cuba Relations, August 14, 2015, United States Embassy, Havana Cuba*, by Richard Blanco. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press. (Translation of poem, author preface and bio, and includes a translator's note in English and Spanish).

Documentary Film

- 2002 "[Adio Kerida/Goodbye Dear Love: A Cuban Sephardic Journey](#)." An 82-minute documentary film drawing on ethnographic research in Cuba, Miami, and New York. Distributed by Women Make Movies.

Curatorial Work

- 1998-present "[Intersections, Cultures, Identities: Artist Books from Cuba by Rolando Estévez](#)," Special Collections Library, University of Michigan.
- 2016-2017 Consultant, [American Museum of Natural History Exhibition, "¡Cuba!"](#) (I worked with AMNH curators to develop the exhibit and assisted with content and exhibit text).

Blog

- 2015-present [Bridges to/from Cuba: Lifting the Emotional Embargo](#). Ongoing blog co-founded in June, 2015 with inaugural poet Richard Blanco.

Selected Essays and Articles

- 2019 "'Chronicle of a Return to Cuba in a Time of Cholera,'" in *Detours: Travel and the Ethics of Research in the Global South*, edited by M. Bianet Castellanos. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2019: 91-102.
- 2019 "Anthropology and the Search for Home: Reflections of an Immigrant Ethnographer," *General Anthropology*, 26 (1), spring: 1-7.
- 2017 "Rereading the Work of Lourdes Casal: Looking Back and Forward," introduction to *Dossier: Rereading the Work of Lourdes Casal*, in *Cuban Studies* 46 (2017): 3-9.
- 2017 "Everything I Kept: Reflections of an 'Anthropoeta'," in *Women Writing Resistance: Essays on Latin America and the Caribbean*, edited by Jennifer Browdy. Boston: Beacon Press, 45-58.
- 2017 "Scholars Talk Writing: Ruth Behar." Dialogue with Rachel Toor, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 4/23/17.
- 2017 "Wanting to Be More Than an Anthropologist in Cuba," Hot Spots, *Cultural Anthropology* website, 3/23/17.
- 2016 "I Come From All Places," in *Home: An Imagined Landscaped*, edited by Marjorie Agosin. Kent, England: Solis Press: 31-37.
- 2015 "In the Meantime," in *The Future of Scholarly Writing: Critical Interventions*, edited by Angelika Bammer and Ruth-Ellen B. Joeres. New York: Palgrave, 2015.
- 2014 "[Where is home for the child of nomads?](#)" *Aeon Magazine: Ideas and Culture* (April 14, 2014).
- 2014 "La Silla," in *Wise Latinas: Writers on Higher Education*, edited by Jennifer De Leon. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- 2013 "The Day I Cried At Starbucks," in *Family Trouble: Memoirists on the Hazards and Rewards of Revealing Family*, edited by Joy Castro. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- 2012 "Mediajournays: Looking at People, Looking for People," with Marcy Brink-Danan, *Visual Anthropology Review*, 28 (1), spring 2012: 1-12
- 2012 "Death and Memory: From Santa María del Monte to Miami Beach" in *Cultural Anthropology's "Curated Collection"* on Literature and Anthropology fall, 2012.
- 2011 "The Death of the Angel: Reflections on the Relationship Between Enlightenment and Enchantment in the Twenty-First Century," *Temenos: The Finnish Society for the Study of Religion* 47:1 (2011): 77-95.
- 2011 "De estos que no os olvidan," in *Lugares, Tiempos, Memorias: La Antropología Ibérica en el siglo XXI*, edited by Luis Díaz Viana, Oscar Fernández Alvarez, Pedro Tomé Martin (Universidad de León, 2011): 271-292.
- 2011 "The Evil Eye of the Anthropologist," in *Resident Aliens: Learning to Live Cross-Culturally*, edited by Sarah H. Davis and Melvin Konner (Harvard University Press, 2011): 53-65.
- 2009 "Folklore and the Search for Home," *Journal of American Folklore* 122 (485): 251-266.
- 2009 "Believing in Anthropology as Literature," in *Anthropology Off the Shelf: Anthropologists on Writing*, edited by Alisse Waterston and Maria D. Vesperi. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell: 106-116.
- 2009 "Sephardic Jews in America: A Diasporic History," book review, *Moment Magazine* (March/April 2009).
- 2009 "The Anthropologist's Son," reprinted in *The Norton Field Guide to Writing, 2nd Edition*, New York: Norton. (originally published in *The Chronicle Review*, 11/17/2008).
- 2009 "My Habana," "Habana Haunts," and "But Can You Travel to Cuba?" *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 7, 2009 (13 pages).
- 2008 "Between Poetry and Anthropology: Searching for Languages of Home," in *Art-Based Research in Education: Foundations for Practice*, ed. Mischa Cahnmann and Richard Siegesmund. NY: Routledge: 54-71.
- 2008 "Ethnography and the Book That Was Lost," in the *Handbook of Arts in Qualitative Research*, edited by J. Gary Knowles and Ardra L. Cole. Sage Publications: 529-543.
- 2008 "Talking in Our Pajamas: A Conversation with Sandra Cisneros on Finding Your Voice, Fear of Highways, Tacos, Travel, and the Need for Peace in the World," *Michigan Quarterly Review*, 47, no. 3 (summer): 411-437.
- 2007 "Ethnographic Writing in a Time of Blurred Genres," *Anthropology & Humanism*, December, 32 (2): 145-155.
- 2006 "The First World Summit of Behars," *Michigan Quarterly Review*, 45, no. 5 (winter): 99-120.

- 2004 "While Waiting for the Ferry to Cuba: *Adio Kerida* and the Goodbye That Isn't a Farewell," in *Homecomings: Unsettling Paths of Return*, edited by Fran Markowitz and Anders H. Stefansson. New York: Lexington Books, 2004: 199-210.
- 2003 "Everything I Kept: Reflections of an Anthro-poeta," in *Women Writing and Resistance in Latin America*, edited by Jennifer Browdy de Hernandez (Cambridge: South End Press): 47-58.
- 2003 "Ethnography and the book that was lost," *Ethnography*, vol 4(1): 15-39.
- 2003 "On the Second Night of Passover," in *The Women's Passover Companion: Women's Reflections on the Festival of Freedom*, edited by Sharon Cohen Anisfeld, Tara Mohr, and Catherine Spector. Jewish Lights Publishing: 153-158.
- 2002 "The Last Time Tere Danced a Rumba," in *Mementos, Artifacts, and Hallucinations from the Ethnographer's Tent*, edited by Ron Emoff and David Henderson. New York: Routledge: 179-198.
- 2001 "Yellow marigolds for Ochún: An experiment in feminist ethnographic fiction," *Qualitative Studies in Education* 14 (2): 107-116.
- 2001 "Anthropology's Epiphanies: Some Things I Learned From James Fernandez," *Anthropology and Humanism* 25 (2): 1-6.
- 2001 "Part-Time Latina," in *Telling to Live: Latina Feminist Testimonios*, edited by The Latina Feminist Group. Duke University Press.
- 2001 "A Strawberry and Chocolate Goodbye," in *Travellers' Tales: Cuba*, edited by Tom Miller. San Francisco: Traveller's Tales.
- 2000 "Honeymoon Nightgowns That A Black Woman Saved for a White Woman: A Perilous Journey into the Cuban Historical Imagination," *American Studies* 41:2/3 (Summer/Fall 2000): 287-302.
- 2000 "Post-Utopia: The Erotics of Power and Cuba's Revolutionary Children," in *Cuba, the Elusive Nation: Interpretations of National Identity*, edited by Damián J. Fernandez and Madeline Cámara Betancourt (Gainesville: University Press of Florida): 134-154.
- 1999 "Ethnography: Cherishing Our Second-Fiddle Genre," *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, special issue on "Ethnography: Reflections at the Century's Turn," vol. 28, no. 5 (October, 1999): 472-484.
- 1997 "Daughter of Caro," in *Daughters of Caliban: Caribbean Women in the Twentieth Century*, edited by Consuelo López-Springfield (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997): 112-120.
- 1997 "Dulce María Loynaz: A Woman Who No Longer Exists," *Michigan Quarterly Review*, vol. 336, no. 4 (Fall, 1997): 529-537.
- 1997 "Sarah & Hagar: The Heelprints upon Their Faces," in *Beginning Anew: A Woman's Companion to the High Holy Days*, edited by Gail Twersky Reimer and Judith A. Kates. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997): 35-43.
- 1996 "The Story of Ruth, the Anthropologist," in *People of the Book: Thirty Scholars Reflect on Their Jewish Identity*, edited by Shelley Fisher Fishkin and Jeffrey Rubin-Dorsky. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- 1996 "América jubana," *Casa de las Américas* 205 (Octubre-Diciembre, 1996), Havana, Cuba, pp. 128-138 (Translation of "Juban América," first published in *Poetics Today*, 1995).
- 1995 "Juban América," *Poetics Today*, special issue on "Literature, History, and Anthropology in/about Latin America," edited by Walter Mignolo, v. 16, no. 1 (Spring 1995), pp. 90-120. Reprinted in *King David's Harp: Autobiographical Essays by Jewish Latin American Writers*, edited by Stephen A. Sadow (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999): 201-223. Also reprinted in *Autobiographical Writing Across the Disciplines: A Reader*, edited by Diane P. Freedman and Olivia Frey, editors (Durham: Duke University Press): 331-348.

Forewords

- 2016 "Introduction," *Saw Palm: Florida Literature and Art*, special issue on Cuba, vol. 10, spring, 2016: 10-12.

- 2013 "Prólogo: Volver," to *Dónde mejor que aquí? Dinámicas y estrategias de los retornados al campo en Castilla y León*, edited by Luis Díaz Viana (Valladolid: Ediciones Universidad de Valladolid, Spain): 11-13.
- 2005 "Foreword" to *Women on the Verge of Home*, edited by Bilinda Straight. (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press): ix-xi.
- 2003 "Foreword" to *Autobiographical Writing Across the Disciplines: A Reader*, edited by Diane P. Freedman and Olivia Frey (Durham: Duke University Press): xiii-xviii.
- 2002 "Gender Que Pica un Poco," preface to *Gender's Place: Feminist Anthropologies of Latin America*, edited by Rosario Montoya, Lessie Jo Frazier, Janise Hurtig (New York: Palgrave Macmillan: ix-xii
- 2000 "Foreword," *Cuban-Jewish Journeys: Searching for Identity, Home, and History in Miami* by Caroline Bettinger-López. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press): xi-xvii.
- 1998 "Foreword," *Cubanas: Stories by Contemporary Cuban Women Writers*, edited by Mirta Yáñez (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998).

Articles in General Interest Publications

- 2019, "Remembering the Woman Who Was My Second Mother in Cuba," *Sapiens/Anthropology/Everything Human*, August 15, 2019. <https://www.sapiens.org/culture/cuba-memories/>
- 2018 "Cuba's Slow Rebirth," *New York Times*, Dec. 4, 2018.
- 2016 "An Old Little Girl Reacts to the Death of Fidel Castro," *Huffington Post*, Dec. 2, 2016.
- 2016 "An Old Little Girl Reacts to the Death of Fidel Castro," *Beacon Broadside*, Dec. 4, 2016.
- 2016 "Don't Be a Woman Who Drowns in a Glass of Water," *Medium & Cuba One Foundation*, August 8, 2016.
- 2015 "Read More, Write Less," in *Savage Minds*, Writers' Workshop Series (February 2, 2015). <http://savageminds.org/2015/02/02/read-more-write-less/>
- 2015 "Goodbye, Comadre" *Chronicle of Higher Education*, January 26, 2015. Originally appeared in *Savage Minds* (January 6, 2015) and also reprinted in *Beacon Broadside*.
- 2015 "The Fantasy of a Cuba Where Time Stood Still" *Huffington Post* (January 15, 2015).
- 2014 "What Now for the Jews of Cuba?" *The New York Jewish Week* (December 23, 2014).
- 2014 "My Parents are Cuban Exiles. Here's what Obama's Decision Means to Us," *Washington Post* (December 18, 2014).
- 2008 "The Anthropologist's Son: Obama's mother taught him to appreciate cultural diversity, and that's a lesson we could all benefit from," *The Chronicle Review*, 11/17/2008.
- 2008 "The Good Book," *Nextbook: A new read in Jewish culture*, July 22. (Posted in Travel and Life).
- 2007 "Salsa, Merengue...and the HORA? An Anthropologist Explains," *Lilith* (summer): 33-34.
- 2007 "Having to say bye to Baba," *The Jewish Advocate*, Boston, Friday, October 26.
- 2007 "A Room Named Ruth: Searching for a Jewish Home in Cuba," *Pakn Treger*, Fall (55): 28-35.
- 2007 "A Degree in Hard Work," *New York Times*, New York Region Opinions, September 30.

Feature Articles and Interviews about Ruth Behar

- "Ruth Behar," in Stacy Russo, ed., *A Better World Starts Here: Activists and Their Work*. Sanctuary Publishers, 2019: 127-137.

- “Meet Ruth Behar, Self-Made Anthropologist, Writer & Professor,” interview with Nely Galán, August 21, 2019. <https://theadelantemovement.com/2019/08/21/ruth-behar-self-made-anthropologist-writer/>
- “Anthropologists as Public Intellectuals: Ruth Behar in Conversation with Kristen Ghodsee,” *Society for Cultural Anthropology*, August 15, 2019. <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/anthropologists-as-public-intellectuals-ruth-behar-in-conversation-with-kristen-ghodsee>
- “What Are Anthropologists Reading, Watching, and Listening to This Summer?” with Deborah Thomas, *Anthropology News*, July 2, 2019. <http://www.anthropology-news.org/index.php/2019/07/02/what-are-anthropologists-reading-this-summer/>
- “Next Year in Havana: Ruth Behar’s Treasures from a Cuban-Jewish Exile,” *Jewish Boston*, April 2, 2019. <https://www.jewishboston.com/next-year-in-havana-ruth-behars-treasures-from-a-cuban-jewish-exile/>
- “Writer Spotlight: Ruth Behar Finds Herself,” *SCBWI The Mitten*, 2019.
- “An Interview with Ruth Behar,” *Highlights Foundation*, 2018.
- “Pathways to Tolerance and Empathy: A Conversation with Ruth Behar,” *Sound Potential*, 2018.
- “Ruth Behar: Finding Wholeness in the Age of Multicultural Childhoods,” interview with Richard Blanco, *Anansesem*, August 7, 2017.
- “Childhood Accident Inspired Writer’s Career and Newest Book,” article by Mary Quattlebaum, *Washington Post*, May 16, 2017.
- “Scholars Talk Writing: Ruth Behar,” interview with Rachel Toor, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 23, 2017.
- “The assimilation of a Jewish Cuban girl to the U.S. and the recovery of the lost island,” by Nora Gámez Torres, *Miami Herald*, March 15, 2017.
- “Island Child Para Siempre: An Interview with Ruth Behar,” *Saw Palm: Florida Literature and Art*, vol. 10, 2016: 62-65.
- “The Only Cure for Homesickness is More Homesickness,” with Julie Schwiertert Collazo, *The Los Angeles Review of Books* (December 21, 2014). <https://lareviewofbooks.org/interview/cure-homesickness-homesickness>
- “Writing, Teaching, and Filming Material Lives: A Conversation between Ruth Behar and Circe Sturm,” *Transformations: The Journal of Inclusive Scholarship and Pedagogy* (Fall 2007, Winter 2008): 65-84.
- “Ruth Behar,” by Marjorie Agosín, ed., in *Uncertain Travelers: Conversations with Jewish Women Immigrants to America*, (University of Mexico Press, 1999).
- “Author traces roots of Jews in Cuba,” *Herald-Tribune*, Thursday, February 2, 2006: 1E-2E.
- “Ruth Behar,” *Current Biography*, May issue, 2005.
- “Letting It Get To You: Cuban-born anthropologist Ruth Behar lives and works in a diaspora within a diaspora,” by Judith Bolton-Fasman, *Jerusalem Report*, 5/1/97, 48-49.

Recent Invited Lectures

- “Reading into History: *Lucky Broken Girl*,” New York Historical Society, Dimenna Children’s History Museum, October 20, 2019.
- “Returning to Cuba: Real and Imaginary Journeys,” West Shore Community College and Ludington Public Library, September 12, 2019.
- “A Reading from *Lucky Broken Girl*,” Macondo Faculty Reading, San Antonio Central Library, July 24, 2019.
- Commentary on the film, *Cuba’s Forgotten Jewels: A Haven in Havana*, and public conversation with filmmaker Judith Kreith, Film Series, Kislak Center, University of Miami, June 13, 2019.
- “La comunidad judía en Cuba: Visiones personales y etnográficas,” Colegio Universitario San Gerónimo de La Habana, May 6, 2019.
- “The Scroll & the Revolution: Dilemmas of Writing About the Jews of Cuba,” Harvard University, April 12, 2019.

- “Words and Artifacts: Treasures of a Cuban Jewish Exile,” Brandeis University, April 10, 2019.
- “The Jews of Cuba and Their Diasporas: Memories, Stories, Dilemmas,” Emory University, February 13, 2019.
- “Anthropology and the Search for Home: Reflections of an Immigrant Ethnographer,” General Anthropology Division Invited Lecture, American Anthropological Association, San José, November 16, 2019.
- “How to Tell the Story of the Jews of Cuba: Memories, Stories, Dilemmas,” The Irving and Regina Rosen Public Lecture Series, Queens University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada, November 1, 2018.
- “A Cuban Love Affair: The Art of the Book,” Ruth Behar in conversation with Cuban book artist Rolando Estévez, Library of Congress, Washington DC, June 28, 2018.
- “The Hold Cuba Has on Me: Memory, Traveling, and Writing,” College of Charleston, April 5, 2018.
- “Writing about Cuban-American Lives,” presentation with Richard Blanco, Skowhegan, Maine, March 23, 2018.
- “Traveling Heavy: Anthropology and the Search for Home,” Victor Haim Perera Collegiate Professorship in Anthropology, Inaugural Lecture, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, December 7, 2017.
- “Entrusting Myself to the “Beauty and Danger of Life: Journeys of an Ethnographic Writer,” Indiana University, Horizons of Knowledge Lecture, sponsored by the Institute of Advanced Study, November 3, 2017.
- “Cuba and the Meaning of Place in Anthropology and the World Today,” University of Texas, Arlington, the Ben and Trudy Termini Distinguished Anthropology Lecture, April 6, 2017.
- “I Come to All Places and to All Places I Go,” Lin Great Speakers Series, St. Mary’s University, San Antonio, Texas, October 25, 2016.
- “East and West, Cuban and American: The Foods of Home,” Invited Speaker, University of Florida, Isser and Rae Price Library of Judaica, Gainesville, March 31, 2016.
- “Cuban Sephardim in Literature and Ethnography,” American Comparative Literature Association, Harvard University, Invited Speaker, March 20, 2016.
- Hispanic Housing Development Corporation, 40th Anniversary Gala Event, Chicago, Illinois, Co-Keynote Speaker with Sandra Cisneros, March 17, 2016.
- “Vulnerability: In Fieldwork, in Life, and on the Page,” Keynote Speaker, Inter-University Research Seminar on Critical Ethnographic Research, Ghent University, Belgium, September 18, 2015.
- “We Are All Somebody: Celebration of the Human Voice,” Keynote Speaker, conference on Life Writing Across the Americas, International Auto/Biography Association, University of Michigan, June 4, 2015.
- “Dreams of Sefarad,” Invited Speaker, Stroum Lectures, University of Washington, Seattle, May 18-May 20, 2015.
<https://jewishstudies.washington.edu/video/ruth-behar-dreams-sefarad/>
- “Ruth Behar and the Vulnerable Observer: After Twenty Years, What Next?” Invited Speaker, Center for Documentary Studies, Duke University, April 8, 2015.
- “An Island Called Home,” Chicago Humanities Festival, November 9, 2014, invited speaker.
- “Displacement, Belonging and Longing: Notes on Traveling Heavy,” invited speaker, London School of Economics, London, UK, October 30, 2014.
- “Exploring Latin American Jewish Cuisine,” invited speaker, Museum of Jewish Heritage, New York, N.Y., September 14, 2014.
- “Academics Writing Fiction: Ruth Behar and Paul Stoller in Conversation, invited speaker, CUNY Graduate Center, New York, February 5, 2014.
- “Crossing Borders in Real Life and in Writing,” keynote lecture, Barry University Symposium on Social Justice and Advocacy through Educational Research, Miami, Florida, February 1, 2014.
- “La presencia del pasado en un pueblo español: Santa María del Monte,” invited speaker, Museo Etnográfico Provincial de León, Spain, July 8, 2013.
- “Los sefardies de Cuba: Construcción y reconstrucción de una identidad diasporica,” invited speaker, Instituto Cervantes, Naples, Italy, June 26, 2013.
- “Immigrants and Travelers,” keynote speaker, Israeli Anthropological Association, Van Leer Institute, Jerusalem, May 29, 2013.

- “After Exile: Cuban Diaspora, Revolutionary Nostalgia, and Global Tourism,” invited speaker, Sophia University, Institute of Comparative Culture Lecture Series, Tokyo, Japan, April 17, 2013.
- “The Jews of Cuba,” invited speaker, Jewish Community Center of Japan, Tokyo, April 18, 2013.
- “Ethnographic Writing in the Age of Facebook,” keynote lecture presented at Contemporary Ethnography Across the Disciplines, University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand, November 22, 2012
- Discussant, “The Ethnographer’s Craft: Works Inspired by Ruth Behar,” double panel organized by my former and current graduate students (Ellen Moodie, Erica Lehrer, Umi Vaughan, Charo Montoya, Gina Ulysse, Bianet Castellanos, Aimee Cox, Marisabel Almer, Xochitl Ruiz, and Vanessa Diaz, with commentary by Renato Rosaldo), American Anthropological Association, San Francisco, November 15, 2012.
- “For the Love of Beautiful Books: An Ode to Ediciones Vigía,” keynote lecture presented at Cultural Bricolage: Artist Books of Cuba’s Ediciones Vigía, University of Missouri, Columbia, November 12, 2012.
- “Cuba Hoy: Crónicas de las diásporas de la comunidad judía de Cuba,” Centro de Investigación y Difusión de la Cultura Sefardí, Buenos Aires, Argentina, October 15, 2012.
- “Cuba Today and Tomorrow: The Individual Caught Between Nations,” Bard College, April 18, 2012.
- “Cualquiera/Anywhere: Ethnographic Stories on Immigration,” Arizona State University, Institute for Humanities Research, April 13, 2012.
- “Reflections on Ethnographic Writing,” prepared for “Race and Narrative Nonfiction Working Group,” University of Illinois, Chicago, February 29, 2012.
- “Sephardic Jews Living in the Present: Ethnographic Gazes,” presented at Sephardic Literary Studies and Comparative Methodologies in Iberia and the Americas,” Institute for Sephardic Studies, CUNY Graduate Center, Friday, November 11, 2011.
- “The Freedom to Travel Anywhere in the World: Stories from Cuba,” invited lecture, Princeton University, Program in Latin American Studies, November 9, 2011.
- “The Saga of Sefarad: Never Forget You,” invited performance and literary reading, Viterbo University, Fine Arts Center Recital Hall, September 17, 2011.
- “De estos que no olvidan,” invited plenary lecture, “Lugares, Tiempos, Memorias,” XII Congreso de Antropología, Lugares, Tiempos, Memorias: La Antropología Ibérica en el siglo XXI, León, Spain, September 8, 2011
- Invited lecture on “Una isla llamada hogar,” Casa Sefarad, Madrid, Spain, September 1, 2011.
- “Between Art and Research: Rethinking Professional Borderlands” and “Research and Personal Engagement: Rethinking Objectivity,” invited discussant, “Aboagora: Rethinking Enlightenment,” and invited keynote lecture, “The Death of the Angel: Reflections on the Relationship between Enlightenment and Enchantment in the 21st Century,” Turku, Finland, August 18, 2011.
- Keynote speaker for “Eyes on Cuba: Reflections of a Photographer and an Anthropologist,” exhibition opening, with Alex Harris, Getty Center, Los Angeles, May 18, 2011.
- “Borders, Bridges, Diasporas: Reflections of a Storytelling Anthropologist,” Plenary speaker, Third International Qualitative Research Conference, “Qualitative Research and Interpretation,” Universidad de Guanajuato, Mexico, May 27, 2010.
- “Borders, Bridges, and Beyond: Latina/Cubana/Jubana Reflections,” Rolando Hinojosa-Smith, Jr. Lecture Series, Latino Studies Program, Anthropology, Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, Program in Jewish Culture and Society, and Student Cultural Programming, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, April 21, 2010.
- “Joys and Dilemmas of Visual Ethnography,” Concordia-McGill Annual Lecture on Anthropological Studies, Montreal, Canada, April 15, 2010, and “Memory Activism,” workshop at Concordia University, April 16, 2010.

“Always Searching for Home: Stories of the Jews of Cuba.” Invited lecture presented at Celébrate! The Jewish Experience in Spanish-Speaking Countries,” University of New Mexico, Latin American and Iberian Institute, November 12, 2009.

“Persons of Unsettled Nationality.” Keynote Lecture, Latina and Latino Studies Silver Anniversary Symposium: Past Present, and Future of the Discipline, University of Michigan, October 31, 2009.

“The Force of Emotions: *Culture and Truth* and its Impact on Anthropology.” Invited speaker at the roundtable celebration of the 20th anniversary of the publication of Renato Rosaldo's "Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis,” New York University, Latino Studies, April 11, 2009.

“Armchair conversation with Ruth Behar, moderated by Marcy Brink-Danan,” Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island. Conference on “Cultured Jews: The Art and Science of Jewish Ethnography,” April 6, 2009.

Languages

Bilingual in Spanish and English.

Reading in Hebrew, Ladino, French, Italian, Portuguese.

Membership in Professional Societies

American Anthropological Association

Latin American Studies Association

Latin American Jewish Studies Association

Association of Latina and Latino Anthropologists

Society for Visual Anthropology

Society for Humanistic Anthropology

Association of Writers and Writing Programs

Writing Workshop Teaching

“Fiction, Non-Fiction,” Master class in creative writing co-taught with Sandra Cisneros, Macondo Writers Workshop, San Antonio, TX, July 23-28, 2019.

Selected Advisory and Editorial Boards

Macondo Writers Workshop: Served as member of inaugural advisory board: <http://macondowriters.com/>

CubaOne Foundation: <http://cubaone.org/aboutus/>

Michigan Quarterly Review: <http://www.michiganquarterlyreview.com/masthead/>

The Ethnographic Edge: <http://tee.ac.nz/index.php/TEE/about/editorialTeam>

RUTH BEHAR
BIO

RUTH BEHAR was born in Havana, Cuba and grew up in New York City. She is the Victor Haim Perera Collegiate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Michigan, where she is also affiliated with programs in Women's Studies, Latina/Latino Studies, and Latin American and Caribbean Studies. Her honors include a MacArthur Award, a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship, a Distinguished Alumna Award from Wesleyan University, and being named a "Great Immigrant" by the Carnegie Corporation.

Behar has worked as an ethnographer in Spain, Mexico, and Cuba. Her books include *The Presence of the Past in a Spanish Village*; *Translated Woman: Crossing the Border with Esperanza's Story*; and *The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology That Breaks Your Heart*. Behar is co-editor of *Women Writing Culture*, which has become a central text in debates about the literary turn in anthropology.

She wrote, directed, and produced *Adio Kerida/Goodbye Dear Love: A Cuban Sephardic Journey*, an 82-minute video documentary distributed by Women Make Movies (www.wmm.com). The documentary is based on the life stories of Sephardic Cuban Jews living in Cuba, Miami, and New York, and has been shown in film festivals around the world.

Her book, *An Island Called Home: Returning to Jewish Cuba*, follows on her interest in visual documentation and creative nonfiction, creating an unusual blend of ethnography and images to reflect on the meaning of Jewishness on the margins. In her life and her work, Behar has become a bridge between Latina/Latino communities and Jewish communities, and it is at her events that members of both of these communities often meet each other for the first time.

In her book, *Traveling Heavy: A Memoir in between Journeys*, Behar describes herself as a specialist in "homesickness," telling the story of how she came to define her identity through a lifetime of travel. She frequently visits and writes about her native Cuba and is the editor of the pioneering anthology, *Bridges to Cuba*, and co-editor of *The Portable Island: Cubans at Home in the World*. She has written editorials about Cuba for the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Huffington Post* and been interviewed on *NPR's Latino USA*.

Her work in cultural anthropology is internationally recognized and cited among a wide range of interdisciplinary scholars. As a public speaker, she has been invited to universities and cultural centers across the United States and Canada, and to locations as diverse as Argentina, Mexico, Cuba, Spain, Finland, Israel, Poland, England, the Netherlands, Belgium, Japan, Ireland, Italy, and New Zealand.

Behar is also a creative writer, and her poetry and short fiction appear in *Telling Stories: An Anthology for Writers*; *Burnt Sugar/Caña Quemada: Contemporary Cuban Poetry in English and Spanish*; *The Whole Island: Six Decades of Cuban Poetry, a Bilingual Anthology*; and *The Norton Anthology of Latino Literature*. With poet Richard Blanco, she runs a blog to create a forum for Cuban stories that engage the heart as the island moves into a new era of its history: www.bridgestocuba.com.

Behar's debut novel for young readers, *Lucky Broken Girl*, the story of a Cuban-Jewish immigrant girl, was published by Nancy Paulsen Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House, and awarded the Pura Belpré 2018 Author Award by the American Library Association. Her bilingual book of poetry, *Everything I Kept/Todo lo que guardé* was published by Swan Isle Press in 2018.

Her historical novel, *Letters from Cuba*, will be published in 2020 by Nancy Paulsen Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House. Behar is the lead editor of *Handmade in Cuba: Rolando Estévez and the Beautiful Books of Ediciones Vigía*, to be published in 2020 by University of Florida Press.

Behar received her B.A. in Letters (1977) from Wesleyan University, and her M.A. (1980) and Ph.D. in Cultural Anthropology (1983) from Princeton University.

Further information about her work is available on her websites:

<https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/ruth-behar/>
www.ruthbehar.com.