



Anniversary of Puerto Rico Federal Relations Act of 1950 & Setonia

For more details about the history of Puerto Rico and other aspects of Latin America please feel free to consult the Joseph A. Unanue Latino Institute at Seton Hall University via the following link - <https://www.shu.edu/latino-institute/> or contact Ms. Ana Campoverde, Executive Director by e-mail: latinoinstitute@shu.edu or phone: (973) 761-9422. Additional aspects about the history of Latino and their contributions to Seton Hall can be researched via the Monsignor William Noé Field Archives & Special Collections Center. Please feel free to consult our website at: <https://library.shu.edu/archives> or contact Alan Delozier, University Archivist by e-mail: Alan.Delozier@shu.edu or phone: (973) 275-2378.

This year marks the 70th anniversary of a legislative mandate enacted by the United States Congress which had a significant impact on the governmental status of Puerto Rico that has impacted on its future development and domestic identity.

This particular Act called for Puerto Rico to become a “Free Associated State” (*Estado Libre Asociado*) which encompassed having to establish an approved bill of rights, democratic elections for a governor and other major offices, a two-house parliamentary structure, and other measures that closely mirrored the American constitutional framework. However, Puerto Rico which had long been a territory of the United States since American armed forces captured the island as a result of victory in the Spanish-American War of 1898 would remain in charge of the capital, military defense, custom houses, and any treaties with other foreign entities.

News of this Act was met with mixed emotions among the citizenry of Puerto Rico. This was especially true among those who wanted a more sovereign or nationalist government instead of remaining a commonwealth of the United States. Therefore, this document became a topic of serious discussion between those not only living on the island, but also the many Puerto Ricans who migrated to the United States who established distinctive communities throughout New Jersey and those who belonged to the Seton Hall community.

Events taking place within Puerto Rico by extension became a primary source of discussion among members of the student organization formed in 1949 and christened: “Los Quijotes” (or “The Quixotes” which loosely translates in English as: “The Idealists”). This group discussed a number of topics related to the Spanish diaspora including the preferred governing status of Puerto Rico especially since a number of members had ancestral ties to the island.



The "Los Quijotes" Club, 1950 *Galleon* (Seton Hall Yearbook)

Beyond club-centered debate taking place in real time. Retrospective analysis would move forward on campus especially with the creation of the Puerto Rican Institute (later renamed the Joseph A. Unanue Latino Institute) in 1974 and an early course offering entitled: "Peoples' of Puerto Rico History past and Present" among other instances of educational and political science dialogue.

For documentary perspective, more details on the 1950 code of law can be found as an electronic resource available through the Seton Hall University Libraries catalog . . .

<http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=5&sid=c0c06d97-6e90-47b4-a3ef-9e67391081cb%40pdc-v-sessmgr01&bdata=JkF1dGhUeXBIPXNzbyZzaXRIPWVkcY1saXZI#AN=sth.on1055033622&db=cat00991a>



Trina Padilla de Sanz (c. 1939)

In regard to primary source and unique holdings related to the Puerto Rican experience with select materials on the early 1950s within this land are part of the Trina Padilla de Sanz Papers housed within the Monsignor William Noé Field Archives & Special Collections Center at Seton Hall University. This compilation is celebrates the work of Ms. De Sanz who remains a noted figure in Puerto Rican history to the present day. This abstract provides an overview of this resource for the benefit of our research community: *“From the Collection: The Trina Padilla de Sanz papers date from 1845 to 1968, with the majority of records dating from 1902 to 1957, and document the life and literary career of Puerto Rican poet, writer, suffragist, and composer Trina Padilla de Sanz. The collection consists mostly of correspondence, original manuscripts, and printed works and also contains a small number of photographs and family papers.”*

Within the perspective of the early 1950s, correspondence with Luis Muñoz Marín the first democratically elected governor of Puerto Rico, Gabriela Mistral, the first Latin American to win the Nobel Prize in Literature, and prominent leaders José A. Amadeo and Antonio Ayuso Valdivieso along with many others. More information on the de Sanz Papers can be found via the following links . . .

Finding Aid - ArchivesSpace

<https://archivesspace-library.shu.edu/repositories/2/resources/187>

eRepository

<https://scholarship.shu.edu/padilladesanz/>

Archives & Special Collections Center Blog Articles

<https://blogs.shu.edu/archives/?s=de+Sanz>

Additional data points on Puerto Rico and the overall scope of Central and South American life can be found within the following information page dedicated to this region and the overall Latino experience



which is updated by Professor Lisa DeLuca, Professor Brooke Duffy, and Professor Lisa Rose-Wiles which provides relevant information leads to the Seton Hall University community and general public alike . . .

Latin American Research Guide - <https://library.shu.edu/latam>

PUERTO RICO CONSTITUTION

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LANDS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTY-FIRST CONGRESS

ON

H. R. 7674 and S. 3336

TO PROVIDE FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF A
CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT BY
THE PEOPLE OF PUERTO RICO

JULY 12, 1949, MARCH 14, MAY 16, JUNE 8, 1950

Serial No. 35

Printed for the use of the Committee on Public Lands



UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON : 1950

20053

Front Page of the Puerto Rico *Federal Relations Act of 1950*

Further information on the background leading to the Act within the context of the overall scope of Puerto Rican history from its prehistoric origins to the present day can be found within the link to our resources

...

<https://setonhall.on.worldcat.org/search?clusterResults=off&queryString=puerto+rico+and+1950>

In addition, various websites are devoted to providing introductory timelines and details on the depth of substance of Puerto Rican history that connect to the Federal Relations Act and its background can be found via the following Internet sites . . .

<https://www.history.com/topics/us-states/puerto-rico-history>

<https://welcome.topuertorico.org/history.shtml>