



Welcome to the newsletter for Latin American, Caribbean and Latin@ Studies at the University of Kentucky! As with past semesters, there have been exciting LACLS events this fall. This newsletter features some of those events. Spring is going to be busy as well: keep an eye out for the first LACLS distinguished lecture, April 26th, featuring Dr. Debra Castillo, former president of the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) and currently Emerson Hinchliff Chair of Hispanic Studies and Professor of Comparative Literature at Cornell University. Do you have any ideas for other events? Need help publicizing an event? Contact [scotthutson@uky.edu](mailto:scotthutson@uky.edu).



**Alejandro Aguavil** is a Tsáchila indigenous spiritual leader and healer from the province of Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas, west of Quito, Ecuador. Aguavil gave a slideshow presentation to the LACLS community on August 24<sup>th</sup>, discussing the recent history of the Tsáchila, the threats posed to their land and livelihood from the encroachment of non-Tsáchila people, and aspects of their belief system, which includes ayahuasca shamanism and coating hair in achiote paste. Peace Corps volunteer Clay Martin worked and lived in Aguavil's community and translated Aguavil's talk at UK. Aguavil's visit to UK was facilitated by Craig Borie who leads UK's Shoulder to Shoulder Global program, which has provided medical care to impoverished communities beyond the US.

Summer research travel grants for graduate students are available! February 1<sup>st</sup> application deadline. For details, see <https://lacs.as.uky.edu/>



Honduran activist Neesa Medina spoke to a packed group of students and faculty on October 15<sup>th</sup>. She focused on how the proliferation of guns in Honduras has resulted in the escalation of violence, which has taken a particular toll on women and families. Migration to the US is one of few options for Hondurans threatened by violence and Medina works with lawyers in the US to help asylum seekers. Medina's travel to UK was facilitated by Witness for Peace.





On Sept. 15th, LACLS celebrated its third annual LACLS Symposium: *Democracy, Citizenship, and Violence in Latin America*. **Abby Cordova** (Political Science) and **Francie Chassen-Lopez** (History) organized the symposium, which was well attended by faculty and students. Ideas for the 2018 symposium? Contact [scotthutson@uky.edu](mailto:scotthutson@uky.edu)

**Dr. Temma Kaplan** (Department of History, Rutgers) delivered the keynote address. Kaplan focused on the connections between water and inclusive governing, from ancient times to the present. Water scarcity is a growing problem, as a projected two thirds of the world's population will face water shortages in the year 2025. In particular, Kaplan discussed the privatization of municipal water utilities, which has led to rising costs for Latin American consumers and increased profits for foreign investors. The lecture ended with a promising example of Maria Auxiliadora, a women's cooperative housing endeavor in Cochabamba, Bolivia



Dr. Temma Kaplan

Our panel of visiting speakers consisted of the following individuals:

**Gabriela Torres** (Anthropology, Wheaton College) discussed the ways that metaphors of patriarchy permeated the rhetoric and actions of the repressive Guatemalan state during the Guatemalan civil war.

**Carew Boulding** (Political Science, University of Colorado) used survey data to explore whether or not victims of crime in Latin America were more likely to become politically active.

**Guillermo Trejo** (Political Science, Notre Dame) presented research on the relationship between narco-trafficking violence and transitions from one governing party to another at both the state and federal level in Mexico.



Dayna Cueva Alegría, Michael Flynn and Daniel Vallejo Cáliz

The symposium also featured UK grad student recipients of LACLS summer travel grants:

**Dayna Cueva Alegría** (Geography) discussed a feminist fair-trade coffee-growing collective in Cajamarca, Peru

**Michael Flynn** (Anthropology) discussed struggles faced by Mexicans who suffered workplace injuries in the United States and now live in Mexico.

**Daniel Vallejo Cáliz** (Anthropology) discussed archaeological fieldwork that focuses on political integration and disintegration at the ancient Maya center of Ucí, Yucatan, Mexico,



**New in 2017:** As a way for LACLS scholars at UK to get to know our own research better, we held our first LACLS workshop on December 6<sup>th</sup>. At the inaugural workshop we discussed a pre-circulated book proposal and article by Francie Chassen-López (History). The workshop was a success and we look forward to our next one in the spring.