FTAA: A Good Investment For Brazil?
By Samantha Medeiros

During this year's Brazilian Independence week (September 1-7), a plebiscite was held to decide if Brazil should belong to the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas in English, or the ACLA – Área de Livre Comercio nas Americas in Portuguese). Protestors chose this event to evidence their opposition to being dependent once again. Thousands of Brazilians are against free trade, and are protesting throughout the country. For example, two recent news articles about different protests stated that a thousand people turned out, including organized church and social groups, and individual citizens, all saying no to the FTAA. Should Brazilians be scared of the FTAA? Is it really so bad to belong to an area of free trade?

These protesters say yes, first because they feel that the level of poverty in Brazil will get worse, which normally happens with globalization, and second, because they fear that Brazil will lose its liberty to govern the country in accordance with what the Country considers right. The third reason for opposing the FTAA is, because they believe that when foreign products arrive in Brazil, small start-up companies will not be able to compete, and as a result will go bankrupt. However, there is another group in Brazil, which includes politicians and executives of the Brazilian media and large companies, which believes such an agreement with the US can open Brazil to the largest markets in the world. For this group, Brazil can only win in this situation. Who is right?

That is a complicated question, but I really think that both groups are right. The FTAA can bring development to countries such as Brazil, Chile, Mexico and maybe Argentina, but it cannot bring development to minor countries with no productive power, such as Belize, Costa Rica and Honduras, among others. Brazil has the eighth largest economy in the world; it is first in the production of coffee, oranges, soy, and sugar cane. It is second in the production of beans, beef, chicken, refined sugar, and corn. In addition, Brazil excels in aeronautic engineering, deep-

KAYAKS, SEWING COOPERATIVES AND ECO-TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PLANNING ON EJIDO LAND IN QUINTANA ROO, MÉXICO
BY MONICA X. DELGADO

This summer I was one of six masters students from Latin American Studies, Community and Regional Planning and the Anderson School of Management who spent six weeks in the city of Chetumal and the ejido of Laguna Guerrero both located in the state of Quintana Roo, México. We had the opportunity to experience hands-on community development work alongside students from the Universidad de Quintana Roo (UQRoo) and community members. The class was the second part of an International Planning Studio in the Community and Regional Planning (CRP) Program. CRP Professors David Henkel and Claudia Isaac, along with UQRoo professors Francisco Rosado-May and Sussana Kissman supervised the studio. UNM students involved in the International Studio were Marjo Curgus, Mónica X. Delgado, Jim Scholz, Adriana Villar, Darcy Johnson, and James

(Continued on page 4)
I would like to begin this letter by giving thanks to LAII and its student body for giving me the opportunity to be president of SOLAS. As such, I hope to continue in the footsteps of previous presidents who have made SOLAS what it is today. I hope to continue to enhance the reputation of SOLAS and lead it in a positive direction.

As president of SOLAS, I think it is necessary to reveal a little about myself and my ambitions for this organization. As a native Nuevo Mexican from Roswell, NM, where I was born to Mexican parents from Durango, Mexico, it became apparent to me early on where my academic loyalties would lie. Perhaps the first book I read that introduced me to Latin America, and essentially solidified my interest in the region, was The Hummingbird and the Hawk by R.C. Padden, a fascinating and intriguing account of Aztec society. Other books that contributed to ensuring a lifelong interest in Latin America were The First America by David Brading, La Raza Cósmica by José Vasconcelos, and in the realm of Chicano history, Occupied America by Rudolph Acuña. More recently, I discovered On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History by Thomas Carlyle, which allowed me to look at Latin American leaders in a different light. Perhaps some would find the book outdated and politically incorrect, but to me it felt like a breath of fresh air, allowing me to look deeper into the psychology of Latin America’s great caudillos. My interest in Latin America is largely an interest in intellectual history, that of ideas.

On a different note, other aspects of myself include a great love of baseball, boxing, and chess; an emerging interest in classical music and religious art; an insatiable passion for travel, and most importantly, a vigorous and sincere interest about the present and more importantly the future political, ideological, and economic situation facing the Chicano people of the American Southwest.

With respect to SOLAS, my goal is to ensure that the reputation SOLAS has acquired is not lost and in effect is enhanced. I hope to do this by ensuring the Brown Bag lecture series continues to invite and host prestigious speakers, as well as students and community leaders from different backgrounds, so as to provide a continuous dialogue from many different perspectives about issues relevant to Latin America, Iberia, and the American Southwest. I hope to do this by facilitating an open line of communication among SOLAS members about the direction and mission of SOLAS, by taking part in campus and community activities, and by ensuring that the voice of the native population of Nuevo Mexico is heard. I hope my disdain for mediocrity will ensure a great year for SOLAS. I urge all members of SOLAS with any ideas or suggestions to speak up.

Thank you,

Ignacio Martinez
SOLAS President
water petroleum exploration technology, the development of satellite technology, tropical agriculture and vaccines. As such, Brazil is more prepared than ever to produce for a foreign market, and therefore has much less to fear from the FTAA than do smaller and less productive countries.

On the other hand, while in the last few decades Brazil is becoming more productive, receiving more investment and acquiring more negotiating power, misery (still makes up part of) the lives of millions of Brazilians. According to the World Bank, millions more Brazilians are now literate than in the previous decade, but knowing how to read or write does not necessarily enable them to understand and work in an international environment.

We cannot forget to take into consideration that if Brazil had made this agreement when Embraer and Petrobras were just beginning, it is likely that now these two famous companies, of which Brazil is so proud, would not exist and Brazil would be importing from the US the technology that these companies are producing today.

So we can see that globalization has two interdependent sides: It brings development and a huge market for productive companies, and misery to those who cannot reach this market. For example, one of the biggest problems in Brazil is an unfair distribution of land along with poor distribution of agricultural investment. Landowners who produce money to invest in exports receive more incentives than poor peasants who produce only for the local market. These peasants often end up selling their land and going to work for miserable salaries in export plantations. Some of them move to the urban centers, hoping to find employment, but end up becoming beggars, as both multinational and private companies producing for the international market are only looking for highly skilled employees.

The good news is that the number of Brazilians with undergraduate degrees and good jobs is improving. Previously, many students lost the motivation to go to the University because of the lack of suitable employment. Now, however, many Brazilians are conscious of the importance of higher education, and year after year make efforts to improve.

Concluding, I don’t believe the FTAA will be so bad to Brazil that we cannot give the Country the opportunity to try. However, Brazil needs to spend more money on its schools so that graduates are prepared for good jobs. Brazil also needs to invest in small agriculture and cooperatives so that they can compete with large agricultural companies. Small companies that are productive should receive more investment so they can acquire the technology and quality necessary in the foreign market. Maybe we should allow Lula, the most socialist of all Brazil’s presidential candidates, to negotiate the terms of the FTAA, making this agreement fairer for the poor in Latin America.

References:

Samantha Medeiros, from Brazil, is an undergraduate student in Business Management and a non-degree graduate student.

**Letter From The Editor**

Dear *Las Noticias* Readers,

As the new editor of *Las Noticias*, it has been a privilege and a challenge to organize the newsletter. I am excited with the diversity of submissions for this issue and hope that you will enjoy reading it. Take note of the art and poetry throughout. I am particularly grateful to *Notícias* co-editors, Rachel Archer and Sue Taylor.

For those of you who do not know me, I am a dual degree student in Latin American Studies and Community and Regional Planning with a concentration in gender studies. Originally from New York State, I recently moved to Albuquerque after living in Mexico for several years and facilitating educational travel-seminars for students from the United States and Canada.

I am already looking forward to working on the next issue of *Las Noticias* and encourage people to make suggestions for how to improve it. My vision is that *Las Noticias* will become a fantastic mix of art and poetry, social activism and academic research. I would love to have a “Letters to the Editor” section, an editorials section and a variety of political cartoons. None of this can be accomplished alone, so please become involved. In particular, I am searching for an Arts Editor; please contact me (sandrita@unm.edu) if you are interested.

I look forward to getting to know more of you and hope to be able to work together. I wish everyone a great semester!

Sandra Ortsman
KAYAKS, SEWING COOPERATIVES AND ECO-TOURISM DEVELOPMENT
PLANNING ON EJIDO LAND IN QUINTANA ROO, MÉXICO
BY MONICA X. DELGADO

(Continued from page 1)

Easterling.

Background
The state of Quintana Roo has been called an
amazing juxtaposition of new and old, of the pristinely
natural and the master-planned. It is a mix of booming
tourism and ancient Mayan ruins. It is also home to Mex-
ico’s most popular tourist destination, Cancún, which until
1961 was almost completely isolated from the rest of Mexico. Quintana Roo
did not receive statehood until 1974. Many cities and small communities in
Quintana Roo, such as Chetumal and its surrounding ejidos, have not suc-
cumbed to Cancún-style development but must constantly vie with the possi-
bility of locally controlled tourism plans.

The capital of Quintana Roo
is Chetumal, located opposite Cancún
on the western tip of the state.
Chetumal is not only a bustling
border town (bordering Belize)
and port city, but it is also a for-
mer Maya stronghold. About 20
minutes outside Chetumal is the ejido of Laguna Guerrero
where we were engaged in community development work
this summer.

Although Chetumal does not have the same re-
sort feel as does Cancún and may not interest resort-
seeking travelers, it has many potentially attractive excursions and expeditions for eco-tourists such as several iso-
lated and unexplored Mayan ruins and discrete, sheltered
coves near Laguna Guerrero where manatee are known to
congregate and graze. The region is full of wildlife. These
waterways fall within an uninhabited region of approxi-
mately 600,000 hectares. A point of access to this lebryrin-
this maze of waterways is through the forest to the ejido
of Laguna Guerrero and Chetumal Bay.

Because of the Cancún contrast, it is essential
that continuous research be conducted on Mexico’s tour-
ism industry, analyzing the profound role of tourism as a
global force that transforms not only rural space but also
communities and their relationship to production and con-
sumption.

Community Planning in Laguna Guerrero
Students and faculty from both La Universidad
de Quintana Roo and the University of New Mexico
worked alongside local community members to facilitate
the process of (pulling ideas together in order) to find an
alternative to selling ejido land through the development
of eco-tourism in the ejido of Laguna Guerrero. We
helped them further shape their own ideas and plans to
create a locally controlled, low impact, viable eco-tourism
sector in their community. The members of the ejidos
were especially interested in expanding specific implement-
ation techniques such as securing financing, building
capacity and organizational methods.

We broke up into five focus groups to
utilize the existing knowledge of commu-

nity members. These groups in-
cluded: a restaurants committee, a
women’s sewing cooperative, a kayak
construction business, a committee on
lodging, and a re-investment committee.

We held numerous meetings with each
small focus group and then brought all
the players to the table to present the
ideas and work achieved in the focus
groups. This helped to bring everyone to
the same page and aspiring towards the same outcome.

Our last day in Laguna
Guerrero was met with a
special dinner/dance in our honor, concluding with short
but very heartfelt speeches by community members thank-
ing us for our hard work, dedication, inspiration and en-
ergy. That
last truck-
bed ride
home out
of the ejido
under the
bright stars
go was a quiet
and sad
one, yet at
the same
time it was totally fulfilling and sweet. The work was rig-
gorous, the conditions were agonizing at times but the ex-
perience gained was awesome.

Monica X Delgado, from New Mexico, is pursuing a dual Mas-
ter’s degree in Community and Regional Planning and Latin
American Studies with a concentration in gender studies and
economics. She is a co-chair for PILA, Planners in Latin
America and a former SOLAS president.
Diego Rivera In Detroit
By Dylan Miner

The legacy of Diego Rivera is immense, both for the cultural history of Mexico and for people of Mexican descent in the United States. To most scholars, Rivera is recognized as one of the greatest painters of the twentieth century and most likely the greatest artist ever in Latin America. For Latinos, especially Chicanos, the murals painted by Rivera represent a past that is still very much alive. As an artist, he is able to present Mexican history, especially the indigenous elements, to those unable to access it anywhere else, especially for mexicanos living in the Midwest.

The popularity of Rivera is unparalleled among Latin American artists, with the only exception being his wife, Frida Kahlo. One can buy T-shirts, mouse pads, posters or virtually any item one could think of bearing the likeness of a Rivera painting. A friend from Chicago recently bought a framed poster of a Rivera mural at, of all places, K-Mart. And how many of us have an item with a Rivera image? In our home, Starr and I have no less than five framed Rivera posters hanging in our hallway.

His work is visually beautiful and speaks to us as an audience in a way that no other artist can. Today, nearly fifty years after Diego's death, Chicanos are still trying to reclaim their lost history. For those of us not comfortable with traditional schooling, Rivera's paintings offer an alternative knowledge and way to relearn history. Yet, other than having a reproduction of a Rivera mural hanging in our houses, how many of us really know about Rivera? Do any of us know about his relationship to Mexicans in Detroit? I only recently began to learn about the contradictory relationship between Rivera and Mexican labor in Detroit. I spent the greater part of the summer working with Detroit's Chicano/mexicano community trying to understand exactly what he did while living in Michigan. This article briefly explores my findings.

In the eyes of many Anglo and Mexican art historians, Rivera's relationship and involvement with la comunidad mexicana in Detroit is not of great importance. Recently, I read a book by Mexican art historian, Alicia Azuela, titled Rivera en Detroit, and even though the book focuses on Rivera and his Detroit Industry murals, she doesn't mention his connection and interactions to Southwest Detroit, the Mexican barrio in the city. In fact, art historians have simply overlooked the relationship between Rivera and Midwestern Latinos. A few Chicano historians, specifically Detroit-native Dennis Vadés, have briefly studied his relationship to Southwest Detroit, but much of the history still needs to be understood. For Midwestern Latinos, this story needs to be told, especially by elders within the Mexican barrio as a way to tell the stories through the eyes of the community. The little information known about Rivera goes something like this:

Rivera arrived in Detroit in the spring of 1932 with his wife, Frida Kahlo. He was commissioned by Edsel Ford to paint the courtyard of the Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA). Upon his arrival at City Airport, Diego and Frida were greeted by Ignacio Batiza, the local Mexican consul, and local mexicano residents. Rivera was only supposed to paint two walls in the courtyard, but petitioned the Institute to allow him to paint the entire space. For nearly the entire following year, Rivera prepared and painted the courtyard at the DIA. During his preparation, Diego traveled throughout Detroit, as well as to Flint, taking pictures of the Automotive Industry as reference for his murals. Anyone who has seen the murals will attest to the beauty and accuracy created by Rivera.

While working on the murals, Rivera would often begin at midnight and work throughout the night, putting in over twelve hour days, stopping only to eat. José Alfaro, a Mexican foundry worker, remembers running all the way from his house in Corktown to the DIA, quite a distance, to speak with Rivera. Often times Mexican factory workers would join el Maestro during his meals at the museum, which were usually cooked by his wife, Frida. These meals consisted of Mexican food, which the couple usually bought while shopping in the Mexican barrio. In addition to shopping in Southwest Detroit and Corktown, also a Mexican community, the two were active in colonia affairs.

In the summer of 1932, soon after his arrival, Rivera, with the help of Consul Batiza, founded the Liga de Obreros y Campesinos. Within the organization, Rivera held the highest position, (Continued on page 6)
Diego Rivera In Detroit
By Dylan Miner

(Continued from page 5)

president of Debates, and was influential in the Liga activities, helping to found a newspaper. By the end of 1932, the Liga claimed to have more than 5,000 members in Michigan and Ohio. While Rivera was in Detroit, the Liga focused its activities on the repatriation and resettlement of both Mexicans and Mexican-Americans to rural Mexico. Rivera worked closely with both the U.S. and Mexican governments to help repatriate destitute mexicanos living in Michigan.

In the era shortly after the Mexican Revolution, a certain form of nationalism arose from the Mexican left. Using this nationalist thinking, Rivera believed that the Mexican workers in Detroit would play an important role in the future development of the Mexican economy. Having learned many skills from the automotive industry, these skills could be put to use in a post-revolutionary, socialist Mexico. However, many within the local barrio disagreed with returning to Mexico, and many felt pressured by the Liga into returning. A large division was built between those involved with the Liga and the more traditional ways of the Catholic church.

Detroit Industry, North Wall, 1932-1933

With Rivera as the catalyst, nearly 1,300 mexicanos, both U.S. and Mexican citizens, were repatriated from Michigan, three times the national average. El Maestro gave money to the repatriados so that they could help start worker collectives in Mexico; unfortunately, his monetary aid was not enough and all four of the newly established communities of Detroit repatriados failed.

Since the 1930s, the perspectives of Rivera in local oral histories in Southwest Detroit have been contradictory. During his stay, many Mexican laborers had worked with him in the Liga de Obreros y Campesinos, while others, especially the Catholic church were vehemently against him. A recent video directed by Detroiter Elena Herrada, Los Repatriados: Exiles from the Promised Land, shows the view of the repatriation from those who lived it, although the role of Rivera is only a minor component. From a historical perspective we must recognize that within the local colonia mexicana, there were two dissenting opinions: one that saw Rivera as a Communist agitator and the other that saw him as attempting, even if unsuccessful, to help Mexican workers.

After nearly a year of working on his mural and working with the Mexican community, Rivera created one of his best paintings ever. According to his biographer, Bertram Wolfe, Rivera considered his Detroit Industry Mural to be his most successful of any of his paintings. Many critics also view it as his best painting of his entire career and by far his best work outside of Mexico. But upon its completion, there was an uproar within Detroit attacking the piece for its ‘pornographic’ content. Just as within the eyes of Anglo society, the response from the Mexican community was split. Many aligned with the church disapproved of the mural, while many laborers viewed it as a positive telling of factory life. In fact, union organizer Rube Álvarez brought non-union laborers to the Rivera Court at the DIA as a way to gain support for the United Auto Workers.

Even if we criticize Rivera for the role he played during the Repatriation Campaign, we must acknowledge that he definitely has affected the manner in which Midwestern Latinos are viewed. Unfortunately for Michigan Chicanos, the mural is within the walls of an Art Museum, a place where many still feel uncomfortable. It is important that this important work be in a more accessible place for all to see. After all, it is the most important painting by the greatest Mexican artist ever.

Dylan Miner, from Michigan is pursuing his Masters Degree in Latin American Studies, with a concentration in Art History and History. He is a member of the IWW, Industrial Workers of the World.
¡Réquiem por Colombia!
Por Juan Carlos Vallejo

En Colombia, cientos de mujeres, “Las Mujeres de Negro”, marchan por ciudades y campos contra la guerra. Madres de Detenidos y Desaparecidos por el Estado colombiano, madres de guerrilleros, policías y soldados caídos o prisioneros; madres, generalmente, pobres. Porque son los pobres quienes ponen los cuerpos y las lágrimas. “No pararemos más hijos para la guerra”, se lee en una pancarta en medio del lúgubre silencio. Se niegan a seguir siendo madres del dolor y el sufrimiento.

 Dice Leo Collymore (c): “El pedido ampliará la capacidad de Colombia con helicópteros y medios de inteligencia. Se espera de los Estados Unidos, 117 millones de dólares para combatir en cooperación mutua el terrorismo que azota el país desde hace unas cuatro décadas. El dinero será un reconocimiento por parte de Washington, de la importancia que es la lucha contra las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) y las autodefensas representadas por paramilitares”.

El histórico conflicto colombiano, tiene connotaciones políticas, económicas, culturales y sociales, cuyo origen y desarrollo nunca tuvo la atención de las castas gobernantes. Desde el alzamiento del indio Quintín Lame (1895) contra los terratenientes respaldados por grupos armados, unas veces privados y otras, muchas, estatales, que les expropiaban sus tierras ancestrales; pasando por la matanza de las bananeras (1928), en donde el Estado colombiano asume la defensa del capital extranjero (United Fruit Company) contra el campesino explotado; continuando con el asesinato del caudillo popular Jorge Eliécer Gaitán (1948), quien puso a temblar al Establecimiento con su vertical presidencia; seguido de la sublevación de Guadalupe Salcedo (1953), quien buscaba desde los Llanos Orientales reivindicaciones agrarias y sociales para los miles de trabajadores del campo; y desembocando en el bombardeo a Marquetalia, con el fin de acabar a 48 campesinos y sus familias que supuestamente habían constituido “repúblicas independientes” en el olvidado sur colombiano, hecho que incentivó el surgimiento de las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, FARC (1964), la única respuesta que han tenido las justas revueltas populares en Colombia, ha sido la armada.

El progresivo desmejoramiento de las condiciones de vida de los colombianos, ha ido en igual proporción al incremento del aparato militar, con el cual se ha garantizado un statu quo injusto y protector de un pequeño grupo de familias dueñas del poder y autistas al clamar popular, que reclama una nueva baraja del contrato social. Colombia, según el Informe de Desarrollo Humano de las Naciones Unidas y la Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe, CEPAL (5), ha acumulado 26 millones de personas pobres; algunas pocas, apenas alcanzan a percibir hasta dos dólares diarios para sobrevivir; el número de desplazados es casi 3 millones, es decir, desterrados de sus poblaciones por el hambre, históricamente, y por la guerra, ahora, y con la única pertenencia de tener la vida, pues sus muebles y enseres los tuvieron que abandonar. Estos últimos pasan a engrosar los 11 millones de seres humanos indigentes, que viven de la caridad en las calles. Hay cerca de 9 millones de desempleados y 15 millones de subempleados, o sea, personas que viven de trabajos inestables e intermitentes, sin una mínima remuneración legal, inseguridad social ni prestacional. Son cerca de 24 millones de personas sin agua potable. Hay 3 millones de niños en edad escolar, que no tienen dónde y cómo educarse, y pasan a ser parte de la escalofriante cifra del trabajo infantil. Pero todavía hay algo peor: ¡432 personas! (1.08% de la aproximada población de 40 millones que tiene Colombia) son dueñas del 60% de la tierra. Del Presupuesto Nacional, el 34% se va para pagar sólo los intereses de la Deuda Externa y el 16% se lo lleva el gasto militar. Lo demás queda para el sostenimiento del Estado, con el agravante que Colombia ocupa el cuadragésimo primer puesto dentro de los más corruptos en el mundo y el duodécimo en toda América. Pero las cifras anteriores no son solamente producto de la guerra. Son la sumatoria de años y años de la diferencia en el omnipremio poder. Son la cara de la infamia del establecimiento colombiano. La “consplicua” dirigencia que se envuelve en la bandera antiterrorista para preservar sus privilegios y componendas, acallando a las organizaciones sociales y luchadores populares que reclaman un país más justo para todos. Antes se escudaron en la lucha contra el comunismo, luego en la guerra contra los carteles de la droga y ahora utilizan el sofisma del terrorismo. Siempre han tenido un chivo expiatorio listo para continuar con su sainete de “Democracia y Libertad.” Se autoproclaman como “la gente de bien,” “los buenos somos más” y la “sociedad civil,” cuando en realidad están contaminados de corrupción y narcotráfico hasta los tuétanos. Ahora montaron de presidente a un siniestro hombre, con oscuro pasado, que, a no ser por su traje de civil, posee todas las características de los dictadores de las mal recordadas “Banana Republic.” “El hábito no hace al monje”, reza un famoso refrán. La guerra, más que solucionar los problemas, los ahonda. Ahí están los ejemplos de lo que quedó de El Salvador, Nicaragua y Guatemala; lo que está ocasionando entre Israel y Palestina; para sólo mencionar unos casos. ¿Y quién gana las guerras? Sólo los comerciantes de armas. ¿Y quién las pierde? Las pierden los pobres, en primera medida, pues son ellos quienes engrosan las estadísticas de muertos, desaparecidos y damnificados; y los países en desarrollo, en segundo lugar, porque quedan con sus economías destruidas e hipotecados a la banca internacional. Por eso, mientras unos saborean sus gustos fascistoides viendo desfiles de helicópteros a través de la televisión, otros acompañaremos la triste marcha de las Mujeres de Negro, al compás de un ¡réquiem por Colombia!

(Continúa en la página 8)
¡Réquiem por Colombia!
Por Juan Carlos Vallejo

(Continued from page 7)

Notas

Juan Carlos de Colombia es un investigador visitante con el Instituto Latino Americano y de Iberia.

Shuc
Shungulla
Paz

By Naomi Gabriella Schwartz

Says Naomi, “The images reflect peace and cross-cultural bridge building.”

Shuc Shungulla means One Heart and Paz means Peace.

Naomi Gabriella Schwartz is a PhD student in Latin American Studies with a major in Anthropology and minor in Native American Sociolinguistics. She is also teaching Quichua this semester.
Faculty Updates: The Buzz on Campus

The editors of *Las Noticias* thought that it would be nice to give faculty the opportunity to share their current research with *Las Noticias* readers as it pertains to Latin America. Here are the responses we received: Celia Lopez-Chavez, assistant professor in the University Honors program, and originally from San Juan, Argentina, is currently finishing a book on frontier and epic poetry in the Spanish American Empire. Her current research also focuses on gender issues, specifically women in Argentina in the 20th Century. Kimberly Gauderman, professor in Latin American History’s research interests include ethnohistory and gender history, primarily in Ecuador where she lived for four years before coming to Albuquerque. Her book, *Playing the System: Women’s Lives in Seventeenth-Century Quito*, will be published by University of Texas Press and is due out sometime at the beginning of next year. Ken Roberts, professor of Political Science, is currently finishing a book manuscript on the transformation of party systems and political representation in Latin America’s neoliberal era. He is also doing research on the political determinants of economic crisis in Latin America. For the second year in a row, Michael Campagna, Director of the Water Resource Program and Michele Minnis, took the Water Resources 573 Field Problems class to Honduras to work on a village water system. The Water Resources Program and Escuela Agricola Panamericana (Zamorano) in Honduras have been funded by USAID to establish a Central American Water Resources Development Center. They also plan to investigate creating a joint professional Masters Degree in Water Resources for Latin American professionals, based on our MWR degree. And, David Henkel, Director of Community and Regional Planning’s, research interests include: transboundary (i.e. frontera) resource and planning issues; bi-national resource management; community-based planning education (postgraduate) in Latin America, especially in relation to the Universidad de Quintana Roo and Caribbean nations.

Thank you everyone for your responses and good luck with your projects! If you would like your research included in the next edition of *Las Noticias*, please email sandrita@unm.edu

A Community’s Right to Choose How They Want to Live  By Sandra Ortsman

On Wednesday August 21st 3000 people marched in peaceful protest of the plan to build a Costco in conjunction with Mexican supermarket, *Comercial Mexicana* on land that used to be the famous *Casino de la Selva* in Cuernavaca, Mexico. In total 32 protesters were jailed and repressed by approximately 450 police. Costco, the mega-store where you can buy just about anything in bulk is trying to build a mega-store on Mexican land that contain valuable murals of Spanish artist Joseph Renau, and Mexican Muralist artists Reyes Meza and Benito Meseguer in downtown Cuernavaca, a few blocks away from the main traditional market. Cuernavaca residents have been peacefully protesting the plan for the past year. They have repeatedly come into contact with an unresponsive city government. Protesters have been arguing that the project is unsound for economic, cultural and ecological reasons.

Costco is likely to have adverse effects on small business people who earn their living selling at the nearby market stalls. As Cuernavacan Pro-Casino de la Selva Civic Front activist, Areli Carreon says, “Stopping Costco is about protecting a lifestyle of a small village and preventing Cuernavaca from becoming a satellite suburb of Mexico City. It is also about citizens’ rights to decide how we want to live.” Moreover, the site is one of the few sites left in the downtown area of the city that is home to diverse flora and fauna and over 500 trees that contribute to the eco-system of the area. Activists allege that Costco had already begun to destroy the famous murals before the final construction permit was granted.

On Tuesday, August 22nd, at least 20,000 people marched to protest the government’s repressive treatment of protesters and to stop repression and violence against the citizens. The marchers demanded release from jail of Pro-Casino de la Selva Civic Front activists. When I asked my friends what I could do from the North, they asked me to write about what was happening and ask people in the North to be in solidarity by demanding that Costco stop their plans to develop in downtown Cuernavaca.

The Pro-Casino de la Selva Civic Front activists are organizing a local and national boycott against Costco and *Comercial Mexicana*. For more information or a sample protest letter, check out, www.procasino.org or email Areli Carreon at Areli@laneta.apc.org. Join hands with direct actionists in Cuernavaca! Take action here in New Mexico.

Call or fax Costco CEO James Senegal at (425) 416-8100 (office) or (425) 313-8103 (fax). Demand that:

- Costco make a public call to drop all charges against all protesters,
- That Costco stop construction on the Cuernavaca store immediately,
- And that Costco abandon the Cuernavaca project altogether.

If you are a Costco customer, tell Costco that you will not shop there as long as they are building with blatant disregard for historic landmarks, the environment and the store’s impact on local economies.

Sandra Ortsman, from New York State, is pursuing a dual Masters degree in Community and Regional Planning and Latin American Studies with a concentration in gender studies. She recently moved to Albuquerque from Cuernavaca, Mexico. Areli Carreon made significant contributions to this article. She is a member of the Civic Front for Casino de la Selva. She is also a member of the Cuernavaca Bike Movement and a long time permaculture activist.
Conversations Con El Rio
By James M. Aranda

Oh proud Rio Bravo
Can you recall the day
when your waters thrived?

Before your meager flow resembled
your humble beginning por el valle San Luis.

My troubled friend
-A river that once ran dry for 30 miles
from Bernardo to Elephant Butte,
Can you forgive us for taking you for granted? You, the very one who
gave us life.

Ancient Rio Bravo
Do you remember when your children were grateful for your guiding
hand and benevolence?
When the law of the land was to give back to you and your six her-
manitos:
el Rio Chama, Rio Embudo, el Rio Puerco,
Rio Salado, Pecos River, and the Red River.

El Rio Grande
Do you reminisce back to times
when your very name rang true?
When your flooding banks swelled
past modern day Edith Boulevard
during late summer monsoons.

Before the dark day your children
drifted far from your embrace.

Before we put a value on your lifeblood
and institutionalized you.

Beautiful Rio Bravo
Can you recollect when the Algodón,
were free to flourish within the confines
of your ripe bosque?

Before the waves of salt cedar,
russian olive y siberian elm
choked out all roots of indigenismo
within your most sacred spaces.

Before the conquest that transformed
Your bosque into neglected thicket
on the verge of EXTINCTION.

Resilient Rio Bravo
Can you still imagine your once glorious past?
Before we your children thought we owned you.
Before we declared war on your waters
and scarred the earth around you.

Before we lined your borders
with barbed-wired jetjacks,
and put you in a straightjacket.
-Driving you deeper and deeper into the ground.

Nuestro Rio Bravo
Do you remember when your water was unsoiled?
Before we poisoned you
with prozac, chlorine, and our wastewater.

Before we started shitting where we eat,
-Flushing you down our toilets 210 gallons a day.

My Rio Bravo
Do you remember when you were far more
than just another obstacle
along the morning commute to work?

Before Montaño or any bridge was built across you.
-Changed forever our direction in this world.

Before we lost our spiritual connection to you
Before we forgot how to be human.

My troubled camarada,
As you ponder our rocky history together
Can you still envision life?
-IN the FUTURE?

Proud Rio Bravo
Will you thrive once again?
-As you thrived before us?
© 2002 James M. Aranda (2/8/02)

James Aranda, from New Mexico, is pursuing a Masters Degree in
Community and Regional Planning Student and is a founding
member of The Angry Brown Poets.
A World Where Many Worlds Fit In:
Critical Update on the Situation in Chiapas, Mexico
By Sandra Ortsman

“We want a world where many worlds fit in.” This is one of many popular Zapatista slogans that exemplify their basic struggle for autonomy and cultural survival. However, this struggle has become increasingly more difficult. In Chiapas, Mexico, representatives of over 30 human rights organizations are organizing against the increase of repression in indigenous communities. In the month of August, paramilitary groups murdered five indigenous members of the Zapatista Army for National Liberation (EZLN). Recently, at a Conference in Geneva, Switzerland, Mexican President Fox and Mexican Secretary of State for Chiapas Zabada denied the existence of paramilitaries in Chiapas and stated that the Zapatistas are unwilling to dialogue.

However, those of us who have been following the Zapatista movement know that the dialogue between the Mexican Government and the Zapatistas has broken down because the Mexican Government failed to meet the three conditions that the Zapatistas put forth last December as minimum requirements before they would return to the discussion table:

- Release of all Zapatista political prisoners.
- Removal of seven strategic military checkpoints in Chiapas.
- Fulfillment of the San Andres Accords.

The Mexican Army has in fact advanced their positions in the conflict zone and established new checkpoints, hence allowing for more paramilitary groups to enter communities of resistance.

The increase of paramilitary presence in Chiapas marks a new stage of counter-insurgency warfare against indigenous autonomous communities of resistance. It is no coincidence that recent violence has occurred in the area of Montes Azules Biosphere. Developers have been coveting this particular land for its high natural resources and strategic location in relation to land “needed” for the Plan Puebla Panama Agreement and the Proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas Agreement (FTAA in English, ALCA in Spanish). Fox is under pressure from foreign investors to stop the Zapatista movement and dislocate the indigenous communities of Chiapas so that foreign investors can begin to make another maquiladora zone similar to the one on the US/Mexico border.

Mexico does not need another maquiladora zone that will dislocate traditional Chiapanecan communities from their homes, lands and waters from which they sustain themselves. It is time we put people before profits. Corporate interests are threatening the cultural integrity of many of the Native people all over the Americas. The power to govern has passed from people to distant institutions controlled primarily by the demands of the business world.

We, the Civil Society, must mobilize against institutions that do not serve the human interest, and reclaim the power that we have yielded to unfair corporate institutions. We must celebrate the wonderful cosmovicision of the Zapatista struggle for autonomy. Much of this information on Chiapas comes from Global Exchange. Contact them at: www.globalexchange.org to make a financial contribution or to be a human rights observer in Chiapas. Contact the Mexican government and express your concern for the peace process in Chiapas. Contact your own representatives and let them know that the Free Trade Area of the Americas Agreement is not good for the survival of indigenous communities in Latin America.

Sandra Ortsman, from New York State, is pursuing a dual Masters Degree in Community and Regional Planning and Latin American Studies with a concentration in gender studies. She recently moved to Albuquerque from Cuernavaca, Mexico.

“no somos muertos:
el dia de los muertos, dos mil”
By Dylan Miner, Latin American Studies
CAFÉ ZAPATISTA
by Brandt Milstein

Chiapas, the southernmost state of Mexico, is not an easy place to do business. Historically a poor and volatile region, the last five years have been particularly hard on its rural Mayan populace. Since 1994, an armed indigenous peoples' rebellion—the Zapatista rebellion—has caused the Mexican government to commit, over time, nearly half of its forces—around 70,000 troops—to the state. On top of this, multiple paramilitary groups operate, and violence and brutality are routine. In the middle of this chaos is American Kerry Appel and his Human Bean Company.

After almost thirty years of traveling throughout Mexico and Central America, Appel found himself in Chiapas just as the Zapatista uprising was getting underway. He took it upon himself to investigate the causes of the violence. The rebellion began on January 1, 1994, the same day the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) took effect. This was not a coincidence; one of the Zapatistas main concerns is the loss, under NAFTA, of indigenous peoples' right to communally and ejido held land. According to the first declaration of war on the Mexican government by the Zapatista army, those in power don't care that we have nothing, absolutely nothing, not even a roof over our heads, no land, no work, no health care, no food or education. Nor are we able to freely elect our political representatives, nor is there independence from foreigners, nor is there peace and justice for ourselves and our children.

Appel has found something to believe in.

Returning to the United States, Appel committed himself to supporting the Zapatista cause. Unconvinced that aiding the violence by running guns to the rebels was the way to go, he was convinced that “to be in solidarity one should act upon the needs expressed by those struggling.” One of those needs concerned new markets for Chiapas' main cash crop: coffee. Ordinarily, the Zapatista communities’ only access to the international coffee market is through intermediaries who pay exorbitantly low prices. “The coyotes come to indigenous communities that have no infrastructure, no markets,” says Appel. “They bring their own scale, tell them what their product weighs and what they’re going to pay. It is usually far below the cost of producing the coffee.” If Appel could import the beans to the United States directly, paying a just or fair-trade price many times that of the intermediaries, he would be supporting the struggle while helping the poor of Chiapas help themselves.

Is Appel sticking his nose where it ought not be? Former Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo had this to say of foreigners involved in Chiapas:

The Mexican people and the federal government cannot allow foreign people (to be) directly involved in the conflict of Chiapas... even though they contend that they do so for humanitarian reasons... (Those) interfering... could do more by working to address the injustices in their own countries left by authoritarianism and the exclusion of their forefathers.

The government of Vicente Fox has backed off from the prior administration’s rhetoric toward foreigners, NGOs, and human rights organizations working in Chiapas. Unfortunately, the continued violence in Chiapas and the Fox administration’s failure to secure new legislation acceptable to the combatants belies the change in rhetoric. Appel agrees that concerns should begin at home but feels it is the policies of the U.S. and Mexican governments that have caused him to act:

If it wasn’t for the fact that Zedillo’s predecessor, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, changed the constitution of Mexico at the request of the United States, if it wasn’t for the fact that Mexico ended communal land rights at the request of the United States, if it wasn’t for the fact that hundreds of millions of dollars of U.S. arms are in Chiapas, then I would be completely in agreement with Zedillo.

Beyond the politics, Appel contends, “There are certain things that transcend borders. One of those things is human rights.

Appel is far from alone in his attempts to add a degree of social justice to international commerce. From Equal Exchange on the east coast to Global Exchange on the west, fair-trade organizations are spreading throughout the United States. Businesses concerned with an array of issues—indigenous peoples’ rights, environmental concerns, the alleviation of poverty, women’s rights—and the like—are using fair-trade pricing and consumer education to promote their causes and empower producers. Profit margins soon become secondary with these businesses. As Appel puts it, “We can afford to take into account the cultural, political, economic, as well as the human values, that are part of international business.” Apparently so; his coffee purchases have more than doubled each of the past five years.

I traveled recently to Chiapas with Appel. Having had the opportunity to visit coffee-producing villages, help with the coffee harvest, take part in community meetings, and speak with Appel’s business partners, two things became clear. First those with whom he does business are very appreciative of his efforts. His concern for their welfare, coupled with his active role in opening new markets for their coffee, offer a positive influence not often felt from outsiders. Second, the people of Chiapas recognize the need for change. “We are suffering too much,” I was told by one farmer. “Kerry wants to help and he does.”

Brandt Milstein, from Colorado, is pursuing a dual Masters Degree/JD in Law and Latin American Studies. His concentrations are in human rights and political science.
SONETO PARA VIOLETA PARRA
Por María Rodríguez-Pope

TE HAGO UN SONETO VIOLETA
PARA RESUCITARTE
PERO A CUANTOS LES TENGO
QUE HACER UN SONETO
PARA QUE RESUCITEN

LE TENGGO QUE HACER UN SONETO
A LOS POBRES QUE SUFREN HAMBRE
OTRO PARA QUE LLORAN
PARA AQUELLOS QUE FUERON VIOLADOS
PARA LOS ÁRBOLES DE LAS EDLVAS Y LOS BOSQUES
QUE FUERON TALADOS
LES TENGO QUE HACER UN SONETO
A LOS RÍOS Y A LOS MARES
PARA QUE RESUCITEN CON AGUAS PURAS
Y QUE CUREN LA SED DE LA TIERRA

LE TENGGO QUE HACER UN SONETO
A LAS VIRGENES
A LOS LLANOS, A LAS AVES, A LAS FIERAS,
A LOS ANGELES,
A LOS NIÑOS QUE NO TIENEN NINEZ

OTRO A ESOLOS CUERPOS MUERTOS
QUE FLOTAN EN LOS RÍOS DE COLOMBIA,
ARGENTINA,
PARAGUAY, RUANDA, SUD AFRICA
Y QUIEN SABE CUANTOS MAS

LE TENGGO QUE HACER UN SONETO A LAS
FRONTERAS
PARA QUE SE HAGAN INVISIBLES
LE TENGGO QUE HACER UN SONETO
A LA I HUMANIDAD PERDIDA

LES TENGGO QUE HACER UN SONETO A LOS POETAS,
A LOS OBREROS, A LOS MAESTROS,
LES TENGGO QUE HACER UN SONETO A LA PAZ, AL
AMOR, AL RESPETO

UN SONETO QUE ROMPE EL AIRE
UN SONETO QUE NO LASTIME.

Mujer frente al espejo, 1998
María Rodríguez-Pope, MA in Bilingual Special Education

María Rodríguez-Pope, 1993
“Este poema lo escribi cuando termine el cuadro en homenaje a Violeta Parra: artista y poetisa chilena. Allí me encontré con la realidad que si bien mi cuadro estaba trayendo, resaltando, a esta artista que tanto contribuyó en la lucha por los derechos humanos y sabiendo que necesitamos de su fuerza y de su poder para que siga inspirándonos a continuar la lucha, pienso que también debemos mirar hacia aquellos seres que sus voces fueron nada más que para enmarcar sus propios Dolores y desfallecimientos. Es así como concluyo de que si necesitamos a todas las Violeta Parra, también necesitamos como cultura, como pueblo con una historia, respetar a todos aquellos, que de una forma u otra han transcurrido sus vidas en un nivel desprivilegiado. Y que en muchos casos, hasta pedieron sus vidas al intentar hacer los propios cambios en mejora de sus condiciones. O para aquellos que sumisamente transcurrieron sus vidas en un lugar de desplazamiento y pobreza dado al fuerte impacto del despojamiento de sus Raza, de su Historia y de sus Tierras. Esto implica, también, la continua y actual apropiación y destrucción de los recursos naturales de estos pueblos.”

María Rodríguez-Pope, from Argentina, is pursuing her Master’s Degree in Bilingual Special Education.
Una Organización Desconocida: Información Sobre ISTE

Por Colin Snider

Si usted le pregunta a la mayoría de los estudiantes o a la facultad de la Universidad de Nuevo México, “¿Qué es ISTECE?” seguramente no podrán responder. Aunque el programa ISTECE está centralizado aquí en la Universidad de Nuevo México y es una organización internacional e importante, la gente de esta comunidad no saben lo que es ISTECE.

ISTEC es una abreviatura en inglés para el Consorcio Ibero-Americano para la Educación en Ciencia y Tecnología. Este consorcio es dedicado a concebir, planificar y llevar a cabo actividades de educación superior, investigación y desarrollo, y científico para los países Ibero-Americanos. Tiene como sus miembros cerca de cien universidades ubicadas en veinte países, de los Estados Unidos a Argentina, y de España a la República Dominicana. Universidades no son los únicos miembros del Consorcio; hay más de veinte industrias desarrolladoras de tecnología participando en el ISTECE, incluyendo Microsoft, Motorola, Intel, y Hewlett Packard. También son observadores organizaciones internacionales como las Naciones Unidas, la Organización de Estados Americanos y el Banco Mundial, y organizaciones gubernamentales como el Ejército de los Estados Unidos y los laboratorios Sandia y Los Alamos.

ISTEC esta vinculado con la Universidad de Nuevo México a través del Dr. Ramiro Jordán, profesor y vice decano del departamento de Ingeniería Eléctrica y Computación en UNM. En 1990, el Dr. Jordán, con personal de la Universidad de Nuevo México y colegas de la región, visitaron varios países Latinoamericanos para identificar y evaluar oportunidades de colaboración como un esfuerzo internacional para el desarrollo de la educación en ciencia y tecnología. Después reuniones con varios gobiernos, empresas e instituciones educativas, identificaron áreas de interés común para lograr una educación activa, dedicada a la investigación, y con oportunidades para recibir transferencias de tecnología de punta. El resultado de estas reuniones dio vida al proyecto ISTECE, con el propósito de mejorar y promover la educación de la tecnología y la ciencia en las universidades Ibero-americanas por medio de Asambleas Generales y varias iniciativas diferentes.

Por los años, ISTECE ha creado nuevos programas como la Educación Continua Avanzada (ACE en Ingles), el Enlace de Bibliotecas, el programa Los Libertadores, y los Laboratorios de Investigación y Desarrollo para seguir ofreciendo nuevas mansiones de mejorar la educación y tecnología para sus miembros en particular y la comunidad científica de la región en general. Estos programas tienen papeles diferentes. La Educación Avanzada fue creada para mejorar las capacidades de intercambio interinstitucional de profesores y estudiantes de post-grado. La iniciativa Enlace de Bibliotecas provee acceso y el intercambio de textos y documentos entre universidades miembros de ISTECE por medio del Internet, sin ningún costo alguno para el usuario. La iniciativa de Los Libertadores busca crear una red de servicios de telecomunicación y estaciones de enseñanza denominadas “Centro de Excelencia,” con cada país o región creando su propio Centro. Los Laboratorios de Investigación y Desarrollo proveen acceso a tecnología de lo más moderno para educadores e investigadores, y a la fecha, con el apoyo de las empresas afiliadas, ISTECE ha montado cerca de 170 laboratorios de investigación y desarrollo en el área de microcontroladores y semiconductores.

Por los esfuerzos del Dr. Jordán, y del equipo administrativo y de coordinación, ISTECE tiene hoy más de 120 miembros participando activamente en el ISTECE, y sigue creciendo y ofreciendo programas nuevos. Uno de estos programas es el desarrollo, en conjunto con Los Álamos Nacional Laboratorios, de una plataforma Web para la educación a distancia que ayudara al profesor impartir, indexar y compartir cursos en línea.

Este noviembre, del 18 al 22, el ISTECE estará celebrando su XII Asamblea General en la Universidad Técnológica de Panamá. También sigue creciendo la asociación, con varias universidades y organizaciones haciendo miembros. Solo la semana pasada, el Ejército de los Estados Unidos se hizo el miembro más nuevo a ISTECE. Todas de estas actividades pasan por las esfuerzos y la energía de Dr. Jordán, quien sigue dirigiendo ISTECE, y la facultad de ISTECE y varios profesores de UNM. Con todas de estas actividades, es una lastima que muchas personas en UNM no saben todo que hace ISTECE, y la importancia que tiene esta organización.

Si quiere aprender más sobre este programa, visite el sitio Web http://www.istec.org y ahora, cuando una persona le pregunte a usted, “¿Que es ISTECE?”, podrá responder y explicar todo que hace y que tiene ISTECE.

Colin Snider trabaja con ISTECE.

UPDATE ON SOLAS FUTBOL SQUAD

The SOLAS soccer team has been getting together for weekly games this semester and is entering the UNM intramural league. If you are interested in playing, contact your SOLAS vice president, Gulliver Scott (gulliver@unm.edu).
The Right To Be Different! Urgent Action in Peru
By Lance Arney

On September 19, the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, www.iglhrc.org issued an Action Alert to mobilize support for equality and sexual rights in Peru’s constitutional reform. The IGLHRC summarizes: “The Peruvian Congress has embarked on a process of amending the national Constitution. Congressional debates began on September 12 and will continue until October 3. Seven lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender non-governmental organizations have created a coalition called FREDIF (Frente por el Derecho a ser Diferente—the Front for the Right to be Different), to promote the inclusion of ‘sexual orientation’ as a category protected against discrimination in the new Peruvian Constitution. A coalition of local women’s organizations led by CLADEM (Comité de América Latina y el Caribe para la Defensa de los Derechos de la Mujer—Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women’s Rights) supports FREDIF’s claim and has also advanced important proposals of their own, protecting sexual rights and the rights of women and children.”

Among CLADEM’s proposed amendments are the following: the right of every person “to identity, to a name, to know who their progenitors are and to be recognized and registered by his/her father or mother at birth;” the obligation of the State to ensure that “no one shall be a victim of moral, sexual, psychological or physical violence, nor subjected to torture or inhuman, humiliating or degrading treatment” by “adopting legislative policies and measures in order to prevent, punish and eliminate violence, in particular that affecting women, boys, girls, adolescents and the elderly” and an entirely new article which would state that “Every person has the right to make decisions about his/her sexual life, free from any form of coercion, violence and discrimination. The State promotes the exercise of free and pleasurable sexuality through providing sexual information and education throughout the life cycle.”

“Especially notable,” comments the IGLHRC, “is the proposals’ affirmation of the rights to identity and to filiation,” for “many births in Peru, as in other Latin American countries, go unregistered. The rural and urban poor often find the physical distance of registries, or the existence of fees, insuperable barriers to registering their children. The State shows little interest in officially confirming the citizenship of the poor and their children, who can contribute little through taxation. Unregistered children, however, find later in life that the lack of birth certificate leaves them unable to obtain a State ID. Not possessing identification often bars them from attending school or receiving medical care, including vaccinations; in adulthood it deprive them of basic rights, including the right to vote, and restricts their access to essential services. (Transgender people in many countries of the world face similar problems.) CLADEM’s proposal would compel State authorities to make registries accessible to all residents of the country. Comparably, CLADEM’s proposal recognizing the right to filiation would offer protections to single mothers, constraining the State to ensure that children can know their parentage— and that neither parent can evade the duty of support.”

According to the IGLHRC, “The proposals [of FREDIF and CLADEM] are consistent with international law and precedent, and will strengthen Peru’s democracy as well as further social as well as political equality.” In addition, “CLADEM’s proposals also acknowledge the State’s responsibility for creating the social and material conditions in which rights can be fully and equally enjoyed. Adopting these proposals will affirm Peru’s commitment to real enjoyment, rather than merely formal recognition, of rights.”

Lance Arney is pursuing a double major in Anthropology and Latin American Studies.
UNM Students Protest Plan Colombia

By Justin Delacour

On September 27, about 75 people attended a rally for human rights in Colombia, which took place in front of the UNM bookstore. Sponsored by the Colombia Solidarity Committee of New Mexico, the rally was part of a national mobilization that focused attention on the U.S. government’s military assistance to Colombia.

Judy Bierbaum, a local activist with School of the Americas Watch, spoke about what she had learned on two human rights tours of Colombia, which were sponsored by the group Witness for Peace. She said that U.S. military assistance was contributing to human rights abuses.

Juan Carlos Vallejo, a Colombian professor of law from Medellin who was forced into exile due to death threats, also emphasized that U.S. military assistance was counter-productive. He said that the civil conflict in Colombia required social -- not military -- solutions.

At the end of the rally, members of the audience spoke before video cameras urging New Mexico Senator Jeff Bingaman to vote against military assistance to Colombia in the future. In past votes, Bingaman has favored increased military assistance to Colombia.

Those who attended the rally also joined picketers on the sidewalk urging passersby to oppose U.S. military assistance to Colombia and war against Iraq.

For further information about the Colombia Solidarity Committee of New Mexico, call 281-8422 or email cronshaw@nmia.com

Justin Delacour, from Washington State, is pursuing his Masters Degree in Latin American Studies with concentrations in Economics and Political Science. He is a member of the Colombia Solidarity Committee.