



Memory, Reconciling Genocide, and other post-Cold War Realities in Guatemala.

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JULY 9

Wednesday, July 9, 2025 | 3:30-4:30 PM | Max Salazar Building (MS 408) at CNM (900 University Blvd SE)

Home to Mayans and other Indigenous groups for thousands of years, Guatemala was claimed by conquistadores in the sixteenth century. The Spanish colonial period gave way to independence, which in turn gave way to increasing U.S. business and strategic interests in the 20th century. An early site for covert intervention, U.S. officials cultivated various right-wing governments during the Cold War, particularly after Nicaragua's Sandinista Revolution. Increasingly repressive governments intensified violence in rural Guatemala throughout the 1980s ultimately carrying out a genocide against Mayans. Political leaders in the late 20th- and early 21st centuries have diverged significantly in remembering and reconciling these events, in leading the nation through recovery from the devastation of anti-guerilla campaigns in the late Cold War period, and in navigating ongoing U.S. interests in the region.

Andy Hernández is a Professor of History at Western New Mexico University where he teaches courses on the Institution of Slavery, the Drug Wars, Latin America and the Cold War, and Central America. He has published articles and book chapters on the Indian Slave Trade in New Mexico, the Plan de San Diego, methods for encouraging undergraduate student research in online history courses, and the Hong Kong Nicaragua Development company's abandoned plans to build an interoceanic canal across Nicaragua. He held publicly elected office as a two-term member of the Deming Board of Education and was a candidate for New Mexico's House District 32. He lives in Deming.



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