For the first time in more than a quarter century, the upcoming meeting of the Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers will take place from January 11-13, 2012 in Mérida, Mexico. Founded in 1542, Mérida is a bustling city of nearly one million inhabitants and the urban hub of the Yucatán Peninsula, though it still retains much of its colonial charm. The conference will be hosted by the Unidad de Ciencias Sociales of the Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán (UADY) and housed at the university’s Edificio Central in Mérida’s Centro Histórico.

The opening reception of meeting will take place on the evening of Wed., Jan. 11 at the Centro Cultural Olimpo in Mérida’s zócalo; the conference banquet, included with registration, is scheduled for the following evening at the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Ateneo de Yucatán (MACAY), also located in the zócalo. Invited speakers include B.L. Turner (Arizona State University), who will deliver a plenary address entitled “The Long Sweep of Landscape Change in the Southern Yucatán” and Gustavo Esteva, an independent writer, grassroots activist, and participant in the Popular Assembly of the Peoples of Oaxaca, who will lead a workshop and interactive discussion focusing on the current "social and cultural tsunami" taking place in Mexico, popular uprising and struggles for radical transformation.

Several field trips are scheduled before, during and after the conference, including a tour of Mérida's monumental urban geography, an exploration of continuity and change along Yucatán’s northern coast, and overnight excursions focusing on Mayan archaeology and ethno-ecological practices and human-environment interaction in the southern Yucatán Peninsula.

For more details about CLAG 2012 please visit the conference website www.clag2012.org or contact James Biles at jbiles@ccny.cuny.edu
Fellow CLAG Members,

There are many things going on this year that should keep us quite busy as CLAG moves forward with our mission to promote the geography of Latin America.

Jim Biles has worked hard to organize our meeting in Mérida, México, in January. I hope that you will be able to join us in the Yucatan, and maybe even participate in some of the excellent field trips that have been put together for the meeting. We are continuing our tradition of trying to support graduate students with our Student Travel Award for the Mérida meeting. We will have two awards, one at the Master’s level and a second at the Ph.D. level. More information on applying for these awards can be found in this Newsletter and on the CLAG web page (http://sites.maxwell.syr.edu/clag/clag.htm).

During the CLAG Business Meeting in Seattle last April, the Board voted to approve a brand new award for graduate students presenting at the AAG meetings. Next year’s AAG meeting will be in New York City the end of February, and CLAG will give two awards, again at the Master’s and Ph.D. levels, and the details for applying can also be found on the CLAG web page. Please note that if your students are going to be applying for these awards that they must be paid CLAG members (at the low student rate!) at both the time of application and during the time the above two meetings take place. Please encourage them to join CLAG even if they are not submitting papers for these awards!

One of the things that make these awards possible is CLAG’s own Journal of Latin American Geography (JLAG). Our journal can be found on Project Muse and through EBSCOhost, and each download provides income to CLAG. Downloading JLAG articles from these databases is a great way to build a personal, digital library of articles focusing on the geography of Latin America. David Robinson, the Editor of JLAG, has put in a lot of work to get CLAG’s former publication, the Yearbook, online as well. I have found that my library does not subscribe to the digital forms of the Yearbook, otherwise I would also be building a digital library of my own from these great articles.

My favorite professional meetings have always been the CLAG meetings I have had the good fortune to attend. Many CLAG members have shared similar sentiments with me over the years, and I hope to see you at our meeting in Mérida.

Taylor E. Mack, Chair
Louisiana Tech University
Ruston, Louisiana, USA
LASG: Letter from the Chair

The first months of 2012 will be a busy time for Latin Americanists. The AAG Annual Meeting comes early this year, closely following the January meeting of CLAG in Mérida. The AAG Meeting promises a welcome opportunity to share our research and field experiences with colleagues from throughout the discipline. The LASG is once again sponsoring or co-sponsoring a number of sessions and activities at the AAG, and Latin American research will be well represented in New York. As always, I am continually amazed and impressed by the sheer variety of research in which we collectively engage, as well as the depth, perspectives, and commitment we bring to our field.

In 2012 the LASG will once again support our student members with field study awards and awards for the best student research presented at the AAG Annual Meeting. Announcements and deadlines for the 2012 LASG Student Awards can be found elsewhere in this newsletter, with awards to be presented in New York at our annual business meeting. We have a strong base of student members undertaking challenging and valuable work, so please pass the word and encourage your students to apply!

Usually the fall newsletter is the time for exhortations to volunteer for one of the LASG award selection committees, but this year I am happy to state that is not the case. This year's call for committee members received a robust response, including from some of our newest faculty colleagues. The Student Award Committees perform a tremendous service to LASG, and to our student members, and I look forward to this year's awards. Mil gracias to everyone who offered to serve!

If at all possible, I encourage your attendance at both the CLAG meeting and the AAG Annual Meeting in early 2012. After all, one can never spend too much time discussing Latin America, and in many ways these meetings reinforce the collegiality and collective bond that have characterized Latin American geography for many years.

I wish you all a productive, fulfilling academic year, and I look forward to seeing you in Mérida, New York, or both!

Saludos a todos,

Craig S. Revels
Central Washington University
LASG Chair, 2010-2012
GRADUATE STUDENT AWARDS

CLAG Student Paper Award, AAG 2012

The Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers (CLAG) invites currently enrolled graduate students who are student members of CLAG to submit a paper for consideration for the CLAG Student Paper Award in the field of Latin American geography. These are new awards that were approved at the last CLAG Business Meeting.

These awards are intended to recognize students' contributions to the field of Latin American geography and are intended to offset costs for attending the AAG Annual Meeting. Awards will be given to the best papers at the Ph.D. level ($500) and Master’s level ($500). Students must present their papers at the New York AAG Meeting. For full details on eligibility and guidelines for submitting papers for this award, please see the CLAG website, or go directly to:

http://sites.maxwell.syr.edu/clag/clagstudentpaperawards.pdf

The deadline for submission is December 15, 2011.

LASG Field Study Travel Award

Applications are invited for the 2012 LASG Student Field Study Award. Awards will be made at the PhD level ($600) and the MA/MS level ($300). This award is intended for a graduate student member of the AAG Latin America Specialty Group to support preliminary or reconnaissance fieldwork for intended thesis or dissertation research in Latin America.

The award is not intended to cover all fieldwork costs, but rather to assist students working toward the master’s to undertake a short period of field research, or to facilitate study site identification and preliminary research for doctoral students undertaking their dissertation research.

Application deadline: January 10, 2012. Applications are available on the LASG website.

LASG Student Paper Award

Applications are invited for the 2012 LASG Best Paper Award. Awards will be given at the Ph.D. level ($500) and Master’s level ($250) for best submitted paper presented at the 2012 AAG Annual Meeting in New York; applicants must also be LASG members.

Application deadline: January 10, 2012.

For more information and further details, please check

CLAG: http://sites.maxwell.syr.edu/clag/

LASG: http://www.aaa.usu.edu/lasg/
Theses and Dissertations completed

Dissertations:

Theses:
- **2011. Adame Campos Rita Libertad.** “Identificación y caracterización de las condiciones en el paisaje que determinan el uso agrícola de la tierra en tres municipios de la Meseta Purhépecha” Maestría en Geografía (orientación Manejo Integrado del Paisaje). Posgrado en Geografía, UNAM.
- **2011. Sebastián Diaz-Angel.** “La Tierra Firme desde los Países Bajos: una introducción a los primeros mapas impresos sobre el Nuevo Reino de Granada y sus territorios vecinos (1559-1648)”. Maestría en Geografía, Universidad de los Andes (Bogotá).
Member news/News from the field

Matthew C. LaFevor continues dissertation fieldwork in Tlaxcala, Mexico, supported by the IIE Graduate Fellowship for International Study (formerly Fulbright-Hays). He is presenting research at the International Geographical Union in Santiago, Chile on the moisture and soil retention capabilities of Metepec semi-terraces. He has an article forthcoming in the Geographical Review (2012) on natural resource management in colonial Mexico, based on archival work in Mexico’s Archivo General de la Nación.

From September through December of this year, a small research team within the American Geographical Society’s Bowman Expedition to the Borderlands is assisting the Honduran indigenous federation MASTA (Moskitia Asla Takanka, “Mosquitia Unity”) to create a website to display maps which depict specific indigenous land use areas, toponyms, villages, property regimes, vegetation and other information useful for the ongoing negotiations of MASTA and other regional groups to formalize and clarify local land management and tenure, with the aim of autonomy. MASTA President Norvin Goff, and indigenous Miskito leaders Donaldo Allen and Elmore Wood, visited the University of Kansas to meet with some members of the research team that includes AGS President Jerry Dobson, geographer Peter Herlihy, and geography graduate students John Kelly, Andy Hilburn, and Taylor Tappan. They provided their critique of the developing digital map results, giving directions on producing the website.

David Salisbury accompanied National Geographic Magazine (writer Scott Wallace and photographer Alex Webb) to the Peruvian border with Brazil for an article on logging in the Peruvian Amazon.

On September 15-16, the World Human Geography Conference was held at Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kansas. Principal organizers included Jerome Dobson of the American Geographical Society, Dan Wildcat of Haskell Indian Nations University, and Peter Herlihy of the University of Kansas. About two hundred geographers, anthropologists, indigenous leaders, government officials, military personnel, and students gathered to share experiences in place-based research in many countries, mainly in Latin America. Discussions focused on community-based methodologies for research and applied work, the ethics of funding sources, and the nature and accessibility of open-source research in the digital age, with a focus on how these themes impact indigenous peoples. Participants agreed that during the gathering a constructive dialogue began among diverse participants and institutions that sometimes regard the others with unproductive suspicions. Many expressed an eagerness to continue these dialogues in a second WHG Conference, possibly in the autumn of 2012.

Kristen Conway-Gómez went to Bolivia this summer to collect follow-up data on turtle abundance and human use of turtle patterns to the data collected in 2000 for her dissertation. She brought along two undergraduate students to help with some of the
Member news/News from the field

data collection that was follow-up as well as new areas of research she is exploring – water quality and physical river habitat characteristics.

In September 2011 **Anthony Bebbington** co-led a field trip to Peru and Colombia for Ford Foundation officers and activists from Latin American and Southern Africa. The purpose of the trip was to analyse and debate the relationships among extractive industries, socio-environmental conflict, rights and development on the basis of site visits and panels with representatives of social organizations, government, NGOs and industry.

**Joe Scarpaci**, Executive Director for the Center for the Study of Cuban Culture + Economy (www.cubancultureeconomy.org) received a people-to-people license to take non-academic groups to Cuba. Thus far he has organized trips for photographers, two dance groups, and a group of interested SW Virginia residents. In the upcoming 8 months, he is scheduled to take to Cuba parties from the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia, The American Geographical Society (twice), The Chicago Art Institute, and a Harvard group. Since August, he has been teaching at West Liberty University's West College of Business (just north of Wheeling, WV) as an associate professor of marketing. He lives in Pittsburgh and returns fortnightly to family and dogs in SW Virginia.

**Dr. Catherine Nolin**, along with several UNBC colleagues, participated in a UNBC-EPAF delegation in Peru in June 2011. The Peruvian Forensic Anthropology Team (EPAF) invited Dr. Nolin and the others to formalize a new partnership and start collaborative research on Peru's internal armed conflict and the search for Peru's disappeared.

**W. George Lovell**’s English-language edition of Severo Martínez Peláez’s classic study, La Patria del Criollo: An Interpretation of Colonial Guatemala (Duke University Press, 2009), co-translated with Susan M. Neve and co-edited with Christopher H. Lutz, continues to be well received whenever reviewed, most recently by Christian Brannstrom in the Journal of Latin American Geography in addition to having been afforded a “featured review” (by Florenica Mallon) in the American Historical Review (February 2011), a journal that ordinarily reviews few titles dealing with Latin America, and very rarely works of translation. His new (revised and expanded) edition of A Beauty That Hurts: Life and Death in Guatemala (University of Texas Press, 2010) has also
Member news/News from the field

been favorably reviewed in JLAG (by Matthew Taylor) and The Professional Geographer (by Curt Holder)

Dan Klooster began interviews of indigenous Mexicans living in California this October, in collaboration with Dr. Leticia Merino of the National University of Mexico

New Appointments

- Iván J. Ramírez. Visiting Assistant Professor of Geography/Environmental Studies, Consortium for Faculty Diversity Scholar. New College of Florida, Sarasota
- Sarah Blue. Assistant Professor. Department of Geography at Texas State University – San Marcos
- Eugenio Arima. Assistant Professor. Department of Geography and the Environment The University of Texas Austin, TX
- Dan Klooster. Professor of Environmental Studies. University of Redlands. He continues as the director of the Latin American Studies Program.

Grants and Awards

- Claudia Radel was awarded a 5 year grant from the NSF, Geography & Spatial Sciences Program: “CAREER: Gendered Transnational Labor Migration, Agriculture, and Environmental Change in Mesoamerica”, 2011-2016.
- Dan Klooster was awarded a grant from the NSF, Geography & Spatial Sciences Program: Trans-border Indigenous Environmental Governance: Assessing the connections of Mexican indigenous peoples in the US to their communities of origin. In collaboration with Dr. Leticia Merino, UNAM
- W. George Lovell (Queen’s University) has been awarded a Canada Council Killam Research Fellowship that will relieve him of administrative and teaching duties for 2012 and 2013, during which time he plans to dedicate himself to writing more about his long-standing interests on Maya peoples in Guatemala.
- Derek Smith of Carleton University (Ottawa, Canada) was awarded a two-year grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council to begin a new research project that will investigate how Mayan people in the Yucatan conceptualize the cultural landscapes surrounding their communities.
- Maria Teresa MacGregor was recently awarded a Doctorado Honoris Causa by UNAM based on her contributions to urban geography. A scholarship honoring her has been created for undergraduate thesis research.
- Anthony Bebbington was appointed 2011 Fellow, Instituto Ibero-American/Free University, Berlin, Germany. He was also awarded a Ford Foundation grant for work on Extractive Industries, Decentralization and Fiscal Systems in Peru and Bolivia.
Recent publications from CLAG members


Recent publications from CLAG members


- Salisbury, D. S. (2011). Conservación y desarrollo en las fronteras Amazónicas entre Perú y Acre, Brasil. University of Richmond, Richmond, VA, USA & Centro de Investigación de Fronteras Amazónicas, Universidad Nacional de Ucayali, Peru. Available at http://blog.richmond.edu/dsalisbury/maps/. Map presented to the governments of Ucayali, Peru and Acre, Brazil and international NGOs as they struggle to reconcile conservation and development in the borderlands shared by Brazil and Peru .


Upcoming meetings and opportunities for students

6th SOLCHA symposium (June 6-8, 2012), Villa de Leyva, Colombia.

The Sociedad Latinoamericana y Caribeña de Historia Ambiental (SOLCHA) is pleased to announce its 6th Symposium, which will take place in Villa de Leyva, Colombia, from June 6 to June 8, 2012. The invitation to participate is open to anyone who examines environment-society relations from an historical perspective in topics such as (and not restricted to) cities and the environment, landscape change, political ecology, among others. Deadline for paper submission is December 12, 2011. For more information please check http://visimposiosolcha.uniandes.edu.co/

Graduate Research Assistantships Available at Utah State University

The Department of Environment & Society at Utah State University (Logan, UT) and PI Claudia Radel announce the availability of three Graduate Research Assistantships, under an NSF-sponsored project on gender, migration, and agricultural/environmental change in Mesoamerica. Two assistantships will be offered at the doctoral level and one at the masters level, with matriculation in fall 2012. The Assistantships will provide 9-month stipends for three years at the doctoral level and two years at the masters level, as well as summer field wages and 80% of health insurance premium costs. Field work in Mexico, Nicaragua, and Guatemala will be required during summer months, in collaborative research teams with graduate students from Mexico’s El Colegio de la Frontera Sur. Spanish language skills will be essential to the successful completion of required field research tasks.

Doctoral students will be expected to pursue the Department’s PhD in Human Dimensions of Ecosystem Science and Management. The masters student will be expected to pursue the Department’s MS in Geography. Application for the Assistantships should be made to Claudia Radel at the email below, by submitting CV, informal transcript, and GRE scores (if available). Application to the graduate degree program, through the university’s School of Graduate Studies (http://www.usu.edu/graduateschool/apply/), will also be necessary. Students with applications fully completed by 15 February 2012 will also be considered for college and university merit fellowships and tuition awards. Please contact Claudia Radel at claudia.radel@usu.edu (or call 435-797-0516) for further information.

This NSF-sponsored research project will also cover the field expenses of three graduate students at Mexico’s El Colegio de la Frontera Sur. For questions regarding these ECOSUR positions, please contact Birgit Schmook at bschmook@ecosur.mx.
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Upcoming meetings and opportunities for students

**U.S. Peace Corps Masters International at Utah State University**

The Geography MS Program at Utah State University now offers a Peace Corps Masters International (PC MI) option. This option allows students both to pursue their MS in Geography and to serve in the U.S. Peace Corps. PC MI students spend the first year of their programs in residence at Utah State University. During this time, students carry out coursework in one of three areas of interest that intersect with Peace Corps service:

- Sustainable Livelihoods and Community Development
- Social and Development Aspects of Natural Resource Management
- Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Analysis

This first year is followed by two years months with the Peace Corps. During Peace Corps service, students continue to work with USU faculty to carry out MS thesis or project fieldwork. Students also receive 9 credits for their Peace Corps service, and these credits count towards the 30-credit degree requirement. Following service, students return to the USU campus to complete their theses or projects over a final one to two semesters in university residence.

For further information, refer to the program website: [http://cnr.usu.edu/envs/htm/graduate-programs/prospective-students/geography-peace-corps-masters-international](http://cnr.usu.edu/envs/htm/graduate-programs/prospective-students/geography-peace-corps-masters-international), or contact the USU Geography Peace Corps MI Program Coordinator, Claudia Radel, at claudia.radel@usu.edu

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**Programa de maestría en Geografía (Orientación en manejo de paisaje)**

Comprender en detalle dónde y cómo ocurren los problemas derivados de falta de planeación, así como procesos de degradación y sus consecuencias se ha convertido en uno de los paradigmas centrales de la investigación en Geografía Ambiental; en este sentido, el análisis de paisaje y su manejo, desde su aproximación geográfica e histórica cobra mayor fuerza por su carácter integrador. El Estudio Integrado del Paisaje, a partir de métodos científicos y técnicas de análisis cualitativos y geo-informáticas, permite definir prioridades de manejo a los principales actores sociales y a los tomadores de decisiones; las mismas permiten revertir los procesos de deterioro mediante una orientación clara acerca del uso adecuado del territorio.

El Campo de Conocimiento en Manejo Integrado del Paisaje, de la Maestría en Geografía de la UNAM, se cursa en el CIGA, UNAM, Campus Morelia con una duración de dos años, a partir del mes de agosto de cada año. Se ofertan becas para los estudiantes nacionales y extranjeros que cumplan los requisitos fijados. La convocatoria se publica en la web en enero de ese mismo año (ver [www.ciga.unam.mx](http://www.ciga.unam.mx)).

Happy Holiday season.

Let 2012 bring you the best