



Latin America
Specialty Group

CLAG/LASG NEWSLETTER

Conference of Latin American Geography (CLAG) and AAG's Latin America Specialty Group (LASG)

Elise Arellano-Thompson and Beth Tellman – Co-Editors

CLAG 2024 – PUERTO RICO

Join us May 22-24, 2024 in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico for the 38th Conference of Latin American Geography (CLAG) at the Cuartel del Ballajá & Instituto de Cultura CLAG Puertorriqueña!

Conference of Latin American Geography

CLAG 2024
May 22-24, 2024
San Juan de Puerto Rico

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CLAG 2024
Conference of Latin American Geography
San Juan de Puerto Rico

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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

KRISTEN CONWAY-GÓMEZ

June 15, 2023

For those in the northern hemisphere, welcome to summer and heavy season of field work! For those in the southern hemisphere I hope your academic year is progressing well as you enter into winter. Speaking of seasons, in contrast to my last newsletter column, which was full of transitions and upcoming events, this column comes at a time of relative predictability, as we are humming along with new folks in place and planning in process. For example, the first issue of JLAG under new co-editors Martha Bell and Jessica Budds has just come out and this is the second newsletter published by our newest newsletter editors – Elise Arellano-Thompson and Beth Tellman who are doing exceptional work! Planning is underway for CLAG 2024, which will take place in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

It is hopeful to see the good work that the next generation of scholars is working on and gratifying that CLAG can support some of it. We had a very competitive round of student field grants, with 20 applications received. We were able to award 10 PhD and four master's level field grants from this strong pool of proposals and look forward to learning about their accomplishments in the field.

Board elections have just been completed – thank you to all who participated with your vote, which represented a 49% turnout. We welcome our new and continuing elected members - Adriana A. Zuniga-Teran, Case Watkins, Nicholas Padilla, Jennifer Devine, Kristen Conway-Gómez, Rebecca Clouser, and Lindsey Carte. A big thank you to Vice Chair Sarah Blue for her efficient work this election cycle.

If you have not yet had the opportunity, dig into issue 22 of JLAG, the first under our new co-editors Jessica Budds and Martha Bell. Thank you to



Martha and Jessica for your dedication and work to keep JLAG moving forward as a key journal of the geography of Latin America. As always, consider sharing your work and time. There are various outlets for your contributions – if you have research or perspectives to share or are interested in contributing a book review, JLAG is your outlet; if you have a book idea, our new agreement with University of Florida Press is to be considered; and keep notes for your next submission to our newsletter. Yours is the labor that makes our organization and its scholarly outputs so valuable. ¡Viva your work in and on Latin America, the Caribbean, and borderlands! As Martha and Jessica noted in their preview of issue 22, this was a team effort, and an example of how many hands make important contributions to keeping CLAG running and relevant – your efforts and contributions matter.

Our membership remains strong, with 207 members – comprised of 48 lifetime, 60 student, 8 retired, and 91 individual members. These numbers represent a decent spread between our groups, with a strong showing among different demographic groups. The numbers represent consistency coming

out of the pandemic, which is a testament to the draw of CLAG!

Hard to believe CLAG 2023 is now six months in the rearview mirror – a heartfelt thank you to the Tucson Colectivo who persisted through two iterations to bring us the superb conference we were finally able to experience in January of this year. Looking ahead, CLAG 2024 will be here soon enough – get ready and plan to be charmed in Puerto Rico in spring 2024! Expect to be hearing more about our conference in the coming months, as it is shaping up to be the next rewarding gathering to stimulate and remind you why you keep coming back to this organization for professional enrichment and relationships.

Thank you for your interest in and contributions to CLAG, keep staying safe out there and be in touch!

Un abrazo,

Kristen Conway-Gómez
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Department of Geography and Anthropology, Cal
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LETTER FROM THE CLAG CHAIR

David Salisbury

Letter from the CLAG Chair

David Salisbury

Queridos CLAGistas and friends,

The cool air of the Amazonian evening flows through the taxi window as I write these notes on my phone. We are speeding toward the westernmost town in all of Brazil, and then beyond, to the Puyanawa Indigenous Territory. The end of the road. This weekend my driver piloted the boat that went beyond the road, and up the river to the site of my Master's fieldwork. There, on Sunday, Father's Day in the US, I sat with an old friend, a septuagenarian illiterate former rubber tapper, and we compared maps: his razor-sharp mental maps and our colorful raster-based images of climate and forest change. What struck me first as we talked was the speed and accuracy with which he fit our geospatial analysis into his mental atlas. My second reaction was immense gratitude to him for sharing his wisdom, worldview, and time. Later that afternoon, as we slalomed under and through the bacaba, buriti, and acai palm fronds of the Japiim, I reflected further on my gratitude to our discipline and profession. What a gift to get to be a geographer, a Clagista, and learn from locals and landscapes in a region as fascinating and dynamic as Latin America!

Our January meeting in Tucson underscored this gift, as we shared our research, stories, and camaraderie in the high desert valley. ¡And what *cuentos* were told on the roof of the conference hotel! We cannot thank the University of Arizona enough for their wonderful hosting of an epic meeting. Our next stop will be Puerto Rico, where we are at work planning another iconic encounter in May of 2024. Puerto Rico provides a unique perspective on the complexity of Latin America, as well as accessibility in a post-pandemic (we hope!) world. We cannot wait to see you there, and hear of your research and your stories from the field. We will share the evolving details as soon as we can.

We also want to encourage you to open the May 2023 JLAG issue (Volume 22, 1) with a diversity of articles that span from North America to the Southern Cone. Kudos to our new Co-Editors, Dr. Martha Bell and Dr. Jessica Budds, and their team for curating this exciting selection. Please download! Great research of Latin America is only a few clicks away through [Project Muse](#). We hope we can read your own research, perspectives, or reviews here in the next issue! Also, don't forget to follow CLAG on your favorite platforms ([Facebook: @clagscholar](#), [Instagram: clagscholar](#), [Twitter: @CLAGGeography](#)) so that you too can sense the breezes of Latin America.

¡Viva CLAG!

Abraços,

David



LETTER FROM THE LASG CHAIR

Andrea Marston

Dear CLAG and LASG,

I'm writing for the last time as Chair of LASG. After three years, I can hardly believe that I won't be called upon to write one of these messages ever again! It's been a rocky ride at times – most of my time as an LASG officer was completely virtual – but it really picked up over the last year. It was wonderful to meet many of you in person at the AAG in Denver, and I want to thank everyone who came to the CLAG/LASG business meeting and the party afterwards (special thanks to Bill Doolittle for generously sponsoring that party!) It reminded me how valuable these communities are, and I'm excited to stay involved as a good old rank-and-file member.

Starting on July 1, 2023, the incoming LASG chair will be Amy Thompson, Assistant Professor of Geography and the Environment at the University of Texas at Austin; the incoming LASG vice chair will be Nicholas Padilla, Assistant Professor of Geography, Environment, and Tourism at Western Michigan University; and the incoming secretary-treasurer will be Priscilla Ferreira, Assistant Professor of Geography and Latino and Caribbean Studies at Rutgers University. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with Amy and Nick over the last year, and I'm thrilled that Priscilla will be joining them this year. Welcome, Priscilla, and best of luck to all three of you!

In addition to sponsoring 19 paper and panel sessions at this year's AAG, LASG also granted two student field awards, one student paper award, and

one solidarity awards. While we normally grant one PhD award and one MA award, we had no MA applicants and an abundance of PhD applicants this year, so we opted to award first and second place PhD awards instead. The first place PhD winner was Leonardo Calzada from the Department of Geography at the Rutgers University, whose work will investigate the effects of the development program Sembrando Vida (Sowing Life) on forest management and degradation patterns in the Calakmul-Sian Ka'an biological corridor in Mexico. The second place PhD winner was Kate Altemus Cullen from the Energy and Resources Group at the University of California-Berkeley, whose research will offer a critical analysis of climate change and water access in Santiago, Chile. The student paper award winner was Ruchi Patel from the Department of Geography at Pennsylvania State University, whose paper was titled, "Securing development: Uneven geographies of coastal tourism development in El Salvador." Finally, we granted one solidarity award to Alicia Barceinas Cruz, PhD candidate at the University of Wisconsin, who presented a paper about insecurity and immobility in the Selva Lacandona borderland corridor in Chiapas, Mexico.

All these awardees were honored at our business meeting, but it is my pleasure to say it again: congratulations! We had many other wonderful applications, and we wish we could have funded them all. As a reminder, these awards are funded 100% from LASG membership dues, which means that we would not be able to offer them without dues-paying members. Thank you for supporting

LASG and the next generation of Latin American geography research!

Although I'm sad to be signing off for the last time, I'm happy to be leaving LASG in good hands, and am looking forward to seeing everyone at another conference soon. Here's to many more intellectually and communally enriching gatherings. ¡Hasta la próxima!

Sincerely,
Andrea Marston
Chair, LASG



LETTER FROM THE CO-EDITORS - JLAG

Martha G. Bell and Jessica Budds

Dear Colleagues,

It is with great pleasure that we announce the publication of our first issue as co-editors of JLAG. Issue 22(1), published in May 2023, presents five research articles on a diverse set of topics: experiences of Central American migrants passing through Mexico, the reemergence of cueca music and dance in Santiago de Chile, the historical role of the African Palm in Mexico's modernization, household water insecurity metrics for northeast Brazil, and the classification of small urban centers in Brazilian Amazonia. Complementing these articles are two JLAG Perspectives on current issues in Peru: the rapid expansion of commercial blueberry cultivation in the highlands, and mapping state violence during the political crisis of late 2022. The issue also offers a suite of reviews of recently published books in all three languages in which we work. We are thankful to the editorial and production teams for their hard work on this issue. We warmly invite you to read the issue, download the articles via Project MUSE (<https://muse.jhu.edu/issue/49707>), and spread the word by retweeting our announcements on Twitter (@JLatAmGeog)!

While working to get the new issue delivered to your mailboxes and uploaded to Project MUSE, we have also been active behind the scenes to improve our editorial and production processes. This is an ongoing project that aims to make publication more efficient, transparent, and timely. Soon you will be able to access a new tri-lingual JLAG website with revised information on editorial policies and submission, an updated style sheet, and simplified peer review guidelines. Our aim is to reduce the time from submission to initial decision, and eventual publication, while making the information available about the journal more straightforward and readily available. This will contribute to

maintaining JLAG's standards of quality and also to the process of improving the indexation of the journal on major publishing platforms.

Finally, as always we are accepting new submissions! We are always excited to receive new research articles and perspectives essays, as well as special issue proposals, from CLAG members. Don't forget that there is also the possibility of writing a JLAG Retrospective for us, which is a short essay in which authors analyze the impact of research previously published in JLAG over 10 years ago. If you are interested in reviewing a book, please communicate directly with Jörn Seeman, our book review editor (jseemann@bsu.edu). We are also actively looking for cover art submissions, so if you have photographs or artwork that you would like to send to us for consideration, please submit these through the Digital Commons submission portal. Thank you in advance for your contributions!

With our best wishes

Martha Bell

Jessica Budds

Co-editors, Journal of Latin American Geography



NEW PUBLICATIONS

NEW PUBLICATIONS: PAPERS

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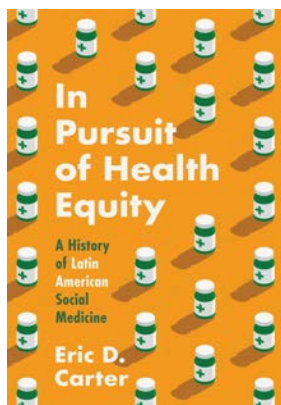
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NEW FILM:

Guatemalan film featured at recent World Conference on Women's Studies in Bangkok presented in Thailand by CLAG member, **George F Roberson**, writer-producer of José by Li Cheng.

According to Roberson: with the recent abrupt and widespread efforts to further marginalize the LGBTQ+ community, these film screening events provide crucial opportunities for 'teaching moments' and to spark student debate and awareness.

José a film by Li Cheng (Guatemala 2020) was closing event at 9th World Conference on Women's Studies (WCWS), Bangkok, Thailand, May 2023 - participants from 25+ countries worldwide.

The screening and panel discussion was organized and facilitated by WCWS conference founder and director Diana Fox of Bridgewater State University (Massachusetts), panelists were Fawzia Khan (conference keynote speaker) of Montclair State University (New Jersey) and George F Roberson - the film's writer-producer and CLAG member, see photo below: Roberson (left), Fox (second from left), Khan (fourth from left), with the Sri Lanka-based conference team.



Storyline. In a harsh urban reality, José's life changes forever when he pursues a forbidden relationship with a rural migrant worker. Deep emotions of first-love invokes self-reflection, and José embarks on a journey of discovery. Wandering in sacred Mayan space, José senses place-wisdom and finds transcendent hope, determination and inspiration. The film features Mayan-Guatemalan actor-activist/spiritual leader Enrique Salanic, see photo below



director Cheng, with Enrique Salanic (left) and Manolo Herrera (right) -
at José by Li Cheng world premiere at 75th Venice film festival

The film world premiered at Venice film festival (where "political film" is championed, alongside celebrity and entertainment), see photo attached; is the first film from Central America ever presented at Venice; features an all-Guatemalan cast and crew; and has featured on Sundance channel, in USA cinemas, and at 200+ film events (campuses, classrooms, conferences, art and cultural centers, and 100+ film festivals) in 70+ countries worldwide

classroom and campus screenings, contact Swank Motion Pictures:

<https://www.swank.com/digital-campus/details/63283-jose>

cast + crew appearances (in-person / via zoom) contact: YQstudioLLC@gmail.com

filmography: https://linktr.ee/geo_arts | en espanol: https://linktr.ee/jose_peli_guatemala

contact Dr Roberson for more information: geo888rob@gmail.com

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Please download all the articles and book reviews from Project Muse where available

<https://muse.jhu.edu/journal/240>

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CLAG/LASG MEMBER NEWS

Member Awards and News:

Brad Jokisch received a 2023 Fulbright Scholarship to Ecuador to understand the development of family emigration from Ecuador.

Kendra McSweeney has been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, joining many fellow CLAGistas there including Billie Turner, Anthony Bebbington, Judy Carney, Bill Denevan, Lisa Naughton, and Diana Liverman.

George Lovell has been invited to deliver a plenary address to the XII Congreso Internacional de Mayistas, which convenes at UNAM in Mexico City from June 25 to July 1, 2023. The theme of the conference is Los pueblos mayas: fronteras e identidades, which fits nicely the subject matter of George's recent title, *Death in the Snow: Pedro de Alvarado and the Illusive Conquest of Peru* (https://www.mqup.ca/death-in-the-snow-products-9780228014409.php?page_id=46&). George's plenary address, like the book itself, highlights the tragic loss of life of hundreds if not thousands of Maya conscripts taken by Alvarado from their homelands in Guatemala and forced to serve in his calamitous, little-known attempt to muscle in on the conquest of Peru. A Spanish-language edition, *Muerte en la Nieve: Pedro de Alvarado y la Conquista de los Andes*, is nearing completion, to be published in Quito later this year by the Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar.

Ame Min-Venditti has newly finished her first year of her PhD in Sustainability at Arizona State University. She is an NSF RULA-IRES (Resiliencia Urbana en Latinoamérica - International research experience for students) fellow this summer investigating nature-based solutions for urban resilience in Bogotá for 9 weeks! Her interdisciplinary team of 6 students will collaborate with three barrios who have ongoing relationships

with our partners at Universidad La Salle. If anyone has experience or tips for conducting fieldwork in Bogotá or Colombia more generally, please feel free to reach out to her!

Ame Min-Venditti has also won a \$10,000 USGS Water Resources Research Act grant collaborating with co-PIs in the American Indian Studies Department at Arizona State University. Their project "Water Stories" aims to expand understanding of water in Arizona, specifically focusing on indigenous and Tribal perspectives. In the next academic year, they plan to send five or more ASU students or community members to train with the OpEd Project in their "Write to Change the World" workshop, and mentor them through the investigative research process, culminating in a published opinion editorial in a local or Tribal broadcast media outlet.

Joel E. Correia received the Warner College of Natural Resources Dean's Grant for Transdisciplinary Approaches to Environmental Wicked Problems. With the award, he is starting (with co-director Andrea Baudoin) the Just Social-Environmental Transitions in Latin America Program (JSET). JSET is a community of academics, practitioners, and students working in, of, and from Latin America who seek to create new approaches to enduring social-environmental challenges by centering justice in that work. JSET is a collective of human geographers, interdisciplinary ecologists, economists, biologists, hydrologists, foresters, ecologists, ecosystem scientists, sustainability scholars, Center Directors, and more who believe that collaborative, integrative applied research is necessary to confront the ongoing climate, environmental, social, economic, and biodiversity challenges Latin America confronts. We are building a community of practice where diversity, equity, and inclusion drive our decision making and approach. Keep an eye out for our forthcoming seminar series and opportunities to get involved!

Samuel T. Brandt's article in JLAG, "The 'Pastoral City-State': A Metaphor for the Geography of Uruguay" won the 2023 Andrew Hill Clark Award for best student paper in the AAG Historical Geography Specialty Group. He also won the Carville Earle Award from the AAG Historical Geography Specialty Group and a Council Fellowship from the American Geographical Society.

Christian Brannstrom has been a Fulbright U.S. Scholar in Uruguay from March to June 2023, teaching Geografía de la Energía to undergraduates at the Universidad de la República in Montevideo and researching social acceptance of wind energy.

Tony Bebbington has received the 2023 Martin Diskin Memorial Lectureship, Latin American Studies Association. From LASA's website: "The LASA/Oxfam America Martin Diskin Memorial Lectureship is offered at each LASA International Congress to an outstanding individual who combines commitments to activism and scholarship."

Eric Carter (Macalester College) has been named Associate Editor for the new Geography section of the Latin American Research Review. Please reach out if you're interested in submitting an article or with ideas for a special issue of the journal to highlight innovative research by Latin Americanist geographers.

Juan Carlos Jimenez (University of Toronto, co-supervised by Ryan Isakson and Christian Abizaid), was recently awarded one of the prestigious Connaught PhD for Public Impact Fellowship for his dissertation work in El Salvador. Juan Carlos also received a CLAG field award earlier this year.

Here is a brief description provided in the Connaught page at U of T:

<https://www.cgpd.utoronto.ca/public-scholarship/connaught/>

Juan Carlos Jimenez is a PhD Student in Human Geography at the University of Toronto's Department of Geography and Planning. His research focuses on youth migration, youth activism, and rural livelihoods in El Salvador, examining the economic and environmental processes shaping life trajectories, and the emotional geographies of trauma in the aftermath of civil war, neoliberal post-war reconstruction, and displacement. Juan Carlos is currently working on two SSHRC funded research projects. First, through the 'Surviving Memory in Post-War El Salvador' research project at Western University, which is an international research collaboration documenting the history of the Salvadorian Civil War (1980-1992) and preventing future violence, using decolonial and participatory methodologies and engaging community-driven research projects with survivors of historic violence. Second, through the project entitled 'Index-Based Agricultural Insurance, Climate Vulnerability, and Food Security in Rural El Salvador' with Dr. Ryan Isakson, which evaluates agrarian livelihoods under the combined stressors of climatic and economic crises, and the role of microfinancing and climate insurance for smallholder farmers in contributing to climate resilience.

As a community-based researcher, Juan Carlos works with the young Central American people in Canada to explore experiences with migration, the legacies of the civil war, and community responses to trauma using arts-based methods. Juan Carlos has worked in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Canada in community driven initiatives.

Project description:

Catalyzed by gang violence, political instability, poverty, and climate change, the recent influx of Central American migrants to the United States has thrust the region into the spotlight. Tapping into this popular imaginary, my research will analyze the exodus of young actors from rural settings in El Salvador, giving attention to the motivations to migrate as well as the hardships and trauma emerging from leaving home and forming trans local lives. I will be working in the municipalities of San Jose las Flores, Nueva Trinidad, and Arcatao, in the department of Chalatenango. These areas witnessed severe conflict during the Salvadorian Civil War (1980-1992), with residents fleeing to neighbouring Honduras to refugee camps and repopulating the area in the late 1980s.

With this Connaught Fellowship, I will be facilitating a Photovoice project with rural youth in these three municipalities. Photovoice is a research method that brings participants together to analyze community strengths, barriers, and hardships using photography and written reflections. Participants then collectively reflect on these issues and plan social actions to respond to these hardships. I will be facilitating Photovoice workshops with young people who have stayed in place, and online with young people who have migrated to urban centers or the United States. My goal is to facilitate transnational dialogues around youth migration, mental health, and community activism, and the economic, social, and climatic realities that shape decision to migrate or stay-in-place. This project will culminate in the organizing of public showcases of these arts-pieces and creation of a Photovoice booklet for residents and policymakers.

Nikolai Alvarado, Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography and GIS at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, co-founded the Latin American and Caribbean Cities Collective, hosted at the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies and involving faculty from the departments of Geography and GIS, Urban and Regional Planning, and Architecture. The LAC Cities Collective is meant as a collaborative space for faculty, students, and community members dedicated to promoting discussion and reflection on the multiple forms of urbanization and urbanism that shape the everyday lives of the majority of people living in the LAC region. The collective first and foremost acknowledges the unequal power relations implicit in how cities in the

region have been shaped. It also recognizes that struggles over urban space and the right to the city are central to understanding politics, everyday forms of democracy and citizenship, the multiple ways of oppression and marginalization, and the alternative forms of inclusion and participation in the region. As a space for discussion, sharing and reflection based in the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, the collective aims to highlight the experiential knowledge of ordinary people and to engage with creative and radical methodologies, pluriversal and decolonial perspectives, plebeian-popular, feminist and insurgent initiatives that support the reproduction of life across diverse urban contexts. The collective also looks to build bridges, extend conversations, and learn from/with Migrant, Black, Indigenous, and Latinx urbanisms across all of the Americas.

Sarah A Radcliffe has a new research project:

"Geographies of Indigenous Citizenship in Latin America", funded by the Leverhulme Trust (2022-2024)

<https://www.geog.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/indigenoucitizenship/>

Matt LaFevor recently published a 4-paper series in *Agriculture* on agricultural diversity in Mexico. One paper was selected as the cover feature paper and another won the Editors Choice award. LaFevor also was awarded the Distinguished Teaching Fellowship by the College of Arts & Sciences at the University of Alabama, where he was recently promoted to Associate Professor of Geography. His summer of 2023 is being spent in the field with Carlos E. Ramos-Scharrón (U of Texas). Funded by the National Geographic Society, the two are working on the surface hydrology of infiltration trenches in Mexico's Pico de Orizaba National Park and Protected Area.

Kristen Conway-Gómez:

Here are photos from the Fulbright recognition ceremony in February 2023 I was invited to by Representative Judy Chu for my Fulbright work in Chile in 2019 (delayed compliments of the pandemic).



My Fulbright was a teaching and research award, titled Social and Resource Geography of Farming in the Chilean Araucanía. I conducted research on how smallholder farmers in the Araucanian region of Chile felt they were impacted by climate change. Of course I was in Chile when large-scale civil unrest broke out due to discontent with a number of social programs – triggered initially by an increase in subway fares that opened up into discussions of pensions, healthcare, access to education, among others. So, while this shutdown my field work for a month it opened an opportunity for me to observe firsthand the beginnings of grassroots democracy through my audiences in town hall meetings and public square meetings where Chileans came together to discuss their thoughts and desires for a new constitution. This is an ongoing discussion in Chile as the constitution that resulted from discussions was not approved in the May 2021 vote. That was a fascinating and unexpected opportunity for me.

As far as why I wanted to research and share my teaching in Chile it was due to my experiences living, studying, and researching in other Latin American nations, mainly – Bolivia, Brazil, Costa Rica, and Honduras. My initial experience in Latin America was as a study abroad semester during my undergraduate degree, which was a seminal experience for me and changed the course of my life. I have had the good fortune to live or travel in ten Latin American countries, mostly tropical, and Chile was a southern cone nation I had not previously spent much time in, so it was a country that provided me an opportunity to expand my experience in. I have a geography colleague there, Dr. Lindsey Carte (a CLAG Board member), with whom I collaborated. My time in Chile provided me opportunities to pursue research I am passionate about through a well-respected program and share my teaching with Chilean students.

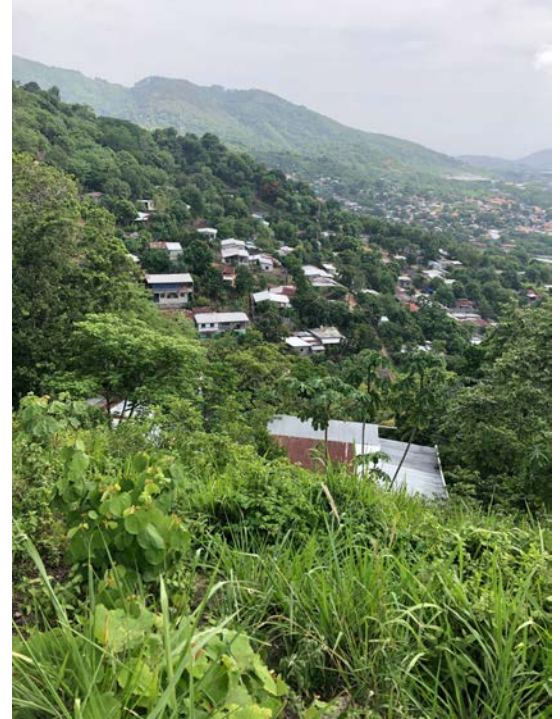
-Kristen Conway-Gómez

PICTURES FROM THE FIELD:

Joseph Scarpaci—Landscape shots: El Morro fortress, Santiago de Cuba, rice drying (Cienfuegos, Cuba), Havana skyline; Viñales Valley (world heritage site; Cuba):

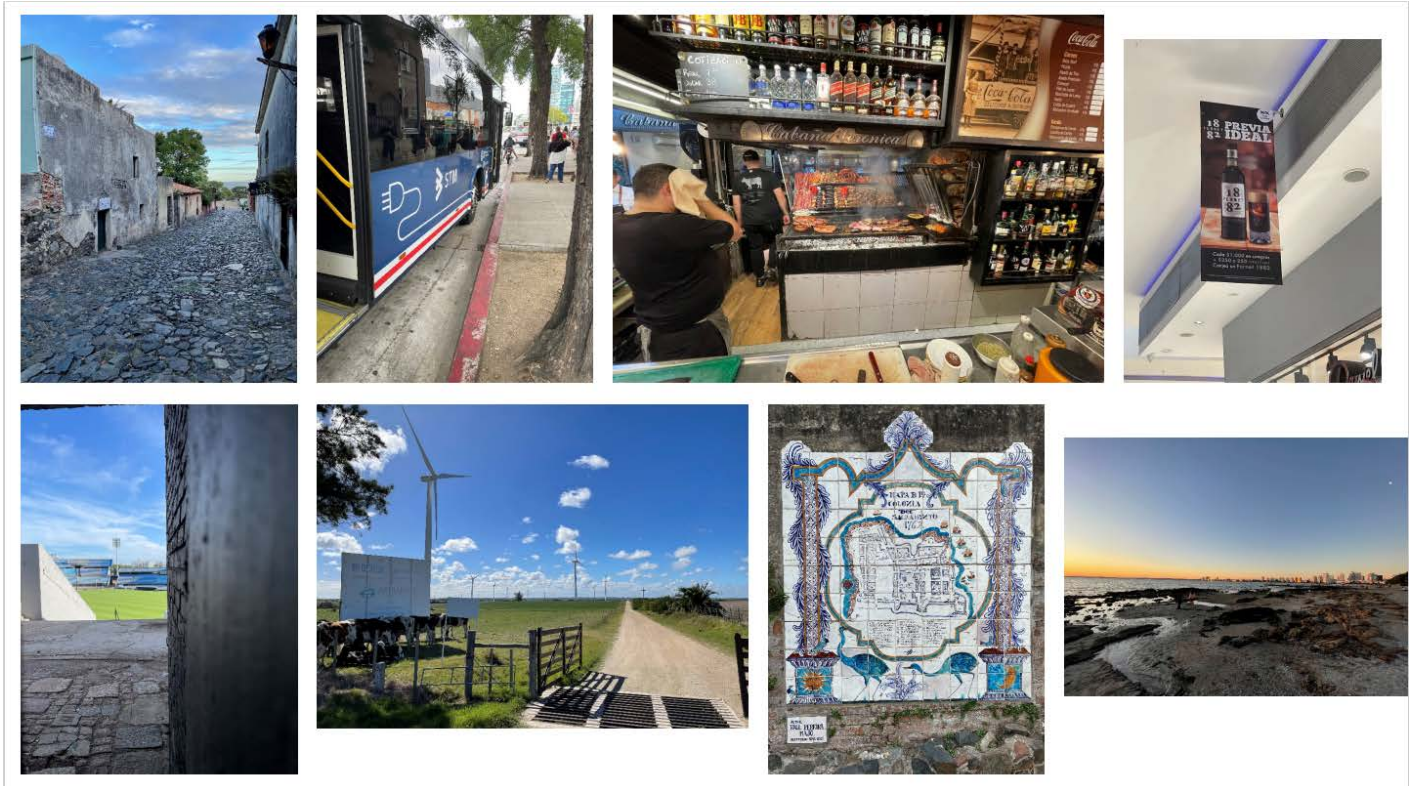


Elise Arellano-Thompson in San Pedro Sula, El Progreso, and Villanueva, Honduras:



Elise Arellano-Thompson, Rohit Mukherjee, Felipe Saad, and Dr. Matt Fagan in Costa Rica:



Christian Brannstrom:

The Calle de los Suspiros in Colonia del Sacramento, popular site for tourists in this UNESCO World Heritage site.

Electric bus in Montevideo.

Parrilla restaurante in the Mercado del Puerto, Montevideo

Advertisement for fernet, a popular bitter and aromatic spirit mixed with Coca-Cola.

The Estadio Centenario in Montevideo, Uruguay, built for the 1930 World Cup tournament, which Uruguay won, and used for soccer matches and music concerts.



Artillerías wind farm west of Colonia del Sacramento, a joint project by Uruguay's UTE and Brazil's Electrobras. The wind farm is located on land rented by the Instituto Nacional de Colonización to family farmers. Wind provides approximately 33% of Uruguay's electricity.

Map on tiles in Colonia de Sacramento indicating the city's fortifications, suggesting its role in geostrategic rivalry among Spain, Brazil/Portugal, and Great Britain from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries.

Punta del Este, Uruguay, in May 2023 (the off-season period)

Brazilian bikers leave stickers celebrating their journey through South America in Joaquín González, a small city in the Argentine Chaco about 2-3 hours east of Salto.

Palomas wind farm, built on lands managed by the Instituto Nacional de Colonización, near Salto, Uruguay

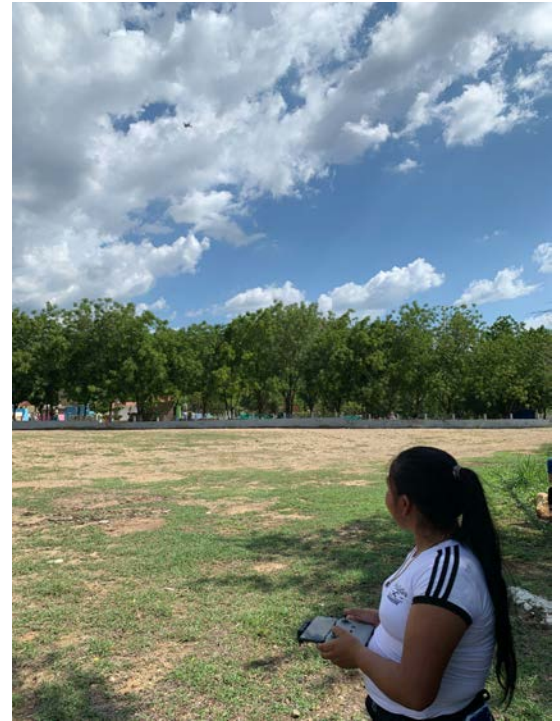
Arias wind farm, built on lands managed by the Instituto Nacional de Colonización, near San José, Uruguay

Tristán Narvajo Street market in Montevideo

Luis Suárez statue in Salto (his hometown)



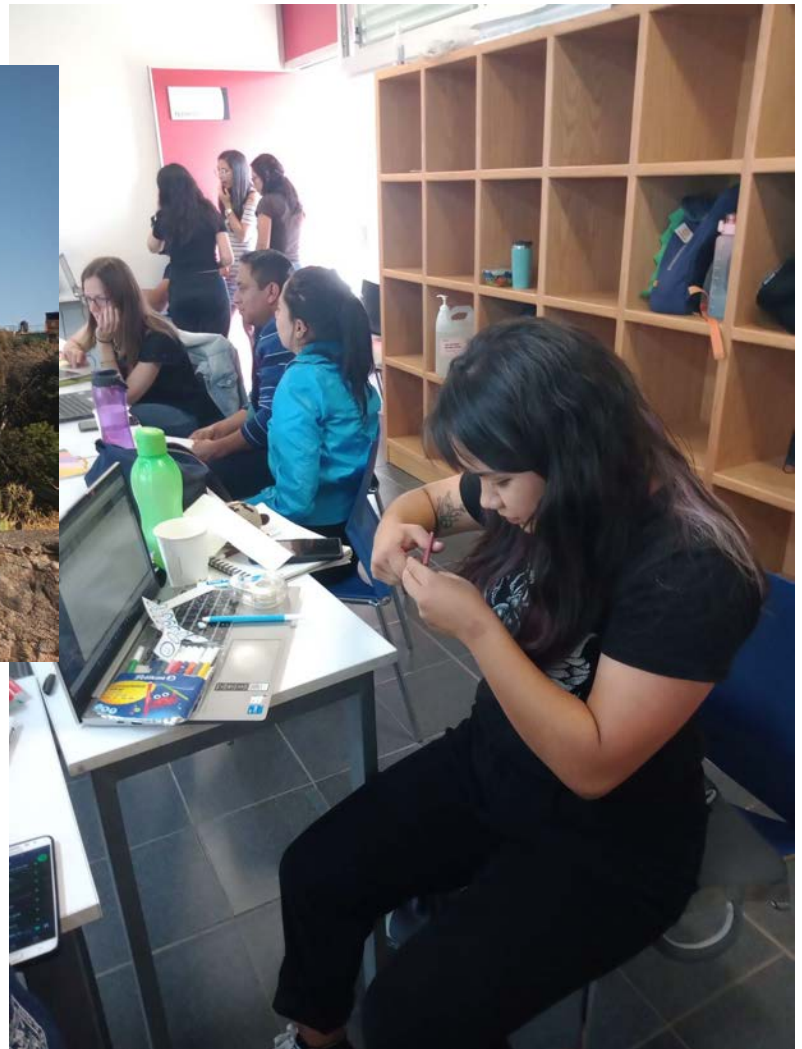
Nick Cuba: training students at the Maya Ch'orti' Pluriversity (Guatemala) on using drones:



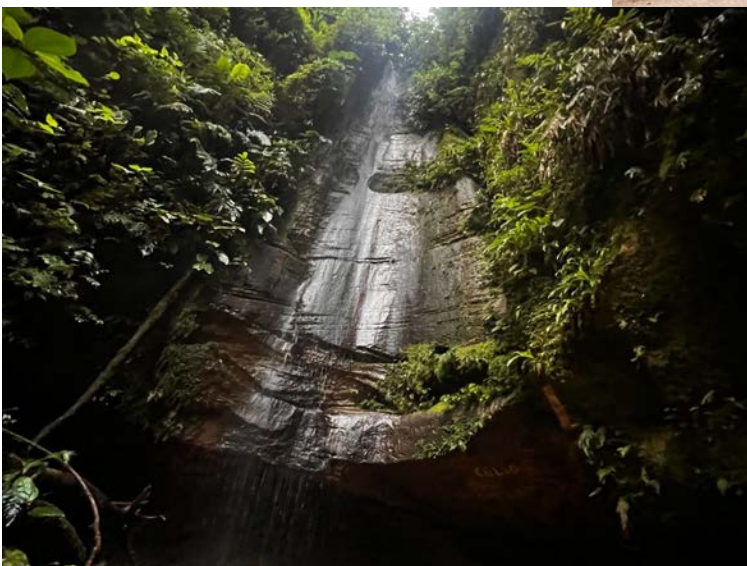
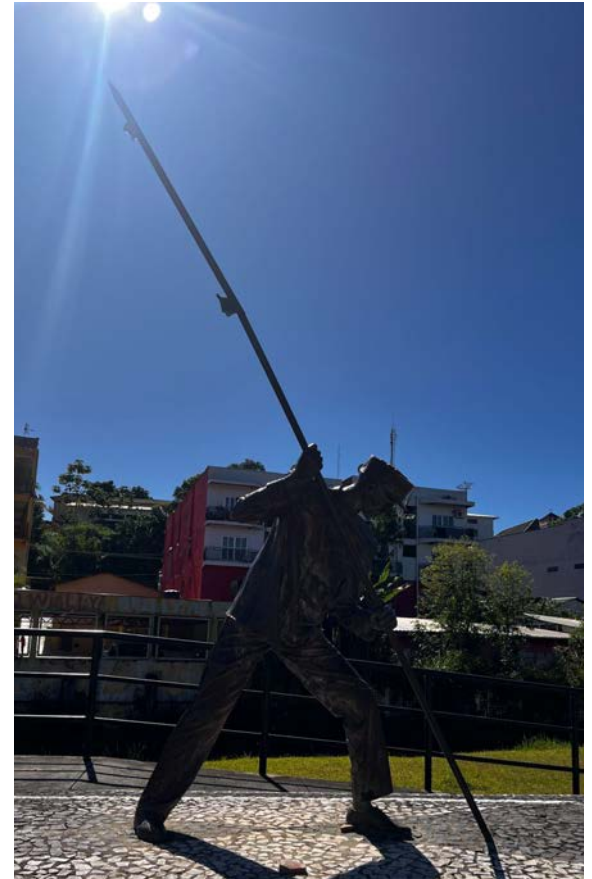
Cloe Perez: San Juan Sosola's landscape, which presents a palm-stand derived from traditional management, in La Cañada region, Oaxaca México



Mike McCall: pics of participatory mapping/PGIS of dangers of 'journey to school' with school children in Morelia, Michoacán:



David Salisbury: Amazon Borderlands of Brazil and Peru



Nikolai A. Alvarado, co-founder of the Latin American and Caribbean Cities Collective. At the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies and involving faculty from the departments of Geography and GIS, Urban and Regional Planning, and Architecture.

Captions of photos:

- Dr. Catalina Ortiz (University College London) delivered the inaugural lecture in October 2022.
- Dr. Magdalena Novoa (co-founder, left) and Dr. Nikolai Alvarado (co-founder, right) with invited speaker Dr. Claudio Alvarado Lincopi
- Workshop on Cuerpo-Territorio with Dr. Sofía Zaragocín
- Fieldtrip to Little Village, Chicago with Dr. Clara Irázabal



RECENT GRADUATES AND NEW POSITIONS

SUCCESSFULLY DEFENDED THESES AND DISSERTATIONS:

PhD

Dr. Anisa Kline. Doctorate in Geography, The Ohio State University. Dissertation "Welcoming the Guest: the lives and experiences of H-2A workers in Ohio". Advised by Drs. Kendra McSweeney and Abigail Norris Turner.



Dra. Claudia Escalera Matamoros. Doctorado en Geografía, CIGA-UNAM. Definición y medición de accesibilidad para la política pública. Un análisis desde la percepción. Bajo la dirección de Michael K. McCall.

Dr. Cloe Perez earned my Ph.D. in geography in 2021 at the Environmental Geography Research Center (CIGA-UNAM), with a dissertation that inquires into the origins of the palm stands of *Brahea dulcis* in the biosphere reserve of Tehuacán-Cuicatlán in central southern Mexico. Last September, I received a recognition from the Botanical Society of Mexico for presenting the best thesis in the Ph.D category of that year.



Dra. Claudia Bucio Feregrino. Doctorado en Geografía UNAM. La dimensión espacial de la conflictividad socioambiental por minería de gran escala: disputa y valoración de los bienes comunes en el centro-occidente de Morelos. Bajo la dirección de:

Dra. Claudia Escalera Matamoros. Doctorado en Geografía UNAM. Propuesta de definición y medición de accesibilidad para la política pública. Un análisis desde la percepción Reconocimiento: Mención Honorífica. Bajo la dirección de: Michael Keith McCall.

Dra. Karla Aurora de la Peña Guillén. Doctorado en Geografía UNAM. Evaluación de peligro por procesos de remoción en masa en laderas asociadas a ambientes montanos intertropicales. Bajo la dirección de: Manuel Mendoza.

Dra. Neyra Sosa Gutiérrez. Doctorado en Geografía UNAM. Aportes al modelo diseño de políticas en materia de medio ambiente en México. Bajo la dirección de: José Alejandro Velázquez Montes

Dr. Oscar Josué Jurado Gutiérrez. Doctorado en Geografía UNAM. Experiencia profesional en el departamento de servicios ambientales del bosque, Comisión Nacional Forestal, Delegación Michoacán. Bajo la dirección de: Isabel Ramírez.

Dr. Oscar Salvatore-Olivares. Doctorado en Geografía UNAM. Contribuciones analíticas para orientar la gestión de cuencas hidrográficas hacia el alcance de la seguridad hídrica: aplicación en cuencas rurales semiáridas del Centro-Occidente de México. Bajo la dirección de: Ana Burgos.

Dra. Tulia Leal Arriaga. Doctorado en Geografía UNAM. Diferenciación socio-espacial y producción inmobiliaria en el AMG, corredor periurbano Blvd. López Mateos 2000 – 2021. Bajo la dirección de: Antonio Vieyra.

Dr. Scott Odell. Graduate School of Geography at Clark University. Advised by Tony Bebbington.

Dr. Benjamin Fash. Graduate School of Geography, Clark University. Advised by Tony Bebbington.

Masters

Mtra. Ana Sophia Aguilar Ramos. Maestría en Geografía, UNAM. Tesis: Localidad de la aldea, Morelia: procesos de gentrificación periurbana. Bajo la dirección de: Yadira Méndez Lemus.

Mtra. Estefanía Santoyo Pérez. Maestría en Geografía, UNAM. Tesis: Organización espacial en Yuriria, Pénjamo e Irapuato durante la época colonial temprana (1530-1650). Siglos XVII-XIX. Bajo la dirección de: Karine Lefebvre.

Mtro. Luis Alberto García Castañeda. Maestría en Geografía, UNAM. Tesis: Interacción de la políticas agrarias, forestales y ambientales en Michoacán, 1917-2017: un análisis multiescalar. Bajo la dirección de: Isabel Ramírez.

Mtro. Óscar Josué Jurado Gutiérrez. Maestría en Geografía, UNAM. Tesis: Experiencia profesional en el Departamento de Servicios Ambientales del Bosque, Comisión Nacional Forestal, Delegación Michoacán. Bajo la dirección de: Isabel Ramírez.

NEW POSITIONS:

Dr. William Delgado, who graduated with his Ph.D. from The University of Texas at Austin's Department of Geography and the Environment in August 2022, started a new job as the desalination and water reuse engineering specialist at the Texas Water Development Board in Austin in February 2023. Dr. Delgado's role involves keeping track of water desalination and reuse projects in Texas and writing reports that outline how these new water sources will play a role in Texas's water future.

Joel E. Correia started a new role as Assistant Professor in the Human Dimensions of Natural Resources department at Colorado State University in January 2023.

Tony Bebbington:

2021 - International Program Director, Natural Resources and Climate Change, Ford Foundation (on leave from Clark)

2023- Chair of the Board of the Climate and Land Use Alliance

Rebecca Clouser has accepted a new position starting fall 2023:

Assistant Professor, Geography

Department of Humanities, Social Sciences, and the Arts

Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology

CLAG FIELD STUDY REPORTS, 2021-22

PH.D. FIELD STUDY REPORTS

Hernán Bianchi Benguria, PhD Student, Department of Geography & Planning, University of Toronto

Project: Demystifying Electromobility: The Lithium Hinterland and Socioenvironmental Transformation in the Atacama Desert

Abstract

The IPCC features electromobility as a key mitigation option for a rapid, systemic transition to cap global warming at 1.5°C. Yet replacing the world's billion cars with EVs requires extracting minerals for these vehicles' lithium-ion batteries. Underground water extraction by the mining sector has caused multiple environmental alterations in one of the world's largest lithium reserves, the Atacama Salt Flat, Chile. In response to increasing water demand in this area, Indigenous communities have mounted resistance to water dispossession.

Recently, the Lickanantay People have organized local blockades, protests, and hunger strikes; all manifestations that increasingly permeate into Chile's political arena. I am concerned with how the electromobility transition—marketed as a techno-fix towards global decarbonization—is driving narratives that invisibilize the territorial and ecological dispossession of Indigenous communities due to processes of mineral extraction required for manufacturing batteries.

By exploring connections between territorial logics of sovereignty, Indigenous claims, capitalist logics of expansion, and the political ecology of lithium extraction, I thus interrogate how has the project of sustainable development incorporated new forms of extraction in the name of environmental protection, how are Indigenous communities responding to new forms of extraction, and in which ways their resistance has mobilized broader processes of political transformation.

During fieldwork I was able to observe and record some of the new dynamics taking place in the area with the lithium boom. I conducted a series of informal interviews, site observations, and contacts. This was done through photographic and filmed registry, as well as through recorded conversations with Indigenous activists, laborers, and mining industry professionals.

Key words: Atacama Desert, Lithium Extraction, Political Ecology

The Kyoto process and the work of the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) have placed climate change as humanity's most pressing challenge, with renewable energy seen by many as a key foundation of post-fossil energy, integral to low-carbon futures, and a possible “renaissance” for future development (Nadaï & Van Der Host 2010, 144). The IPCC features electromobility as one of the key mitigation options for a “rapid, systemic” transition to cap global warming at 1.5°C, as outlined in the 2016 Paris Agreement (Masson-Delmotte et al. 2018, 41). For road transport, “hybrid electric vehicles are ... instrumental to enabling the transition from internal combustion engine vehicles to electric vehicles” (pp. 142–143), a transition which is underway. In short, electromobility is positioned in the policy mainstream as one of the main climate transition strategies for the world's transport infrastructure.

Yet replacing the world's cars with electric vehicles (EVs) requires lithium-ion batteries that make them go. Deploying energy storage technology has become a global and globe-spanning project, requiring investments to extract unprecedented amounts of minerals—including lithium, cobalt, copper, graphite, and nickel—to manufacture batteries, as well as their respective charge/discharge components and infrastructure. Some of these energy transition minerals are

extracted from places such as the Atacama Desert in Northern Chile—the most arid biome in the world. The Atacama Salt Flat is considered part of what has been infamously referred to as the “lithium triangle,” including the Andean High Plateau across Argentina, Bolivia, and Chile—a region reportedly holding over half of the world’s commercially feasible lithium reserves (USGS 2022). The Atacama Salt Flat contains Chile’s only two operational lithium mines, where lithium and other minerals are extracted from underground brine deposits. However, a growing number of mining ventures have shown interest in expanded extraction in this area and other salt flats with lithium deposits across the Atacama Desert, fueled by the electro-mobility transition (Blair et al. 2022; GAC 2017; Jerez Henríquez 2018).

My research focuses on interrogating the electromobility transition—marketed as a technological fix in the global move towards decarbonization—by examining how green development and capitalist imperatives exists in relation to the contestation of the Atacama Desert, and the ways in which this tension is negotiated, contained, and resolved. My work thus aims to help define under which conditions lithium extraction can proceed or be resisted, and what kind of development policies, practices, and socioecological relations do in fact interrogate and contest extractivist development models more broadly.

By exploring connections between territorial logics of capitalist expansion, sovereignty, and Indigenous claims, my research focuses on electromobility as an environmental fix (Ekers & Prudham 2015; Goldstein 2018; Sheller 2014; Smith 2008). I thus intend to use critiques of sustainable development and technological fetishism (Feenberg 1991; Harvey 2003; Hornborg 2014) to investigate how colonial forms of exploitation and capitalist expansion are embedded in development policy. As electromobility is promoted across the world to address the titanic challenge of climate change, the outcomes of extraction are shifting and emerging in specific places—such as with lithium mining. Such impacts tend to be obscured not by sustainable

development policies only, but also specifically by the idealization of electromobility as a socio-technical and environmental fix.

The struggle and response of the Lickanantay to both existing and new extraction ventures in the Atacama Salt Flat area—in the face of the electromobility transition—speaks of a series of socioenvironmental issues being overlooked by the ‘sustainable development’ status quo. Investigating and carefully listening to the Lickanantay’s struggle and acts of resistance will help me understand the interplay between the politics of lithium and environmental justice.

Furthermore, by contrasting the politics of clean energy with what is happening on the ground, will show evidence of how a process of dispossession through green capitalism is articulated and materialized. Ultimately, my long-term goal is to contribute to what we need to know—as citizens, activists, scholars, professionals, and/or decisionmakers—in mobilizing a praxis aimed at socio-environmental justice in the face of extraction. Indeed, the knowledge probed throughout this work is intended to provide further clarity when contesting resource, energy, and even mobility enclosures, as to envision, mobilize, and democratize the commons and new ways of commoning (De Angelis 2004; Federici 2004; Li 2014; Linebaugh 2014; Marx 2015).

Fieldtrip Methods

There are two main sites of analysis located in Canada and Chile, far apart from each other on opposite sides of the American continent. In the case of Canada, the University of Toronto St. George campus will host most of the desk research, remote interviews, data analysis, and fieldwork preparations. In Chile, the small town of San Pedro de Atacama (urban population 5,717 [INE 2017]) will serve as basecamp for most of the fieldwork; including in-person interviews and participant observation in the nearby Atacama Salt Flat lithium mines, and surrounding Lickanantay Indigenous communities.

Budget Flow and Itinerary

Exploratory fieldwork has been completed in San Pedro de Atacama (Chile) and surrounding area for ten days (plus two travel days), between October 5 and October 17, 2022, per the following updated budget (in US\$):

- Air travel (roundtrip Toronto – Calama via SCL): US\$ 1,187 (receipt CLP 1,152,756)
- Car rental (at \$43/day): US\$ 427 (receipt CLP 414,914)
- Fuel (at \$10/day): US\$ 102 (receipts CLP 99,396)
- Lodging (at \$30/day): US\$ 309 (receipts CLP 300,000)
- Ground airport transportation: US\$ 91 (receipts CAD 34, US\$ 66)
- Recording equipment (audio): US\$ 65 (receipts CAD 89)

This adds up to a total of \$2,181 for initial exploratory fieldwork in San Pedro de Atacama and surrounding area, including Indigenous and rural community settlements in the San Pedro municipal district, Antofagasta Region, Chile. With the CLAG award covering for US\$ 1,500 of this budget, the remaining expenses have been covered by US\$ 750 (minus a US\$ 25 PayPal fee) provided by the American Association of Geographers Cultural and Political Ecology Specialty Group (AAG-CAPE) Field Study Award, granted March 2021, and adding to a total available early fieldwork grant money of US\$ 2,225.

Preliminary Results

During fieldwork I was able to observe and record some of the new dynamics taking place in the area with the lithium boom. I conducted a series of informal interviews, site observations, and contacts. This was done through photographic and filmed registry, as well as through recorded conversations with Indigenous activists, laborers, and mining industry professionals.

Among these actors, I contacted a Lickanantay activist named Ricardo Mallorca, who will run for mayor of San Pedro next year. Nicknamed “El Zorro,” he promotes the community’s environmental struggles by dressing up as different superheroes. Zorro showed me around the area, performed sacred rituals with me to respect the land and ancestors, and introduced me to his father-in-law Don Gustavo, an Indigenous elder that still farms the land in the desert, and who half a century ago planted one of the only arid forests with native species existing in the region.

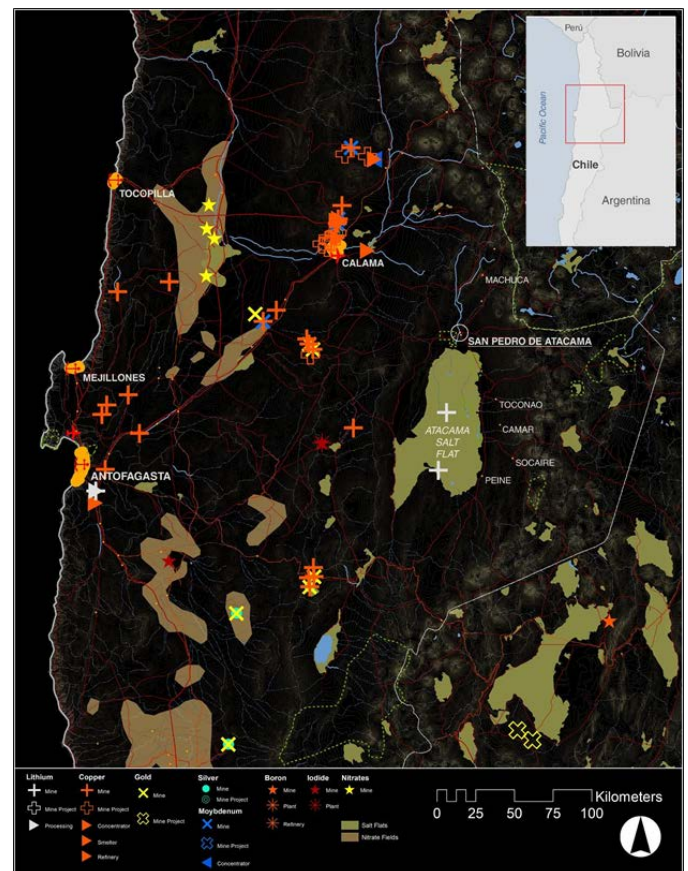


Fig. 1: Map of trinitational region showing major Andean and Pre-Andean salt flats.



Figs. 2-3 Aerial views of SQM and Albemarle lithium mines and their evaporation ponds, located in the Atacama Salt Flat, seen from the flight before landing in Calama, and from the town of Socaire (3,500 masl).

Figs. 4-5 Pictures of the tamarugo forest planted by Don Gustavo around fifty years ago. Today protected by Chile's National Forestry Corporation as part of the 'Flamingoes National Reserve.'



Figs. 6-9 Numerous political and activist billboards in central touristy San Pedro de Atacama, advocating for the protection of the environment, native species, the land, farming

communities, and water in the region. These political expressions are coupled with Chile's recent Constitutional process.



Figs. 10-13 Ricardo "El Zorro" Mallorca showing me around San Pedro de Atacama and surrounding Death Valley, performing sacred rituals with coca leaves to express gratitude and pray for the protection of the land and ancestors. He pointed out the numerous environmental struggles existing in the region, such as water exhaustion and waste outputs of lithium mining and the tourism industry in the area.



Figs 14-17 Dinner, dancing, and conversations with Ricardo and Don Gustavo, his father-in-law, Lickanantay elder, and lifelong farmer who planted the "El Tambillo" tamarugo arid forest in the area. They pointed out a late 1990s municipal ordinance that prohibits dancing within the town's municipal area, which Ricardo—who after dinner dressed up as 'Batman' for the party at "El Diablillo"

restaurant—plans to repeal as soon as he becomes mayor of San Pedro, if elected in 2024. The party ended immediately once the police showed up because of this ordinance

Cindia Arango López, Estudiante de doctorado en Estudios Latinoamericanos, The University of Texas at Austin

Project: Una historia ambiental del Río Magdalena y los navegantes ‘bogas’ durante el siglo XVIII en el Nuevo Reino de Granada

En la actualidad los colombianos consideran al río Magdalena como la principal arteria fluvial del país. Más de 30 millones de personas dependen de un río que tiene graves problemas ambientales. Sin embargo, el río no siempre fue así. Los paisajes son dinámicos como la propia naturaleza. Durante los primeros momentos de la conquista en los siglos XV y XVI, las huestes españolas rápidamente identificaron que el río era la arteria principal que los llevaría a Pirú (actual Perú). Durante el siglo XVI, algunos comerciantes ingresaron población esclava desde Cartagena, y algunos fueron destinados a navegar en el río mezclados con indígenas que se resistían a bogar (remar y navegar). Hasta el siglo XVII, aparece en los registros históricos que los indígenas desaparecieron como bogas y fueron las personas negras y mulatas esclavizadas quienes los reemplazaron. Los negros y mulatos esclavizados hacían sus rutas como bogas desde asentamientos como Cartegena que recibía mercaderías del Imperio español, luego por Mompox (cercano a Cartagena), donde transportaban mercancía al corazón de los Andes en Honda y de allí hasta la ciudad de Santafé y más al sur en Popayán. Los bogas esclavizados emprendieron rutas contra la corriente y tardaban meses transportando pasajeros y objetos como tafetán, camisas holandesas, almendras, entre otras que circularon durante el siglo XVII.

Mi investigación busca establecer la conexión entre el río y estos navegantes conocidos como bogas en el siglo XVIII. Sugiero que existe un exceso de

investigación académica sobre bogas para el siglo XIX basado en las fuentes como la literatura de viajes. Sin embargo, esto contrasta con la investigación histórica académica limitada para la investigación de bogas del siglo XVIII, dado que las fuentes de información son de archivo y están dispersas. Mi expectativa con esta investigación es contribuir a una perspectiva de intersección entre la relación naturaleza-cultura desde una mirada sistémica de uno de los sectores más representativos del medio ambiente como son los ríos y la sociedad en un momento de la historia de Colombia. De hecho, la comprensión del río como un agente influyente en la sociedad se perdería sin comprender cómo las personas han modificado, utilizado y vivido en los ríos y viceversa.

Para ello, los fondos de apoyo de la beca Beca de estudio de campo CLAG 2022 fueron destinados para la identificación inicial de fondos de archivos de fuentes primarias manuscritas y fuentes de información de museos, así:

Metodología propuesta inicialmente:

Objetivo de la financiación	Actividades	Metodología	Fechas	Presupuesto
Identificar las fuentes de información para la investigación doctoral	Visita a con los curadores e investigadores del Museo del Río Magdalena en Honda-Tolima (Colombia) y recorridos territoriales.	Etnografía que incluye: -Realización de instrumentos de recuperación de información. -Realización de entrevistas semiestructuradas. -Visita a terreno y diario de campo. -Observación del paisaje.	Una (1) semana de mayo de 2022 y Una (1) semana de agosto de 2022	1) Tiquetes aéreos, Austin- Colombia y viceversa: 800 dólares 2) Hospedaje: semanas de trabajo de campo y archivo: 300 dólares
	Identificación de documentación en los índices del archivo general de la nación.	-Visita al Archivo General de la Nación (Bogotá - Colombia) -Lectura de índices de tomos documentales para identificación de documentos. -Levantamiento de índice de documentos.	Una (1) semana de mayo de 2022	3) Alimentación: semanas de trabajo de campo y archivo: 300 dólares. 4) Libros y adquisición de material: 100 dólares Total: 1.500 dólares

ACTIVIDADES DESARROLLADAS

Actividades	Descripción
Visita al archivo general de Nación-Bogotá (Colombia)	Identificación de los fondos documentales para la información. Ver cuadro abajo.
Medellin-Honda	Visita preliminar al Museo del Río Magdalena en Honda (Departamento del Tolima) Colombia. Se identifica un centro documental menor y un <u>guío</u> museográfico renovado. Ver fotografías abajo.

Fondos documentales identificados en los índices del Archivo General de la Nación-Bogotá (AGN) en donde se identifica de manera preliminar información relacionada con mi investigación.

Tiempo de identificación: tres semanas y media.

NOMBRE DE FONDO	No. CATALOGO AGN
Índice de documentos de Archivos Españoles para la Historia Colonial del Nuevo Reino de Granada	249
Administración de aduanas	234
Aduanas (Real Hacienda, cuentas)	8
Archivos	18
Cabildos	32
Caciques e indios	33
Civiles – Asuntos	44
Competencias	50
Contrabandos	61
Contrabando -Cartas	63
Colonia-Correos	66
Criminales	72
Cruzadas	73
Diezmos	83
Encomiendas	94
Historia civil	116
Impuestos varios (cartas)	122
Mejoras materiales	137
Milicias y marina	138
Miscelánea	166
Monedas	169
Monedas – Cartas	171
Negocios exteriores	176
Poblaciones	187
Policia	189
Pólvora	191
Quinas	197
Real Hacienda	198
Residencias	206
Temporalidades	224
Testamentarias	226
Tributos	228
Visitas	231
Esclavos	97



Fotografías por la autora, julio del 2022

1. Figurilla en honor a los bogas de la colección permanente del Museo del Río Magdalena en Honda-Tolima.
2. Vista del río Magdalena a la altura de Honda en tiempos de bajo caudal.
3. Cañon de defensa de la ciudad de Honda. Colección permanente del Museo.
4. Vista de Iglesia central del la ciudad de Honda Tolima.

Fotografía de visita preliminar al Museo del Río Magdalena en la ciudad de Honda, departamento del Tolima-Colombia



Claudia Diaz-Combs, PhD Candidate, Syracuse University, Department of Geography and the Environment

Project: Urban Water Governance, Social Movements, and Working-Class Environmentalism in San Salvador

Abstract: Since 2006, Salvadoran environmentalists led a struggle to establish a water law addressing urban drinking water service interruptions, contamination, high costs, and repel threats of privatization from right-wing business lobbies. In December 2021, Nayib Bukele's

administration codified a Law of Water Resources. Deputies in Congress praise it as a tool to address the water crisis, yet environmentalists denounce it as de facto privatization and an assault on the human right to water. My dissertation research examines why this long battle ended in defeat for the environmental movement, by establishing a robust understanding of social movement politics and how water issues impact ordinary Salvadorans. Building a comprehensive picture of Salvadoran social movement politics requires centering another influential stakeholder

– the labor movement – who support a publicly owned and operated water utility, and continue winning worker demands despite hostility from the right-wing Bukele administration. I've conducted semi-structured interviews with labor unions, and participant observation at press conferences, rallies, and marches. The interviews highlight the impact of water issues on Salvadoran workers, and union strategies to win worker demands. My research identifies shared points of interests between labor and environmentalists that can potentially form a basis for a multi-coalition movement to address ongoing socio-environmental inequalities.

Key words: water governance, water justice, labor movements, El Salvador, authoritarianism

Background

In December 2021, the Nayib Bukele administration implemented the country's first comprehensive water policy, the Law of Water Resources. Many in Bukele's political party, Nuevas Ideas, hailed the success of establishing such robust legislation and blamed the protracted process on the incompetence and corruption of previous governments. Bukele and Nuevas Ideas claim the new law will address years of drinking water service interruptions, contaminated tap water, and high costs for consumers. However, not everyone has been so quick to praise the new water policy. For over a decade, Salvadoran environmental movements fought to establish a national water law, and they denounce Bukele's version as de-facto privatization

and an assault on the human right to water. The environmental movement presented their own version of a water law in 2006, with five necessary measures: 1) Water is maintained and managed by the state; 2) Participatory governance models that prioritizes roles for civil society and government ministries; 3) Recognition of the human right to water; 4) Sustainable aquifer management; 5) Financial economic justice. While Bukele's Law of Water Resources gestures to some of these measures, details on implementation, enforcement, and regulation remain unclear. Meanwhile, Salvadorans continue enduring weekly water service interruptions¹, days- long shortages, and skyrocketing costs.

Fieldwork Experience

I conducted dissertation research in El Salvador's capital, San Salvador for approximately 9 months. I've conducted 4 months of preliminary dissertation fieldwork in San Salvador in 2019 and 2021, where I interviewed environmentalists, academics, and politicians to understand the Salvadoran water conflict. My long-term research built on that previous work, and I've spent this past academic year engaging in-depth interviews with representatives and rank and file members of the Salvadoran labor movement, along with ethnographic participant observation at marches, rallies, protests, and press conferences.



Photo 1. My interview with Roberto, general secretary of a Salvadoran union, January 2023 (photo credit: Rafael, union member)



Photo 2. Workers marching to commemorate the Day of the Salvadoran Unionists, November 2022. This historic day remembers the bombing of the National Federation of Salvadoran Workers union hall in San Salvador in October 1989 (during the Civil War), where nine union leaders were killed and 30 more injured. (photo credit: Claudia Diaz-Combs)

Though not leading the fight for water justice in El Salvador, the labor movement supports the efforts of environmentalists, especially the demand for a publicly owned and operated water utility. Salvadoran unions have even folded concerns about the water crisis into broader economic and workplace demands. They've continued to steadily win demands for their members like workplace contracts, wage increases, new equipment, and improvements to working conditions, including to improve water infrastructure and remedy water contamination.

CLAG Funds

CLAG funds were used for airfare from New York to El Salvador, and lodging in San Salvador. I am grateful to CLAG for the opportunity to spend a significant amount of time in the field conducting in-depth ethnographic fieldwork. Financial support from CLAG was crucial to my successful experience conducting my research.

Achievement of Objectives

When asked to discuss the water crisis, broadly defined, and how it impacted them, workers most often brought up worries about the cost of water. They mentioned how water bills had skyrocketed with no explanation from the national water utility, and they were struggling to cover those costs, causing them serious economic anxiety. In addition to cost, workers are affected by water service interruptions and contamination at the workplace, and they have used their unions to demand improvements to working conditions. In several examples, workers explained they bargained with their employers to improve the conditions of access to water on the worksite, either because workers couldn't do the jobs they were being asked to, or because they felt like the conditions themselves were unsafe. In one case, workers even turned off machinery until their employer replaced the company drinking water source, which was contaminated and making workers sick. These conversations with workers indicate to me that the Salvadoran labor movement is deeply concerned with the ongoing water crisis and how it affects working-class Salvadorans. And yet, despite Salvadoran environmentalists battling to establish a water law for over a decade, they presented their demands too narrowly and in ways that didn't appeal to a broader popular base in the working class. Rather than underscore economic concerns, the environmental movements tended to subordinate them at the end of their list of measures.

When thinking about winning strategies, where power lies in society, and the structural location of workers in capitalism, I've concluded that water justice goals can potentially be achieved if they are led by the labor movement. Unions integrated water justice issues into workplace demands, mandating improvements to workplace conditions and worker health. Unions have also bargained for higher wages to match skyrocketing cost of living which would address economic concerns on the cost of water in the city. Finally, strategies like work stoppages that can last hours, sometimes days, pressure employers to agree or at least negotiate demands. By

emphasizing cost, disruption at work, and health as points of distress, environmental movements can frame their demands in ways that appeal and gain support of working people. Identifying shared interests between labor and environmentalists encourages the potential to build a coalition with a broad popular base.

Building strong coalitions is especially important now under the irreverent and authoritarian president Nayib Bukele, who is no friend to labor or environmentalists. Under his regime, Bukele has slashed the budget for public services, health care, education, and the water utility, and workers will continue to be financially squeezed. In addition, Bukele's ongoing state of exception, a strategy meant to eradicate gang violence, is now being used against any form of dissent. Any protests, gatherings, or marches can be construed as gang affiliation, and prominent labor leaders and water activists have been arrested with no due process. Cultivating strong, broad coalitions that center working-class interests within environmental struggles is urgently important in a time when autocrats continue to repress grassroots opposition.



Photo 3. May Day march, May 2023. People gather in the Plaza Gerardo Barrios in the historic downtown center. The May Day marches saw record numbers of people from across civil society (labor, environmentalist, student, feminist movements, veterans, state officials, etc.) come out to march and denounce the repression and authoritarianism of the Nayib Bukele administration. (photo credit: Claudia Diaz-Combs)

CONFERENCES AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

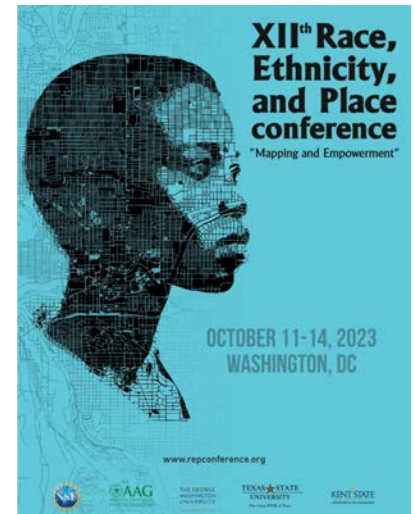
RACE, ETHNICITY AND PLACE CONFERENCE:

Washington DC October 11-14, 2023

<https://repconference.org/>

Papers, posters, and organized sessions are all welcome.

Over the years, many CLAGistas have attended.



RGS-IBG ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2023:

Session title: Mobility politics of pastoralism under climatic and other changes (1) & (2)

Session convenors: Ariell Ahearn, University of Oxford; Olivia Mason, Newcastle University; Julio Postigo, Indiana University.

2023 SOUTHWEST DIVISION OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF GEOGRAPHERS (SWAAG) ANNUAL MEETING:

Laredo, Texas, November 2-3, 2023

SAVE THE DATE!

The Department of Social Sciences at Texas A&M International University cordially invites you to join us at SWAAG 2023, taking place in Laredo, Texas, at La Posada Hotel from November 2nd to 3rd, 2023. Immerse yourself in the captivating atmosphere of the historic venue, nestled in downtown Laredo on the picturesque San Agustín Plaza, offering a breathtaking view of the international border or Río Grande/Río Bravo. The scenic surroundings and urban landscape alone make this event a worthwhile experience.

We kick off the conference with a meet-and-greet on Wednesday night (11/01) at either Cultura Beer Garden or Café Radical, both conveniently located within walking distance from our conference hotel,

La Posada. Engaging paper and poster sessions will take place on Thursday (11/02) and Friday (11/03), followed by the highly anticipated annual SWAAG GeoBowl on Thursday night.

During Thursday's Carne Asada lunch, we are honored to present Dr. Gary Langham, the Executive Director of the AAG, as our keynote speaker. The closing banquet on Friday will be a celebration of accomplishments and an opportunity for networking, featuring a surprise musical guest to enhance the evening's festivities.

In addition, we have planned an exciting field trip on Saturday morning to explore "Energy Landscapes of South Texas." This trip promises to offer a unique and insightful experience for all participants.

Traveling to Laredo is convenient, as we are situated at the beginning/terminus of I-35. Multiple affordable flights to and from Laredo from DFW and IAH airports ensure easy air access. Should you have any inquiries or require further assistance, please feel free to reach out to Andy Hilburn at ahilburn@tamiu.edu.

We eagerly look forward to welcoming you to Laredo this fall! Prepare yourself for an exceptional conference experience that combines academic enrichment, cultural immersion, and memorable networking opportunities.

All are invited to attend and submit a paper or a poster for our # Southwestern Division of the Association of American Geographers (SWAAG) meeting at the La Posada Hotel in Laredo.

Please contact Andy Hilburn (ahilburn@tamiu.edu) for more information.

2024 CLAG MEETING:

Join us May 22-24, 2024 in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico for the 38th Conference of Latin American Geography (CLAG) at the Cuartel del Ballajá & Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña! Field Trips May 25 & 26. January = early registration & abstracts.

Flyers below:



Conference of Latin American Geography

CLAG 2024
May 22-24, 2024
San Juan de Puerto Rico



Join us May 22-24, 2024 in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico for the 38th Conference of Latin American Geography (CLAG) at the Cuartel del Ballajá & Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña! Field Trips May 25 & 26. January = early registration & abstracts

**Cuartel de Ballajá e
Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña,
in Old San Juan**

<https://youtu.be/NvpfNTx2Npl?si=4FVxQyPpqjHID5nj>



Join us May 22-24, 2024 in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico for the 38th Conference of Latin American Geography (CLAG) at the Cuartel del Ballajá & Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña! Field Trips May 25 & 26-27 January = early registration & abstracts More details forthcoming!!



CLAG 2024
Conference of Latin American Geography
San Juan de Puerto Rico



Hotels near the Conference:

Note, there are cheaper options outside the old city, and you can Uber in!

High (\$200+)

El Convento
Villa Herencia
Decanter Hotel

Potential Field Trips:

Tour of Old San Juan
Wildlife in the Estuary
Community Ag. Toa Alta
Political Ecology of the South Coast (Ponce+)

Casa Sol
Sheraton Old San Juan
Casa Blanca
Others...

Medium (\$100+)

Navona Studios
A few others...

Low

Air B&B or hostal options...





CLAG 2024
Conference of Latin American Geography
San Juan de Puerto Rico

NOTE FROM THE CLAG NEWSLETTER CO-EDITORS

Greetings, CLAGistas! I (Elise) write to you from San Pedro Sula, Honduras where I am reminded how violence dynamically shapes Honduras' landscape as we are currently under a government-enforced toque de queda, or curfew, due to rising gang violence around the city.

With all types of news relating to Latin America lately – important elections to keep an eye out for like the primaries that just happened in Guatemala and upcoming runoff in August, to the ever-growing insecurities and violence against migrants occurring at the US-Mexico border, to the devastating floods and hazards that continue to sweep across and harm entire communities – let us be reminded that our research as a community in Latin America covering migration, violence, the environment, climate change, and other key issues are ever more relevant. We all contribute to the production of knowledge, solutions, and inspirations while benefiting our communities and serving academia.

We are so impressed and proud with the work of our CLAGistas and have been so informed about all of the exciting news. Kudos to everyone!

It is our pleasure to serve in our role as the newsletter co-editors and we again would like to thank everyone for all of the submission contributions and the patience as we put together our newsletter in the midst of summer fieldwork and travels. We look forward to what's next! Thank you all!

Saludos,
Elise and Beth
CLAG Newsletter Co-Editors



