"FOR US INDIGENOUS PEOPLE
OF THE WORLD, ALL PRESIDENTS ARE DANGEROUS. MY PEOPLE HAVE BEEN RESISTING COLONIALISM FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS. THE 45TH PRESIDENT WILL NOT CHANGE ANYTHING. HE WILL JUST CONTINUE WHAT THE OTHERS DID NOT FINISH. AND WE'LL CONTINUE TO DO WHAT WE HAVE BEEN DOING FOR 525 YEARS."

ZAPOTEC LEADER ODILIA ROMERO

MEXICO'S TROUBLES
IN THE ERA OF TRUMP

WHILE THE NEW U.S. ADMINISTRATION THREATENS TO CUT TRADE AND DEPORT IMMIGRANTS, MINING, MEGA DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AND ORGANIZED CRIME INCREASE INEQUALITY

Page 13:
Dr. Martin Luther King Day speech
by Russell Rickford

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Global Health students and grads reflect on study and family in Dominican Republic
Mexico’s troubles in a global economy

by Tim Shenk

“I will build a great, great wall on our southern border, and I will make Mexico pay for that wall.” - Donald Trump

Mexico and its people have been the subject of threats and misinformation during the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign and since.

Home to over 120 million people, Mexico is the United States’ third largest trading partner. The 35 million Mexicans and Mexican-Americans in the U.S. have an immense influence on culture and politics here.

Given the country’s prominence in U.S. political conversation, it has been an apt focus for CUSLAR this past year.

One of Donald Trump’s few concrete policy proposals was to pull the U.S. out of the North American Free Trade Agreement. NAFTA has been generally good for elites of both countries. At the same time, it has contributed to falling standards of living for working and poor people in both countries, displacing nearly 5 million Mexican family farmers and pushing U.S. manufacturing wages downward.

That said, there is no indication that the Trump administration will come up with something better than NAFTA for regular folks. Trump likely will be bad for Mexicans on both sides of the border, whether or not he builds his infamous wall.

However, CUSLAR students’ research indicates that Trump policies may not be the biggest challenge Mexico faces.

Rather, Mexico’s hardships are emblematic of a global trend toward increasing poverty and inequality. And presidents have to respond to the economy, not the other way around.

The crisis of overproduction of 2007-08 caused shifts in the global economy. Investors pulled money out of labor-intensive manufacturing, as consumers could no longer buy what was being produced and years’ supplies of products accumulated in warehouses.

Investors preferred to gamble in speculation and resource extraction, as shifting policies have made mining and energy industries attractive.

In Mexico as elsewhere, some local populations have resisted exploitative incursions into their territories. Others, as Richard Gaunt explains on page 3 of this issue, are displaced and forced to migrate to feed their families.

Angel Alvarez, a guest of CUSLAR in October, shared first-hand accounts of development and underdevelopment in southern Mexico. An agricultural engineer and community development leader in Oaxaca, Alvarez shared about the dangers of new Special Economic Zones. He and Marx Aguirre expound further on page 8.

Alvarez noted organized crime’s takeover of agriculture, especially the mango industry in his native Tehuantepec isthmus region.

On page 5, Meredith Rector explores how mangoes serve as a bridge between legal and illicit production in the region.

On page 6, Nicole Mance investigates the uptick in mining projects in Oaxaca and ties it to histories of colonial exploitation.

Indigenous Zapotec leader Odilia Romero notes that not much may change for her people’s struggles under the new president: “For us indigenous people of the world, all presidents are dangerous,” she said. “The 45th president will just continue what the others did not finish. And we’ll continue to do what we have been doing for 525 years.”

On page 9, Vanessa Bauch chronicles Romero’s CUSLAR-sponsored visit in Oct.

The Trump era has begun. May our actions be informed by a deep analysis of the real dangers ahead. May we also gain perspective from leaders like Odilia Romero who have carried on struggles for justice and dignity no matter who the president is.
Migration: Moving people, moving capital

by Richard Gaunt

Immigrant and migrant workers who depend on precarious wage labor are at the crux of global capitalism’s explosive crises. As members of the global poor and dispossessed, they are often subject to super-exploitation and physically dangerous conditions. Immigration and migration remain poorly understood phenomena, and yet immigrants are among the most important political agents today. What are we to make of the dramatic spike in labor migration in recent decades? What broader political and economic forces are behind this?

We must do everything we can to denounce the racism and xenophobia that is rapidly normalizing following the election of Donald Trump as U.S. president as divisive scapegoating, and we must push deeper into their structural origins. A perspective that includes the dynamics of the world economy suggests that global capital both relies on and produces uprooted, mobile labor.

As capital globalizes, people, money and commodities move rapidly across the globe. Sociologist William Robinson writes that the globalized era is defined by a “dramatic decline… in the material and political obstacles to [capital’s] unfettered movement.” Enabled by neoliberal policies that eliminate trade barriers, commodities are now produced and distributed in complex global networks. Today, national economies are increasingly subservient to the transnational economy. This shift to a global economy has occurred through massive structural violence resulting from privatization and neoliberal policies that remove state restrictions to capital’s flow. The resulting changes have destabilized lives all over the world, and triggered the dramatic rise in net international migration from 93 million in 1980 to 243 million in 2015, according to the World Bank.

Few places have felt this destabilizing shift as directly as Mexico, whose economic structure was rewritten in the early 1990s by the North American Free Trade Agreement. NAFTA is an archetypal neoliberal policy, as it entailed the near total elimination of trade restrictions between the U.S. and Mexico, and initiated mass privatizations.

This resulted in the decimation of local economies in Mexico, and the dispossession of peasants and indigenous people. Millions of dispossessed peasants and disenfranchised workers became a new commodified export for the global economy: cheap labor.

In the years following NAFTA, Mexico exported more labor per-capita than any other country in the world, according to United Nations documents. In these years, as similar changes swept other Latin American countries, Mexico also took on a role as a “gateway” for northward migration, as people made the arduous journeys north through Mexico to the United States. Samir Amin notes that these workers are now dispersed in maquiladora, agricultural and service sector jobs that rely on “precarious” labor whose low skill status, and/or lack of citizenship reduces the capacity for negotiation afforded to more “stable” workers.

NAFTA and other economic programs are representative of the structural ways in which the global economy simultaneously creates and relies on uprooted immigrant labor. In effect, this means that the same processes and interests that uproot people’s lives, also appropriate those lives to supply the labor for global capital. Today, those who are geographically uprooted form an ideal workforce for the global capitalist class. As Robinson points out, their flexibility, and in some cases “deportability” makes them vulnerable, and yet instrumentally necessary components of transnational production. Knowing this, President Trump may find it difficult to carry out his promise to deport millions of undocumented workers on whose labor global capital depends.

The conflicts surrounding immigration are symptomatic of the global nature of the relationship between capital and labor. Because of this, migrating workers have a unique political agency in today’s global economy. The days of centralized, geographically stable, union labor are behind us, and with it the forms of organizing that were successful in the past.

Migrant workers must become an agent of labor struggle for the present day. This will require thinking and acting beyond borders, exposing racist scapegoating of immigrants as profit-protecting lies, forging solidarity between and among sectors of workers, and finding new ways to organize flexible labor to reclaim power. Most importantly, we must challenge the foundations of capitalism, which destroy any possibility of stability and livelihood for the vast majority of the world’s population.

CUSLAR is a Cornell University-based organization, founded in 1965, which seeks to promote a greater understanding of Latin America and the Caribbean. CUSLAR members are a diverse group of people united in our concern about the role of the United States in the social, political and economic affairs of the region. CUSLAR supports the right of the people of Latin America to self-determination and control over decisions that affect their lives and communities.

CUSLAR is a project partner of the Center for Transformative Action.

Richard Gaunt is a 2016 graduate of Ithaca College.
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The war over mangoes
Intertwining legal and illegal commodities in Mexican exports

by Meredith Rector

Growing mangoes in the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca has racked up an enormous socio-political expense for the region far greater than the price tag on the fruit in the supermarket. For a Mexican drug cartel desperate to move product, hiding illicit drugs in mango shipments is a risky but viable cover for getting them to the U.S. market. For the people of Oaxaca, however, the infiltration of one of the region’s most important industries indicates the unavoidable threat of a life controlled by drug violence and its wide-ranging effects on society.

Drug trafficking is a complex and multifaceted problem and has proliferated as Mexico continues to face economic troubles and ungovernability. Various sectors of the Mexican economy have struggled or failed altogether as a direct result of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which took effect in 1994. According to Clint McCowen in his report *Globalization and the Mexican Market*, the period immediately following the implementation of NAFTA brought job loss on a massive scale with unemployment rates over 55 percent. Part of this job loss was that many Mexican businesses could not compete with imported subsidized goods after the elimination of tariffs and trade barriers and the privatization of previously state-owned companies. This blow also affected small to medium-sized farms and left the agricultural sector monopolized by the corporate counterparts, which cost Mexican farmers $12.8 billion from 1997-2005.

One sector of the Mexican economy that grew during this period of stagnation was the informal sector, that is, economic activity that is untaxed and unregulated by the government and includes drug traffickers. The progress of these industries in their respective fields and the control of the agricultural sector by drug cartels has led to the birth of a socio-economic hybrid called “narco-agriculture.” Many different kinds of fruit have served as the front of drug cartel operations in recent years. But the most recent and prominent infiltrated sector is the mango market.

Oaxaca has particularly felt the effects of drug cartel infiltration because it is such a strong contributor of mangoes to the world economy. Exporting 32,000 tons of mangos to Canada and the U.S. in the 2016 growing season alone, no other region has the same level of success.

According to Will Cavan, Executive Director of the International Mango Association, not only do mango farms serve as a way for cartels to launder their money, but it also gives them control over the market prices and profit.

Regional cartels, such as Los Caballeros Templares and La Nueva Familia, can order a halt on mango export production to drive up prices. Intimidation tactics such as kidnapping, murder and extortion are used to influence the amount of mangoes shipped out at the cartels’ convenience. Much of the profit is pocketed and never goes to the legitimate producers, according to Cavan.

In addition to these violent tactics typical of cartels for the last decade, cartel leaders are actually quite heavily involved in production and product restriction in order to both launder money and diversify their operations. And even before these shipping processes are tampered with, the cartels can manipulate into existence a free or cheap labor source for the picking process. Oaxacans often choose hard labor to alleviate extreme poverty common in rural areas of Mexico.

Many accept cheap wages and complicity with the cartels in order to subsist for themselves and their families. Aside from a local supply, Central American migrants are frequently forced into working for cartels in this region, according to community development leader Angel Alvarez. Because migrants don’t often have legal documentation to be in Mexico, they are vulnerable to detention and not a priority for the overtaxed Mexican judicial system. Overall, a combination of old tactics and new tricks are being used to infiltrate the mango industry, from growth and picking to shipment and distribution.

Aside from the control over the product, success of the market and access to cheap labor, the mango market has another benefit for cartels. This industry allows for drug smuggling, as border patrol agents cannot inspect every box.

In his book *The Fruit Hunters*, Adam Leith Gollner talks with a fruit industry professional in Montreal about the apathy in checking such large volumes of fruit, and also the bribery inherent at border patrol checkpoints. With proper preparation for these circumstances, cartels can ensure the passage of their products, both legal and illegal.

CONTINUED ON FOLLOWING PAGE
Mining and resistance in Oaxaca, Mexico

by Nicole Mance

Enrique Peña Nieto, the president of Mexico, runs a government that has pushed structural reforms to enable land dispossession in rural and indigenous areas of Mexico. Mass demonstrations in the southern states of Oaxaca and Chiapas have ended in violent state- and corporate-backed repression. In many cases, the mining industry is at the center of the land dispossession battle.

It can be challenging to understand why there is such protest when the mining sector promises jobs. But many rural Mexicans see mining as a threat to their land and livelihood.

In March 2012 Bernardo Vásquez, a vocal Zapotec activist, was shot and killed in Oaxaca. To many, this was a political hit. His adamant resistance towards the Canadian mine company, Fortuna Silver, is what ultimately made him a target.

Protests erupted near the mine and continue nearly five years later. Protestors say there has been no justice for Vásquez or their communities, only oppression as the mining project is expanding with protection of state and federal authorities.

Vásquez’s murder for his opposition to Fortuna Silver is not an isolated event. Rather, it must be read as one example of the global economic crisis, where investors seek to secure their profit. Currently in the state of Oaxaca, according to Mexico’s Secretary of Energy, more than 15 percent of Oaxacan territory is leased to mining companies for exploration and exploitation. It must be questioned why the Mexican government has changed the constitution to allow an avalanche of mining permits, and what their interests are in this case and others like it.

In order to adequately address these questions, these government policies in history must be thoroughly investigated.

Recent rise in large-scale mining

More than 400 mining projects exist in Oaxaca. None of them have the consent of communities and indigenous peoples living in these regions alongside these projects. Forty-eight communities gathered last February and demanded the cancellation of all mining projects in Oaxaca.

“With no real restrictions on foreign ownership, an incredibly low tax regime, and no royalties, simplified administrative procedures and environmental laws that are not enforced in practice, Mexico has become the number one destination in Latin America for foreign direct investment (FDI) in mining,” according to Henry Veltmeyer and James Petras in The New Extractivism.

In 2005 the Mexican mining sector attracted $256 million in FDI. By 2011 it was $559 million. Though foreign investment in extractive industries has reached new heights in Mexico, it is an extension of colonial patterns of exploitation and dispossession.

Mining and colonial extraction

Extractivism has evolved throughout history and currently fundamentally involves the state. The state has contributed to development policies, like the one in Peña Nieto’s Mexico, that ignite problems, mainly social conflicts, within society. This is rooted in rapid growth of the industrial development that initially took place in Europe that transferred to the Americas via colonization. The land was expropriated and “landless” human beings were created. The demand for raw materials during this revolution required colonial relationships, as platforms for land occupation, the

One of Trump’s central campaign promises was that he would end NAFTA, because he claims it is “maybe the worst trade deal ever signed anywhere, but certainly ever signed in this country.”

However, ending NAFTA would have serious effects. According to the Bloomberg Network, even implementing new tariffs as low as 3 percent could cause a 10 percent reduction in Mexico’s exports within a year of implementation. According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 6 million American jobs depend on free trade with Mexico and could be lost along with NAFTA. While Trump should oppose the deal that contributed to a major decline in the way of life of the U.S. and Mexican working classes, he should also observe the implications of his policy decisions. An economic deal implemented for over twenty years has been engrained in the North American economy.

Causing instability with such a decision could exacerbate the very problems Trump seeks to eliminate, among them irregular immigration and drug trafficking.

Opting out of NAFTA as Trump proposes seems reactionary, rash and essentially based on a naive hope that high-paying manufacturing jobs would return to the U.S. once NAFTA was removed.

However, the global economy has changed, and most of these jobs are being done by robots today, not Mexicans. In light of this new structural reality, we must take a serious look at NAFTA and other policies, and focus our resources on making sure the most vulnerable in the region are cared for. For the sake of regional cooperation, for the sake of societal growth, and for the sake of the mangoes.

Mangoes and the Mexican drug trade from previous page

This convergence of the illegal drug trade with Mexican export-based agriculture has created a new challenge: impeding the damaging effects of drug cartels and their culture of fear and violence, while allowing one of the bright spots of the struggling Mexican economy to flourish. Tackling such a complex regional issue requires attentiveness and mutual understanding by leaders of both the United States and Mexico.

Will the recent election of Donald Trump as U.S. president allow for such a collaboration? The incoming Trump administration may choose to limit dealings with Mexico across the board. NAFTA, the two countries’ most significant collaboration, is in danger.

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exploitation of natural resources and new markets were developed. While colonization is not the current issue in Mexico, these same principles and practices can be applied to the current situation. Capitalism is rooted in colonialism and modernity, according to Carlos Sempat Assadourian, “as its methods are dispossession of resources and trade relations in which value is transferred in a single direction, situating colonized nations as satellite entities with new differences between them.” Latin American economies became dependent on the outset due to the system of trade that developed between colonies and European metropoles.

With the development of capitalism came a requirement for an expansionist strategy: the search for new lands and resources. The outcome is economic activity based on extractivism, more specifically, the appropriation of land and its inhabitants. Though capitalism is very different today than it was in the colonial era, we can see similarities between colonial extraction and what is currently taking place in the mining sector in Mexico.

Development model deepens inequality

Neoliberalism has become a staple of international economic policy, replacing the previous national development model in Latin America. The neoliberal state model has the government facilitating private interests while the state is hollowed out. In other words, “Neoliberalism emphasizes economic self-interest that justifies elevation of market principles as the organizing principle of society, where private interest transcends the public good,” according to Philip McMichael in Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective.

Latin America fits into the neoliberal model as a region targeted for its natural resources. A marker of these practices is the development with a focus on mineral extraction. Companies performing extraction are export-focused and the local economies, as well as social and environmental considerations, are neglected. The neoliberal model isn’t working for a vast majority of Mexicans.

These policies have intended to bring Latin America out of its debt crisis and into the global economic fold. In Mexico, neoliberal policies attracted and permitted entrance of FDI in many areas. Mineral extraction by private foreign enterprises is profit-driven and as a result has caused the country low revenue, loss of income derived from tax payments and a variety of social and environmental problems. Though Mexican politicians have helped to make Mexico into an ideal location for exploitation, evidently this problem is not unique to Mexico. It is a part of a global economic trend emerging from the 2008 crisis, where mining projects have spiked internationally.

Final thoughts: Mineral Mexico today

Natural resource exploitation has a long history that in the current environment is protected by governments aiming to attract investment to their countries. This permits the exploitation of resources by companies that contribute little to the development of the host country but rather create and perpetuate social, economic and environmental backlash and consequence.

National development is torn between private interests and the survival of diverse rural and indigenous cultures living in zones that are of interest to extractivist activities. Mining has been a major draw for foreign investment in recent years. State earnings through tax payments and/or duties and royalties is far less than those of the profits earned by the mining companies.

Large-scale corporate mining is bad for the communities where it takes place and has resulted in protests and deaths in numerous communities throughout Mexico. The social impact is increasing discontent with the actions of the mining companies as communities fight against the contamination of their territory and respect for their basic rights and traditions.

In many cases mobilization has not yet succeeded and mining continues. In others, communities have managed to temporarily halt or even cancel projects, bringing to light the destructiveness of the economic model highlighted through corruption and poor management on a national and international level.
Zonas Económicas Especiales en México: ¿Alternativa de desarrollo regional o desarrollo neoliberal?

por Ángel Álvarez Martínez y Marx Aguirre Ochoa

¿Qué es una Zona Económica Especial, o ZEE? Se considera un área delimitada geográficamente que ofrece un entorno de negocio excepcional para que las empresas que inviertan en ella, sean altamente competitivas y por tratarse de territorios ubicados estratégicamente para aprovechar su potencial productivo y logístico.

Las ZEE tienen como objetivo ser un instrumento de impulso al desarrollo de los estados ubicados en el sur -sureste mexicano para incrementar la competitividad regional, atraer inversiones productivas nacionales y extranjeras, generar empleos directos e indirectos, facilitar la construcción de infraestructuras, diversificar la producción, elevar las exportaciones e incidir en el mejoramiento del nivel educativo regional.

Las ZEE están contempladas en 10 estados de alta marginalidad que cuenten con infraestructura productiva potencialmente competitiva y a los cuales el gobierno federal destinará 115 mil millones de pesos de inversión.

1. Puerto Lázaro Cárdenas, entre los estados de Michoacán y Guerrero;
2. Corredor Transístémico en el Istmo de Tehuantepec, mejoramiento de las vías de comunicación y férreas del puerto de Coatzacoalcos, Veracruz con el puerto de Salina Cruz, Oaxaca;
3. Puerto Chiapas, región del Soconusco, Chiapas.

Para el 2017 se impulsarán las ZEE en Campeche y Tabasco, posteriormente en los estados de Hidalgo, Yucatán y Puebla. Se han incluido estos últimos a la iniciativa debido a la potencialidad que presentan en la producción de petróleo y la afectación que han tenido en los últimos años debido a la crisis petrolera.

El área geográfica considerada para el establecimiento y operatividad de las ZEE presenta un entorno favorable para las empresas e industria que ahí inviertan, no solamente por la ubicación estratégica, sino también por las riquezas naturales con que cuenta la región: petróleo, gas natural, recursos minerales, forestales y potencialidad productiva. Pero también, con un incipiente desarrollo en política pública que ha generado situaciones de inseguridad, marginación y explotación de recursos y mano de obra.

El rezago económico en la región sureste ha prevalcido durante décadas y puede apreciarse en las diferencias de desarrollo en comparación con el norte del país, aun cuando la generación de una gran parte de la riqueza del país proviene de la explotación de los recursos con que cuenta el sur.

Coyuntura actual

Desde septiembre de 2015 las ZEE cuentan con la aprobación del Congreso Mexicano.

El avance presentado en los diferentes estados es diferente, así como la diversidad de situaciones internas. ¿Será posible los acuerdos ante los diferentes gremios e intereses que se manejan desde las organizaciones sociales, el gremio magisterial, grupos locales de poder, productores privados, ejidos y pueblos comunes?

Es importante aprender de las experiencias del pasado. Los polos de desarrollo económico y social considerados dentro de las ZEE en un principio fueron creados con el objetivo de ser impulsores de la economía regional del sur-sureste del país. La meta no fue alcanzada y provocó mayores desigualdades.

Caso concreto de Puerto Madero (Chiapas) cuyo objetivo fue generar las condiciones para el transporte de agro productos de exportación café, cacao, ganado y miel, pero que en principio solo benefició a un mínimo porcentaje de los productores locales. Ocurrió algo similar en el Puerto Lázaro Cárdenas, Michoacán donde su prosperidad, pudo convertirse en un “enclave” ajeno a la vida de los otros 112 municipios del estado.

En Lázaro Cárdenas serán invertidos aproximadamente 38 mil millones de pesos en infraestructura y urbanización de por lo menos 500 hectáreas de terreno. Se estima la generación de por lo menos 50 mil fuentes de empleo. Al igual, se invertirán más de 11 mil millones de pesos para la construcción de dos nuevas terminales portuarias en la ZEE.

En el Istmo de Tehuantepec, Oaxaca, existe una industria incipiente de la época de la colonia. El reto es que a través de las ZEE se impulse el desarrollo industrial de alto valor agregado. Será necesario analizar integralmente los aspectos que involucran directamente a la población local y los recursos que poseen.

¿Cómo se capacitarán las personas requeridas por las empresas?
¿Cómo el fortalecimiento de la organización comunitaria?
¿Cómo se manejará el impacto ambiental de las actividades industriales?
¿Habrá impulso de actividades económicas concurrentes como servicios?
¿Quiénes se beneficiarían?
¿Se contempla la generación de empleos con mejores ingreso?

El Puerto Lázaro Cárdenas es un ejemplo de experiencia cosmopolita derivada del acelerado crecimiento económico y demográfico ante un proyecto de desarrollo de esta magnitud. Hay que prever un análisis y acciones que atiendan situaciones como crecimiento demográfico, migración hacia las áreas de trabajo, la sinergia de culturas y otros aspectos sociales. Si no se toman en cuenta, provocarán insuficiente integración social y propensión al conflicto y la violencia.
Romero, FIOB strengthen indigenous languages and cultures in California

CUSLAR and Native American Students at Cornell (NASAC) hosted Odilia Romero at Cornell University as part of a week of activities celebrating Indigenous Peoples’ Day in October. Poster design: Nicole Mance.

resides in México but do not identify themselves as Mexicans. She then introduced herself. “I am Odilia Romero. I migrated to the United States when I was ten years old. I came to Los Angeles only speaking Zapotec, and not knowing any English or Spanish.” She spoke about how this experience inspired her to become involved in the FIOB and become an interpreter.

The Zapotec who have migrated to the U.S. face the potential disappearance of their language and cultural values. When Romero was growing up, many parents discouraged the use of the native language. Romero’s mother, for example, didn’t want her daughters to have to suffer the discrimination, insults and disrespect she went through as a factory worker in Los Angeles. So she had them stop wearing the traditional dress and emphasized learning English. “Our parents told us, ‘Zapoteco won’t get you anywhere. It hasn’t helped us,’” Romero said. “So we became embarrassed of speaking Zapoteco.” This loss of connection is a tragedy for Romero.

“Something dies when you forget to speak the language, or when you don’t speak it. There is a whole world that dies in that language,” she said. Romero and other indigenous rights workers are beginning to reverse this process. With the FIOB, “we started working on language rights for giving people due process in their language with trained interpreters, but we didn’t stop at that. We had to rescue the language.”

They are developing a smartphone app that teaches Zapotec with phonetic English spelling so that more young people raised in the U.S. can learn the language of their parents and grandparents.

Romero has become a leading advocate for reclaiming Zapotec culture and language in California. She wears traditional embroidered blouses to work and beams when she hears someone speaking Zapotec on a city bus. Her work in the FIOB emphasizes “decolonizing the indigenous mind” by promoting traditional clothing, food, traditions, and most importantly, language. The group uses their own fundraised money for celebrations so that the Zapotec can find solidarity and encourage them to be proud of their own identities.

Odilia also discussed cultural solidarity of the varied indigenous groups in Los Angeles. This past summer, she helped to organize the first Indigenous Languages Literature conference at the prestigious Los Angeles Public Library.

This event was crucial in challenging the narrative that indigenous traditions are a relic of the past. With the conference, cultural celebrations and their political action north and south of the border, they remind others that they exist, and they are here to stay with their cultural practices.

“Our indigenous communities throughout the Americas have suffered a lot, but our language still lives today, and some of our traditions still live today. We have been in the process of resistance for more than 500 years,” Romero said.

Now more than ever, it is important to recognize past and present injustices that have been brought upon indigenous peoples in the United States and throughout the Americas, as well as their consistent resistance to cultural and economic structures that have tried to eliminate them.

If justice is to prevail, it will be because of the efforts of thousands of emerging leaders like Odilia Romero.

Vanessa Bauch is a senior at Elmira College majoring in International Studies and Spanish.
Nothing in DR begins on time

by Paige Wagar

I came to the Dominican Republic expecting humidity, the heat of a city in summer, mosquitos, and to be honest, a lot of beans and rice. I had constructed an image of my experience-to-be using the information fed to me gathered through the experiences of others.

In January, I had traveled to Honduras. I reread my musings from the first few days and one began as follows: Nothing in this country begins on time! No one is responsive or prompt! I laughed as my eyes continued to read my rant regarding the lack of efficiency or promptness.

Just six months ago I was in a similar context, had faced similar frustrations, had learned the reasonings of the laid-back Latin culture, and with one semester in a setting driven by the constraint of time I had forgotten. I hadn’t expected a struggle with time. People here sit. They chat. They banter. They walk. And as simple as a statement this may seem, this is one of the bigger contributors to the culture shock I have faced.

On Tuesday and Thursday we have class from 4 to 6 pm. This means, class begins at 4:20 and ends at 6:15. Zumba starts each morning at 8 am, which means, whenever the teacher and majority of students arrive.

I wear a watch. Others wear theirs for time. People here sit. They chat. They banter. They walk. And as simple as a statement this may seem, this is one of the bigger contributors to the culture shock I have faced.

The question caught me off guard. A norm, is it not? To be on time.

My mother says I would make a good lawyer. According to her, I am assertive in my interpretations of the world and have strong beliefs that I abide to without constraint. She says I hold myself to a high standard of conduct and expect the same from those around me. This mentality serves well in an institution operating under the popular paradigm of education, where knowledge is passed from teacher to student and your day is driven by the clock.

My life at Cornell is scheduled to the minute: class from 8:40 am to 9:55 am, meeting at 10:00 am, class at 11:00 am to 12:20 pm, work at 12:30 pm – I’m stopping there because I can feel my pulse quickening as I type. Aha! Here lies my lesson.

I’ve heard the critique that time is a construct, created to inspire industry and to keep the people on task. But I have my own reasons. My mind likens promptness with respect. This connection lies at the root of my discomfort with the lack of adherence to a schedule. I proudly accept the label type-A for the attributes I associate with this identity: prompt, driven, motivated, efficient, reliable.

It’s funny, really. You’d think a girl raised in a southern California beach town renowned for its surf and beer would have an easier time letting it go and responding to the rhythm of the day. It hasn’t been easy, but as the days pass and the summer progresses, I can feel myself becoming more accustomed to Dominican time.

Paige Wagar is a student of Development Sociology at Cornell University. She is studying in India in spring 2017.

Becoming family in Dominican Republic

by Dylan van Duyne

One of the most humbling parts of the Cornell University Global Health Program in Santo Domingo was having my host mother, Doña Carmen, accept me with open arms immediately upon my arrival in Simón Bolívar. From the first day, Doña Carmen, Don Ciprian, Thania, and Ángel treated me like a member of their family, and this formed a deep feeling of belonging in a community that would be my home for the next eight weeks. I was referred to as mi hijo, “my son” or mi hermano, “my brother.”

Even more than our research projects, a class on qualitative research methods and clinical observation at local hospitals, the most meaningful components of this program for me were the homestay and the Spanish immersion.

Each night, I ate dinner with mi hermana, Thania, who would talk about anything and everything with me, from the day’s events to politics to the secrets shared between siblings that would make Doña Carmen incredibly curious. Talking for hours with my Spanish “teacher” (an appropriate phrase she chose for herself) was crucial to my Spanish development over the course of eight weeks, and this was also our chance to share stories and experiences. From these conversations, we formed a very close friendship that has certainly continued well beyond the summer.

I went on a wide variety of adventures with my host family, from playing basketball at Centro Olímpico to going to the beaches of Boca Chica enjoying the 27 charcos with Ángel. One of my favorite memories from the summer was Doña Carmen’s birthday, and I still distinctly remember her saying that the best gift she could have ever received was “having her four kids together with her on that day.” This was very significant to me, because she was counting me as one of her four kids. As much as your host mom will tell you that you are the greatest gift to her, she is truly the greatest gift you could ask for, and I will be forever grateful for all the learning that occurred under Doña Carmen’s roof.

I have continued to stay in very close contact with my host family, and I am beyond excited to return to them in December as I visit them over winter break.

Dylan van Duyne is a pre-med student at Cornell University majoring in Spanish.
Eliminating gender-based violence

Noemi Plaza-Sánchez is living her passion of contributing to women's health, especially by working to eliminate gender-based violence. A 2014 participant in the Cornell-CUSLAR Global Health Program in the Dominican Republic and 2015 Cornell grad, Plaza-Sánchez has returned to the Dominican Republic with a Fulbright scholarship to do research with Centro de Masculinidad Solidaria. At left are two of her youth collaborators in the Simón Bolívar neighborhood.

by Noemi Plaza-Sánchez

Every time I think I have nothing left to gain from Calle General Sucre, I am proven wrong. This is the third time I have come to the same street, in the same barrio, in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, yet the learning is more intense than ever.

In the summer of 2014, I was part of the first cohort of the Cornell Global Health Program in the Dominican Republic. The experience had me hooked. Dr. Angel Pichardo Almonte’s contagious energy and unending knowledge of natural and Chinese medicine, the love I felt from the whole neighborhood – it was all so exciting.

The following summer, I returned to the program in a leadership capacity, taking on the role of the student trip leader. Learning how to deliver a successful field experience to both the students and our Dominican partners tested my leadership style, and helped me to grow tremendously in understanding the dynamics of human relationships. In addition, Dr. Pichardo had started a center for gender studies, giving me a new arena to discover, one closely related to my interest in women’s health.

To continue my work with Dr. Pichardo, last fall I applied to and received a Fulbright U.S. Student Program grant to work in his Centro de Masculinidad Solidaria on a project with teens and violence prevention.

Gender-based violence is of increasing importance in the Dominican Republic, with the region’s third highest femicide rate in 2013, according to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Femicide is the murder of a woman by her partner or ex-partner. Even more alarming, the numbers are rising. Amnesty International reports that in the last six months of 2014, gender-based killings increased by 53 percent. To put these percentages and rankings into perspective, in a population of 10 million people, a woman is killed every two days.

In a context in which machismo, or a perception of male superiority, has increasingly led to murder, Dr. Pichardo proposes an innovative approach to addressing gender violence: one that works with men to construct an identity of masculinity based on mutual respect. The center aims to establish a youth education program around gender equality, and my proposed research will be key in collecting baseline data for the project.

My research entails immersing myself in the Simón Bolívar neighborhood of Santo Domingo to get to know young people’s perceptions about gender relations. Do teenagers in the barrio have a consciousness of inequality in their gender relations? If so, what is their perception? What are their attitudes towards this perceived inequality? How do they act when confronted with, or even partake in their prescribed gender roles? And finally, what feelings do they have toward the unequal gender relations in their realities?

I aim to engage with young people around these questions through focus groups and participant observation. Being an effective researcher in Simón Bolívar means, in addition to formal interviews, playing street basketball, as well as talking in colmados, or neighborhood stores, and at social gatherings. Focus groups give me a chance to have more specific conversations with teenagers about their perceptions about the opposing gender. We discuss scenarios and pose questions, not only to obtain answers to the research questions, but also to entice conversations with teens as they consider taking action.

In the spring I will work directly with the youth to implement gender equality workshops and curriculum, using the research findings as a basis for the material. I hope that work with teenagers in the field of gender relations will bring a greater understanding of the roots of societal patterns that endanger women’s mental, physical, and reproductive health.

Through this research I am learning to understand the social aspects affecting and shaping women’s health, an issue in which I hope to specialize and dedicate my career.

Noemi Plaza-Sánchez is a 2015 graduate of Cornell University. She is currently a U.S. Fulbright Scholar in the Dominican Republic, and she has been accepted at the Warren Alpert Medical School at Brown University for the fall of 2017.

**Monthly Spanish Masses with Cornell Catholic**

- **Sunday February 5th at 4pm Sage Chapel**
- **Sunday March 19th at 4pm Sage Chapel**
- **Sunday April 30th at 4pm Sage Chapel**
Global Health: Springboard to a career

by Vanessa Rivera

As a Cornell Global Health minor, I was eager to study the social aspects of human biology and medicine. I spoke of my desire to “help others” and “create change.” I lacked the exact words and experiences to describe what I wanted to pursue: global health medicine.

Now, two years after completing my Cornell degree, it is useful to reflect on where I have come from, realizing what has shaped my life journey and passion for health and healing.

I was raised in Houston, Texas by immigrant parents. The role my mother’s culture played in my family was central. Castellano was the language I spoke at home, my abuelos helped take care of me and merienda was the snack I had after school.

Uruguayan culture was the backbone of my Hispanic identity, and education was my parents’ priority for me. My family could not financially support my way through college, but my going was nonnegotiable. I became a first-generation college graduate, and I have been inspired to help others follow this path as well.

Recurring themes of health equity have reinforced my passion to pursue global health medicine in limited resource settings.

My first health experience abroad was fulfilling the eight-week fieldwork requirement for the Global Health minor in 2013. I lived in Cusco, Peru and worked as a research assistant implementing a feasibility study on the efficacy of infant vaccine reminder bracelets. I enrolled mothers and infants into our study.

I quickly learned that critical determinants of human development, such as routine vaccination for newborns, so integrated into societal structures in some places of the world, do not exist in others. The basic human right to health is still withheld from many mothers around the globe.

After graduation in 2014, I was the teaching assistant on Cornell’s first Global Health experience in the Dominican Republic. This program is dedicated to alternative methods of medicine in global health, from traditional healing to holistic, socio-psychological public health models. As we studied holistic and traditional healing at the ANDA community center, we became a part of a vibrant Dominican community. In the DR, I grew to respect the importance of learning local history and context, including spiritual practices, as vital components of healing.

The Cornell Global Health Program and the enriching experiences abroad it afforded me provided me with a springboard to explore a career in global health research.

Currently, I work as a full-time research coordinator at an infectious disease clinic and AIDS research center in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. During the past two years, I have explored how basic science and clinical care can work together to effect societal changes through clinical research.

Connecting my current work and my past experiences in the Global Health Program, I realize that the role of clinician, researcher and patient advocate become synergistic through medicine. In my interactions with doctors and patients, I find myself eager to ask questions to fill the gaps in my medical knowledge to learn not only the socio-psychological aspects of disease, but also the science behind patients’ diagnoses, infection and treatment and clinical management.

These experiences, made possible through Cornell Global Health, have transformed my understanding of what it means to be a physician and have inspired me to pursue medical school in the coming year.

Vanessa Rivera graduated from Cornell University in 2014. She studied Policy Analysis and Management and minored in Global Health. She held a leadership role in the Cornell Global Health Program in the Dominican Republic in 2014 and 2016.
On Martin Luther King Day, Resist the Disney-fication of Dr. King

Russell Rickford, associate professor of history at Cornell University, gave the 2016 address to the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Day Community Luncheon at Beverly J. Martin Elementary School, Ithaca, New York last January 18. We print the speech in its entirety here. Used with permission.

Russell Rickford

It’s nice to see you. Thanks to the organizers of this gathering. It’s good to be here.

My seven-year-old daughter came home the other day singing a song about Martin Luther King. Her second-grade class was getting ready to participate in an annual MLK Day concert.

Now, in a way that’s amazing. It’s a sign of just how institutionalized MLK commemoration has become in our society.

Yet the lyrics my daughter was singing also reflect some of the very problematic ways that the American public remembers King.

The song my daughter learned explains that King was “a kind and gentle man.” It suggests that he “had a plan” for achieving peace and racial harmony. And it implies that Americans have more or less carried out this “plan,” or are at least trying to do so.

Now, I recognize that we craft certain messages for children. But the assumptions behind such representations of King also shape our culture and consciousness.

Such depictions of King cater to the American obsession with individualism. Here King is the singular, charismatic leader, the wise shepherd gently guiding his flock to freedom.

Largely ignored are the masses of women and men, boys and girls whose sacrifices and courage actually generated the popular black insurgency of the postwar era. The conventional narrative of King, moreover, suggests that the movement has been largely fulfilled. The anti-racist struggle in America becomes a relic that inspires civic rituals, proud tributes, somber reflection, and little else. Perhaps some volunteerism. A day on, as they say, rather than a day off.

The trouble with this approach is that, no matter how well intended, such messages inevitably contribute to the hollowing out of King, and to the distortion and erasure of both the man and the movement that produced him.

We’re left with a docile and accommodating King. Watered-down. Washed up. Safe. I like to call it the Disney-fication of King. Somebody said Santa Claus-ification.

This King has universal appeal. He could be a contestant on American Idol. This is the corporatized King. King as trademark, as brand. King as the Nike “swoosh” symbol. This King is making the world safe for transnational corporations.

It’s a stroke of genius, really. You reduce the entire black freedom struggle to one man. Then you drain that man of any kind of oppositional or political meaning. You turn him into a fairy tale; a metaphor for American exceptionalism.

Y’all know what American exceptionalism is?

It means that this nation was uniquely ordained by God or nature to embody the democratic strivings of all humanity; and that it can therefore do whatever it pleases, bomb whomever it pleases, take anybody’s land, pollute anybody’s rivers.

This is the King that we dutifully resurrect every year.

The idea that King held a picnic in Washington, and America showed up to wash away its sins in the waters of the Lincoln Memorial reflecting pool, and that Obama today is the incarnation of that moment of grace, that transcendent day in 1963 when Martin said “I have a dream.” That, my friends, is a narrative designed to reassure us that America really is a city on a hill. No matter how much war we wage; how many children we drone; how many poor families we deport or starve; how many “enemy combatants” we torture and illegally detain. We can always trot out King to reassure ourselves. And to cover the stench.

In the end, though, the contradictions surface.

It’s not just that King has been used to justify the gutting of affirmative action. Or that he has been transformed into a poster boy for colorblindness. “Colorblindness”—the idea that simply “not seeing race” is evidence that we have overcome the legacy of slavery and segregation.

No. The real rub is that the greatest enemies of King, and of the movement that created him, continue to kill and plunder while clothing themselves in his legacy.

In Chicago, Mayor Rahm Emanuel just held an MLK breakfast. Now here’s a guy, directly complicit in the cover-up involving Laquan McDonald, a young black man viciously gunned down in the street by the cops. The cops lied about what happened, and Rahm lied right along with them. And now he’s gonna stand on Martin’s face and say, “I have a Dream”?

And then there’s Obama. I know some of y’all like Obama. Obama just had his State of the Union address. And of course, he paraphrased King.

CONTINUED ON FOLLOWING PAGES
Obama has bombed seven countries in as many years. He’s dropped 35,000 bombs on Muslim nations.

Some of you know Mary Anne Grady Flores. Mary Anne, a resident of our area, is the “grandma” Drone resister who they’re sending back to jail for six months for nonviolently protesting Obama’s drone assassination program.

Mary Anne is a symbol of our outrage, our horror at these death machines, these demonic contraptions that even now, somewhere, are circling overhead, buzzing incessantly, tormenting civilians. Mary Anne Grady Flores speaks for many of us when she says those children that you have mutilated, that you have dismembered, those are our children. Those are our babies.

Well. Here we are singing King’s name and locking up Mary Anne. I have a dream. I have a drone.

Then there’s the carnage in our streets. Tamir Rice in Cleveland. The boy was 12 years old. Somebody said “he was murdered for using his imagination.”

In the last two weeks alone there have been more than 20 fatal police shootings. And it’s not just the caravan of deaths that haunts us, that exposes our hypocrisy. It’s other forms of violence, too.

White wealth today is thirteen times that of black wealth. Thirteen times! What kind of historical experience produces that level of inequality?

Recently, when the housing bubble burst, Black America lost 240,000 homes. Every day we are human fodder for a truly grotesque system of mass incarceration. Generations of black men and women have simply vanished.

Who’s got a freedom song for that?

No. If we’re gonna honor the black liberation movement, let’s honor the whole movement, past and present. The slave revolts. The armed struggles against the Klan and the lynch mob. The black communists. The black feminists. The workers’ struggles.

If we’re going to remember King, let’s not recycle a sound byte. Let’s not call for “civility” or “inclusion” or “diversity” or “tolerance.”

Let’s recall the man, who, near the end of his short life, was struggling, as we all must, with his mortality. Who was scared and riddled with doubt. But who was determined to tell no lies.

This King said: “I never intend to adjust myself to economic conditions that will take necessities from the many to give luxuries to the few.”

This King said: “Many white Americans of good will have never connected bigotry with economic exploitation. They have deplored prejudice but tolerated or ignored economic injustice.”

This King said America was on the wrong side of the world revolution, and declared that, “We as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values.”

This King was trying to catch up with the young radicals of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, who had already taken a principled stance against U.S. imperialist war.

In some ways, this King was trying to catch up with Malcolm X, who had never stopped denouncing U.S. imperialism at home and abroad.

Through their few, fragmented and fraught communications, I can imagine the exchanges King and Malcolm might have had.

Brother Malcolm might have said to King -- and here I’m taking poetic license -- he might have said: Now brother, this ain’t no civil rights struggle; this is a struggle for human rights. This is a struggle against colonialism and imperialism. This is a fight against white world supremacy.

And King might have replied: Brother, in many ways you’re right. But I can’t say that out loud -- I’ll lose my pulpit. I’ll lose my bargaining position.

Yet King understood his historical role. In the end, he knew what he had to do. He had to help organize a campaign of militant civil disobedience. He had to help launch a Poor People’s Campaign -- an alliance between organized labor, unorganized workers, the unemployed, and the poor, to descend on Washington and demand an economic bill of rights, a humane society.

King had to do something else, too. He had to speak out against that damn war in Southeast Asia.

This King called the United States government “the greatest purveyor of violence in the world.”

This King named the three pillars of American empire: racism, militarism, and economic exploitation. He said: “When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, militarism, and economic exploitation are incapable of being conquered.”

That was and is the unholy trinity, the vicious triad of American violence. As I tell my students, just remember the three W’s: War, Wealth inequality, and White supremacy.

Near the end of his life, when King began saying these things far more openly than he ever had before, when his critique expanded to envelop the whole apparatus of American capitalism, then, in the eyes of the political establishment, the media, the civil rights mainstream, and much of polite America, King became a pariah.

He became what segregationists and business elites had always called him: A Nuisance! And quite a dangerous one.

So today, if we’re going to honor the radical tradition of peace and justice that...
helped make King, we must again combat the three W’s: War. Wealth inequality. And White supremacy.

If we’re going to build a humane society, we must heed the words of the brilliant scholar-activist Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, a queer black woman. As Keeanga recently said: “The idea that we should have a society based on the equal distribution of wealth and resources is deeply embedded in the black experience. We talk about wanting black people to be free, so we have to think through what that means, which involves understanding what limits black freedom and what black freedom -- beyond statutory, formal freedom -- could look like.”

So in the short time I have left, I want to try to identify one of the main threats not just to black freedom, but to the freedom and wellbeing of all humanity. I want to talk about neoliberalism.

Now, “neoliberalism” is a funny word. It doesn’t mean “liberal” according to today’s definition of that term—someone who thinks the government should be actively involved in reforming society.

No. The “liberal” in neoliberalism comes from the 19th century meaning; that is, complete freedom from government interference. So “neo” liberalism, in part, means a return to an era in which there was next to no economic regulation or taxation.

But neoliberalism is much more than that. Neoliberalism is an especially aggressive, especially brutal form of capitalism. It has ruled our lives, and the lives of most people on the planet, since the late 20th century.

What else does neoliberalism mean? Neoliberalism means growing insecurity, unemployment or underemployment for most of the people in the Global North -- the rich countries -- and economic devastation for most of the people in the Global South -- the poor countries.

Neoliberalism means austerity, except for the bankers. It means the crushing of labor unions, the decline of wages, the shredding of the safety net. It means sending jobs overseas. It means the billionaire class sucks up 95 percent of the economic gains since the Great Recession of ’08-09.

Neoliberalism means desperation and downward mobility. It means your life is increasingly precarious. You’re swimming in debt. You think you’re running in place, but you’re actually falling behind.

Neoliberalism means even white, middle-class people are dying sooner. As it turns out, your whiteness won’t protect you.

Neoliberalism means obscene inequality. It means the redistribution of the world’s wealth to the top 1 percent. Eighty people now hold the same amount of wealth as the world’s 3.6 billion poorest people. In the U.S., 400 individuals have more wealth than 150 million citizens. The Walton family, owners of Walmart, have more wealth than 42% of American families combined.

Neoliberalism means privately run prisons and privately run healthcare. It means billionaires privatizing our public schools and annexing our great cities.

Neoliberalism means decay. It means climate change, the destruction of our planet, the neglect and deterioration of our infrastructure and our public institutions. It means that children in Flint, Michigan are dying of lead poisoning as a result of that city’s foul, orange-hued tap water. Flint is largely black and largely poor. They’re drinking toxic waste. If you think it can’t happen to you, you haven’t been paying attention.

Neoliberalism means widespread ignorance and spiritual starvation. In its lust for profit and world domination, neoliberalism unleashes the most reactionary and vulgar elements of society. The fascists. The bigots. The warmongers.

This is not civilization. It’s barbarism. This is not what King had in mind when he said we would reach the Promised Land.

Who can live elegantly under the neoliberal regime? How can we teach our children decency in such indecent times? The only way to salvage our humanity, to leave our children something besides war and debt and misery, is to fight!

So as I close, I urge you to join the General Strike that is unfolding in many pockets of the world, from South Africa to Saudi Arabia. From Ferguson to Baltimore. From Yale to Mizzou to Ithaca College.

Today, many of our young people recognize the imperative to resist. They recognize the truth of what the democratic freedom fighter Ella Baker said back in 1964: “...We who believe in freedom cannot rest.”

These young people are calling for a new social contract. Some of them, particularly those organized under the banner of “Black Lives Matter” and “Fight for 15,” are calling for the reconstruction of democracy. They’re calling for living wages, dignified jobs, a worker’s bill of rights, and the protection and rebuilding of unions. They’re demanding fully funded healthcare, social services, and public schools. They’re seeking universal childcare, full access to reproductive health, an end to racist mass imprisonment, police terror, and the colonial occupation of the Palestinian people.

Some of our young people are now in open rebellion against neoliberalism and its accomplice: global white supremacy.

They’re determined to create a massive crisis for the system—a crisis of dissent. They have begun to engage in civil disobedience. Boycotts. Work stoppages. Marches. Rallies. Creative disruption. I think Martin would have been pleased.

As our brother Cornel West has said: “The litmus test for realizing King’s dream was neither a Black face in the White House nor a Black presence on Wall Street. Rather, the fulfillment of his dream was for all poor and working people to live lives of decency and dignity.”

So let’s be like King. Let’s catch up with our young people. Let’s demand a humane economy and an end to war. Let’s become nuisances.

King was a deeply flawed man. As flawed, perhaps, as you and me. If he was great, he was great because some small but determined segment of the people rose up and said “enough.” They launched a general strike. They didn’t hold no picnic. They didn’t have no love-fest. They analyzed their objective conditions. And they went to battle.

I want to try to identify one of the main threats not just to black freedom, but to the freedom and wellbeing of all humanity. I want to talk about neoliberalism.

So I leave you with the words of the beautiful Fred Hampton, chairman of the Chicago Black Panthers, one of the spiritual descendants of King, and Malcolm, and Ella, who was murdered in his sleep by the mad-dog cops and federal agents in 1969:

Comrade Fred said: “People say you fight fire best with fire, but we say you put fire out best with water. We say you don’t fight racism with racism. We’re gonna fight racism with solidarity. We say you don’t fight capitalism with no black capitalism; you fight capitalism with socialism.”

Thank You. Venceremos! Free Palestine!
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CUSLAR: Committee on U.S.-Latin American Relations
316 Anabel Taylor Hall, Cornell University
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Globalization and Latin America
by Richard Gaunt, David Johnson and Tim Shenk

The term “globalization” is on everybody’s lips today, from academics to policy makers to international business leaders. Yet the term’s precise meanings and consequences are often elusive.

At CUSLAR, in our study of Latin America, we increasingly find it necessary to study globalization, a phase of capitalism that is rapidly knocking down the borders and barriers that formerly shaped our world.

In this article, we turn to the work of William I. Robinson, whose path-breaking work on critical theories of globalization is essential for social scientists and social movements alike. Robinson’s work charts globalization’s place in the historical development of our economic and political system.

He demonstrates how we can use globalization to view contemporary issues in specific regions. A critical globalization perspective not only challenges the way we situate Latin American Studies, but also reveals the rising potential for global change and global action.

Read the full article at cuslar.org/globalization

Indigenous struggles in global context
by Tim Shenk

Indigenous struggles have gained visibility in 2016 throughout the Americas.


In March, the assassination of globally renowned indigenous environmental leader Berta Cáceres brought the world’s attention to Honduras, where the Lenca people are fighting a hydroelectric dam megaproject in their territory.

I’d like to consider how recent conflicts involving indigenous peoples may be connected to the economic context, especially as the world continues to feel effects of the global economic crisis.

Read the full article at cuslar.org/indigenousstruggles

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Letters to the editor should not exceed 250 words, and posts meant for the web should range from 700 to 1,000 words.

For more info, visit cuslar.org

CUSLAR on the web
Committee on U.S.-Latin American Relations

Ithaca, NY
Community Book Read:
The New Jim Crow
by Michelle Alexander

The New Jim Crow is a serious look at the deeply unjust system of mass incarceration in the U.S. Criminalization of African-Americans is particularly harsh, leading to the creation of “second-class” citizens who can’t vote and face legal discrimination in housing, employment, education and benefits. 2017 events:

JANUARY 16
Hosted by The Returning Citizens Welcome Group. Corresponds with Chapter 4.

FEBRUARY 13
Hosted by Civic Ensemble, ReEntry Theater. Corresponds with Chapter 5.

MARCH 13

APRIL 17
A conversation to discuss next steps for addressing mass incarceration locally.

Events open to everyone. Childcare and a free, light dinner provided at each event.

All listed events will be held at GIAC, 301 W. Court St., Ithaca, from 5:30 - 7 pm.

Get more information and your free copy of The New Jim Crow at multiculturalresourcecenter.org/bookread.

To donate, visit cuslar.org/about/donate. To advertise in the newsletter, contact cuslar@cornell.edu.