

# La Compañera



October 20, 2015  
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## *Carleton Hosts Anabel Hernández, Mexican Investigative Journalist*

This month, Carleton welcomed Anabel Hernández, best known for her investigative research on the Mexican Drug War, which has taken the lives of some 100,000 people and the “disappearance” of a roughly equal number of others since 2006, and the intimate connections between the cartels and the U.S. and Mexican governments.

Hernández, currently a fellow at U.C. Berkeley’s Graduate School of Journalism, dined with students at Stimson House at the invitation of the Office of Intercultural and International Life (OIIL) on October 1. OIIL had invited Hernández to campus as this year’s Hispanic Heritage Month convocation speaker. Students were given the opportunity to speak with her in a more informal and intimate



*LASO dinner with Anabel Hernández*



*LASO students who attended the dinner.*

setting. Hernández began with a self-introduction

before discussing her investigation of the fate of the forty-three missing rural education students from Ayotzinapa, Guerrero who were abducted last year in the town of Iguala. She noted that “A year into the case I came to realize the Mexican government manipulated the case since the beginning.”

Hernández went on to explain how Mexico has become one of the most dangerous places to work as a journalist. She received numerous threats during her investigation of the drug war, because, she claimed, her work was uncovering the truth about the Mexican government. These threats spurred her to leave the country in order to continue her investigation.

Hernández, however, returned to the streets of Iguala to interview eyewitnesses, only to surmise that they were being threatened not to share their stories. She canvassed the

neighborhood, but the inhabitants were initially reluctant to speak. Only after repeated attempts did she start to convince people to tell their stories. They shared videos and pictures to support their claims that.... on what occurred on that devastating day.

## Anabel Hernández

Investigative journalist Anabel Hernández warns that remaining silent kills freedom and justice



Anabel Hernández opened her convocation address with a request for a moment of silence in honor of the 13 people killed and 20 injured in a mass shooting in Oregon the previous day.

“Things like this happen everyday in Mexico,” she noted.

Hernández proceeded by detailing her journalistic career and her current investigative work. She argued that the U.S. depiction of Mexico’s Drug War is highly inaccurate. The devastation occurring in Mexico is happening, she argued, because the Mexican government is corrupt. She went on to suggest that the rise of cartel leader Joaquín “El Chapo” Guzmán is a direct testament of the government’s corruption. Corruption already existed in Mexico prior to the Drug War, and that corruption gave birth to El Chapo.

Hernández went on to lament that there is no faith in the government because the continuous string of horrific events occurring in Mexico never seem to bring any significant consequence. Government statements in response to these tragedies also seem untrustworthy.

On a more optimistic note, Hernández emphasized that the case of the 43 missing students has galvanized a great deal of popular support. Hernández argued that the relatives of the missing students refuse to stop their demand for justice and truth, because they have nothing left to lose, and that the poignant disappearance of so many young students has resonated strongly in a country where so many families have endured similar losses and fears.

Hernández spoke passionately of the determination of the Mexican people. “These Mexican students do not have nice pants, t-shirts to wear, but they are fighting to find their colleagues, their friends... Ángel, a young man from Guerrero, Mexico, visited U.C. Berkeley and he admired the beauty of the buildings, people, and their clothes. His response to his visit, “People here have everything, yet are moved by nothing. We have nothing, yet we fight everyday.” Hernández’s message was that there are so many issues going on in the world that need to be talked about more, and that we students are a part of this society. If we do not take steps to create solutions, no one else will.

### A brief interview with Ms. Hernández...

**Q: Why do you think this incident became so known?**

*A: The case of the 43 missing students brought up the Mexican crisis, these 43 students unified the society. They represented the thousands of missing people that have gone missing in Mexico.*

**Q: Why did you choose this vocation?**

*A: I’m the only journalist in my family, most of my family members became engineers. The desire to become a journalist came from the murder of my father.*

**Q: What can we do?**

*A: You are a part of society, what you do or do not has an effect. Social movements led by students have a huge impact. I believe more in the social movements than in the international government.*

## Fall Term Events

### Exhibition of the late Ana Mendieta's Films and Images

There will be a viewing of the late Ana Mendieta's films and images at the University of Minnesota's Nash Gallery. This exhibition will be running throughout the fall. *Covered in Time and History: The Films of Ana Mendieta* September 15<sup>th</sup>- December 12<sup>th</sup>.

Ana Mendieta was born in Havana, Cuba on **November 19**, 1948. Her came from a politically and culturally prominent family. She received a Bachelor of Arts in 1969, and Master of Fine Arts degree in painting in 1972. Shortly after she abandoned painting to focus on mixed media, performance and sculpture. Through a series of works incorporating the earth and her figure, she developed the earth-body genre for which she is widely known. During the summers, Mendieta returned to Mexico with the Intermedia Program, where she created her first Siluetas at Yágul.

Learn more about the exhibit at <https://art.umn.edu/nash/Katherine-E.Nash-Gallery>



### Fall Lefler Lecturer, Peter Kornbluh, U.S.-Cuba Relations

The History Department is welcoming Peter Kornbluh as the Lefler distinguished lecturer on **Monday, October 26**. His lecture, "The Hidden History of Back Channel Negotiations between the U.S. and Cuba," is open to all and will take place between 4:30 and 5:30 in Leighton 305.

Kornbluh is a National Security Archive Senior Analyst and the Director of the Archive's Cuba and Chile Documentation Projects. His publications include: *Back Channel to Cuba: The Hidden History of Negotiations between Washington and Havana*; *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962*; *The Iran-Contra Scandal: The Declassified History*; *Bay of Pigs Declassified: The Secret CIA Report on the Invasion of Cuba*; and *The Pinochet File: A Declassified Dossier on Atrocity and Accountability*, which was an *L.A. Times* best book of the year.

His articles appear often in *Foreign Policy*, *The New York Review of Books*, *The Nation*, *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and many others. He has appeared on national television and radio broadcasts: *60 Minutes*, *The Charlie Rose show*, *Nightline*, *CNN*, *All Things Considered*, and *FreshAir*. His documentary films include the Oscar-winning *Panama Deception*, the History Channel's *Bay of Pigs Declassified*, and *The Trials of Henry Kissinger*. In **November 2003**, he served as producing consultant on the Discovery Times documentary, *Kennedy and Castro: The Secret History*, based on his article "Kennedy and Castro: The Secret Quest for Accommodation."

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