

***Communities Confronting Globalization – February 27, 2007***

The Center co-sponsored a presentation entitled “Communities Confronting Globalization” by Manuel Mendez Guzman, a member of the Red de Defensores Comunitarios por los Derechos Humanos. Sr. Guzman engaged in a bilingual conversation with an overflowing crowd of students, professors, and members of the outside community about his work advocating for victims of human rights abuses in the rural Mexican state of Chiapas. The goal of Sr. Guzman and his colleagues is to end the violence perpetrated against the indigenous farmers of the Chiapas region by government-sponsored paramilitary groups as well as to maintain the economic and environmental stability of the region. Sr. Guzman described the Red’s fight to keep electricity and running water in the indigenous communities of Chiapas, as these once state-run utilities are becoming increasingly privatized. A denial of light and water, explained Sr. Guzman, is a denial of fundamental human rights, as educational and medical services, among others, rely heavily on these utilities. In concluding his talk, Sr. Guzman explained that the objective of his travels to American universities is to raise awareness outside of Mexico of the plight of the Chiapas indigenous community. This lecture was also sponsored by the International Studies Program, the Latin American Studies Program, the Globalization and Inequality Series, and the Film Program.