



Evangelical Protestantism in Rural Andean Bolivia: The Social Impact of Religious Change

Dr. Marygold Walsh-Dilley

Wednesday, September 30, 2015

12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

UNM LAII (801 Yale Blvd NE)

A “Protestant Wave” is sweeping across Latin America, challenging the historical dominance of the Catholic Church and bringing with it far reaching social change. This paper examines the contentious process of increasing religious diversity in rural Andean Bolivia. Drawing on ethnographic research in two Quechua villages, I explore why villagers convert to new evangelical denominations, what tensions result, and how increasing religious diversity interacts with non-religious social networks. I focus in particular on reciprocity networks and practices, which have long been understood as important cultural and economic resources in the Andes. This research highlights alcohol consumption as a key factor mediating both religious conversion and its effects.

Marygold Walsh-Dilley is Assistant Professor of Social and Behavioral Sciences in the Honors College, with a courtesy appointment in the Department of Sociology. She is also a faculty affiliate of the LAII. She holds a PhD in Development Sociology, and an MS in Applied Economics, both from Cornell University. Her research focuses on the intersection between rural development, food systems, and indigenous politics, with a geographical focus in Andean Bolivia.

This event is free and open to the public. Image: Photograph of church reprinted with permission from Walsh-Dilley.

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