

# Colombian urges pressure

By Sheri Metzler  
Emerald Contributor

In an effort to raise consciousness in the United States about human rights violations in Colombia, Clara Lopez Obregon visited the Eugene Council for Human Rights in Latin America on Wednesday.

Obregon is the former City Council President of Bogota, is on a national speaking tour sponsored by the Third World Women's Project.

"Colombia has been declared a human rights emergency," Obregon said. "It has the highest murder rate for a country not at war."

Obregon sees Colombia's present state as an "undeclared civil war." She said, "There are a great number of death squads. The government has 140 documented."

The death squads exterminate those people of political dissent, Obregon said. "Labor union organizers, human rights defenders and the intellectual community have become subject to persecution," she explained.

Obregon herself is on a death list because of her views. "I am a very strong human rights activist and it has created a situation for my being placed on a death list," she said. Consequently, the government gives Obregon strong protection.

As a result of her speaking tour, Obregon hopes to raise the consciousness of the American people and to persuade the U.S. government to pressure the Colombian government.

"The Colombian government may respond to international pressure," Obregon said. "It is not responding to internal pressure."

Another of Colombia's problems is the \$140 billion drug market. Obregon observed that drug trafficking is "out of control" both in Colombia and in the United States.

"Drugs were never a problem until the big demand came from the U.S.," said Obregon. "The U.S. has to try to solve the drug problem also," she continued.

Obregon sees drug abuse as a symptom of a greater disease. According to Obregon, there is evidence that drug kings are financing the paramilitary death squads.

"There is a double policy in the government," Obregon said. "They are willing to give bodyguards (for those like herself), but not take people to trial. There is no unity inside the Colombian government," she said. "There are all sorts of conflicting and contradictory influences."

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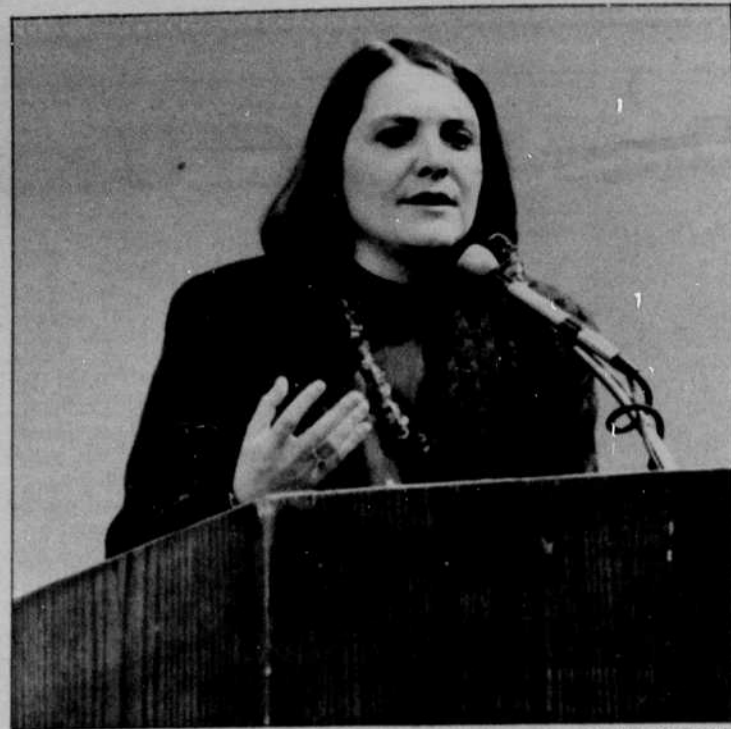


Photo by Maile Field

Clara Lopez Obregon, former city council president of Bogota, Colombia, spoke Wednesday about the need to educate the public about human rights violations.

## Lecture series opens with government ethics topic

By Chris Bouneff  
Emerald Reporter

Ethics in public service and government will be the topic addressed by speaker Victor Rosenblum at 8 tonight in the EMU Fir Room.

Rosenblum, a professor of law and political science at Northwestern University, is the first speaker in a series of four lectures scheduled for this fall to address the topic of ethics in government.

The University's Center for the Humanities, with help from a grant from Thomas E. Autzen, is sponsoring this fall's lectures. They are the first in a three-year program designed to bring to public forum those issues that relate to both the humanities and the professions.

"It's crucial for there to be public discussion on issues that often fall between college and curricular boundaries and public boundaries," said John Stuhr, Center for the Humanities director.

This fall's lectures focus on ethics in public service. Next year's topic will be journalism, and the final series of lectures will center around the world of business.

Other speakers slated for this fall include Judge Abner Mikva of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, and Robben Fleming, recent interim president of the University of Michigan. Oregon Sen. Mark Hatfield, scheduled for Nov. 29, is the last of the four speakers for this year.

According to Stuhr, the speakers were specifically chosen for their different backgrounds so they could provide varied perspectives on the topic of ethics in politics.

Rosenblum, who is the director of Northwestern's Law School Graduate Studies Program, was president of Reed College from 1968-70 and has taught in a number of law schools during summer sessions.

Mikva, who will speak Nov. 2, joined the circuit court in 1979. Before that he was a five-term congressman from Illinois, serving on the House Judiciary and Ways and Means committees.

Fleming is a past president of the National Academy of Arbitrators and currently chairs the board of the National Institute for Dispute Resolution. He is also a senior consultant to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Besides being a four-term U.S. senator, Hatfield was the governor of Oregon from 1959-67 and has written three books and co-authored three others on dealing with world hunger and the benefits of a nuclear weapons freeze.

Because each speaker comes from a different area of public service and has a different perspective of ethical issues in government, Stuhr expects the series of lectures will help highlight the moral and political issues that apply to both the humanities and the professions.

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