

Juan E. Méndez Book Award

The Juan E. Méndez Book Award for Human Rights in Latin America honors the leadership and legacy of Juan E. Méndez, a champion of justice who has devoted his life to the defense of human rights. Méndez is the former UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and current Professor of Human Rights Law at American University. The award honors an outstanding book of non-fiction, including graphic works, published in English on human rights, democracy and social justice in contemporary Latin America. Méndez's papers are housed at Duke University Libraries' Human Rights Archive, one of the largest collections of human rights materials at any American university. The papers document Méndez's work as the UN Special Advisor for the Prevention of Genocide and the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, as well as his work with the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ).



ELIGIBILITY

Scholarly and popular books, including graphic works, are eligible, either edited or authored. To be eligible, books must meet the following criteria:

- An original, non-fiction book related to issues of human rights, the rule of law, social and/or economic justice, and democracy, as they are broadly understood, in contemporary Latin America. Books should pertain to events that took place in roughly the past 50 years.
- Published in the English language by a commercial, university, or non-profit publishing concern. Books written originally in other languages and translated into English are eligible. Self-published books are not eligible.
- Published in the two years before the date of the award, including the year of the award. In other words, books published in 2018 and 2019 are eligible for the prize awarded in 2019. Books published in 2017 or before are not eligible.

The award winner will be announced in December 2019 with the winner delivering a reading at Duke University in early 2020. Judges will be looking for books that offer important contributions to research on Latin America while also enriching the general public's understanding of Latin America. The winning book will reflect high standards of originality, high-quality research and clear, compelling writing. Both scholarly and popular books are welcome. In the case of two or more authors, the prize money will be distributed equally among them. There is an award of \$1,000.

The deadline for entries is **October 15, 2019**. There is no entry form. Publishers, authors or readers may send inquiries to rights@duke.edu. Please use the subject line Méndez Book Award.

Copies should be mailed to:

Méndez Book Award
Duke Human Rights Center @ the Franklin Humanities Institute
Box 90403
114 S. Buchanan Blvd.
Durham, NC 27708

The submission should contain a short description of the book and publishing details; no supporting materials or reviews are necessary. If books are short-listed, we will request copies for all judges. For books due to be published in 2018 but after the entry deadline, nominators may send a pre-publication copy, indicating the publication date. Judges are drawn from Duke University as well as journalists, scholars, writers and others who have worked in human rights in Latin America.

JUDGES

Holly Ackerman: Librarian for Latin American, Iberian and Latino/a Studies at the Duke University Libraries, Ackerman is a member of Duke's graduate faculty in History. She is the author of *The Cuban Balseiros: Voyage of Uncertainty* which established the demography and social history of Cubans who emigrate by sea. She publishes regularly on aspects of Cuban, Dominican and Haitian migration as well as issues of national reconciliation. She recently participated in an invitational project of the Social Science Research Council on the [Implications of Normalization of U.S. Cuban Relations](#). She serves as an advisor to Amnesty International USA on Cuban issues. Ackerman has curated archives and exhibits on the Puerto Rican diaspora as well as Haitian, Dominican and Cuban migration. Currently, she is working on a comparative study between Caribbean and Mediterranean Sea migration having completed field research in 2016 in Italy and Malta.



James Chappel: Hunt Assistant Professor of History at Duke University, James Chappel studies modern European history. Chappel received his PhD in History from Columbia University. His first book will appear from Harvard University Press in the Spring of 2018: *Catholic Modern: The Challenge of Totalitarianism and the Remaking of the Church*. Among other things, the book traces the way that Catholics came to adopt a language of “human rights,” and it explores the limitations and opportunities of religious human rights language. He is generally interested in human rights, religion, and the welfare state.



Robin Kirk (Chair): Faculty Co-Chair of the Duke Human Rights Center at the Franklin Humanities Institute, Kirk is a founding member of the Pauli Murray Project, an initiative of the Center that seeks to examine the region’s past of slavery, segregation and continuing economic inequality. An author and human rights advocate, Kirk is a lecturer in the Department of Cultural Anthropology and directs the Human Rights Certificate. Kirk has written three books, including *More Terrible Than Death: Massacres, Drugs and America’s War in Colombia* (Public Affairs) and *The Monkey’s Paw: New Chronicles from Peru* (University of Massachusetts Press). She is a co-editor of *The Peru Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (Duke University) and co edits Duke University Press’s “World Readers” series.



Maria McFarland Sánchez-Moreno is an activist, writer, and lawyer. She is the author of the narrative non-fiction book *There Are No Dead Here: A Story of Murder and Denial in Colombia* (Nation Books, Feb. 2017). As the executive director of the Drug Policy Alliance, Maria is at the helm of the leading organization in the US fighting to end the war on drugs in the United States and beyond. Previously, Maria held several positions at Human Rights Watch, including as co-director of its US Program, guiding the organization’s work on US criminal justice, immigration, and national security policy; and as deputy Washington director, working on a broad range of US foreign policy issues. She started her career there as the organization’s senior Americas researcher, covering Colombia’s internal armed conflict and working on the extradition and trial of former Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori. Maria grew up in Lima, Peru, and now lives in Brooklyn.



Kirsten Weld: A historian of political conflict and social movements in modern Latin America, Weld is the John L. Loeb Associate Professor of the Social Sciences in the Department of History at Harvard University. Her first book, *Paper Cadavers: The Archives of Dictatorship in Guatemala* (2014), analyzes the discovery of Guatemala’s National Police archives — the largest body of once-secret state records ever discovered in the Americas — and its impact on the country’s postwar social reconstruction. *Paper Cadavers* won the 2015 WOLA-Duke Human Rights Book Award and the 2016 Best Book Prize from the Latin American Studies Association’s Recent History and Memory Section. She is currently writing a history of the Spanish Civil War’s impact and legacies in Latin America.

This award began in 2008 as the WOLA-Duke book award, a collaboration between the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) and Duke, in recognition of WOLA’s decision to deposit its institutional papers at Duke’s Rubenstein Rare Books and Manuscripts Library. The award honors the best current, non-fiction book published in English on human rights, democracy, and social justice in contemporary Latin America. The books are evaluated by a panel of expert judges drawn from academia, journalism, and public policy circles.

2018 Winner

2017 Winner

2016 Winner

2015 Winner

2014 Winner

2013 Winner

2012 Winner

2011 Winner

2010 Winner

2009 Winner

OUR LOCATION

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