

ACTIVISM AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN POSTWAR GUATEMALA

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Irma Nimatuj's presentation is based on the admirable struggle of a group of 15 Maya-Q'eqchi women from Sepur Zarco, Izabal, Guatemala. The case reflects the struggles but also the obstacles that indigenous women face when demanding justice and confronting members of the State's security apparatus. In this trial, Dr. Nimatuj had the opportunity to contribute as a researcher and expert witness. As a result of this experience, she wants to raise some questions about how the social sciences can contribute and serve as an instrument of justice in a small Central American country.

Irma Velázquez Nimatuj is the first Maya-K'iche' woman to earn a doctorate in Social Anthropology and she initiated the court case that made racial discrimination illegal in Guatemala. She writes a weekly newspaper column in el Periódico de Guatemala and through both her political and academic efforts seeks to create viable and realistic ways to create equality for indigenous people and a democratic and participatory democracy in Guatemala.



Irma A. Velásquez
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