



Press Release

Plant Teacher: A gringa writer ventures into Latin America

Washington, D.C. - Do you ever wonder exactly what Yankees think of South America? Look no further than the new novel, *Plant Teacher*, written by the decidedly gringa author, Caroline Alethia. Alethia spent ten months in Bolivia in 2007 and 2008, at a time when the country was violently divided in its support of President Evo Morales and his policies.

Not shy in her stance against the Morales regime, Alethia's *Plant Teacher* has been described as "truthful" and "a must-read" by Huffington Post contributor Joel Hirst, while others have referred to the book as "neocon" and called for its boycott. Now the translation is available in Spanish and you can decide for yourself.

"In truth, the novel is not overwhelmingly political," says Alethia. "*Plant Teacher* happens to take place in Bolivia during a time of unrest, and I describe this unrest as I witnessed it. But the deeper themes of the novel center around more intimate topics of maturation and the powerful but sometimes surprising connections between seemingly unrelated events."

Plant Teacher begins when a hippie in Oakland, California flushes a syringe of LSD down a toilet in anticipation of a police raid, and it then follows the syringe's improbable three-decade journey to Los Yungas, Bolivia, the umbilical cord between the towering Andes and sprawling Amazonia. The syringe arrives just in time to affect the lives of two North Americans who have travelled to La Paz for opposite reasons – Cheryl Lewis wishes to forge her future while Martin Banzer seeks to come to terms with his past.

While *Plant Teacher* remains a story primarily about North Americans and how North Americans perceive Bolivia, Alethia does a highly credible job of peering into Bolivian society – the conflicts between the races, the divides between the rich and the poor, and the thoughts and observations of everyday citizens in a society that Alethia portrays as on the brink of dictatorship.

Whether you lean towards the spiritual, the magical, the political, or the simply human, chances are you will find a lot to like and to consider in *Plant Teacher*. The book is for sale in paperback and Kindle at Amazon.com. You can also enjoy excerpts and a video trailer (in English, but interesting nonetheless for its rhyming poetry) at the book's website, lplantasagrada.net.

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