The Rubenstein Collection, comprising XXX books belonging to the late Dr Steven Lee Rubenstein (1962-2012), is an addition to the Library’s collection on Anthropology, Latin American Studies, and the Social Sciences more generally. Dr Rubenstein was a Reader in Latin American Anthropology in the School of Cultures, Languages, and Area Studies at the University of Liverpool. He was an inspiring colleague, warm and generous friend, a caring mentor, and a great friend of the Centre for Amerindian, Latin American, and Caribbean Studies (CAS) at St Andrews.

Dr Rubenstein’s research was based on over forty months of ethnographic fieldwork among Shuar people, an indigenous group of Amazonian Ecuador. His library collection encompasses his interests in contrasting systems of power, particularly in how different modes of colonialism produce different subjects and organizational forms (e.g. 2001, 2012). In addition, he made important contributions to women’s studies (2004a); circulation and power (2006); and political ecology (2004b). Among his noted works are also two books, the edited volume Border Crossings: Transnational American Anthropology (2009, co-edited with Kathleen Fine-Dare) and Alejandro Tsakimp: A Shuar Healer in the Margins of History (2002). The wide disciplinary scope of his collection reflects his steadfast conviction that anthropology contributes to broad discussions that traverse the social sciences and humanities.

Steve was widely appreciated for his collegiality and concern for younger scholars. At conferences, he inevitably could be found sitting in the hotel lobby, surrounded by students and colleagues, talking and offering advice and insights into personal and professional aspects of life as an anthropologist. Carrying on his spirit, in 2013, the Society for the Anthropology of Lowland South America (SALSA) created “Conversations in the Lobby.” This is a now traditional event at SALSA’s sesquicennial conferences, in which an established scholar opens a collective discussion about the kind of personal and professional questions about which Steve cared and conversed so generously. In addition, SALSA has established a Memorial Scholarship in his name. One of Steve’s most anonymous yet extraordinary contributions was in his role as dedicated Wikepedian [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:Slrubenstein], responsible for over 30,000 edits including corrections and contribution toward some of the most trafficked topics on anthropology-related pages.

Steve is remembered for his incorrigible compassion for humanity and knowledge, his wit, and his insistence on rigor and creativity. To honour his memory and his scholarship, CAS held an international conference, 'Steve Rubenstein and the Neo-colonial Frontier' in 2014.

The Rubenstein Collection came to St Andrews through Dr Juan Pablo Sarmiento Barletti (formerly in the Department of Social Anthropology). The University is extremely grateful to Ken and Francine Rubenstein, and Dr Daniela Peluso (University of Kent) for generously donating this portion of Dr Rubenstein’s collection to St Andrews.

References