About the Bildner Center

The Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies is a forum for the gathering of academics, students, policy makers, civil society leaders, and other specialists working on contemporary issues in the Americas. Founded in 1982 at the urging of philanthropist Albert Bildner, this nonpartisan center generates information, policy and background studies, problem-oriented research, and encourages the formation of networks and intellectual communities.

The Bildner Center seeks to create an international community of people, ideas, and enterprises to forward the understanding of the complexities of social, economic, political, cultural, and ecological life in the Western Hemisphere. The Center fosters research and understanding through a number of programs, both country and theme specific. The broad themes are Democracy and Human Rights, Sustainable and Equitable Development, Integration and Globalization, and Knowledge and Culture. The Brazil Project and the Cuba Project study these two countries in regional, comparative, and global context. Each of these programs invites distinguished scholars and practitioners to participate in an ongoing dialogue to generate greater public comprehension, as well as public policy recommendations.

Mauricio A. Font is Director of the Bildner Center and Professor of sociology at Queens College and the Graduate Center. His books include: Transforming Brazil: A Reform Era in Perspective (2003), Integración Económica y Democratización: América Latina y Cuba (1998), Toward a New Cuba? Legacies of a Revolution (1997).
CUBA PROJECT

The Cuba Project is a collaborative effort to study changes in Cuban policy, economy, culture, society and polity. It focuses on the relationship between Cuban social change and development and their international context. The Cuba Project works actively with other academic and policy-oriented programs and institutions to engage academics, policy makers and other policy practitioners, business and media figures, and students from various countries and disciplines.

The activities of the Cuba Project in its first year of operation (1996-1997) centered on a monthly CUBA Seminar, the planning of a cycle of international symposia/conferences, and the launching of a working paper series. Additional activities in 1997-98 included a bulletin, the development of a website, and research efforts.

The CUBA Project focuses on processes of economic liberalization and the development of democracy, including their cultural and social aspects. However, it does not assume a single view about any of these complex processes. Rather, the events and publications of the CUBA Project bring together into dialogue and debate diverse policy-oriented academic approaches to both. Its contribution is thus by structuring debates in a pragmatic and constructive spirit and actively advancing cooperation in the identification and assessment of models, options and directions.

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Cuban National Reconciliation: Memory, Truth, and Justice

Marifeli Perez-Stable
Florida International University

Panelist:
Elzbieta Matynia, Transregional Center for Democratic Studies

Moderator:
Mauricio Font, Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies

Marifeli Pérez-Stable is a professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Florida International University in Miami. She is the author of The Cuban Revolution: Origins, Course and Legacy (Oxford University Press, 1993); a Spanish-language edition was published by Editorial Colibrí (Madrid, 1998). Her work in progress, “Cuba’s Long Twentieth Century (1868-2002),” proposes a political reinterpretation of Cuban history. Dr. Pérez-Stable chaired the Task Force “Memory, Truth, and Justice,” which issued the report, Cuban National Reconciliation.

“Cuban National Reconciliation: Memory, Truth, and Justice” will address the report’s main themes and recommendations: the imperative of a democratic Cuba for full national reconciliation; the need to begin reintegrating disparate historical memories; and the pursuit of dialogue among all Cubans to the extent possible. Establishing the truth about human rights violations by the Cuban government, abuses by the armed opposition in Cuba and in exile, and the actions of the United States in Cuba is essential. The report concludes outlining four aspects of national reconciliation: individual; family, diaspora; and political.

Dr. Elzbieta Matynia is a sociologist whose major fields are intellectual history, political philosophy, and the sociology of culture. Since 1986 she has taught at the Graduate Faculty where she is the Director of the Transregional Center for Democratic Studies. Her works include a book of essays entitled "Grappling with Democracy: Deliberations on Post-Communist Societies", 1990-1995, and other writings on society, culture, and politics which appear in a variety of scholarly journals in America and Europe.

Tuesday, June 10, 2003 5:00 P.M.
The Graduate Center
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