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The Bildner Center Enters a New Era

by *Mauricio A. Font*

The new century brought major change to the Bildner Center. In 1999-2000, when we began to explore new directions for the Center, our attention was drawn to two main ideas.

First, we agreed that the Bildner Center should focus on the assessment of emergent tendencies in the region—processes of democratization and the promotion of human rights, structural reforms and sustainable development, globalization, regional integration, and changing US-Latin America relations. Emphasis would fall on new debates about social, political, and economic shifts in the region. Though much of Latin America and the Caribbean seemed to be moving in the same direction, various voices demanded reforms that effectively promote social and sustainable development. Important distinctions had to be better understood. A bird's eye comparison of processes of reform in Brazil, Mexico, Chile and Cuba showed not only contrasting balances between continuity and change, but also the emergence of new voices claiming roles in strategies for development, political modernization, and redefined roles in global affairs. To play a significant role in the study of those processes the Center should fully address the international debate about how best to improve the well-being of the peoples of the Western Hemisphere.

As a forum, the Center addresses debates on how best to improve the well-being of the peoples of the Western Hemisphere

Second, the idea of organizing the Bildner Center as a broad international forum seemed natural, considering the comparative advantages related to The Graduate Center's mission and location. The very move of The Graduate Center to the refurbished B. Altman building provided a



Albert Bildner, President Lula da Silva, Mauricio Font

great venue for bringing people together. The University's mandate to reach out to all sectors in this great global city, together with the latter's prominence in the region, naturally implied a serious look at our many links with Latin America and the Caribbean. New York is the paramount global city and millions of Latin Americans have made it their home.

These ideas reinforced each other and convinced us to rededicate the Center as a policy-oriented international forum focused on the well-being of the peoples of the Americas. The first objective of the new Bildner Center was to aggressively design a program of seminars, international symposia, related events, and publications to bring together faculty and students from The City University of New York, policy-makers, academics, and other stakeholders from other research centers, foundations, non-governmental organizations, and civil society organizations in the Americas and the rest of the world.

We have achieved our basic aims in this regard. In the last four years the Bildner Center organized dozens of seminars and five international symposia, as listed on our website. We sharpened the focus on a handful of themes, working with colleagues and programs throughout the CUNY system and beyond. We learned to cooperate with diplomatic corps, research centers and non-governmental organizations throughout

Continued on next page

BILDNER CENTER

The Bildner Center brings together scholars, policy makers, civil society leaders, and other stakeholders to further understanding and policy-oriented research concerning governability, human security and the economic well-being of peoples in the Americas.

Founded in 1982 with the support of philanthropist Albert Bildner, the Center has been directed by sociologist Mauricio Font since 2000. The non-partisan and multi-disciplinary center organizes and sponsors a range of activities.

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Continued from page 1

the New York area. As a result, the Center has become widely known throughout the Americas as a world-class forum and research center. In 2004 alone, we were greatly honored by visits from two presidents from Brazil, the largest country in Latin America: President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and former President Fernando Henrique Cardoso.

In the last four years the Bildner Center organized dozens of seminars and five international symposia.

Faculty and student involvement has been a major ingredient in the Center's achievements. Our country specific programs and other special projects are good examples. In 2004, Distinguished Professor Margaret Crahan (The Graduate Center and Hunter College) played the key role in organizing a conference on US-Cuba relations, an event in which professor Ted Henken (Baruch College) and two graduate students also coordinated. These and other members of faculty and student body, as well as staff and interns at the Center, helped organize the international symposium on today's Cuba. Later this year, Distinguished Professor Raquel Chang-Rodriguez, Alfonso Quiroz, and others joined the large international conference, "Alexander von Humboldt: From the Americas to the Cosmos."

The Brazil Project has led to equally impressive forms of collaboration with senior faculty and recently hired professors. Altogether, the new phase of the Bildner Center has drawn from the efforts of nearly two dozen members of the CUNY faculty and a large number of students. Collaboration has been critical in the launching of the Bildner Western Hemisphere Studies book series.

We have reasons to be proud of these and other achievements described in this bulletin or on the Bildner Center website. Yet it would be a mistake to take the new Bildner Center for granted. We all need to remind

ourselves of the sustained collaborative effort called for in the next four years and beyond. Building on current strengths, we need to launch research initiatives and augment the Bildner Center's contribution to the generation of new knowledge. We need to better sell our ideas to academic authorities and vital supporters. We face the challenges of consolidating our position in the midst of challenges from competing agendas, budget constraints, and inevitable institutional change.

There are plenty of grounds to be optimistic. The new Bildner Center's mission is today more sharply defined, shared and supported than at the turn of the century. It may be more relevant than ever. New York's long history of ties to Latin America and the Caribbean—financial, economic, political, and cultural—is well documented. We are still reckoning the full extent to which recent and ongoing migration flows have further connected us inextricably to the rest of the Americas. As New York is now home to some four million people from Latin America and the Caribbean, it and its environs have become a fundamental point of

The new Bildner Center's mission is today more sharply defined, shared and supported than at the turn of the century.

reference to the region. The census, school counts, and other surveys report Hispanics, Latinos, and Latin Americans at large to be one of the largest and fastest-growing blocs in the Greater New York area.

Today, the Bildner Center plays an important role in The City University of New York's new importance in policy-oriented studies of the Americas. We are in tune with the evolving agenda of the Western Hemisphere. Our accomplishments invite attention. We have mechanisms and momentum. We are much better able than ever to address major issues in our changing world with academic rigor and responsibility. The agenda is clear and much work remains to be done. *Manos a la obra!*

www.bildner.org

Visit our website for information on upcoming events and minicourses.

Lula offers optimistic view of Brazil's economic prospects

Brazil is on the road to economic recovery and remittances from citizens living abroad are helping drive the country's development, Brazilian President Luiz Inácio "Lula" da Silva told a festive gathering of more than 500 academics, media and Brazilian immigrants at The Graduate Center on June 23.

"The worst is over," Lula said, speaking to a standing-room crowd that packed the Center's Harold M. Proshansky Auditorium and two adjoining conference rooms. "I am convinced that Brazil has entered a cycle of sustainable growth that will only move ahead without return. Brazil is a country that offers no risks, only opportunities."

Lula, a member of the left-leaning Partido dos Trabalhadores (Workers' Party) who was elected president in 2002, visited The Graduate Center to help launch a new Inter-



net-based remittance program administered by the government-owned Caixa Economica Federal, Brazil's third largest bank. Remittances by more-than 2 million Brazilians living abroad pumped an estimated \$5.2 billion into the Brazilian economy in 2003, according to the Caixa. The new program is designed to streamline the remittance process by allowing Brazilian expatriots to establish online accounts, thereby avoiding tariffs and fees charged by private banks and financial services.

The evening, which was hosted by The Graduate Center's Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies, also featured a performance by renowned musician Paulinho da Viola, whose Samba-infused songs have made him a popular international performer and folk hero in Brazil.

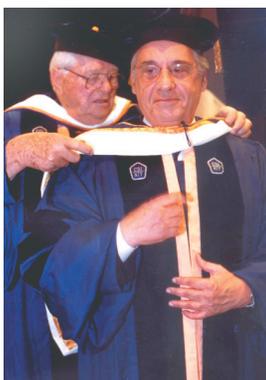
Paulinho's infectious melodies and Lula's populist appeal – at one point he compared the Brazilian immigrants on hand to his father, who migrated from northern Brazil to São Paulo in the 1950s "in order to survive" – made for an emotional evening. "He was so lucky," Lula said of his father, "that his

"Brazil is a country that offers no risks, only opportunities."

son became president." Audience members, some waving Brazilian flags, repeatedly interrupted Lula with standing ovations, and when he finished his speech, dozens rushed the stage to shake the President's hand.

The evening was the latest in a series of events related to the Bildner Center's Brazil Project, which encourages the study of the processes of reform and sustainable social development in the South American nation and surrounding countries.

Fernando Henrique Cardoso awarded honorary degree



Fernando Henrique Cardoso, noted world intellectual and former President of Brazil (1994-2002), was awarded a Doctor of Humane Letters honoris causa by The Graduate Center of the City University of New York this past Friday, October 29,

2004. This prestigious honorary degree recognizes Mr. Cardoso's long achievements as academic, public intellectual, reformer, and champion of democracy.

In a speech accompanying the ceremony, Mr. Cardoso addressed the role of civil society in global affairs. According to Mr. Cardoso, civil society is a vital force in the new forms of international and global cooperation to foster democracy, well-being, and sustainable development. The transnational role of civil society organizations plays an integral role in the globalization process.

Since his presidency Mr. Cardoso has worked on several issues regarding global dynamics and international development. He served as Chairman to the United Nations panel on the relationship between the U.N. and civil society and he is currently involved in the development of the Instituto Fernando Henrique Cardoso - a center with the dual mission of storing documents related to Cardoso's career and forum for debate on the choices and challenges that Brazil and Latin America face in the pursuit of sustainable growth and human development.

The Graduate Center's President Frances Degen Horowitz hosted the ceremony awarding the degree, with Vice President Steve Gorelick acting as moderator. Mr. Albert Bildner and Mrs. Lin Bildner, acquaintances of President Cardoso who were actively engaged in his visit, were present at the ceremony. Mr. Bildner performed the hooding of President Cardoso. Speaking in fluent Portuguese and without notes, he discussed Cardoso's significance as statesman and intellectual. Professor Mauricio Font, Director of the Bildner Center, read the official Citation.

A large number of professors, dignitaries, business and civil society leaders, administrators, and students attended the ceremony.

The guest list included Ambassador Heraldo Muñoz, Chile's Representative to the United Nations and long-term acquaintance of President Cardoso since the years he spent in Santiago de Chile (1964-68) as exile from Brazil's military regime. Cardoso's enduring significance as statesman and public intellectual throughout the Americas also accounts for the presence of several other diplomats from the region.

A large number of Brazilianists from the region attended the ceremony. From CUNY, the Brazil experts included Desmond Arias, John Collins, Amy Chazkel, Margaret Crahan, Kenneth Erickson, Mauricio Font, John Hammond, and Michael Turner. Also present were members of the faculty at Fordham University, Yale, Princeton University, Harvard, Temple, Rutgers, and the University of Connecticut. Several leading figures from the business world, included Robert Smith, Bob Stebbings, Paulo Vieira da Cunha, and others.

Alexander von Humboldt: From the Americas to the Cosmos

In 1804, German scientist and explorer Alexander von Humboldt concluded a five-year journey of discovery through South America, New Spain (Mexico) and Cuba with a visit to the United States at the invitation of President Thomas Jefferson. This extraordinary expedition established Humboldt as the greatest and most famous explorer of the time, and his voyage became the highpoint of a life-long investigation and documentation of the unity of nature. Upon his return to Europe, Humboldt produced a thirty-volume account of his journey that continues to inspire to this day, and his travel writing is now considered to be groundbreaking. His American experience also moved the politically engaged Humboldt, a man inspired by the Enlightenment and ideals of the French Revolution, to publish books on Cuba and Mexico that offered critiques of colonialism and slavery and strongly advocated on behalf of the native peoples he saw cruelly exploited.

On Oct. 14-16, 2004, 127 academicians and experts from 14 countries gathered at The Graduate Center of the City University of New York to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Humboldt's momentous journey. The celebration featured the opening performance of *Wide World*, a play commissioned for the event, and the North American premier of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartoldy's *Cantata*, which was written to commemorate Humboldt's expedition. Academic papers presented examined Humboldt's ongoing legacy in a large number



Conference Organizers Brian Schwartz, Mauricio Font and Ray Erickson.

of fields, including literature, botany, geography, music, the visual arts, human rights, early environmentalism and society in the New World. The three-day event proved the largest-ever gathering of Humboldt enthusiasts, and its multidisciplinary focus provided a unique forum for the sharing of ideas and observations across a broad spectrum of disciplines.

Support for the conference came from a variety of sources, including the Consulates General of the Federal Republic of Germany and Mexico, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the Goethe Institute, The Graduate Center and the Queens College's Aaron Copeland School of Music.

The Bildner Center will publish the papers presented in PDF format to make them available online. A selection of the papers is also being considered for publishing in book form.

Cuba Today: Continuity and Change since the 'Periodo Especial'

On October 4-5, The Bildner Center played host to 89 academicians, experts and students who gathered to examine contemporary reality on the island in the wake of the collapse of global socialism in the early 1990s.

The two-day international event drew Cuba specialists from Europe, Australia, Latin America and the United States, and its multidisciplinary focus provided a unique forum for the sharing of ideas and observations across a broad spectrum of disciplines. Presentors probed patterns of continuity and change in economics, politics, civil society, religion, race relations, national identity, culture and the arts.

The papers presented will be published in PDF format to make them available online.



Mauricio Font, Sujatha Fernandes and Margaret Crahan at the Cuba Today Opening Plenary.

The Bildner Center plans to use the event as a model for a series of ongoing symposia, to be held every 18 months, at which scholars meet to analyze the cultural, political, economic, social and environmental issues underlying conditions in Cuba.

US-Cuba Relations: Past Experience and Current Realities



Discussions during US-Cuba Conference.

Policy experts, diplomats and legislators gathered at The Graduate Center on April 29-30, 2004 to discuss past experiences and

current realities in US-Cuban relations.

The conference, which drew 32 participants, including many prominent researchers and writers and several specialists with first-hand experience in past US-Cuba negotiations, focused on the issues of counterterrorism, diplomatic representation, migration and drug control. The purpose of the conference was to review the history of US-Cuban negotiations – both formal and informal – and related exchanges since 1960 in order to identify areas of consensus on bilateral issues. One chief objective was to identify the most effective strategies

for achieving agreement between the two governments, based on past experience, in order to offer strategies for future interactions and bilateral negotiations.

Among the panelists were Ambassadors John Ferch and Kenneth Skoug, academicians Jorge Dominguez of Harvard University, Saul Landau of California Polytechnic State University and Philip Brenner of American University, and think tank representatives such as Philip Peters of the Lexington Institute and Shelley McConnell of the The Carter Center.

Diego, Frida and Trotsky by Albert Bildner

The recent movie *Frida*, brought back vivid memories of my youth. I knew all three principals - Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo and Leon Trotsky.

I embarked on a journey starting in NYC headed for Mexico City... I was lured by the prospect of traveling to Latin America and meeting Trotsky.

The year was 1937. I had just graduated from Yale University. With \$200 saved from working in a grocery store owned by my father, I had bought a second-hand 1931 Packard limousine, color black. It had a roll-up window between the front and back seat; there was a voice tube for the back seat passenger to speak through to give orders to the driver; two small flower vases were on either side of the rear interior.

With two friends, I embarked on a journey starting in New York City headed for Mexico City. I had kept in touch with another Yale graduate, Bernard Wolf, then based in Mexico City who was doing translating work for the exiled Russian communist leader Leon Trotsky. I spoke Spanish fluently, having studied it in university, and Bernard had assured me of a job doing Spanish translation. I was lured by the prospect of traveling to Latin America and meeting Trotsky. The trip took four days to Laredo, Texas, plus another four days from the US border to Mexico City.

Upon arrival in Mexico City, the three of us, including Kevin Lynch who would later become a world-renowned professor in the field of urban planning, checked into a flea joint on Calle Ayuntamiento; we paid \$5.00 per day for a room with three cots. In my Packard, I drove to the house in Coyoacán (a suburb of Mexico City), owned by the artists Diego Rivera and his wife Frida Kahlo, but then occupied by Trotsky, his wife and grandson.

Leon Trotsky arrived in Mexico in 1935. He was ordered into exile by Stalin first to some island off the coast of Turkey, then to Norway. Due to the dictator Stalin's paranoia about the proximity of Trotsky to Moscow, the exiled former Russian leader ended up in Mexico City, as then Mexican president Lázaro Cárdenas, known for his socialist views, was the only Latin American

country willing to receive Trotsky. Diego Rivera, already internationally acclaimed as a muralist, and Frida were both communist sympathizers, so they offered Trotsky one of their homes as a refuge.

The Coyoacán house became a meeting place for the artist friends of Diego and Frida. One of the regulars was Doctor Atl, the one legged painter whose specialty was painting Mt. Popocatepetl, a mountain the amputee would climb with one leg and a crutch. Pablo O'Higgins and Alfredo Zalce were also visitors there. David Alfaro Siqueiros, another famed artist friend who was known to be somewhat crazed, was already in jail for trying to kill Trotsky. Since the house was mainly a refuge for Trotsky, there were several, perhaps a dozen young people, doing translation work for the exiled Communist leader. I was given the job of reading Spanish magazines and newspapers and translating certain articles into English, or vice-versa. Trotsky was intelligent, well-read and articulate. He looked and sounded like a professor. He had a wide vocabulary, with a good command of the English language, but spoke with a heavy accent and mispronounced words. (For example, he would say "monses" when he meant "months".) One time I asked him about Stalin's statistics on the USSR's increased production of wheat, corn and other agricultural products. I will always remember Trotsky's answer to me; he said "Everyone has a coefficient of exaggeration ... and Stalin's is about 30%." I would come to use this expression of Trotsky's many times during my business career.

Trotsky was intelligent, well-read and articulate. He looked and sounded like a professor.

I met Frida Kahlo on several occasions while working in the Coyoacán house. She and Diego would come in and out of the house. Frida typically wore the Mexican peasant blouse with a long skirt down to her ankles. She had been partially maimed in a street car accident, (where she was impaled on a metal rod), and in this way covered her leg deformity and limp. My first impression of her face revealed bushy, connected eyebrows and a mustache. She was friendly, made small talk with the young people and would have purposeful conversations with

Trotsky. I did not get the impression that she was a lover of the much older Trotsky, although the movie "Frida" portrays her as such.

My encounters with Diego Rivera were memorable. He was fat, a jovial character with a pleasant personality.

My encounters with Diego Rivera were memorable. He was fat, unlike in the movie, a jovial character with a pleasant personality, and an eye for women. He loved my Packard when he first saw it and asked if I would be his chauffeur to drive him to Chapingo, some forty miles away. He was touching up the murals he had painted on the walls of the Agricultural School, where he had painted a theme of the Goddess of the Waters. I would drive him twice a week; Diego would sit in the back seat wearing a big sombrero. I would also drive Diego to the house in San Angel where he would paint portraits of women. He allowed me to watch him paint. One day I watched him paint an obese, unattractive woman whom he made appear slim and beautiful. Later, I said to him "Diego, tu sabes que esa mujer no parece guapa y bonita como tu la pintaste." I will never forget his answer: "A nosotros los artistas tambien nos gusta comer."

Four months later, it was time for me to return home, where I had a job waiting: to run the Big Ben, the first supermarket chain established on Long Island. I was saying my good-byes to the people at the Coyoacán house. Trotsky came downstairs in his bathrobe and asked me if I wanted a glass (not a cup) of tea. He asked me to go to the garden and pick a lemon from a tree. When I returned, he had two glasses of tea ready. I watched him sip his tea "Russian style"; with a cube of sugar between his teeth. In one of his books, Trotsky argues the basic differences he had with Stalin, who wanted the communist revolution contained in the USSR while Trotsky, who was to be Lenin's heir, challenged Stalin, believing that the revolution should have been exported to the world. Before I left, Trotsky gave me an autographed English version of his book *The Revolution Betrayed*.

When I told Frida I was going back to the United States, she asked me about some

Recollections continued on page 9

Brazil Project

The Brazil Project fosters the study of reforms, social change, and sustainable development in Brazil and neighboring countries. Through it, the Bildner Center works closely with affiliated faculty and other Brazil specialists to organize seminars, international symposia, research, special events, and publications. This collaboration has resulted in over 30 seminars, two international conferences, cultural programs, and several publications over the last three years. The list of guests and participants has included several policymakers and diplomats from Brazil—including former President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, ambassadors Rubens Barbosa and Gelson Fonseca, former minister Luiz Carlos Bresser-Pereira, and others.

The discussions and publications of Brazil's important processes of economic and political reform probe their depth and effectiveness in addressing societal needs. More generally, the Brazil Project explores Brazil's process of democratization and the country's new role in regional and world affairs. They consider Brazil's responses to globalization and relations with the United States and other countries in the Western Hemisphere.

The Bildner Center's Western Hemisphere Studies book series emphasizes Brazil, as do several affiliated faculty in other publications. *Reforming Brazil*, includes a dozen original essays by noted Brazilian and American scholars which were originally presented at a Bildner Center conference.

Bildner Center Director Mauricio Font, editor of the above volume, contributes to



the scholarly literature about the changing facets of modern Brazilian democracy. He also authored *Transforming Brazil: A Reform Era in Perspective* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2003) and is now completing *Brazilian Statism: Rise and Limits* (forthcoming). In addition, he edited and wrote the introduction to *Charting a New Course: the Politics of Globalization and Social Transformation*, a collection of 26 essays by Fernando Henrique Cardoso (Rowman and Littlefield, 2001).

Recognizing the vital role Brazil plays in the Western Hemisphere, the Bildner Center declared last September to be "Brazil month." A highlight of this festival was a talk on US-Brazil relations by US Ambassador to Brazil Donna Hrinak. A large audience also enjoyed a show with No em Pingo D'Agua, the renowned "choro novo" ensemble from Rio de Janeiro. Last year's seminar series on Brazil included a presentation in the Faculty Development Workshop series by professors Andrew Baker of the University of Houston and Scott B. Martin of Columbia University, who discussed emergent approaches to Brazilian

politics.

The Bildner Center sponsored an event that brought President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva to The Graduate Center. In this event with the "Caixa Economica Federal," President Lula and members of his Cabinet and the Caixa discussed a new government-supported service aiming at facilitating the remittance process and related investments in Brazil. The evening closed with a wonderful performance by Paulinho da Viola.

The long list of seminars and special events included a visit by Congressman Mauro Benevides, who discussed challenges to reform in the Brazilian Congress in an exceptionally informative session on an issue of great importance in contemporary Brazilian politics.

To cap off a busy October, 2004, the Bildner Center collaborated with The Graduate Center in a visit by former president Fernando Henrique Cardoso, in which he was granted an honorary degree. The accomplishments of the Brazil project since have been remarkable.

In conclusion, the Brazil Project has stood out in organizing programs that illuminate multiple aspects of change in Brazil, while highlighting the impressive expertise on this country at The City University of New York. The Bildner Center's Brazil Project looks forward to additional programs to bring together faculty, students, other specialists, and interested publics concerned with political, economic, and social developments in this fascinating and important country.

Cuba Project

The Cuba Project enjoyed a successful 2003-2004 program and is working towards an exciting 2004-2005 calendar.

In 2003, The Cuba Project welcomed John H. Coatsworth of Harvard University to discuss "The History and Context of US Policy Toward Cuba." In April, Uva de Aragón, Associate Director of the Cuban Research Institute at Florida International University spoke on "Cuban Miami: Changing Culture and Politics." In May, Ivan A. Schulman (University of Illinois), Oscar Montero (Lehman College and The Graduate Center), Mauricio Font (Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies, The Graduate Center and Queens College), and Esther Allen (PEN Translation Committee), contributed to the seminar "Tribute to José Martí."

In 2004, The Cuba Project reviewed the history of US-Cuban negotiations and related exchanges since 1960 in the seminar series "US-Cuban Relations: Past Experience and Current Realities." Also, in February the Cuba Project explored the economic relationship between the US and Cuba with the seminar "US-Cuba Economic Relations: What are the Real Possibilities?" Panelists included Ted Henken of Baruch College, Reverend Raimundo Garcia Franco of Christian Center of Reflection and Dialogue and Kirby Jones of Alamar Associates.

In October, the Cuba Project organized the symposium "Cuba Today: Continuity and Change since the Periodo Especial" at which more than 50 participants explored contemporary Cuban reality since the early 1990s. In addition, the Cuba project en-

gaged in the cultural portrayal of Cuban life with the screening of the documentary "Suite Habana."

Looking ahead, the Cuba project anticipates the publication of two books, *Cuban Counterpoints: The Legacy of Fernando Ortiz* and *La República cubana y José Martí (1902-2002) Recepción y usos de un símbolo nacional*. Both texts are compilations of papers presented at conferences hosted by the Cuba Project, and are edited by Professors Mauricio A. Font and Alfonso W. Quiroz.



New Book Series on Western Hemisphere Studies

The publication of *Reforming Brazil* marks the launch of Western Hemisphere Studies, a joint publication initiative by the Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies at the City University of New York and Lexington Books. The scholarly works published in this series endeavor to support the Bildner Center's mission of furthering understanding of contemporary issues in the Americas, creating international dialogue on policy and generating research on a range of topics that are both country and theme specific.

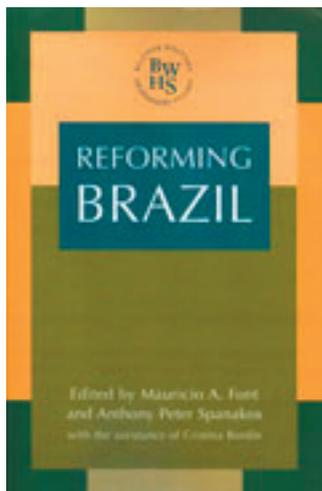
For more information or for purchasing information please visit www.bildner.org.

Series Titles

- *Reforming Brazil* (2004)
Edited by Mauricio A. Font and Anthony Peter Spanakos with the assistance of Cristina Bordin.
- *Cuban Counterpoints: The Legacy of Fernando Ortiz* (2004)
Edited by Mauricio A. Font and Alfonso W. Quiroz
- *La Republica Cubana y José Martí (1902-2002)* (Forthcoming)
Edited by Mauricio A. Font and Alfonso W. Quiroz
- *New Approaches to Social Reform in Brazil* (Forthcoming)
Edited by Mauricio A. Font

Reforming Brazil

Edited by Mauricio A. Font and Anthony Peter Spanakos with the assistance of Cristina Bordin



For years, successive governments in Brazil grappled with the vexing issues of unequal

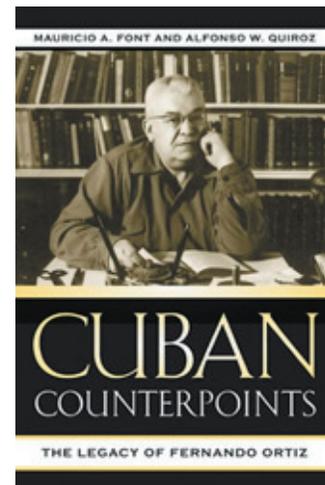
Cuban Counterpoints: The Legacy of Fernando Ortiz

Edited by Mauricio A. Font and Alfonso W. Quiroz

While Fernando Ortiz's contribution to our understanding of Cuba and Latin America more generally has been widely recognized since the 1940s, recently there has been renewed interest in this scholar and activist who made lasting contributions to a staggering array of fields. This book is the first work in English to reassess Ortiz's vast intellectual universe. Essays in this volume

*Cuban Counterpoints
explores the bold new
perspectives that Ortiz
brought to bear on
Cuban society*

analyze and celebrate his contribution to scholarship in Cuban history, the social sciences--notably anthropology--and law, religion and national identity, literature, and music. Presenting Ortiz's seminal thinking, including his profoundly influential concept of 'transculturation', *Cuban Counterpoints* explores the bold new perspectives that he brought to bear on Cuban society. Much of his most challenging and provocative thinking--which embraced simultaneity, conflict, inherent contradiction and hybridity--has remarkable relevance for current debates about Latin America's complex and evolving societies.



Among the contributors are María Fernanda Ortiz Herrera, Mauricio Font, Alfonso Quiroz, Pamela Maria Smorkaloff, Consuelo Naranjo Orovio, Miguel Puig-Samper Mulero, Octavio di Leo, María del Rosario Díaz, Rafael Rojas, Marifeli Pérez-Stable, Carmen Almodóvar, José Matos Arévalos, Jean Stubbs, Enrique S. Pumar, Fernando Coronil, Alejandra Bronfman, Tomás Fernández Robaina, Patricia Catoira, Jorge Ramírez Calzadilla, Roberto González Echevarria, Ricardo Viñalet, Antonio Fernández Ferrer, Benjamin Lapidus and María Teresa Linares Savio.

distribution of wealth and runaway inflation. In the 1990s, long-overdue reforms began to help tame inflation, streamline bloated and ineffective government and address chronic social ills. But problems and questions remain: Why is Brazil still so poor, and why is inequality so intransigent? Were some reforms counterproductive or could they have been implemented better?

Reforming Brazil is a thought-provoking examination of these and other important issues facing Brazil today, from privatization and agrarian reform to entrepreneurial programs and hemispheric integration. Written by 11 Brazilianist scholars from a range of disciplines and intellectual traditions, the book offers compelling new insights for international policymakers, economists and scholars of Brazil.

Contributors include: Maria Hermínia Tavares de Almeida, Eliana Cardoso, Sônia Draibe, David Fleischer, Eduardo Gomes, Fabrícia C. Guimarães, Peter Kingstone, Karina Mariano, Marcelo Mariano, Alfred Montero, João Paulo Machado Peixoto, Anthony Pereira, Salvador Sandoval, Anthony Peter Spanakos, Tullo Vigevani.

"A timely work, Reforming Brazil is a vast mosaic of authoritative perspectives that help to clarify the complex and often serendipitous most recent phase of Brazilian modernization."

—Luis Bitencourt
Brazil Project, Woodrow Wilson
International Center for Scholars

2003-2004 BILDNER CENTER HIGHLIGHTS

September 2003 was Brazil month at the Bildner Center. The Bildner Center hosted seven events on Brazil that ranged from a look back at Brazil's military dictatorship to a Choro concert by N6 Em Pingo D'Água. During this month there were two seminars that were of particular importance.

On September 26, the Bildner Center held an event entitled *US-Brazil Relations*. As the two largest countries in the Western Hemisphere, the relationship between the US and Brazil can largely influence inter-American relations, and has lately centered on the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), as well as bi-national trade and cooperation issues.

Amb. Donna Hrinak, US Ambassador to Brazil, highlighted the relationship between the two countries with regards to the proposed FTAA and the ascension of the Partido dos Trabalhadores (Workers' Party) government in Brazil. Ambassador Hrinak discussed the current state of US – Brazilian relations as well as the factors that have shaped it.

As part of the Bildner Center's Latin America Challenge series, which strove to identify positive policy responses to hemispheric problems derived from an analysis of past crises, the Bildner Center held *Economic Crises Then and Now: A Comparison of Responses to the Mexican Crisis of 1994 and the Argentine Crisis of 2001*. The event, which featured Joyce Chang, Managing Director and Global Head of Emerging Markets Research at JP Morgan, Lacey Gallagher, Director of Emerging Markets Research at Credit Suisse First Boston, and Shari Spiegel from Columbia University's School of Public and International Affairs and the Initiative for Policy Dialogue, focused on the dissimilarities of the policies adopted by the United States and the international financial community towards Mexico and Argentina.

Along with the Brazil Program and its general Latin America scope, the Bildner Center is also host to the Cuba Project, which aims to shed light into the sources of conflict within by convening a forum dedicated to exploring the undercurrents of

Cuban society and US-Cuban relations.

On October 24, the Bildner Center began the seminar series New Scenarios for US-Cuba Relations with the seminar *US-Cuba Relations: A United States Perspective*, featuring Kevin Whitaker, Coordinator of the Office of Cuban Affairs in the US Department of State. Mr. Whitaker took this opportunity to discuss current US policy towards the island, as well as the historical factors shaping US-Cuba relations.

One major accomplishment this year was the gathering of a wide array of CUNY Cuba specialists on December 5 to discuss their current research. *Cuban Studies at CUNY: History and Promise* brought together over twenty interdisciplinary specialists, and created a network of academics currently working on and in Cuba.

Part of the mission of the Bildner Center is to provide a forum for dialogue and foster problem-oriented research on pressing issues in Latin America, and on January 21, it sponsored the seminar *The Water City: A Public Art Project in Mexico City* with Bernd M. Scherer, Director General of the Goethe-Institut in Mexico City. Mr. Scherer gave attendees his insight into the problems caused by the lack of access to water in Mexico City, and discussed the role of the Goethe-Institut, in collaboration with the Mexican government, in combating this problem. Mr. Scherer's approach to this issue was based on art and culture, and focused on the pre- and post-Columbian factors that shaped the water system in Mexico City.

As part of the Bildner Center's Faculty Development workshop series Jorge Dominguez of the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs at Harvard University came to speak about US-Policy toward Latin America on February 27. *The Future of Inter-American Relations* looked at the recent political and social changes in Latin America that challenge conventional understandings and assumptions about the region.

Chile's Development Strategy and the Recent Trade Agreement with the United States took place on March 4, and featured Ambassador Osvaldo Rosales, General Director for International Economic Relations, Chilean Ministry of International Relations.

Ambassador Rosales discussed Chile's development strategy both economically and socially. Ambassador Rosales affirmed that the interest of international actors like the US and the EU does not lie in the size of

Chile's market, but in its institutional stability and its strategy of opening up regional and global trade.

On June 8, the Bildner Center and the Inter-American Development Bank teamed up to produce a procurement seminar entitled, *Business Opportunities with Latin America and the Caribbean through the IDB Group*. This seminar covered an overview of the

IDB, project cycle (how to track business opportunities), sources of information, current lending priorities, procurement opportunities, opportunities in the private sector financing activities by the IDB Group and remittance. Additionally, one-on-one sessions were used to discuss issues of interest with IDB Group representatives. Also covered was the role of remittances based on the IDB's 2004 survey on remittances as a source of capital for Latin American and the Caribbean. The IDB is the largest multilateral provider of development financing for Latin America and the Caribbean, with a cumulative lending of \$118 billion, offering substantial business opportunities to the private sector. The Bank has an annual lending capacity of \$8.5 billion and is generating business opportunities in the form of approximately 13,000 activities.

On September 17, 2004, the Bildner Center played host to Chilean officials to discuss their country's role in international peacekeeping operations. Entitled *Chile in Haiti: The Changing Face of Latin American Involvement in Regional Peacekeeping Operations*, the panel's speakers included: Oscar Fuentes, Consul General of Chile in New York; Marcos López, Military Attaché at the Mission of Chile to the United Na-



Kevin Whitaker



Amb. Donna Hrinak



One-on-one sessions with the IDB

Continued on next page

Bildner Center hosts Latin American consuls

Representatives from 10 Latin American consulates gathered at The Graduate Center of the City University of New York March 31 to explore issues of regional interest during a working luncheon hosted by The Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies.



The representatives – eight consul generals and two deputy consuls from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay and Venezuela – were joined by Mauricio Font, director of the Bildner Center, as well as Brian Schwartz, The Graduate Center’s vice president for research and sponsored programs, and Steven Gorelick, vice president for institutional advancement at The Graduate Center. Among the topics discussed were ways to promote education of Latin American society and culture, including a range of upcoming Bildner Center and Graduate Center events.

Continued from previous page

tions; Martin Poblete, the Latin American Seminar at Columbia University, and Francois Pierre-Louis, Queens College-CUNY.

On October 20, 2004, the Bildner Center welcomed Arturo Sarukhán, the Consul General of Mexico in New York, to discuss current Mexican foreign policy. In his talk, entitled *Mexican Foreign Policy During the Fox Administration*, Mr. Sarukhán spoke about Mexico’s ever-growing role in international politics and how this increased participation is related to the domestic changes that have taken place since Vicente Fox’s election in 2000. Mexico’s changing position is evidenced by greater participation in the United Nations and a strengthening of interest in bilateral negotiations with the United States. Mr. Sarukhán’s talk highlighted key developments in recent US-Mexico relations, as well as offered speculation as to where the relationship is headed.

Cuba Project Launches Online Directory of Cuba Specialists

In keeping with its mission to promote studies and research about Cuba, The Cuba Project launched an online Directory of Cuba Specialists in early 2004. The directory, which now includes the names of more than 200 experts from around the world, is a searchable database of specialists who are actively engaged in Cuban studies and Cuba-related issues. Specialists are listed by area of expertise, making the directory a powerful tool for scholars, media and others looking to find experts in fields ranging from policy, civil society and economics to literature, music and the arts. The directory also promotes the development of a community of Cuba specialists by allowing users to identify colleagues who work on

related subjects and by disseminating information about their works.

To be listed in the directory one must:

- (1) hold faculty or research appointments at a university;
- (2) hold policymaking or other government positions related to Cuba,
- (3) hold a professional position at an international organization,
- (4) be a professional practitioner affiliated with a foundation or non-governmental organization, or
- (5) publish frequently on Cuban affairs.

For more information or to browse the directory visit www.cubadirectory.org.

Recollections continued from page 5

hill-billy (mountain) music, which she said she loved. She asked me to send her some hill-billy records, which I did, months later. That was the last time I saw or heard from her. In 1954, Frida Kahlo died in her bed on the top floor of the Coyoacán house; the last thing she saw was a picture on the wall of Marx, Engels and Stalin. Her wheelchair and easel were by her bedside.

In 1939, Diego and Frida had violent arguments with Trotsky on political grounds; the couple had reverted to Stalinism. Trotsky was forced to leave the house where I had met him and moved into another a few blocks away called “Casa Azul.”

In August 1940, Leon Trotsky was assassinated in Casa Azul by Jacques Mercader, a Spaniard who was brought by his mother to the USSR after the Spanish Civil War and raised as a rabid Stalinist. He was trained by the secret police to kill Trotsky. Mercader met an American woman named Silvia near Notre Dame cathedral in Paris (the meeting was set up by the Russians). The two became lovers and Silvia brought Mercader back to Mexico. She knew the Coyoacán group and vouched for Mercader to enter the inner circle of Casa Azul.

Mercader split Trotsky’s skull with an alpenstock (an ice-climber’s axe) which he had hid inside his raincoat. For this, he spent 25 years in a Mexican prison. Upon his release, a Czech plane picked him up and brought him to Russia where he disappeared. Trotsky’s body was cremated and

his ashes are buried in the courtyard under a stone that bears his name above a hammer and sickle.



The house is now a popular tourist stop. Trotsky’s office where he was killed is exactly as he left it, with an old-fashioned typewriter with Russian letters.

Diego Rivera passed away in the late 50s after a bout with cancer. He had gone to Russia for an operation but died shortly after his return to Mexico. Before I left Mexico, Diego gave me three small drawings.

The world has only recently come to appreciate Frida Kahlo’s great artistic talents with the rise of feminism. Details of her personal life have surfaced, particularly her life-long excruciating physical pain and the emotional suffering she endured from her famous philandering artist husband, and their camaraderie with the exiled Trotsky. Frida has since been acclaimed in international art circles as a great artist with her self-portraits surrealistically portraying her inner struggles with pain and with Diego: today, her paintings are valued in the millions of dollars.

BILDNER FELLOWS AND CUNY FACULTY

Bildner Fellows

Desmond Arias

Desmond Arias, John Jay College, is currently working on a book entitled *The Dynamics of Criminal Governance: Illegal Networks and Public Order in Rio de Janeiro* which is under advance contract with the University of North Carolina Press. Earlier this year he published "Faith in our Neighbors: Networks and Social Order in Three Brazilian Favelas" in *Latin American Politics and Society*. Both of these projects are based on research he conducted on violence and politics in Rio de Janeiro.

Jerry Carlson

Jerry Carlson, Associate Professor of Film Studies at The City College and The Graduate Center (CUNY), is co-producer of the bilingual feature film *Dirt* directed by Nancy Savoca. Shot in New York and El Salvador, the movie tells the story of an undocumented Salvadoran family living in the USA. Produced by Showtime Networks, the film will have worldwide distribution by MGM International.

In December, he attended the Havana International Film Festival for the Latin American premiere of the performance film *Reno: Rebel without a Pause*, directed by Nancy Savoca and co-produced by him. He returned to Cuba in January to teach a course "Tendencies of the New Latin American Cinema" at EICTV, the international film school founded by Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

In spring 2003 he was nominated for an Emmy award for his work as producer of *Canape*, a monthly TV cultural magazine about French-American cultural relations.

Amy Chazkel

Amy Chazkel spent the summer of 2003 carrying out archival and library research for her book-length study in progress, *Laws of Chance: The City, the Animal Game, and The Making of Modern Public Life in Brazil, 1880-1968*. Fellowships from the PSC-CUNY, Harvard University David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, and the Yale University Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition gave support for her research.

Thanks to a CUNY-Center for the Humanities Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship, she was on leave from Queens College for the 2003-2004 academic year. She spent the year co-organizing an interdisciplinary faculty seminar and completing her book manuscript. Articles in progress include

one on the Rio de Janeiro city jail and another on petty crime and post-abolition urban society in Brazil.

Margaret E. Crahan

Margaret E. Crahan, Dorothy Epstein Professor, Hunter College & The Graduate Center, continues to serve on the Executive Committee of the Interamerican Institute of Human Rights, which together with the Interamerican Court and Commission constitute the institutional framework for the Interamerican system of human rights. She is also on the Board of Trustees of St. Edward's University and ForCHILDREN, Inc.

She recently edited and coauthored *Religion, Culture and Society: The Case of Cuba* (2003) and coedited and coauthored *The Wars on Terrorism and Iraq: Human Rights, Unilateralism, and US Foreign Policy* (2004). Field research on religion took her to Cuba twice in 2004. She is currently writing on religion and civil society, as well as on the culture of resistance among female political prisoners in Argentina under the 1976-1983 military dictatorship.

Ted Henken

Ted Henken is an Assistant Professor in the Black and Hispanic Studies and the Sociology and Anthropology Departments at Baruch College. At Baruch, he teaches courses on Latin American Immigration to the United States, Immigration to New York City, Race and Ethnic Relations, U.S.-Latin American relations, and on Contemporary Cuban Culture and Society. He also offers a mini-course through the Bildner Center each semester on the origins and development of Cuban Music.

He is currently co-writing a book with

Archibald Ritter on the recent growth of Cuba's underground economy and the emergence and future potential of micro-enterprise on the island since 1993. He is also writing a general country study of Cuba to be published by ABC-CLIO in its Global Studies series. He has been a consultant on Cuba for the U.S. Department of State and is a member of the board of directors of the Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy.

Mark Ungar

Mark Ungar, Associate Professor of Political Science at Brooklyn College, is working with the government of Argentina to implement police reforms. With financial support from the UN, he will begin a course for the Policia Federal Argentina this fall to change police station management and promotion criteria, followed by new training courses and community policing projects.

In the 2004-05 academic year, Mark was a fellow at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, writing a book on police reform in four Latin America countries. He is also directing a project funded by the Ford Foundation to develop proposals for improving prison conditions in Latin America.

CUNY Faculty

Carolina Bank Muñoz

Carolina Bank Muñoz is an Assistant Professor at Brooklyn College. She obtained her Ph.D at the University of California, Riverside in 2004. Prior to arriving at Brooklyn College she worked as a project director at the University of California Institute for Labor and Employment (ILE). At the ILE she conducted immigration pol-

Internships in Western Hemisphere Studies

The Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies offers internship opportunities throughout the year. The interns will work closely with the outreach coordinator and other staff.

Responsibilities:

- Assist with research projects through on-line research
- Assist with event and conference coordination
- Edit materials for publication
- Various office duties

Qualifications:

- Knowledge of Latin America
- Knowledge of Microsoft Office applications

- Available 10-15 hours per week
- Language ability in Spanish and/or Portuguese preferred.
- These are unpaid internships.

Please mail or E-mail a resume and cover letter to:

Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies
365 Fifth Avenue, Suite 5209
New York, NY 10016
bildner@gc.cuny.edu

No phone calls, please. Only those candidates who will be considered for an interview will be contacted.

CUNY Faculty

icy research, coordinated educational programs on the Immigrant Workers' Freedom Ride, and developed leadership schools for immigrant workers in Los Angeles. She is currently working on a book manuscript based on that work. Her most recent article is "Mobile Capital, Immobile Labor: Inequality and Opportunity in the Tortilla Industry" (Social Justice Journal, 2004).

Sherrie Baver

Professor Sherrie Baver, Political Science, City College and The Graduate Center, has co-edited *Beyond Sun and Sand: Caribbean Environmentalisms*, with Barbara Deutsch Lynch of Cornell University. The book will be published by Rutgers University Press next year.

Jonathan Conning

Professor Conning, together with Professor Jonathan Morduch of N.Y.U. recently received grant funding from the Ford Foundation for a research project on the "Foundations of Social Investment." The project will study frameworks that donors might work with to target and evaluate social investments in the microfinance sector. His most recent publication, "Why isn't there more financial intermediation in developing countries?" (written with Michael Kevane) is to appear in *Insurance against Poverty*, to be published by Oxford University Press.

Mario Gonzalez Corzo

Currently, Dr. Gonzalez Corzo is Assistant Professor at the Department of Economics, Accounting, and Business Administration at Lehman College of The City University of New York (CUNY) where he teaches courses in Financial Institutions, Human Resource Management, International Economics, Labor Economics, and Security and Investment Analysis. In addition, he teaches mini-courses on Cuba's Post-Soviet Economy sponsored by the Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies. His research interests and areas of specialization include Cuba's post-Cold War economic reforms, the informal economy, and the role of foreign investment in contemporary Cuba.

Carmenza Gallo

Carmenza Gallo is an Associate Professor in the Sociology Department at Queens College and The Graduate Center. Her publications include *Tax and State Power: Political Instability in Bolivia 1930-1952* (Temple University Press 1991) and "The

Autonomy of Weak States" (*Sociological Perspectives* 1997). Her interests include the study of central states, fiscal systems, and citizenship in Latin American countries. She is currently working on a comparative project on States and Citizenship in Colombia and Bolivia.

Alfonso Garcia Osuna

Alfonso Garcia Osuna's recent work is a dual-language critical edition of the *Lazarillo de Tormes*, published this year in London by McFarland Press. Last year McFarland Press published Prof. Garcia Osuna's book *The Cuban Filmography: 1897-2001*. Recently he has been approached by the University of Valladolid and the Government of Castile-Leon, in Spain, to translate some of Miguel Delibes' major works. Prof. Garcia Osuna is currently working on an anthology of Spanish medieval literature.

Stephanie R. Golob

Stephanie R. Golob, Assistant Professor of Political Science at Baruch College, continues to pursue research on regional integration in 'North America,' with an emphasis on Mexico and Canada. She recently co-directed a tri-national study group in Montreal on "Mapping the New North America," and is currently co-editing the collected papers for publication. Her research on the role of ideas in North American integration has appeared in *World Politics* (April 2003) and *Canadian-American Public Policy* (December 2002). She is also pursuing a second research project on transitional justice in Chile, focusing on the evolution of ideas about 'rule of law' within the judiciary and the legal profession. She was awarded a Frank Cass Prize for 2002 by the editors of the British journal *Democratization* for her articles on the Pinochet Case.

Samuel Farber

Samuel Farber is currently working on a book tentatively entitled *Why the Cuban Revolution? A New Look* under contract with the University of North Carolina Press. The book discusses, with the help of recently declassified information from U.S. and Soviet archives, why the Cuban Revolution evolved from a multi-class, anti-dictatorial, political revolution into a Communist social revolution. The book addresses questions that are relevant to the larger issue of whether the social radicalism of the Cuban Revolution was rooted in the social and economic conditions of the country, or whether the Cuban Republic was politically reformable and developing economically.

Edward Paulino

Professor Edward Paulino, History, John Jay College, presented a paper at the Latin American Studies Association meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada on October 7-9th, 2004. The session is called "Civil Society Effort to Expand Justice." He received a PSC/CUNY grant award for 2004-2005 and a Faculty Research Award from the National Endowment for the Humanities, 2004-2005.

Peter Roman

Dr. Peter Roman, Hostos Community College and The Graduate Center, published the second, updated edition of *People's Power: Cuba's Experience with Representative Government* in October 2003 by Rowman and Littlefield. His paper "The National Assembly and Political Representation" will appear in *Cuban Socialism in a New Century: Adversity, Survival and Renewal*. Editors Max Azicri and Elsie Deal, University Press of Florida, 2004, and in TEMAS in Cuba in Spanish. He has received PSC-CUNY Grants for 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 for work on a book on the Cuban National Assembly. Dr. Roman is currently Unit Coordinator of Social Sciences at Hostos Community College, and member of the Doctoral Faculty of the Political Science Program at The Graduate Center-CUNY.

For more information on on Bildner Center Fellows and CUNY Faculty please visit www.bildner.org.

Acknowledgements

The Bildner Center would like to take the opportunity to thank all the former employees, interns and minicourse instructors who have contributed to the New Bildner Center. These employees include Gary Aguayo, Sandra Black, Cristina Bordin, Natalia Caruso, Rosa Conceição, Andres Salas, and Danielle Zach. Former interns that volunteered their time include Janaina Saad and Graziella Reis-Trani. Minicourse instructors, include Esther Allen, Elba Barzelatto, the late Evaldo Cabarrouy, Geraldo Galvão Ferraz, Philip Galinsky, Mario Gonzalez-Corzo, Ted Henken, David Oquendo, Silmara Roman, Luis Simas, Sandra Vasconcellos, and Cláudia Sobral Vaz. In addition, the Bildner Center would like to thank all the Bildner Center fellows and CUNY Faculty who have helped out during the past year.

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