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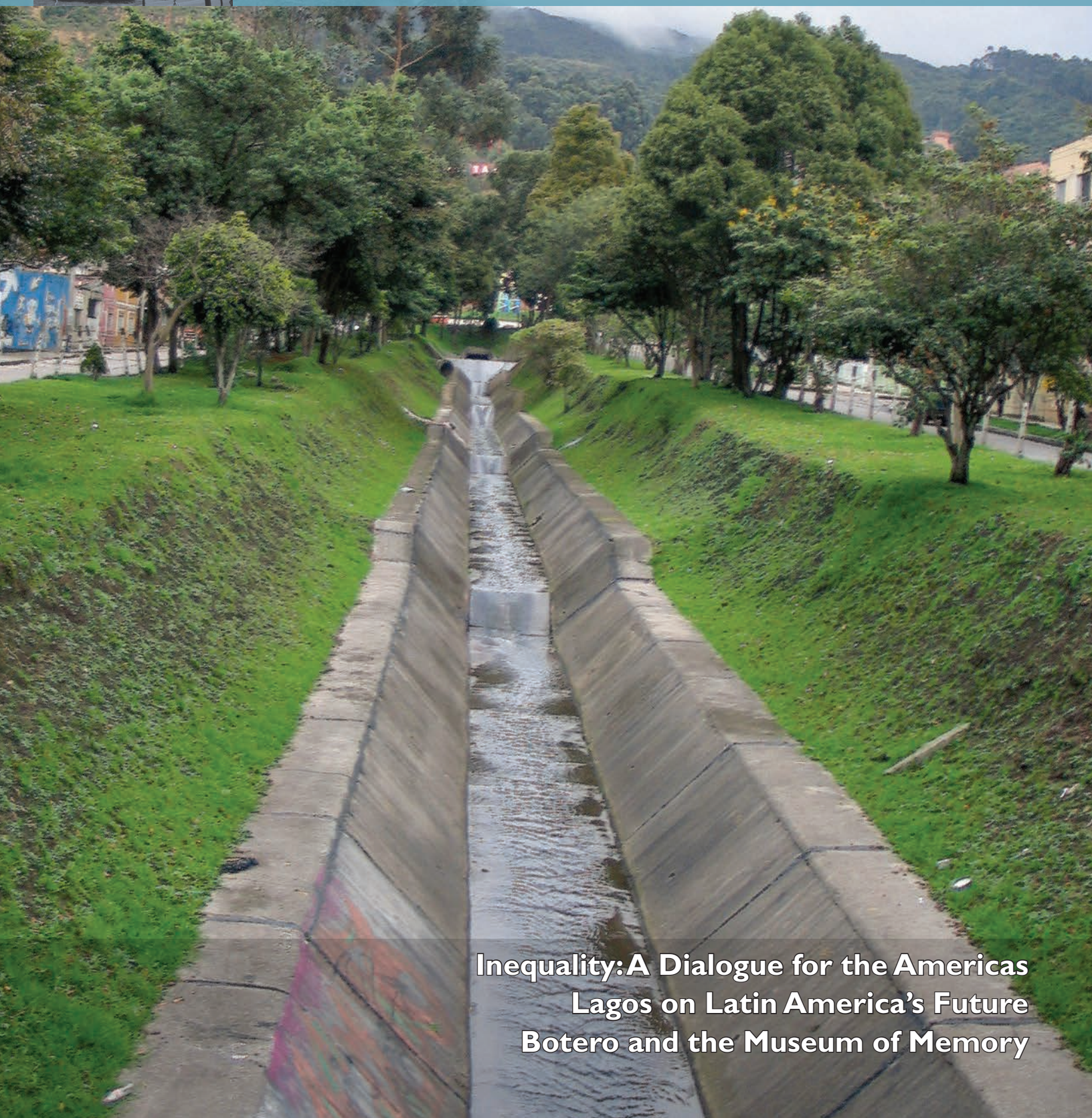

Inequality: A Dialogue for the Americas
Lagos on Latin America's Future
Botero and the Museum of Memory

Berkeley Review of Latin American Studies
Fall 2012

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Front cover: Canal de la Calle 153, Bogotá.
Photo by René Davids.

Comment

Income inequality has become a defining topic in the United States. As President Obama emphasized in his second inaugural address, "Our country cannot succeed when a shrinking few do very well and a growing many barely make it." Recent data have been disturbing. "For millions of workers," The New York Times reported in January 2013, "wages have flatlined." Meanwhile, the wage share garnered by the top 1 percent rose to 12.9 percent in 2010, almost doubling from 7.3 percent in 1979.

Latin America is no stranger to income inequality. It has long been known as the most unequal region in the world, while the U.S. historically has been associated with high social mobility or the "American dream." The latest data indicate an unexpected trend: a modest decrease in Latin American inequality and the unraveling of the American dream in the U.S.

Inequality is a critical issue for the economic future of both areas. The Center for Latin American Studies (CLAS) engaged this theme with a new, transcontinental series "Inequality: A Dialogue for the Americas" in fall 2012. Using videoconferencing and the Web to bring together live audiences on two continents, CLAS brought a range of perspectives from both Latin America and the United States to the fore. Speakers included prominent academics and political leaders; participants included students, faculty, community members, entrepreneurs, and labor leaders. Highlights of the dialogue — including some surprising findings — appear in this issue of the Review.

CLAS also collaborated with the Museum of Memory and Human Rights in Santiago, Chile, to mount an exhibit of Fernando Botero's Abu Ghraib paintings and drawings in spring 2012. This exhibit marked the first display in South America of these works, which the artist has donated to Berkeley. The museum proved to be a particularly appropriate venue, and the exhibit received intense national attention, sparking a thoughtful debate about torture, human rights, and democracy.

Also in this issue, Berkeley Architecture Professor René Davids reports on innovative urban design in Bogotá, Colombia, after a research trip in 2012. Many of these innovations have their roots in the city's turn towards more democratic governance in the early 1990s.

Professors Deborah Yashar (Princeton), Thad Dunning (Yale), and Ben Schneider (MIT) gave diverse talks on their recent research. All are Berkeley political science alumni who were here to celebrate the career of Berkeley professor David Collier.

Finally, CLAS was pleased to welcome Chilean President Ricardo Lagos (2000-06) to teach a special seminar and give several public talks.

— Harley Shaiken

From left: Ricardo Lagos, Harley Shaiken, and Robert Reich, September 2012.

Photo by Jim Block.

INEQUALITY

A Dialogue for the Americas

by Kirsten Sehnbruch and Harley Shaiken

Inequality has emerged as a global crisis. "The problem is not only that the top income groups are getting a larger share of the economic pie," Joseph Stiglitz writes, "but also that those in the middle are not sharing in economic growth, while in many countries poverty is increasing."

Recent data in the United States has been striking. The country seems to be experiencing what one might call hyper-inequality: 93 percent of all income growth in 2010 flowed to the top 1 percent, with 37 percent of all income gains captured by the top .01 percent or 15,000 households. Meanwhile, median real family income slid almost 9 percent from 2000 to 2011.

The result of this dismal state of affairs, Stiglitz points out, is that "equality of opportunity has been exposed as a myth," and the social mobility that this opportunity makes possible — the American dream — has been undermined. "Intergenerational mobility in the United States is now poor by international standards," notes Harvard economist Larry Summers, "and, probably for the first time in U.S. history, is no longer improving." Moreover, a sharp rise in inequality can depress broadly based demand, limiting growth. "Research by economists at the IMF," The Economist magazine reports, "suggests that income inequality slows growth, causes financial crises and weakens demand."

This extreme economic polarization can have corrosive political consequences across the globe. "Eventually, faith in democracy and the market economy will erode," Stiglitz warns, "and the legitimacy of existing institutions and arrangements will be called into question." The Economic Commission on Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) reported that in 2011 "six out of every 10 Latin Americans reported having very little or no trust in political and state institutions; this is a very high percentage" linked to "high levels of inequality."

Income inequality "remains one of the region's main challenges," according to ECLAC, despite modest progress in the last decade. "On average, the richest 10 percent of the Latin American population receives 32 percent of total income, while the poorest 40 percent receive just 15

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A homeless man in San Francisco.
Photo by Paula Steele.

percent of income" according to the most recent data for 18 countries. Ironically, the U.S. has now surpassed some Latin American countries such as Argentina in terms of unequal income distribution.

Since the challenges of inequality span the Americas, the Center for Latin American Studies (CLAS) sought to initiate a discussion across the hemisphere. In collaboration with the Universidad de Chile, CLAS held a series of four colloquia entitled "Inequality: A Dialogue for the Americas," which used intercontinental video-conferencing to bring together scholars and policy makers from the United States and Latin America. The discussions were broadcast live to the Universidad de Chile in Santiago, where faculty members and students participated in the debate, and to Medellín, Colombia, where Sergio Fajardo, the governor of Antioquia province, was involved.

In the first colloquium, Chilean President Ricardo Lagos (2000-06) and UC Berkeley Professor of Public Policy Robert Reich contributed original perspectives and extensive policy experience to the discussion. Professor Reich argued that after World War II, a growing population and rapidly rising productivity fueled an expanding economy for three decades. These gains were broadly shared and allowed new investments in education and a social safety net. According to Reich, these programs acted like "trampolines," propelling many working families into the middle class.

As the 1970s drew to a close, these economic gains began eroding, and for many, the economy took a "giant U-turn." Despite economic growth and rising productivity, almost all the gains flowed to those at the very top, Reich maintained. In fact, real wages for large parts of society have either stagnated or even decreased since then, diminishing purchasing power and contributing to the economic crisis.

While inequality in the United States has recently become an issue, Latin America has long been plagued with highly unequal income distribution. Poverty, however, historically has been a more pressing concern, President Lagos argued.

Despite the lack of focus on inequality, between 2002 and 2007, the Gini coefficient, the indicator most commonly used to measure the distribution of income, declined moderately in 14 out of 17 Latin American countries. Recent studies argue that this trend can be attributed to both a reduction of the skill premium captured by highly qualified workers and to regional increases in social spending, particularly through conditional cash transfer programs to the poor.

Nonetheless, inequality remains a potent political issue and a critical social and economic question. President Lagos emphasized that once per capita income reaches a threshold of approximately US$20,000 per year (at purchasing power parity), improvements in social indicators such as life expectancy, infant mortality, and crime rates are strongly associated with more equal distribution of income. Since several countries in the region are expected to cross this threshold within the next five to eight years, improving income distribution will become the region's new priority. Therefore, the appropriate measure of development will no longer be average per capita income, but rather "how this income is distributed."

While Latin America has seen modest improvement on measures of inequality in recent years, studies of income distribution in the United States by Berkeley professor Emmanuel Saez show a sharp increase in earnings of the top 1 percent and 0.1 percent since the 1980s, which reflect that country's worsening income distribution. This analysis is based on tax data, which is both reliable and precise. In Latin America, by contrast, tax data is not readily available to analysts. Instead, researchers use household survey data, which is known to significantly underestimate the income of the highest percentiles. This means that although official Gini indicators have improved, it is likely that Latin American tax data would show similar trends to those observed in the United States.

In the second colloquium, professors Bradford DeLong from UC Berkeley and Oscar Landerretche from the Universidad de Chile discussed the economic aspects of inequality. DeLong outlined three fundamental dimensions of inequality: first, global and historical inequalities between nations, which generally reflect whether or not a country industrialized early; second, inequality between persons, which principally reflects differences in educational opportunities; and third, the explosive increase of income among the top 1 percent of earners. DeLong argued that recent developments in the United States reflect the distancing of a select upper-class from the rest of society, which could lead to a plutocracy that erodes the democratic ideal of equity. "Political decisions helped to create the super-elite in the first place," former Financial Times journalist Chrystia Freeland observes, "and as the economic might of the super-elite grows, so does its political muscle."

Overall, the United States has witnessed a major transfer of income from wages and salaries to profits, particularly over the last three decades. In 2012, the St. Louis Federal Reserve reported that wages and salaries accounted for 43.5 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP), the smallest share since World War II, down from a peak of 53.5 percent in 1969. In contrast, after-tax corporate profits reached 11.1 percent of GDP last year, the largest share since World War II.

Photo by Jim Block.

Ricardo Lagos and Robert Reich draw a packed house at the Berkeley Law School.

Professor Landerretche brought the perspective of developing countries to the discussion, analyzing income distribution from five different angles: the distribution of productivity and education; the distribution of negotiating capacity; the productive structure of the country; its fiscal policies; and finally, direct transfers and acquired social rights. Landerretche recognized that Chile has not made significant progress in any of these dimensions, which leads to the important question: Why aren't aggressive public policies enacted to tackle inequality? He explained that in every one of these five dimensions powerful interest groups would lose out if more aggressive structural reforms were implemented. Therefore, elite groups are motivated to put up a highly coordinated resistance to any change in the status quo. On the other hand, the people who would gain from such policies are not organized and do not form an effective pressure group.

The arguments of professors DeLong and Landerretche both lead to a crucial conclusion: behind the economics of policymaking lies the distribution of political power. The third colloquium in the series focused on the politics of inequality by bringing together professors Paul Pierson from UC Berkeley and Daniel Hojman from the Universidad de Chile.

Taking up the theme raised by DeLong, Pierson, a political scientist, began by asking whether the United States is turning into an oligarchy. The evidence he offered in support of this thesis was striking. First, the 15,000 richest households in the United States have increased their income by 600 percent during recent decades. The inequality generated by these gains is a historical novelty, and its long-term political consequences remain unknown. Second, a small group of people invest large sums in financing political campaigns in the United States, which suggests an outsize influence on politics. As Freeland writes, "The feedback loop between money, politics, and ideas is both cause and consequence of the rise of the super-elite." Finally, the United States increasingly resembles an extractive society, similar to what has traditionally been seen in Latin American countries, where powerful minorities control the political and economic system and extract resources from both the country and its people for their own benefit.

Professor Hojman took up Paul Pierson's arguments, adding that high inequality erodes the public good, which in turn leads to social unease, illustrated by the increased activity of social movements across Latin America, not least in Chile, where the student movement firmly put the issue of inequality on the public policy agenda.

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SPEAKERS IN THE SERIES
"INEQUALITY: A DIALOGUE FOR THE AMERICAS"

Ricardo Lagos was president of Chile from 2000 to 2006 and is president of the Fundación Democracia y Desarrollo.

Robert Reich is the Chancellor's Professor of Public Policy at UC Berkeley.

Bradford DeLong is a professor of Economics at UC Berkeley.

Oscar Landerretche is the director of the School of Economics and Business at the Universidad de Chile.

Paul Pierson is the John Gross Professor of Political Science at UC Berkeley.

Daniel Hojman is a professor of Economics at the Universidad de Chile and at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

Emmanuel Saez is the E. Morris Cox Professor of Economics and the director of the Center for Equitable Growth at UC Berkeley.

Sergio Fajardo Valderrama is the governor of Antioquia, Colombia.

Hojman attributed the political unease in Chile to several factors: while inequality increased significantly during the dictatorship, subsequent democratic governments led by the center-left Concertación coalition did not manage to reverse this trend in a significant way. In addition, the market is the main mechanism that distributes resources and governs social interaction in Chile. Again, this is an inheritance from the dictatorship that the Concertación could only moderate with increased social expenditure. The legacy of the dictatorship therefore produced a significant concentration of wealth and political power in the hands of a rich oligarchy. In addition, these elites are geographically isolated from the general population, further contributing to their political insularity. The only factor that has to some extent relieved social unease and counteracted this political polarization is the increase in consumption produced by relatively high levels of economic growth. Lower- and middle-income families have begun to satisfy their basic needs since the transition to democracy. While economic growth in Chile has certainly not been redistributive, it has at least increased everyone's income.

In the final colloquium, Economics professor Emmanuel Saez, who directs the Center for Equitable Growth at UC Berkeley, engaged with Governor Sergio Fajardo on the issues that inequality raises from different, though complementary, perspectives. Saez presented a broad overview of his path-breaking research on income inequality and put these findings in historical perspective. He compared the sharp rise of pre-tax income inequality in the United States over the past three decades to what the country experienced in the early 1900s, the Gilded Age. Overall, he pointed out that public policy — particularly on taxes — was a key determinant in exacerbating U.S. income inequality.

Saez presented a graph that showed U.S. income inequality surpassing that of Argentina between 2000 and 2010 and approaching that of Colombia, one of the most unequal countries in Latin America.

As governor of Antioquia, the most unequal province in Colombia, Fajardo has put inequality at the top of his agenda and laid out the importance of addressing it in a comprehensive way. For him, education is a central component of any meaningful, long-term change. Fajardo emphasized that progress in education requires major improvements in infrastructure, schools, technology, culture, and the state. While well aware of the enormity of the challenge, Fajardo viewed it as critical and not insurmountable. He brings to the task a highly-regarded track record as mayor of Medellín, where he was able to enact innovative reforms in a very difficult context.

One conclusion to be drawn from these colloquia is the striking parallel between the United States and Latin America when one compares both the causes of inequality and its consequences. As the colloquia participants explained, the concentration of economic power has led to the concentration of political power in both regions. In turn, this political power has perpetuated the vicious circle of inequality. The United States has traditionally tolerated higher levels of income inequality than other developed countries in exchange for the promise of earnings growth, while Latin America has simply suffered the consequences of its historically high levels of inequality. Effectively addressing this issue could prove critical for economic success and democratic values going forward.

Kirsten Sehnbruch directs the Center for New Development Thinking at the Faculty of Economics and Business at the Universidad de Chile. She was a senior scholar and lecturer at the Center for Latin American Studies from 2004 to 2009.

Harley Shaiken is the Class of 1930 Professor of Letters and Science and chair of the Center for Latin American Studies. He is a faculty member in the Graduate School of Education and the Department of Geography.

Photo by Jim Block.

Ricardo Lagos and Robert Reich.

INEQUALITY

A Challenge for Prosperity

by Mathias Poertner

Despite significant economic gains over the past decades, inequality remains a critical issue in most parts of the Americas. According to the 2011 United Nations Human Development Index, Latin America as a region continues to suffer from the most unequal income distribution in the world. Similarly, in the United States, the incomes of the top 1 percent of earners grew by about 275 percent between 1979 and 2007, while the average pre-tax income of the bottom 90 percent has actually decreased.

Chilean President Ricardo Lagos (2000-06) and UC Berkeley professor of Public Policy Robert Reich brought their unique perspectives on this disturbing trend to a discussion that marked the beginning of the CLAS-sponsored series "Inequality in the Americas."

Since World War II, the U.S. economy has grown almost continuously, due to both productivity increases and population growth. During the first three decades after World War II, as Reich pointed out, "everybody gained." These economic trends, along with the struggle for civil rights during the 1960s, led to increasing social equality. In addition, major investments in secondary and higher education, job training, and welfare programs "functioned like trampolines for many people who were in the workforce," Reich argued.

Beginning in the late 1970s, "a giant U-turn in the U.S. economy" took place. Notwithstanding continued increases in productivity and economic growth, there was "almost no sharing of productivity gains with anybody but those at the very top," Reich maintained. In fact,

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Photo by Felipe Araya Allende.

The Costanera Center in Santiago is emblematic of Chile's economic success.

real wages for large parts of society have either stagnated or even decreased over time. For example, an average male worker earns less today than he did 30 years ago, after adjusting for inflation. This decline in wages has had drastic implications for the economy as a whole. In fact, one of the main reasons for the slow recovery after the economic crisis of 2008, according to Reich, is the decreased purchasing power of the middle class.

The influence of labor unions has also decreased significantly over the last 40 years. In 1975 roughly 25 percent of private sector employees in the U.S. were unionized; today, this number is down to less than 7 percent. According to Reich, the resulting decrease in bargaining power of large parts of the workforce has contributed to the decline in real wages. Furthermore, he argued, this trend has been exacerbated by a slowdown in public investment in education, particularly higher education.

While Latin America also faces extremely unequal income distribution, historically the challenges faced by the region have been quite different from those confronting the United States. President Lagos explained that Latin America first needed to decrease poverty before being able to focus on equality.

In the years following Chile's 1990 return to democracy, the first priority was to increase overall economic growth and to use some of the gains to fight poverty. This strategy has proven quite successful. While nearly 40 percent of Chilean families lived under the poverty line in 1990, today, this number is down to about 13 percent, due to sustained economic growth and policies targeted at poverty reduction. In light of this trend, Lagos concluded, "We have been quite successful vis-à-vis reducing poverty, but still our distribution of income is one of the worst in the world — the worst as a continent."

Indeed, growth-led poverty reduction is quite different from reaching a more equal distribution of income in a society. Lagos reasoned that the tools needed to reduce poverty from 40 percent to about 15 or 20 percent are very different from those needed to reduce it further. Once a country's per capita income reaches

Photo by Victor Ruiz Caballero/Associated Press.

El Peñon, a shantytown in the Puente Alto sector of Santiago, is home to those left behind.

the $20,000 a year threshold (at purchasing power parity), improvements in social indicators such as life expectancy, infant mortality, and crime rates are strongly associated with more equal distribution of income. Since several countries in the region are expected to cross this threshold within the next five to eight years, improving income distribution will become the new priority. Therefore, the appropriate measure of development will no longer be the average per capita income, Lagos argued, but rather "how income is distributed in that country."

A progressive tax system is one way to reduce inequality. However, in Chile, as in most of Latin America, income distribution before and after taxes is almost identical. Lagos advocated implementing a progressive tax system to create a more level playing field, with additional revenue allocated to increasing educational opportunities and other programs that benefit the emerging middle class.

The "Washington Consensus" did not "realize that growth was not enough because growth is not always going to trickle down to the rest," Lagos argued.

"The 'Chicago Boys' think that a society has to be shaped according to market forces," he said, referring to the historically influential group of Chilean economists educated at the University of Chicago, but in a democracy, society should be "formed according to the views of the citizens." In the end, he concluded, the purpose of politics "is to make a difference."

Ricardo Lagos was president of Chile from 2000 to 2006 and is president of the Fundación Democracia y Desarrollo. Robert Reich is the Chancellor's Professor of Public Policy at UC Berkeley and served as U.S. Secretary of Labor during the Clinton administration. They spoke for CLAS on September 11, 2012.

Mathias Poertner is a Ph.D. student in the Charles and Louise Travers Department of Political Science at UC Berkeley.

VIDEO AVAILABLE AT CLAS.BERKELEY.EDU

Photo by Jim Block.

Emmanuel Saez lectures while Sergio Fajardo listens in from Colombia.

INEQUALITY

Catching Up With Colombia

by Erica Hellerstein

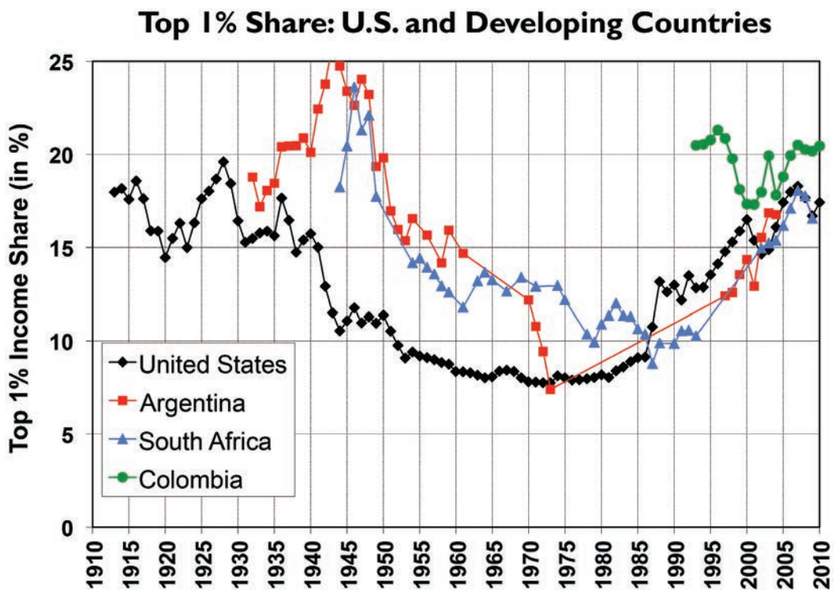
In recent years, global discontent with the status quo, triggered by rising rates of economic inequality, has played a major role in framing the political discussion.

In May 2011, thousands of Spaniards, using the name *indignados*, took to the streets of Madrid in mass protest of the country's harsh austerity measures, high unemployment rate, and politicians' handling of the global economic crisis. Later that summer — and across the Atlantic — throngs of protesters aired similar grievances in Manhattan's Zuccotti Park. Their movement was dubbed Occupy Wall Street, and its blazing rhetoric of the global 99 percent spread like wildfire to cities worldwide. Meanwhile, in Chile the student protest movement commonly referred to as the "Chilean winter," also commenced in May 2011. Its message of "*la educación no se vende*" (education is not for sale) mobilized thousands of students to demand a new framework for education and an end to the country's largely privatized university system.

These issues of equity, brought to global prominence by protestors in New York, Chile, and Spain, are also of critical concern throughout the Americas. As part of the videoconferencing series "Inequality: A Dialogue for the Americas," CLAS connected UC Berkeley Economics professor Emmanuel Saez to Sergio Fajardo, the governor of Antioquia, Colombia.

Fajardo, speaking from a small room in Colombia, and Saez, addressing a full audience at Berkeley, discussed the impact of inequality on economic growth and government policy.

According to Saez, free market economies stimulate economic growth but also contribute to substantial inequality, which often leads to political instability. Moving forward, governments must learn how to measure and address inequality, if they seek to maximize growth without fracturing the economic livelihood of the middle and lower classes. Saez's research measures income concentration, or the share of total income that various groups at the top of the distribution receive. To begin with, he presented a chart that showed the top 10 percent of income share from 1917 to 2010 and the total income accrued to the top 10 percent of U.S. families since 1917.



(Source: The World Top Incomes Database.)

During the above time period, Saez found that the United States had widely varying levels of income concentration. Prior to World War II, income was highly concentrated, with the top 10 percent of the population capturing almost half of total income. But following the war, the U.S. experienced a substantial drop in income inequality. In the past 30 years, however, income concentration has risen dramatically. In fact, Saez continued, the U.S. now has a level of pre-tax income concentration similar to that of the early 1900s. The largest increase has been at the top of the distribution, with the top 1 percent seeing the largest, and most striking, increase in income.

"The reason why those numbers matter is they actually challenge the view you might have about growth overall [and] the way you view the economic performance of the United States," he said, adding that the top 1 percent has captured close to half of U.S. economic growth in recent years.

Internationally, however, disparities in income concentration in other developed countries have trended differently. While English-speaking countries such as Canada and the United Kingdom have followed the same pattern as the United States, some non-English-speaking developed countries — including France, Sweden, and Japan — have experienced much smaller growth in income concentration, despite sharing similar technological progress. So why do the English-speaking countries follow a different pattern than their non-English-speaking counterparts? Saez's conclusion is that a country's level of income concentration is determined both by technology and by government policy, specifically tax policy.

In the United States, the period following the Great Depression was characterized by high tax rates, which led to an increase in the incomes of the bottom 99 percent and a slowing down in the rise of the incomes of the top 1 percent. However, the past 30 years have been characterized by lower tax rates, which have propelled an alarmingly sharp increase in the income of the top 1 percent and a much slower growth in income for the bottom 99 percent.

"When the top 1 percent does well, the bottom 99 percent does poorly, and conversely, at least that's what the U.S. record suggests," said Saez.

As a result, there has been a close link between the amount by which a country cuts its tax rates and the gains of the top 1 percent. After the U.S. cut its tax rates, the wealthiest 10 percent of Americans saw an enormous increase in their income concentration relative to the remaining 90 percent. But the drastic increase in the incomes of the wealthy elite has not improved the growth of the economy, Saez concluded.

So what does this mean for the fractured economy?

Saez postulated: "It's not the case that the U.S. or the UK have grown faster than other countries in Europe that haven't changed their top tax-rate policies… It's hard to find

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Photo by Jim Block.

Networking technology connects governor Sergio Fajardo of Antioquia to UC Berkeley.

evidence when you look systematically at the data that this has an impact on economic growth. That is, at this point of the research, top tax policy doesn't seem related to economic growth."

Following Saez's presentation, Sergio Fajardo Valderamma, the governor of Antioquia, Colombia, spoke about inequality through a gubernatorial, rather than an academic, lens.

Antioquia is located in northwest Colombia, at the tip of the hemisphere's intersection with Central America. According to Fajardo, it's the "most important state in Colombia," due in large part to its geography and economic importance.

With the exception of Haiti, Colombia is the most unequal country in Latin America, and Antioquia is the most unequal region in Colombia. The state's economic inequality is compounded by two additional and endemic problems: a culture of violence and a culture of illegality and corruption associated with narcotrafficking and the longstanding guerilla conflict, Fajardo explained.

As a mechanism to tackle problems of equity, violence, and impunity, Fajardo's government authored the "*Antioquia la más educada*" (Antioquia the Most Educated) campaign, to make education, in Fajardo's words, "the engine of transformation" for Colombian society.

The project emphasizes education as the primary and most important step in transforming Antioquia into a more equitable society, with a less stratified distribution of wealth. For Fajardo, education in the 21st century — and the effort to improve and reform education — requires a combination of science, technology, innovation, entrepreneurship, and culture. Under this formula, it's not simply education that needs to be refined. Roads need to be restructured and rebuilt; schools need to be restructured and rebuilt; and the Internet, computers, and the digital world need to be brought to children, so that they can become competitors in the global economy.

"Education is crucial to the development of the country, but we have never bet on education as a key issue for our society," he said.

Fajardo also elaborated on the project's incentives to create a strong network of regional universities, similar to the UC system in California. Due to a lack of opportunity in poor and rural areas of Antioquia, high-school graduates commonly leave to attend institutions of higher education in Medellín — and rarely return to their native cities and towns. Creating a strong regional network of universities in various cities throughout the state will allow students to attend local colleges and give back to their immediate communities.

"And what does this have to do with inequality?" Fajardo asked. "I have no amount of doubt that whichever path you take in order to work on inequality, at least in Colombia, it has to go through education."

Additionally, the project is working to create work opportunities, technological and educational fellowships, and jobs for high-school graduates, offering an alternative to drug trafficking.

The development of women and women's opportunities is a crucial part of the transformation into a more equitable society, Fajardo added. Emphasizing intelligence, creativity, and talent — rather than beauty — is another aim of the project, which has established a "Talented Women Contest" for women and girls.

These crucial elements of the "Antioquia la más educada" project will hopefully serve as a catalyst for turning the state into a more equitable society, Fajardo said. "All these things put together build hope," he concluded.

Saez voiced a similar perspective in his final remarks: "As an economist, it's great to see such entrepreneurship at the political level. Economists have made tremendous progress studying experiences from smart policymakers who implement new things all over the world. I hope down the road, [Fajardo's] state will be the laboratory that economists come to see what has worked."

Sergio Fajardo Valderrama is the governor of Antioquia, Colombia. Emmanuel Saez is the E. Morris Cox Professor of Economics and the director of the Center for Equitable Growth at UC Berkeley. They spoke for CLAS on November 19, 2012.

Erica Hellerstein is a student in the Graduate School of Journalism at UC Berkeley.

VIDEO AVAILABLE AT CLAS.BERKELEY.EDU

Finalists in Antioquia's "Talented Women Contest."

Photo by Alejandro Moreno.

Photo by Ricardo Funari.

Workers clean vaporizing tanks in a São Francisco ethanol and sugar plant.

LABOR

The Low-Skill Trap

by Andrés Schipani

Chile has been widely praised by economists, political scientists, and international organizations as the model of economic and political development in Latin America. Its high economic growth rates since the late 1980s, combined with the strength of its state institutions and political parties, have caused many Latin American scholars to turn their attention to Chile in order to learn lessons on how to promote economic and social development across the region. However, this perception has changed over the last two years, as massive student protests against the government have shone a spotlight on discontent with the country's model of economic development among important segments of Chile's population. This reaction is particularly puzzling not only because of Chile's elevated rates of GDP growth but also because Chile has the highest college enrollment rate in the region. How can we explain the widespread dissatisfaction with Chile's "successful" model?

Ben Schneider's hypothesis is that Chile's recent wave of student demonstrations speaks to a broader phenomenon. Most Latin American economies are characterized by "macro" indicators that have looked quite positive over the last decade, particularly when it comes to economic growth and declines in inequality. However, Schneider, a professor of Political Science at MIT, argues that the region's economies show important deficiencies when observing more fine-grained, "micro" indicators such as rates of capital formation, workers' skills, and the quality of newly created jobs. These micro indicators, which do not usually make the front page of the paper, are crucial elements for models of economic and social development that aim to achieve Western European or even East Asian levels of human development in the long run. Indeed, while rates of capital formation in Latin America are around 20 percent of GDP in most countries, many of the jobs generated in the past decades have been low-skill, low-wage positions. In other words, high capital formation rates did not necessarily lead to an upgrade of skill levels. Moreover, although access to education has increased considerably across the region, its quality is low by international standards. According to Schneider, this is what Chileans are mobilizing against: a model of economic development that fails to produce enough good jobs for citizens.

Why do Latin American countries exhibit these problems? Schneider argues that the region's countries are characterized by a "hierarchical" variety of capitalism that is different from any of the successful models of development in North America, Western Europe, or East Asia. This model of capitalism has four core elements: an important role for multinational corporations in local production; local business groups that are embedded in a wide variety of economic sectors; atomized labor relations; and low-skilled workers. Schneider's central thesis is that these four elements tend to reinforce one another in a way that pushes Latin American economies toward a low-skill equilibrium from which it is extremely difficult to emerge. Indeed, in economies with atomized labor relations and high turnover rates, companies have no incentive to invest in upgrading their workforce's skills: why would they, when workers will almost certainly leave within one or two years? Moreover, the high level of informality among the Latin American workforce means that there is only a small pool of workers able to acquire advanced skills.

Interestingly, this characterization of the region's economies goes against recent optimistic accounts of Latin America's export commodity boom. As a matter of fact, while many observers characterize this growth in the commodities market as a unique opportunity to foster Latin American prosperity, Schneider argues that the export commodity boom is only reinforcing the low-skill trap of Latin America's hierarchical capitalism. In this regard, Chile's example is particularly illuminating: while copper exports account for 20 percent of its GDP growth in the last decade, they have only generated a 2 percent increase in employment. Moreover, as the case of Brazil under the Lula administration makes clear, commodity exports tend to appreciate local currencies, which in turn leads to relative increases of exports based on primary goods (such as sugar or meat products) at the expense of more capital-intensive industrial exports. Hence, the commodity boom has the perverse effect of reinforcing Latin America's demand for low-skill workers.

Given this scenario, is there any escape from the low-skill trap? Schneider tends to be pessimistic. First, it is very difficult to forge the political coalitions necessary to get countries out of the low-skill trap by improving the quality of public education. While middle-class families have an exit option available to them by sending their children to private schools, the poor tend to reward politicians that meet quantitative standards (such as building more schools) over those who are concerned with more subtle issues such as improving the quality of education in existing schools. Thus, it is extremely hard

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Chile's Chuquicamata copper mine.

Photo by Magnus von Koeller.

for politicians to build cross-class coalitions to reform public education, a necessary condition to get countries out of the low-skill trap.

Second, when one observes the cases of countries in other regions that were able to escape the pitfalls of hierarchical capitalism, their exit route seems hard to replicate in a Latin American context. The obvious comparison for Latin American countries is Finland, which went from an industry based on natural resources (mainly forestry) to creating successful, capital-intensive industries in the telecommunications sector (the best-known example being Nokia). But according to Schneider, Finland's strategy for upgrading its workers' skills combined two features: (1) high public investment in education and (2) high private investment in research and development (R&D). Paradoxically, in Latin American countries such as Chile the opposite scenario is the rule: the state makes most of the investments in R&D, while the private sector is the largest investor in education. Although some auspicious developments are taking place in Brazil, where multinational corporations are starting to invest in private R&D in order to upgrade industries based on primary products and engage in more capital-intensive products such as ethanol, these efforts are still inchoate.

In sum, although Latin America has exhibited impressive economic growth indicators over the last decade, it still experiences important limitations in terms of those micro indicators of economic and social development that actually set developing nations on a sustainable path toward development. Among these indicators, improving the quality of Latin America's public schools stands out as the most important task politicians need to tackle. In this regard, the Chilean case clearly shows how politicians' failure to improve education can create widespread social resistance to unequal models of economic development.

Ben Ross Schneider is the Ford International Professor of Political Science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He spoke for CLAS on April 13, 2012.

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VIDEO AVAILABLE AT CLAS.BERKELEY.EDU

A fruit seller makes a living in Peru's informal labor market.

Photo by Julia Manzerova.

Photo by Fernando Antonio/Asscoaiated Press.

Honduran soldiers outside Congress during a December 2012 political crisis.

CENTRAL AMERICA

Citizenship Under Siege

by Wendy Muse Sinek

Democracy appears to be firmly established in Central America. The civil wars that ravaged many countries in the region during the 1970s and 80s have come to a definitive end. Brutal authoritarian leaders in Guatemala, Nicaragua, and El Salvador have been replaced by democratically elected officials. With the exception of Cuba, countries across Central America and the Caribbean hold free and fair elections for political office and have enshrined political and civil rights in their constitutions. And yet, conversations with ordinary citizens reveal that democratic rights and freedoms remain elusive for many. In a talk sponsored by UC Berkeley's Center for Latin American Studies, Deborah Yashar, a professor of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton University, described the violence that many Central Americans experience on a daily basis.

In the early 2000s, Latin America was the most violent region in the world. According to data from the World Health Organization, the average homicide rate was more than five times the global average, with 27.5 homicides per 100,000 people in Latin America compared to five per 100,000 elsewhere in the world. More recently, a 2011 report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime found that the number of homicides by firearms in Central America was more than three times greater than the world average. Unsurprisingly, the 2010 Latinobarómetro survey found that nine out of 10 Latin Americans fear becoming a victim of violent crime. Statistics like these demonstrate the phenomenal human toll that violence has taken on society. What has been underexplored, however, is the role that violence plays in reducing the quality of democracy by curtailing individual citizenship rights.

To better understand why some areas of Central America have been more affected by violence than others, Yashar has embarked on a multi-year research project. For the purposes

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Photo by Johan Ordoñez/Getty Images.

Guatemalan police officers accused of kidnapping, robbery, and abuse of authority head to court.

of her study, she defines violence in terms of homicide rates for a given area. Data for all forms of violence in the region are inconsistent and difficult to obtain. Homicide rates, however, are among the best-documented types of violence and are therefore most amenable to analysis.

Yashar chose to focus on Central America for two main reasons. While homicide rates are relatively high across Latin America, murder is extraordinarily common in Central America. Second, and more puzzling, is the fact that some Central American countries experience far more violence than others despite sharing similar histories. For example, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua all experienced civil wars in which state officials committed numerous human rights abuses against ordinary citizens. By the early 2000s, however, all three had successfully transitioned from an authoritarian to a democratic regime, and at present, each has similar levels of economic inequality. Despite these commonalities, rates of violence are extremely high in El Salvador and Guatemala but relatively low in Nicaragua. Why do rates of violent crime vary so widely from one country to another, especially given their similarities on other counts?

Three explanations are commonly given to explain high levels of violence in Central America: a legacy of civil war, inequality, and weak civil society. Yashar finds all three unconvincing, because they do not account for where the violence is actually taking place. Those making the civil war argument reason that war leaves a legacy of violence in its wake. When families are torn apart, weapons are prevalent, and states have become militarized, people become habituated to violent acts, making violence more commonplace. However, high levels of violence are recorded in countries that didn't have civil wars, such as Honduras, and low levels of violence appear in countries that did, namely Nicaragua. Furthermore, from a subnational perspective, the regions within each country where homicide rates are highest are not the areas in which the civil wars were fought.

Others scholars point to high levels of inequality as contributing to patterns of violence. In Latin America, however, there is no simple correlation between violence and inequality. Yashar analyzed econometric data from the World Bank and the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and found that countries with the lowest levels of inequality also have the lowest levels of violence. However, high levels of violence are found in countries with high levels of inequality, as well as in countries where wealth is distributed far more

Photo by Ann Kroon.

Nicaraguan police officers participate in a cooperative training session put on by the national police academy and the Swedish police force.

equitably. What is more, homicide rates in Latin America are actually much higher than the region's average level of inequality would predict.

The quality of civil society is a third common explanation for varying levels of violence. During the 1990s, a wave of research on the role of social networks indicated that a strong civil society — particularly dense networks of civic associations — can foster social peace. However, in recent years, a similar body of work has found that a strong civil society can support social groups with criminal or violent intentions, as well as peaceful ones. In sum, none of the predominant theories can satisfactorily explain disparate levels of criminal violence in the region.

Instead, Yashar contends that we should move past regional or single-country explanations such as those presented above and consider dynamics at the sub-national level. In doing so, she finds a compelling explanation for the pattern of violence that is rooted in the trade and transit of illicit goods. Specifically, homicide rates are highest in areas that contain drug transit routes, particularly for cocaine. In the late 1990s, much of the cocaine produced in Latin America reached U.S. shores via the Caribbean. By 2012, however, cocaine was far more likely to travel through Central America and Mexico, through both overland and maritime routes. Changes in the violent crime rate have paralleled this shift in drug transit corridors. Homicide rates in El Salvador and Guatemala are highest around ports and international borders — areas through which drug trade routes currently pass. It is not the production of drugs per se that correlates with high levels of violence; instead, higher homicide rates occur along the route those drugs take as they make their way to market in the United States.

It is important, then, to know what determines the route drugs will take. Illicit goods routinely move through Honduras and Guatemala, while Nicaragua and Costa Rica are not so thoroughly overrun. Why? Yashar finds that drugs tend to pass through areas where the state is weak and/or complicit in crime. Drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) are essentially profit-seeking multinational organizations. It makes sense for goods in any economic sector to take the most direct route to their consumers in order to keep transportation costs low. Within the illegal economy, however, DTOs must also consider the risks of transporting drugs. Crime bosses prefer routes that are not only geographically favorable but also pose the least risk of prosecution.

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Countries with relatively weaker states — or where those in power are complicit in illicit activity — are thus most amenable to crime. Weak states are, by definition, less able to enforce the rule of law. If the state is unable to monitor illegal activity, arrest perpetrators, and hold them accountable through the judicial system, crime poses fewer risks. In some areas, corruption within the police force is rampant, and individual officers are themselves involved in the drug trade. Moreover, if judges can be bribed and courts are ineffective in prosecuting criminals, then arrests made by the police become fairly meaningless. Narcotraffickers consider all these factors when determining the routes that illicit drugs should take to reach the United States. As with any international business, drug trafficking organizations choose the path of least resistance: in their case, areas with low state capacity.

Assessing state capacity is challenging for researchers, not least because it is difficult to disentangle outcomes from the measures chosen. For example, it may be that drug traffickers corrupt police wherever they go. If this is the case, state capacity in areas with high levels of trafficking might diminish over time in response to crime, rather than the other way round. To disentangle cause from effect, Yashar is exploring subnational dynamics in depth. The Nicaraguan case is an illustrative example.

Like many Central American countries, Nicaragua is plagued by corruption, and state officials are assumed to be involved in illegal activity. However, Nicaragua has better-than-average state capacity in one particular respect: its police force is highly professionalized compared to other countries in the region. Qualitative data reveal that Nicaraguans are far more likely to take pride in the police force as an institution than residents of other Central American countries. People in Nicaragua expect that the police will serve the public good, and the country's judicial system is regarded as one of the best in the region. Since the likelihood of being caught and prosecuted is higher in Nicaragua, drug traffickers bypass the country, sending their product through neighboring nations with lower state capacity.

While the state capacity theory helps explain the location of illicit drug routes, a central question remains unanswered: why does violence occur along drug transit routes? The ideal state of affairs for any business enterprise, including drug trafficking organizations, is one of peaceful hegemony. All corporations would prefer to corner the market without having to compete for customers, and DTOs are no different. Although criminal organizations use the threat of violence to keep people in line, they generally prefer to avoid violence when possible because it is expensive to undertake and incites retaliation, both from rival criminal organizations and from the state. Extrajudicial killings tend to be limited to the minimum necessary to maintain credibility and fend off territorial rivals.

Yashar's line of reasoning thus predicts that violence will occur when the control of drug transit routes is in flux. Drug trafficking organizations engage in violence to stave off competition from rivals, to punish perceived informants, and to hamper the state's capacity for enforcement. Evidence indicates that homicide rates do not rise wherever criminal organizations operate. On the contrary, when a DTO has effectively secured a given trade route, homicide rates tend to be low. Instead, murder rates rise in areas where competition for the control of drug transit routes is most keen. In short, neither DTOs nor illicit drugs correlate with violence on their own. However, when criminal organizations actively compete with each other to control drug trade routes, violence is more likely.

Yashar emphasized that her research remains a work in progress. She, along with a team of graduate students, will continue to analyze quantitative and qualitative data from throughout Central America to assess the arguments presented here. However, some preliminary conclusions can be drawn from her work thus far. First, Yashar contends that we need to look past broad regional explanations to understand why violence occurs where it does. Transit routes for illicit goods, particularly cocaine, are central factors that should be more fully explored.

Her findings also hold significant implications for public policy. As criminal organizations strive to control territory, their conflict is not contained within national borders, nor is it uniform throughout the Central American region. Thus, any solutions devised to address rising levels of violence should take both international and subnational politics into account.

There are also important implications for all who care about the quality of democracy across Latin America as a whole. One of the most basic rights that citizens enjoy is the right to physical security. Regardless of regime type, states should control the legitimate use of force in society and prosecute those who commit extrajudicial violence according to the rule of law. The right to personal security is so fundamental that many scholars who write about citizenship tend to assume that such protection exists. In many areas of Latin America, however, citizens cannot take their right to physical safety for granted.

Aside from the human toll taken on individuals and families, violence affects the quality of democracy that people experience in multiple ways. The 2010 Latinobarómetro survey revealed that while many Latin Americans enjoy multiple types of freedom — particularly freedom of religious expression — very few believe that the state provides adequate protection against crime. José Miguel Cruz, a political scientist at Vanderbilt University, found that while a majority of Latin Americans prefer democracy to all other regime types, escalating crime rates are prompting a shift in public opinion. As of 2008, slightly less than half of all Latin Americans indicated that they would be willing to trade democracy for authoritarianism if a strong leader could effectively address rising rates of everyday violence. At the broadest level, rampant violence negatively affects collective preferences for democracy.

Violence also affects the way individuals experience democracy in their day-to-day lives. Marginalized populations across Latin America have rarely enjoyed full citizenship rights; the unequal protection of rights is nothing new. What is distinctive about the current period, however, is the power of violence to transform the contours of civic life. Those who live under conditions of constant physical insecurity and fear of random violence may make political choices they would not otherwise consider, such as favoring authoritarian regimes. Individuals may also conclude that the political game is one they cannot influence, given the climate of violence, and withdraw from civic participation altogether. Neither outcome is healthy for democracy. Illicit activities, particularly the violence caused by competition over drug trafficking routes, are placing fundamental citizenship rights under siege in Central America.

Deborah Yashar is a professor of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton University and co-director of the Project on Democracy and Development. She spoke for CLAS on April 30, 2012.

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VIDEO AVAILABLE AT CLAS.BERKELEY.EDU

Nicaraguan kids playing cops and robbers.

Photo by Eric Molina.

Photo courtesy of Rubén Ignacio Arancda Manriquez.

CHILE

Lagos points at the camera and accuses Pinochet of torture, murder, and human rights violations before the 1988 Chilean plebiscite that deposed the dictator.

A Memoir About the Future

by Ernesto Muñoz-Lamartine

Chile must shift its emphasis from growth to equity if it is to develop successfully. So argued Chilean President Ricardo Lagos (2000-06) during his CLAS talk, which was based on his recently published political memoir: *The Southern Tiger, Chile's Fight for a Democratic and Prosperous Future*. However, Chile's historical trajectory has shaped its current policy choices and dilemmas, and the country must grapple with that history if it is to move forward.

After completing his mandate, Lagos remained at the forefront of the political discussion in Chile, as one of the handful of public intellectuals with enough stature to steer the agenda, especially within his own center-left Concertación coalition. He has done so by creating a series of initiatives through his Fundación Democracia and Desarrollo (Democracy and Development Foundation), such as a the virtual community El Quinto Poder (The Fifth Power, www.elquintopoder.cl) and by collaborating with young scholars and policy makers in thinking about the new challenges facing Chile on its way to development.

An example of Lagos' engagement with the younger generation was the publication in 2011 of an edited volume titled *El Chile Que Se Viene: Ideas, miradas, perspectivas y sueños para el 2030* (The Chile That Will Be: Ideas, Views, Perspectives, and Dreams for 2030), in which he defined seven strategic goals, from education policy to tax reform, all of them articulated around a single principle: the need for increased equality. In this prescription, Lagos closely follows Wilkinson and Pickett's arguments in *The Spirit Level* (2009), about the correlation between inequality and negative social outcomes in advanced economies but adds a key corollary: according to Lagos, when countries like Chile achieve a certain level of income per capita, social indicators cease to be closely correlated with increased growth and begin to depend on income distribution. He therefore attributes phenomena such as Chile's student-led unrest to the natural progression of a society that gradually seeks equal treatment for all.

President Lagos' preoccupation with high levels of income and wealth inequality in Chile is not new. In his political platform for the 1999-2000 presidential elections, he used the slogan "*Crecer con Igualdad*" (Growth With Equality) to represent his ideal set of policies: continuing to foster growth and productivity gains through trade liberalization, exports, and private investment, while conducting an expansive social policy in areas such as housing, education coverage, and healthcare reform.

Lagos' focus on inequality is natural: although in the last 15 years Chile has continued to grow consistently, quickly rebounding from exogenous shocks such as the 2007-08 financial crisis through a combination of public spending and first-rate macroeconomic management, the country's income-distribution indicators have improved only marginally since the end of the dictatorship in 1990. Chile's Gini coefficient, a measure of inequality, remains among the worst in the world.

In his talk, Lagos provided a long-term, political-economic and historical view of the legacies and constraints that, in his opinion, have prevented Chile's success in the crucial area of equality. He started with an analysis of the reasons for the democratic breakdown of 1973. In his view, ideological polarization in the context of the Cold War and under the threat of foreign intervention prevented Chileans from achieving what Lagos sees as essential in a democratic society: a common ground of mutual respect in the public sphere. He tied this requirement to his own experience, not only in Chile, but also in the United States, where the institutional violence on display during the Civil Rights struggle marked his time as a young graduate student in the North Carolina of the early 1960s.

The main lesson that he and a whole generation of Chilean politicians learned in the aftermath of the 1973 coup was the need to build broad alliances based on consensus and compromise. He applied this lesson to his fight against the dictatorship, starting with his role as a deal broker within the Socialist Party. As he recounts in *The Southern Tiger*, his ascent to political prominence in Chile was due both to his academic credentials and his perceived neutrality and fairness, which allowed him to build bridges within his party and with the Christian Democrats, a crucial test. This bridge-building quality was recognized somewhat jokingly by his fellow Socialists, who called the non-aligned group led by Lagos, "los Suizos" (the Swiss).

Connecting that political experience to the current situation in Chile, Lagos situated the origin of his country's particular political institutions to a choice, made during the early stages of the fight against Pinochet's dictatorship, to follow a nonviolent, less-confrontational path to

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Guards protect Pinochet during a 1988 rally.

Photo by Marcelo Montecino.

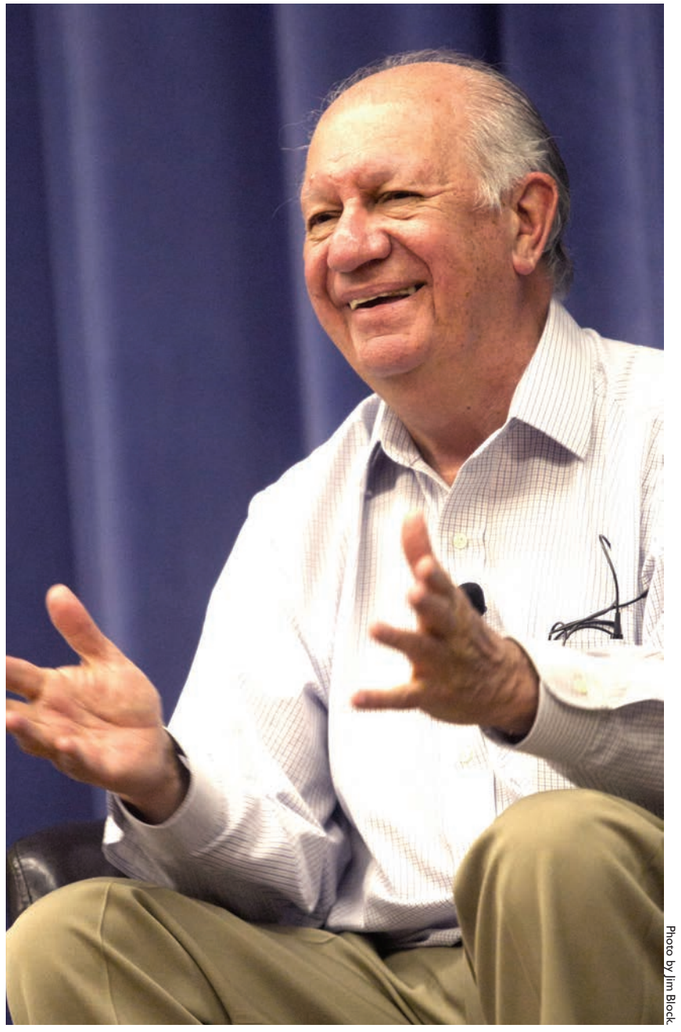

Photo by Jim Block.

Ricardo Lagos during a talk at UC Berkeley.

democracy. The price for defeating a dictator "with pencil and paper" as Lagos put it, was that many of the non-democratic rules written into Pinochet's 1980 Constitution had to be accepted by the democratic opposition. This set of institutions, such as high quorums for economic and social legislation, a binomial electoral system, and the lack of democratic participation through referenda, gave the rightwing parties, a minority in 1990, effective veto power against any major change in the economic model. This veto power has proven to be one of the most enduring legacies of the dictatorship.

During the Lagos administration, a few of the more clearly authoritarian holdovers in the Constitution, such as the *senadores designados* (designated, or appointed, senators), were eliminated. However, according to Lagos, these changes were not enough to give him or his successor, President Michelle Bachelet, the power necessary to push for more extensive reforms such as modifying Chile's tax code.

In today's Chile, Lagos sees the reflection of a political, economic, and social cycle that has run its course, opening new avenues for reform. In the political realm, the electoral system and the Constitution must be changed if Chilean democracy is to achieve its potential. Gross Domestic Product per capita has reached US$14,000 (US$17,311 at purchasing power parity), according to a 2011 World Bank report, and Chile is well on its way to achieving the US$20,000 mark. However, without effective redistributive policies, Chile will remain one of the most unequal countries in the region. Culturally, Chile is a much more mature society that is now open to the world. Citizens have access to new technologies that also pose new challenges and opportunities for democratic inclusion.

In sum, Chile has progressed along the path to development but faces crucial challenges if it wants to achieve its goals while conserving its social and political stability. In drawing lessons from history, Lagos reminds us of the historically dependent path that Chile has followed and cautions against judging the current situation outside its institutional context. What is needed, as President Lagos recommended in his talk and recounted in his memoirs, is for political actors to realize their historic moment and to lead with principled clarity in the face of uncertainty. Whoever achieves that, while representing the interests of disenchanted Chilean citizens, will help shape Chile's future and its path to development.

Ricardo Lagos was president of Chile from 2000 to 2006 and is president of the Fundación Democracia y Dessarollo. He spoke for CLAS on September 13, 2012.

Ernesto Muñoz-Lamartine is a Ph.D. student at UC Berkeley's Goldman School of Public Policy.

VIDEO AVAILABLE AT CLAS.BERKELEY.EDU

Lifestyles of the "transnational global plutocratic overclass," Monaco.
(Photo by Damian Morys Photography.)

INEQUALITY

The New Plutocrats

by James Gerardo Lamb

Although the United States and Chile are "two very different countries at two very different moments of development," their recent histories include some surprising similarities, argued Oscar Landerretche, director of the School of Economics and Business at the Universidad de Chile. In both countries, efforts to reduce substantial inequality have been limited by an ineffective relationship between public policy challenges and the political process.

This interaction between the politics and policy surrounding inequality was the subject of a dialogue between Bradford DeLong, professor of Economics at UC Berkeley, and Oscar Landerretche at the recent CLAS event "The Politics of Inequality." Each speaker analyzed the impact on inequality of various factors: history; globalization; technological change; government policy, especially in the area of education; and the economic structures and role in the world economy of each country. The speakers also noted that both countries are often cited for their high degree of social and economic inequality.

DeLong began by addressing three broad dimensions of inequality: trends in global inequality between nation-states; a political-economic history of inequality in the United States comparing the Gilded Age of the late 19th and early 20th century with recent history; and the shift of the bulk of inequality from between countries to within them, driving the creation of a more international economic elite, which he termed a "transnational global plutocratic overclass." Due to the uneven adoption of technological advancements originating in the Industrial Revolution, global inequality between nations expanded from roughly 1800 until about 1975. Since that time, this type of inequality has been decreasing significantly. However, this decline is almost entirely due to strong and sustained growth rates in only two nations, India and China.

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Within the United States, the most significant phenomenon in recent economic history is "the emergence of a Second Gilded Age." Historically, noted DeLong, the U.S. enjoyed relative equality among those who were recognized as full citizens, namely non-indentured white males. Beginning in the 1870s, this began to change as widening inequality led to the Gilded Age of mass poverty combined with enormous concentrations of wealth among plutocrats. This situation "called forth a political reaction" in the form of populist and progressive social movements in the United States, which demanded that "the government … put its thumbs on the scale heavily to create an equal income distribution and a middle-class society." Movements were able to gain power and influence policy, despite the enormous impact of wealth on politics. From 1925 until about 1980, policies inspired by these ideas led to steady declines in inequality in the United States as well as some incorporation of excluded groups such as women and African Americans.

Since 1980, there has been a major change as inequality has expanded greatly along two dimensions. First is the gap between the top 20 percent and the bottom 80 percent of the income distribution, which has grown rapidly along with the returns on a college education. The second is "an even larger explosion of inequality" between the top .01 percent (about 15,000 households) and the rest of the top 20 percent, "perhaps the most puzzling and remarkable feature of the past generation." This development "puts the American political system under substantial long-term threat," as the kind of concentrated political power associated with such imbalanced wealth endangers a "democratic commitment to equality of opportunity" for future generations.

DeLong also expressed concern at the generalization of this latter trend across nations, asking whether a "plutocratic overclass" is being generated, not just in the United States, but as a global phenomenon in many countries. This increasing concentration of wealth within nation-states allows an internationally oriented economic elite "to speak very loudly indeed" and may foreclose possibilities for the more robust reemergence of a pro-equality politics.

Landerretche began his presentation by noting that Chilean inequality exists in a context of global forces over which the country has very little control yet by which it is strongly affected. A small, open economy such as Chile's must adjust to global trends it cannot alter, a situation Landerretche calls the "unmoved mover" effect. Still, "a country is more than its trade and the relative prices it brings," so national factors matter.

Landerretche contextualized current trends in Chilean inequality as the product of five main variables in the domestic economy: the distribution of productivity and education; the distribution of bargaining power between employers and employees; the domestic economic structure of production; the tax structure; and the system of transfer and entitlement policies. As inequality has been growing in many countries in recent decades, the Chilean economy became increasingly open to transnational trade and investment flows.

In terms of these factors, Landerretche noted that there had been a huge increase in the coverage of education in Chile, especially post-secondary education, with the benefits attenuated by uneven quality. Little has changed in terms of bargaining power and the tax structure. Chile's economic structure continues to be strongly influenced by its heavy reliance on primary exports — especially copper, food, and agriculture. This dependence can raise relative prices for other sectors and so crowd them out of the economy, reinforcing dependence on the commodity export industry. This sitaution is what Landerretche terms the "Chilean flu" a milder version of the phenomenon known to economists as "Dutch disease," in which resource exports hurt competitiveness in other sectors.

The major changes of recent decades, particularly since 2000, have come in the area of transfer and entitlement policies, where "substantial expansions" have been "very important." As world income inequality has worsened, Chilean "total income inequality," which includes the effects of government transfers, has improved "a little bit." Considering that the tax structure is neutral in distributive terms and that "autonomous income inequality" without transfer policy effects has somewhat worsened in Chile, "you could argue that's a pretty good result," Landerretche observed.

However, the question is why "more aggressive" policies to counter inequality in one of the most unequal regions and countries in the world has not been possible. Landerretche noted that major policy reforms to significantly ameliorate inequality are very complex and difficult to promote politically, as vested interests are coordinated and motivated by the concreteness of their potential losses. The lack of a viable political strategy to sustain policy that would address inequality more thoroughly is a major obstacle in Chile. Landerretche closed by pointing out that in the United States, it has likewise been difficult for an administration that campaigned on reforming the country's economic extremes to coordinate a policy response broad enough to make a sizable impact while remaining politically feasible.

As part of the inter-continental dialogue, each professor posed a question to the other. The first, from DeLong to

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The New Global University

Professor DeLong on the Change Represented by the "Dialogue for the Americas" Series

Thank you very much for inviting me. I'm always happy to be here at the Center for Latin American Studies. I'm even happier to be part of a cross-continental dialogue, if only because the slow creation of — call it a global intellectual space — is what ought to be the 21st-century mission of universities like this. After all, a thousand years ago when the university started in the West — it had started earlier elsewhere — the basic problem was that you needed educated people. Emperors needed judges; popes needed theologians; theologians and judges needed to have and read books, but books were expensive. Come 1100 or so when the University of Bologna was founded, your average book required about six months of skilled monk labor to produce by the time you've prepared the parchment, prepared the ink, written out the book, illustrated the manuscript, and so forth. Much, much cheaper to get all the budding judges and theologians together in a room in Bologna or Naples or Paris or Oxford and have somebody read the single copy of the book that exists to them aloud while they take notes than to have people distributed all over Western Europe, each with their own copy of these hideously expensive books. Well, books are much cheaper now, but we still have universities because they are places where people can come together and easily talk to each other about important intellectual issues and principles. And we would have a better world if we could generalize this to the globe, so the entire globe becomes one university, rather than being small, individual hotspots all over the place, to which a relatively small portion of the world's population has access. That's the business we're in for the 21st century. That's the business that this particular technology experiment is in aid of.

– Bradford DeLong

The library of the University of Bologna.
(Photo by Anna Hesser.)

Photo by Jacquelyn Martin/Associated Press.

A protestor in the United States holds a ball and chain symbolizing the burden of his educational debts.

Landerretche compared the role of the education system in combating inequality in the United States and Chile. DeLong explained that the "Clark Kerr" model of high government investment in higher education was "very effective at promoting equality between the 1920s and the 1970s." However, since about 1980, the withdrawal of government subsidies to this sector and a resulting explosion in the cost of higher education means that "this road [to greater equality] is closed to us." Might Chile mitigate inequality through the expansion of higher education?

Landerretche called Chile a "very dramatic experiment" in expanding access to higher education. The country financed an "aggressive" and "expensive" loan program that resulted in explosive growth in post-secondary education, from between 200,000 and 300,000 students a decade ago to 1.2 million today. However, due to the "employment structure," there are insufficient jobs appropriate for this number and mix of professionally trained workers. The danger of an educated but disappointed population leading to a "very angry politics" is thus a real concern. DeLong noted that this result would make Chile "the first country to over-invest in higher education." The possibility of such an outcome would largely owe to a copper price boom and the "Chilean flu." A "Norwegian model" of a large sovereign wealth fund invested abroad and set aside for long-term savings and investment might help mitigate this problem, suggested DeLong.

In querying DeLong, Landerretche wondered whether an analogous "flu" situation could be said to have affected the United States in recent decades. Has the "tremendous" expansion of the financial sector exerted extra pressure on other sectors of the U.S. economy such as manufacturing? DeLong argued that by "accidentally" shifting 7 percent of GDP "out of manufacturing and other sectors" with 3 percent going to healthcare administration and 4 percent to financial services, the United States had lost overall productivity while increasing risk and uncertainty. Landerretche suggested that the growth of the "angry" Tea Party movement could be one of the effects this shift has had on U.S. politics. DeLong emphasized that the politics of any major structural adjustment aimed at correcting this imbalance would be especially fraught, amidst an anemic recovery after a major recession.

A member of the audience asked Professor DeLong to parse the effect of "global forces" on U.S. inequality. The incorporation of 2 billion workers from India and China into the global labor market was indeed important, conceded DeLong. But it ranked fourth in significance, behind the decline of U.S. educational supremacy, a "less progressive" tax and transfer system, and a cultural and socio-political transformation that has rendered acceptable elite corporate practices that would have yielded a sharp response from organized labor and the wider society in earlier eras.

In answering what factors hinder progress on addressing Chilean inequality, Landerretche pointed to several dynamics that make the politics of enacting such a program daunting. In a "very small" country such as Chile, with very concentrated markets, the economy "is basically controlled by just a handful of very large family conglomerates, and they are going to lose." This context makes such "a political agenda very difficult to produce." He also reminded the audience that the context for Chile, unlike the United States, is a persistent history of stark inequalities.

DeLong picked up on this theme in response to a question about the limits of discussing economic reform without changing the political structures that clearly delimit such reform. He agreed that such change was probably necessary but that it must be approached with great caution. The history of the 20th century is replete with examples of the risks of political actors claiming greater legitimacy as representatives of "the people" than that of their elected officials.

Concluding remarks centered on the puzzle of why the explosion of inequality in the United States has not led to the level of "social outrage" and protest that might be expected. DeLong once again compared the current era to the Gilded Age, which did in fact lead to widespread protest. He offered that it was "a great mystery" why no such reaction has occurred over the last 30 years and highlighted it is as one area where the "Second Gilded Age" diverges radically from the first.

Speaking to the same contradiction, Landerretche ascribed the difference to the lack of political leadership that offers a coherent and compelling policy mix to robustly address the situation. In this vein, he cited Clement Attlee, the post-World War II British Prime Minister from the Labor Party whose policies are credited with building the foundation of the United Kingdom's modern welfare state. In comparison, contemporary protest movements such as the *indignados* (indignant ones) in Spain or the Occupy movement have lacked "political leadership that enables people to construct solutions." Until such leadership emerges, we may simply be "trapped waiting."

Bradford DeLong is a professor of Economics at UC Berkeley and the former Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Economic Policy under President Bill Clinton. Oscar Landerretche is the director of the School of Economics and Business at the Universidad de Chile. They spoke for CLAS on October 15, 2012.

James Gerardo Lamb is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Sociology at UC Berkeley.

VIDEO AVAILABLE AT CLAS.BERKELEY.EDU

Camila Vallejo and Giorgio Jackson, leaders of Chile's student protests, are pursuing their respective agendas by running for office in 2013.

Photo by Roberto Candia/Associated Press.

Photo by Valter Pontes/Coperphoto.

City council chamber of Salvador, one of Brazil's most diverse cities.

DEMOCRACY

The Puzzling Whiteness of Brazilian Politicians

by Jean Spencer

Is Brazil really a racial democracy? The idea of racial democracy, originally put forth by the Brazilian sociologist Gilberto Freyre in the 1930s, holds that racial discrimination is much more moderate in Brazil than in countries like the United States, due in part to widespread racial mixing. If Brazil is truly a racial democracy, however, why are the city council members in both Salvador and Rio de Janeiro significantly whiter than their electorates? Thad Dunning, an associate professor of Political Science at Yale University, designed a study to discover the reason for this lack of descriptive democracy.

The first problem Dunning faced was a basic one: defining terms. In Brazil, black, white, and brown are in the eye of the beholder. To get "a quick and dirty" baseline for how different politicians are perceived, he conducted an internet survey where participants were asked to assess the race of a random sample of elected officials and unelected candidates using several different scales. In one, candidates were evaluated on a zero-to-10 scale with zero being the lightest and 10 being the darkest; in another, respondents located candidates in one of multiple color categories; and in a third, participants were asked to place the candidates in one of the five categories used by the Brazilian census: *branco* (white), *pardo* (brown), *preto* (black), *amarelo* (yellow), and *indigena* (indigenous). In general, Dunning found that there was a good match between the results of the scales, with the pardo category generating the most heterogeneous responses. Comparing the codings of politicians with census data on residents of Salvador and Rio, he also found that whites were heavily overrepresented on the city councils of both cities, just as he had suspected.

But why? Dunning considered three main possibilities: whites hold racist attitudes toward other groups; black and brown voters have internalized disparaging attitudes about their own groups; or voter preferences are more influenced by class than race. To test these hypotheses, Dunning ran an experiment designed to tease out voters' underlying racial biases. He hired black and white actors to create videos that followed the same format as the free hour of coverage that Brazilian television gives to candidates for city council. In order to compensate for differences in the personal appeal of individual "candidates," he hired six black and six white actors for each city.

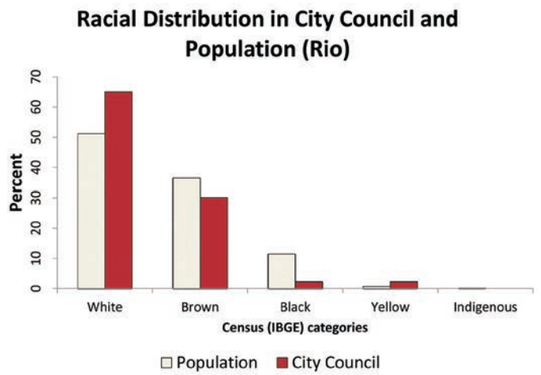
The researchers made a series of videotapes. In one set, the actors gave identical speeches, but in some videos, they wore jeans and in others a suit. In the second set of videos, the actors assumed a particular class identity and mode of dress and gave a speech that emphasized that identity — either "working class" or "elite." Subjects were then randomly assigned one of the videos and asked to identify the candidate's race and evaluate his characteristics such as intelligence, trustworthiness, and likeability as well as whether they would vote for him based on the speech they had just viewed. Subjects were also asked to identify their own racial group. The researchers then evaluated how subjects responded to candidates of the same race as themselves compared to those of different races and also how they responded to candidates of the same class compared to those from different classes.

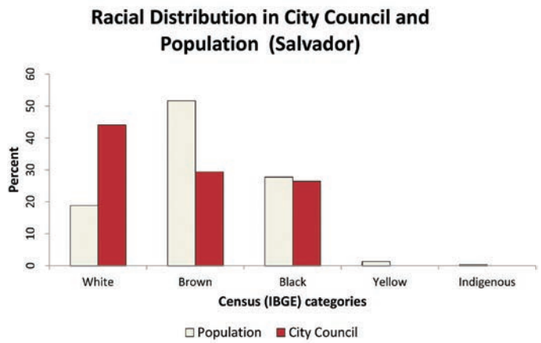
Interestingly, while the race of the faux candidates was perceived as intended about 75 percent of the time, roughly 25 percent of the time candidates who the researchers had identified as black or white were seen as being brown. This finding was especially likely when people were assigned a "white" candidate, a fact that underscores the difficulty of drawing clear racial lines in Brazil.

An even more interesting result was that there were no conclusive results. Dunning found that there were "no effects of race and class that survive[d] standard adjustments for multiple statistical comparisons." This null result is especially surprising given that Dunning has carried out similarly designed studies in other countries, including Mali and India, where he found that voters do favor candidates from their own ethnic group.

Finding no strong race or class effects on voting, Dunning was left without a clear explanation for what he termed "the puzzling whiteness of Brazilian politicians." Working together with Natália Bueno, a Ph.D. student in Political Science at Yale, Dunning followed up his initial study by doing a preliminary analysis of three alternative hypotheses that might explain the lack of descriptive representation in Brazil: party influence, barriers to candidate entry, and unequal candidate resources.

Brazil uses an open-list, proportional representation system. The number of seats allocated to each party depends on its share of the total vote. Within each party, individual seats are given to the candidates who receive





Comparison of the racial distribution of the citizens of Rio and Salvador and that of their city council members, based on census data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE). (Graphs courtesy of Thad Dunning.)

the most votes. Since candidates from the same party are competing with one another, this type of system is thought to weaken party control over candidates, which would seem to undermine the party influence hypothesis. Dunning and Bueno investigated another peculiarity of the Brazilian electoral system, however, that they thought might give the party more power over the candidates. In Brazil, voters traditionally do not select a name from a list; rather, they write in the candidates' number. Dunning noted that parties seemed to have influence over the numbers assigned to individual candidates, and "prominent people tended to have easy-to-remember codes." He also found that having repeated digits or digits that appeared in sequence correlated with better election results. However, there was "no significant difference for race with regard to the quality of [the candidates'] numbers." In other words, "whites don't seem to be getting better numbers." Given these findings, it doesn't seem likely that parties are suppressing non-white candidates in the polls.

The second hypothesis that Dunning and Bueno looked into was whether there are barriers that keep

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non-whites out of politics. They looked at non-elected candidates to see if there were fewer blacks and browns among the total candidate population as well as among those eventually elected to office. What they found was the opposite: whites are roughly proportionally represented (Salvador) or even underrepresented (Rio) among the candidates but overrepresented among the winners.

Dunning and Bueno's final hypothesis was that a candidate's resources helped determine the electoral result. So far, this line of inquiry has been the most promising. In Brazil, candidates are required to declare their assets. In surveying these records, Dunning and Bueno found that candidates elected to office had significantly higher mean total assets, at 432,423 Brazilian reais (R$), than those who were not elected, whose average assets totaled R$188,649. This disparity may provide a clue to the gap in descriptive representation, since whites in general tend to have more resources: on average, whites have a net worth of R$440,790 compared to R$247,378 for nonwhites.

At the end of his presentation, Dunning joked that his findings would be perfect for submission to the mythical Journal of Null Results. Still, his research does pose some interesting questions about democracy in Brazil. First of all, it shows some support for Brazil's claim to racial democracy. As Dunning said during the question-and-answer session, "Maybe the myth of racial democracy is right." His follow-up work also points to areas that could be fruitful for future research, including the impact of candidates' relative wealth on election outcomes. Until such work is done, however, the cause of the racial disconnect between the population and the political class in Brazil remains a mystery.

Thad Dunning is a professor of Political Science at Yale University. He spoke for CLAS on May 2, 2012.

Jean Spencer is the outreach and publications coordinator at the Center for Latin American Studies and a graduate student at UC Berkeley's Goldman School of Public Policy.

VIDEO AVAILABLE AT CLAS.BERKELEY.EDU

City Hall, Rio de Janiero.

Photo by Felipe Borges.


EL HORROR según Botero

Por primera vez llega a Sudamérica la serie de Fernando Botero que retrata las torturas de los soldados norteamericanos en la cárcel de Abu Ghraib, en Irak. A punto de celebrar sus 80 años pintor habla con Qué Pasa sobre esta muestra, que se inaugu el 15 de marzo en el Museo de la Memoria.

[Por Yenny Cáceres]

La obra más cruda y po aterriza en el Museo de

CULTURA

Fernando Botero celebra sus 80 años en el mundo y su obra pasa por Chile

Desde el viernes, se verán en Santiago treinta y siete obras sobre las torturas en la cárcel iraquí. Pronto, su mayor retrospectiva estará en México y España, y sus últimos trabajos en Colombia, Italia y Brasil.

TRES MUESTRAS

News accounts of the Botero exhibit at Chile's Museo de la Memoria.

CHILE

Botero and the Museum of Memory

by Harley Shaiken

The Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos (Museum of Memory and Human Rights) is a striking, contemporary building on the edge of downtown Santiago, Chile. Its simple rectangular form — glass, steel, and concrete sheathed in green metallic mesh — seems to hover over a sunken, open-air plaza that spans a city block.

As you approach the museum, walking down the gentle slope toward what is appropriately called "Memory Plaza," you pass alongside the 30 articles of the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights, engraved article-by-article on a concrete wall. Article 5 states that "no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment." The declaration frames the building as you arrive and confronts you again when you leave. The museum, located in Santiago's gritty Barrio Yungay, is embedded in the cacophonous city but, with its compelling architecture, open spaces, and flowing water, encourages reflection. While very different in form and function, it has the haunting quality of the "Vietnam War Memorial" in Washington, D.C.

Upon entering the building, you are met with the words of President Michelle Bachelet, who inaugurated the museum in the final months of her presidency. "We cannot change our past, we can only learn from what we have lived. This is our opportunity and our challenge." These words define the mission of the Museo de la Memoria: it was created to focus attention on the human rights horrors of Chile's recent past and, thereby, to help ensure a democratic future.

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The museum, which details the trauma of Chile's bloody 1973 coup and the 17-year dictatorship that followed, proved to be an exceptional place to display 38 of the paintings and drawings from Fernando Botero's Abu Ghraib collection on their first showing in South America. The exhibit, on loan from the University of California, Berkeley, opened on March 15, 2012 for a three-month run.

"The theme of human rights is universal," commented the museum's director, Ricardo Brodsky, in an interview about the exhibition with La Tercera, a major Chilean newspaper. "Through art, we can touch these same themes in a more open, modern, and rich way."

Art proved to be a powerful window on critical issues: torture and institutions; the rule of law and democracy; and memory and human rights. Botero has said that great art is meant to provoke, and these works do just that. They draw you into their world and force you to confront your own. In the process, they touch the soul and engage the mind. The art raises critical questions: What circumstances led to these horrific events? What toll does torture extract on a democracy? How can human rights abuses be prevented in the future?

Photo courtesy of Paula Leonvendegar.

The exhibition space.

Botero is arguably the world's best-known living artist, and he is particularly iconic in Latin America. David Ebony, the managing editor of Art in America magazine and a noted critic, called him "one of the world's most significant artists," noting that "Botero has managed to be profound and popular at the same time — not an easy feat." Speaking at the presentation of the International Sculpture Center's Lifetime Achievement Award to Botero in late October 2012, Ebony called him "one of the most courageous artists of our time," recalling "as the stories and images of the atrocities and abuse of prisoners at the Abu Graib facility near Baghdad first came to light in 2004, I was stunned that most contemporary artists remained silent on the subject."

Botero broke that silence with his graphic, brilliantly executed paintings and drawings about what took place. He spent 14 intense months creating this series, which Roberta Smith, The New York Times art critic, called "among Mr. Botero's best work, and in an art world where responses to the Iraq war have been scarce — literal or obscure — they stand out."

How did Berkeley become involved? After Botero completed the series, it was shown at prestigious museums across Europe to strong reviews. Museums and galleries throughout the United States, however, passed on exhibiting the works. The Center for Latin American Studies organized the first showing at a U.S. public institution in January 2007 on the Berkeley campus, leading Botero to donate 60 paintings and drawings — virtually the entire Abu Ghraib collection — to UC Berkeley.

At the opening in Chile, visitors who had lost loved ones during the dictatorship or who themselves had been horrifically tortured were visibly moved by the art. Among them was Carolina Toha, who has since been elected mayor of Santiago. Her father, Salvador Allende's vice president, was arrested, tortured, and murdered in the aftermath of the coup. A new generation was also in attendance. Young people, many of whom were born after the return to democracy, were also deeply impacted by the art.

The combination of great art, an iconic artist, and a new, path-breaking museum sparked intense interest and discussion throughout Chile as well as elsewhere in the Americas. It provoked a flurry of major media articles, radio discussions, television segments, tweets, and blog posts. The exhibit became a must-see event and sparked a national discussion on human rights, torture, and democratic

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Photo by Gonzalo Orellana Hidalgo.

The 30 articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights line the wall outside the museum.

values. President Piñera visited the museum for the first time to see the exhibit.

At a small dinner held the evening before the opening, a Chilean professor mused about the major impact the exhibit was already having. All the excitement and attention stemmed from the fact that "it's not about Chile," he said, "but it is." The art universalizes torture. Chileans and Latin Americans were horrified at what happened at Abu Ghraib, he reflected, and the fact the U.S. was involved made it all the easier to critique. Once the discussion about torture starts, however, it leads inexorably closer to home.

In a program at the museum the day after the opening, José Zalaquett, a professor of Law at the Universidad de Chile and co-director of its Human Rights Center, placed the discussion in historical context by describing art's shifting representation of torture and war. He displayed slides of artworks from the Middle Ages that displayed gruesome images bearing a striking resemblance to the Abu Ghraib works, and he presented photos of contemporary horrors around the world. Eduardo Vio Grossi, a judge on the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, laid out a contemporary vision of the continued relevance of these issues in Latin America. Christopher Edley, dean of the Berkeley Law School, examined torture and the rule of law. Edley, who played a key role in bringing the art to Berkeley in the first place, has displayed four of the largest and most riveting paintings at the law school. They sit just outside the dean's office in a major corridor between that office and the law library.

"Art offers the possibility of serving a need that law has failed to serve," he said during the museum program in Santiago. "How can we be sure that we will continue to debate what is right and what is wrong? I believe that the answer lies, in part, in art. That is what Señor Botero has done for us."

Harley Shaiken is the Class of 1930 Professor of Letters and Science and chair of the Center for Latin American Studies. He is a faculty member in the Graduate School of Education and the Department of Geography.

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Santiago Opening Remarks

Dear Friends,

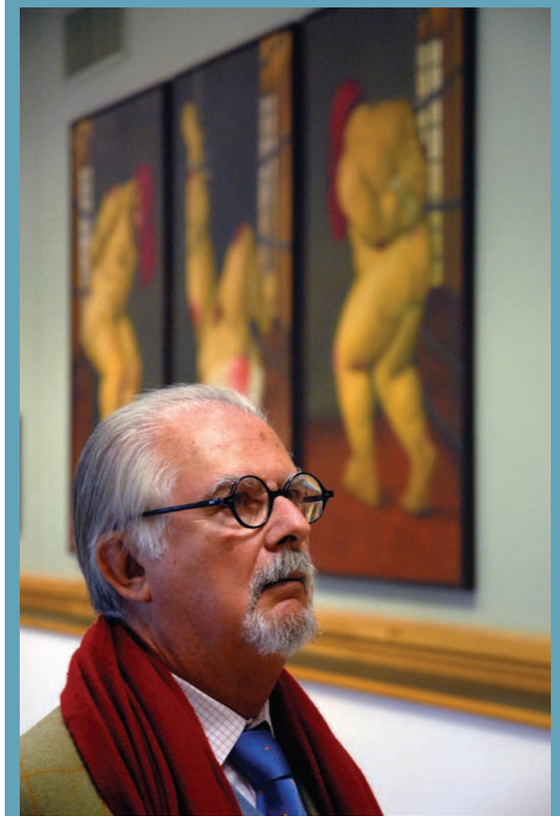
Unfortunately, I cannot be present at the opening of my Abu Ghraib exhibit at the Museum of Memory and Human Rights in Santiago, Chile. Due to several commitments this year, in which I am turning 80, it was not possible for me to attend this very important event. The day prior to the opening of the exhibit in Santiago, I am inaugurating a sculpture exhibit in Assisi, and the following week, I am inaugurating another exposition, the largest of my life, at the Fine Arts Palace Museum in Mexico City. Thus, due to reasons beyond my control, I cannot be there with you this time.

However, I am glad to know that two great friends of mine are there on my behalf: scholars Harley Shaiken and Beatriz Manz, both professors at the University of California, Berkeley. What is more, I can say that to a great extent, I owe to them the wide publicity this collection has received in the United States. Harley and Beatriz knew about this series of paintings and drawings because it had already been exhibited at some European museums, but they also knew that it had been rejected by several American museums, which is why they decided to contact me and suggested presenting it at Berkeley. Delighted, I accepted, of course, and in that moment, they made the miracle happen. In only seven weeks, they were able to arrange the exhibit in the university's facilities. The exhibit caused a significant impact and met with great interest, both on the part of the faculty as well as the students, because they all shared the same indignation that this atrocious news, that of the tortures in the Abu Ghraib prison, 32 kilometers away from Iraq's capital city, had generated everywhere.

In reality, the main reason for my anger, and that of the civilized world, was that this outrageous event was not limited to an isolated case of a perverse and corrupt vigilante group, committing atrocious crimes unknown to their superiors, but something much more complex. Everything seemed to indicate that the world power that presented itself as the guardian of dignity and human rights had orchestrated a system of abuses from the highest echelons of power. Even though American troops had invaded the country under the pretext of freeing the nation from Saddam Hussein's tyranny, they had ended up torturing the Iraqi people in the same prison where Hussein had tortured his fellow citizens. Without a shadow of a doubt, it was precisely this hypocrisy and double standard that led me to paint these pieces. The basis for my information was Seymour Hersh's article, which I read in The New Yorker, as well as other European publications, and these readings gave me the energy, which stemmed from anger, to work on these paintings later.

Finally, thanks to my friendship with Harley and Beatriz, and due to the fact that the University of California, Berkeley, was the first place where I could exhibit this series in the United States, I decided to donate the collection to this institution's prestigious museum. That is where these paintings are now and where they will be forever, and I am glad they have been left in good hands.

Thank you very much,
Fernando Botero



Fernando Botero in the Abu Ghraib exhibit at UC Berkeley, 2007.
(Photo by Jan Sturmann.)

ABU GHRAIB

Art and Law in a Time of Torture

by Christopher Edley

The following is an edited transcript of Dean Edley's talk at the opening of an exhibit of Fernando Botero's Abu Ghraib series of paintings and drawings at Chile's Museo de la Memoria.

It's a privilege to be here representing Berkeley. We are so proud that Señor Botero gave us these paintings and the honor of stewardship for decades, and we hope centuries, to come. Let me make three brief points. First, a little something about God. When I was studying for my confirmation — I was about 11 or 12 years old — I had a bit of an argument with the minister. I said to him: "You say that God made man in His image."

He said, "Yes."

"And God is perfect."

"Yes."

"But man is not perfect. Can you explain that?" So he called my parents and complained that I asked too many questions.

Forty thousand years of religion have not managed to remove evil from humanity. In a sense, it is not surprising, then, that 4,000 years of law have failed to remove evil or even prevent its consequences. And too often, law even fails to punish it. But my law school was excited to be able to support the Botero exhibition at Berkeley and to support this show here in Santiago. It's because of that old saying, "If you have a hammer, every problem you see looks like a nail." So when I took a helicopter ride into the Andes and saw the retreating glacier, I thought, "Law could do something about this. We need law to tackle the problem of climate change." When I study the inequalities in schools, I think that law can play a role in helping to address these problems of inequality, injustice. When I first saw the images of Botero, I thought, "Here is law that has failed. It has failed to protect, and it has failed to teach the basic morality that underlies human rights." To me as a lawyer, the images show what happens in the moral void created when we have no law. And it is for this reason that my law school has supported this exhibit, and it is for this reason that we will be displaying four of the Botero paintings on a permanent basis at my law school. Hopefully those images will haunt and instruct law students for generations to come.

So God did not make us perfect in his image. Religion has not cured us. Law has not cured us. But both religion and law help us to try to overcome and grapple with the evil within us.

The second point I want to make is that as important as law is, it is deeply flawed in certain respects. There is an internal tension, an inherent and internal incoherence, that makes law imperfect, which of course is to be expected given who creates it. There are three basic ways to think about the realms of law: One is that law can create what we call "rules of the road." The law says that green means go and red means stop, and we find this very convenient because it helps order society. Law also plays that function in business. The law helps structure the way businesses interact with each other.

Law also plays a role in deterrence and in punishment. That is obvious, and I won't belabor this point, but this, too, is an effort to create order. If the laws are legitimate in the political sense and in the moral sense, then this legal ordering is all to the good of society.

But the third role of law is actually to teach. For example, during the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, when Martin Luther King, Jr. and many others argued that the Congress should enact antidiscrimination statutes, many people objected and said, "We can't legislate morality." Well, to a lawyer that's just wrong, because law has a pedagogical function. You can pass an antidiscrimination statute, and you can pass an anti-torture statute. Even if it is not welcomed immediately and accepted by the general public, over time, such laws can stand as instruction, perhaps even as a beacon, so that people grow to understand the normative impulse, and it begins to help order society. In that sense, you are legislating morality through a process of instruction and an inculcation of higher values, higher social aspirations.

So those are the three functions of law, and yet when we go to apply the law and live under the law, a lot of problems arise. For example, it is part of the discipline of law to try to make everything as complicated as possible. This is how lawyers manage to be fully employed and why we can charge such high fees — because we are experts at complicating.

You say that torture is illegal. So let me ask you: At what point does degradation become torture? Does it require physical pain? Is there a distinction between abuse and torture? Are all forms of abuse torture? Are there gradations of torture and circumstances in which some forms of torture may be permissible? I could go on for days about how complicated this simple proposition is — that torture is illegal. That is my disability as a lawyer.

The interesting point I want to emphasize is that law tries to reflect morality, but law is not really driven by the same kind of calculus as moral discourse. Law is informed by moral discourse, but it has its own rules of argument, its own rules of evidence. And for that reason, law alone can never do the job we fully want in a moral sense. In some respects, I am offering an excuse for my profession and discipline, an excuse for the law. But I am also stating this as a challenge. We make a serious mistake if we expect too much of the law, just as we make a serious mistake if we expect that the traffic lights, the traffic laws, will protect us from all automobile-related injuries. The law is not enough.

The third point I want to make is a bit more complicated. During the presidential transition in the U.S. in 2008, I was among a small group of people who were responsible for helping President Obama plan the beginning of his administration. Although my responsibility was to worry about health care, immigration, and education, when his board of advisors was meeting and the principal national security advisor was talking about her team's priorities for the first two months of the administration, I raised a question. I asked: "Well, tell me, what are you planning in the way of investigation or prosecution of Bush administration officials with regard to issues of torture and abuses of human rights?"

And she said in response: "We are not going to do that. We are not going to go on a witch hunt."

I said: "Well, I am not interested in a witch hunt either, but I am interested in the rule of law." If we don't explore both the facts of what happened and the legality and morality of what happened, if we don't debate where to draw the lines, then how will we learn for the future? Even if no one ends up going to prison, it's important for the American people to know, to understand, to argue. But this was a very smart and savvy group of advisors. We all understood the legal argument, but also the stakes in terms of partisan politics and morale in the national security agencies. Not surprisingly, the group quickly went on to talk about the budget and the economy.

So, when I look at the Botero paintings… I realize that here is a respect in which art offers the possibility of serving a need that law has failed to serve. Because we have not applied the rule of law to the full extent, I believe, we should have. Therefore, how can we be sure that we will remember? How can we be sure that we will continue to debate what is right and what is wrong? I believe that the answer lies in part in art. That is what Señor Botero has done for us. That's what he's done for my university and my law school. And I will be eternally grateful.

Christopher Edley is The Honorable William H. Orrick, Jr. Distinguished Chair and Dean of the Berkeley Law School. He spoke for CLAS at the Museo de la Memoria in Santiago, Chile, on March 16, 2012. He has since installed four of the Abu Ghraib paintings in a highly visible corridor of the law school, between the Dean's Office and the library.

Photo by Jim Block.

Botero's "Abu Ghraib 57" hangs outside the library of the Berkeley Law School.

The Quebrada de la Vieja Creek runs briefly through a natural canyon before entering a culvert. (Photo by René Davids.)

COLOMBIA

Restoring Bogotá's Waterscapes

by René Davids

Settled between the agriculturally fertile savannah and the foothills of the Cerros Orientales and within walking distance of important resources, Bogotá's exceptional location was paradoxically also its undoing; for 450 years, citizens used the trees of the Cerros Orientales for energy and construction, eroding the hillsides and polluting the rivers, wetlands, and lagoons. Environmental and social problems increased as the city expanded, and by the early 1990s, the Colombian capital had gained a reputation for being hopelessly polluted, chaotic, and crime ridden.

Bogotá's turnaround began with the 1992 imprisonment of Mayor Juan Martín Caicedo on corruption charges, an event that triggered the reform of the mayoral selection process. While mayors had previously been presidential appointees, from 1992 onward they have been democratically elected. The democratic process allowed leaders to emerge who were able to transform one of the world's most dangerous, violent, environmentally contaminated, and corrupt capitals into a relatively peaceful city.

Instrumental in enabling the makeover was the approval and adoption of the 1993 Estatuto Orgánico de Bogotá, a city by-law that insured citizen participation in government and a more effective and efficient expenditure of public funds. The imposition of a general property sales tax and a levy on the price of gasoline allowed Mayor Jaime Castro (1992-95) to lay the fiscal foundation for subsequent mayors. His successors, Antanas Mockus and Enrique Peñalosa (1995-97 and 1998-2001 respectively), >>

The bicycle path along the Alameda del Porvenir.

Photo by René Davids.

Photo courtesy of Colombia Travel.

The Virgilio Barco Library.

invested those funds in an ambitious city improvement program. Among their initiatives were policies that aimed to enhance public squares and streetscapes, recover dilapidated parks, provide market areas for street vendors, and install bollards to prevent illegal parking. The program's best-known achievement was the establishment of the TransMilenio transportation system, which used fixed routes and exclusive lanes for buses. Modeled on a system to ease congestion first established in the Brazilian city of Curitiba, the Transmilenio also featured a new network of pedestrian overpasses, sidewalks, and bikeways. Understanding that modifications to the physical structure of the city had to be accompanied by a change in civic attitude, Antanas Mockus introduced a program of symbolic, ingenious, and thought-provoking street representations and cultural events aimed at promoting mutual respect and reflection on the importance of improving everyday civic behavior. Unpopular measures such as the restriction of arms possession among civilians through anti-gun campaigns were also carried out.

Another important tool in the reform of Bogotá was the Plan de Ordenamiento Territorial (Territorial Reorganization Plan, POT). This set of legislation and planning policies was introduced in 1997 to regulate land-use, the right to property, environmental protection, and any physical intervention in the larger territory. The POT allowed the Peñalosa administration to institute its de-marginalization project, which aimed to install infrastructure and provide social services in poor neighborhoods by building hospitals, public libraries, and schools as well as by legalizing settlements and resettling families living in areas of high physical risk.

The most remarkable of the four libraries built as part of Peñalosa's program was the centrally situated Virgilio Barco Library designed by architect Rogelio Salmona, Colombia's best-known modernist architect. Built of brick and reinforced concrete, the library recalls traditional Moorish buildings, with a sequence of spatial events such as courtyards with water features and decks connected through ramps and stairs that begin in the park and culminate in a rooftop deck.

Rogelio Salmona's passion for promenades and water reemerges in his design for the Eje Ambiental de la Avenida de Jiménez de Quesada (Jiménez de Quesada Environmental Axis). Conceived in collaboration with Luis Kopec and built between 1997 and 2001, this intervention transformed the street originally built over the San Francisco River into a brick-paved promenade featuring native trees, ribbon-like water fountains running along the sloping course, and a lane for the Transmilenio. The effect was to create a friendly relationship between public transport and pedestrian traffic while revitalizing the public spaces along the route. Since the San Francisco River continues to be piped underground, the Eje celebrates the memory of the river but serves no ecological function other than to mark the re-emergence of water as a fundamental part of the city's identity.

The Eje, together with the Parque del Tercer Milenio (Third Millenium Park), re-ignited downtown investment. The latter features sound and wind barriers built from the site's construction debris and planted with groundcover and flowering vines to create an artificial valley that provides a protective, secluded space for local birds and city-dwellers seeking a refuge from chaotic urban life. Some critics have argued, however, that the development made life more chaotic for the roughly 12,000 people relocated to make room for the nearly 50-acre park.

While the destruction of slum housing for the Parque del Tercer Milenio remains controversial, the ecological objectives achieved through the reforestation of the Cerros Orientales and the restoration of the 233-hectare Humedal Juan Amarillo (Juan Amarillo Wetlands) were unquestionably positive. Wetlands play an important role in the water cycle; they help mitigate flooding and provide a rich habitat for flora and fauna. However, prior to the restoration project, informal housing in Bogotá's eastern region had reduced the size and degraded the condition of the wetlands, threatening water supplies and natural habitat. Restoration efforts included the construction of islands for nesting birds and the restitution of the original flora of the region as well as a new plaza and walkways and cycling paths around the lake.

The public spaces around the Humedal Juan Amarillo are part of a new network of pedestrian and bicycle paths known as *alamedas*. Traditionally the designation for a public walkway or promenade shaded with poplar trees, the new alamedas were conceived during Mayor Peñalosa's term and were meant to provide clean, affordable transportation by encouraging pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Arguing that people need to walk, not just to be healthy but also to be happy, just as fish need to swim and birds need to fly, Peñalosa envisaged a city in which green

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The Eje Ambiental de la Avenida de Jiménez de Quesada.

Photo by René Davids.

Photo by René Davids.

A cow grazes beside the Canal de Torca.

space would be accessible to all, not just those who could afford to belong to private clubs.

The network was conceived by the Taller del Espacio Público (Public Space Workshop) of the District Planning Commission under the supervision of architect Lorenzo Castro Jaramillo. The first of these boulevards, the Alameda del Porvenir, was constructed in the late 1990s, in an outlying, low-income area located in the city's southwest. The 17-km-long path features a median of palm trees separating pedestrian from cyclist lanes and connects the neighborhoods it crosses with schools, libraries, community facilities, and transportation. Designed by Felipe Gonzáles Pacheco, the character of the Alameda del Porvenir changes dramatically as it passes through different districts, which include open fields and the Humedal Tibanica.

The intersection of the alamedas and the wetlands in the rapidly urbanizing areas of Bogotá's savannah created a series of connected public green spaces reminiscent of Boston's Emerald Necklace, which was designed by the American architect Frederick Law Olmstead at the end of the 19th century. Both projects aimed to preserve nature in vast stretches of their respective cities and to clean up polluted tidal creeks and swamps. In Peñalosa's view, there are very few public spaces left on the planet because most of the land has been privatized. For him, public spaces are the minimum a democratic society should provide to compensate for social inequalities. Both the alamedas and Boston's Emerald Necklace were conceived with the objective of providing access to green spaces for everyone and preserving them for future generations. Unfortunately, this aim is currently threatened in Colombia, as the Alameda del Porvenir has been the victim of vandalism and poor maintenance.

By contrast, the Parque del Virrey, the Canal de Torca, and the Alameda de la Quebrada de la Vieja — all alamedas designed around streams located in Bogotá's up-scale areas north of downtown — are well maintained. Used until the late 1980s to carry waste into lagoons and wetlands, and ultimately to the Bogotá River, these creeks contaminated an extensive area of the city before the waste was diverted. While the water has been cleaned up, the Canal del Virrey and the Canal de Torca still run through concrete culverts that do not provide a habitat for plants to grow and wildlife to thrive. The culverts also accelerate water flow, which prevents moisture from percolating down to the water table and increases the danger of flooding. The Quebrada de la Vieja Creek, by contrast, includes a stretch that runs through a natural canyon. However, it runs above ground for only a short distance before it is diverted into an underground culvert.

Thus, the ecological functions of the alamedas are not as comprehensive as they might have been. In addition, critics have questioned their usefulness for reaching jobs that are often located at distances that make biking to work impractical. Detractors argue that the alamedas have served to expand low-rise sprawl in southwest Bogotá and the periphery, further damaging the savannah's ecosystem. In their view, building denser housing in the existing, deteriorated parts of Central Bogotá would have been a better strategy. While the shortcomings pointed out by critics are arguably correct, the improvements to the city's ecology, public space, and civic culture, as well as the positive effects these have had on the perception and identity of Bogotá, are impressive and constitute a considerable achievement.

In the 1990s, Bogotá's newly elected leaders began implementing transformational urban reforms. For a socially segregated city like Bogotá, these reforms were a historic breakthrough. The alamedas brought the informal and formal cities into an organic whole, marking the beginning of the end of a schism that had divided the city since its foundation. The urban projects have provided a physical identity and visibility to neighborhoods, rich and poor alike, and the wetland and forest restoration integrated the environment into the city's structure, making it more than a mere site of resources. Perhaps most importantly, the renewal has also changed citizens' perception of water, moving it away from the notion that water is a mere resource or sanitation problem to re-envisioning it as a fundamental part of the city's identity.

René Davids is a professor of Architecture and Urban Design at UC Berkeley. He recently returned from a CLAS-sponsored research trip to Bogotá and Medellín.

The Quebrada de la Vieja Creek.

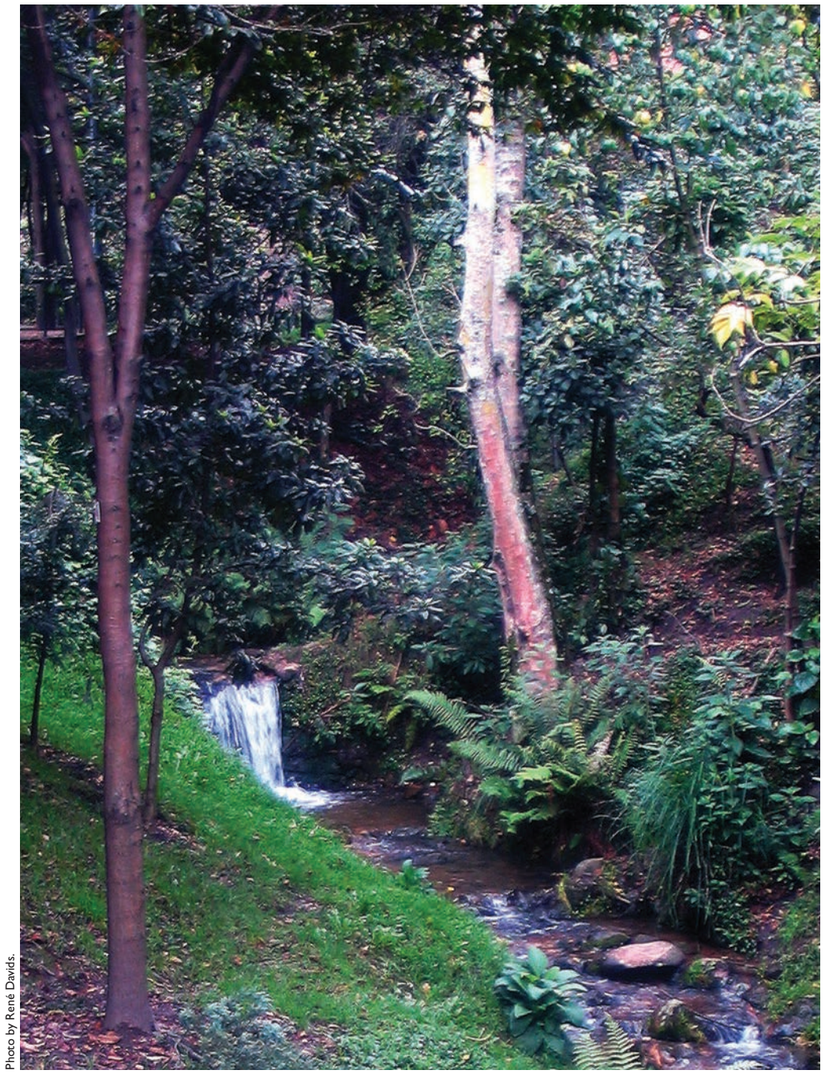

Photo by René Davids.

Workers cut and pack celery in the Salinas Valley.
(Photo by Dan Long.)

LABOR

A Long Dry Season

by Philip Martin

California enacted the Agricultural Labor Relations Act (ALRA) in 1975 to "ensure peace in the agricultural fields by guaranteeing justice for all agricultural workers and stability in labor relations." At the time, the United Farm Workers (UFW) and the Teamsters were competing to represent farm workers; together, they claimed over 50,000 members. Almost four decades later, fewer than 10,000 farm workers are represented by unions, including about a third represented by the UFW. There are several explanations for why there are fewer union-represented farm workers today than in the past, including flawed union leaders, politics, the changing structure of agriculture, and unauthorized migration.

Union Organizing

California is the only major farm state with a state law that grants union organizing and bargaining rights to farm workers, establishes election procedures under which workers can decide whether they want to be represented by unions, and has an agency to remedy unfair labor practices committed by employers and unions. The ALRA was enacted to end a decade of strife between unions and growers that required frequent intervention by state and local police.

During the 1960s, some farm employers selected the Teamsters to represent their workers without elections. Because of this experience, the ALRA requires a secret-ballot election supervised by the Agricultural Labor Relations Board (ALRB) before a union can be certified as the bargaining representative of farm workers. After the ALRA went into effect, there were more than 100 elections a month on California farms. Between 1975 and 1977, there were almost 700 elections on the state's farms, and unions were certified to represent workers on two-thirds of the farms involved (See Figure 1).

With unions representing most of the workers on large vegetable farms and many of those employed on the largest fruit farms, the farm labor market was expected to change. Wages were expected to continue increasing, with even seasonal workers receiving benefits such as health insurance and pensions. For example, at a time when the federal minimum wage was $3.25 an hour, the UFW pushed for a 40-percent increase in the general labor or entry-level wage from $3.75 to $5.25 an hour on vegetable-growing farms, prompting Businessweek to predict in a March 1979 article that seasonal farm workers would soon "win wage parity with industrial workers."

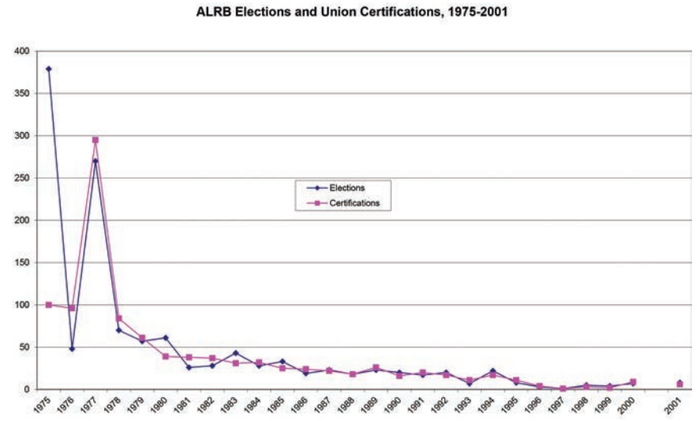

Figure 1: After an initial surge in the 1970s, California farm unionization has declined.
(Graph courtesy of Philip Martin.)

Union organizing slowed in the 1980s, and the share of ALRB-supervised elections that resulted in union certification fell to 55 percent. Elections fell further during the 1990s to an average of 10 a year, with unions winning half, and then declined even further in the first decade of the 21st century, when the average number of elections dropped to seven a year, including many that involved workers trying to decertify the union representing them.

The ALRB recognizes 15 labor organizations as eligible to represent workers on California farms, but three unions represent most of the farm workers covered by contracts today. The best-known, the UFW, reported 4,300 active members (and 900 retirees) to the U.S. Department of Labor at the end of 2010. Teamsters Local 890 represents several thousand workers employed in the Salinas area, while United Food and Warehouse Workers Local 5 (previously Local 1096) represents workers in the Salinas areas and at several wineries and dairies around the state. The UFW does not have local unions.

Union Decline

There are four major explanations for why farm worker unions have been unable to transform the farm labor market. The first involves flawed union leadership, especially at the UFW. In her 2009 book on the farm labor movement, journalist Miriam Pawel praised César Chávez as a charismatic leader able to articulate the hopes and dreams of farm workers, but concluded that Chávez was unwilling to turn the UFW into a business union that negotiated and administered contracts. Frank Bardacke comes to a similar conclusion in his 2011 biography of Chávez, arguing that the union leader became more interested in using the UFW as a vehicle to achieve broader social change than in organizing more farm workers who might challenge his leadership.

The second explanation for the failure of farm worker unions involves state politics. Democratic governors made key appointments to the ALRB between 1975 and 1982, Republicans between 1983 and 1998, Democrats between 1999 and 2004, Republicans between 2005 and 2011, and Democrats since. Sociologists Linda and Theo Majka concluded that the ability of farm worker unions to organize and represent farm workers in the 1970s and early 1980s depended on who made appointments to the ALRB.

The third explanation deals with changes in the structure of farm employment. In the 1960s and 1970s, farm worker unions were most successful in winning recognition and negotiating contracts at farms belonging to conglomerates with brand names that made them vulnerable to boycotts, including Shell Oil and United Brands (Chiquita). During the 1980s, many conglomerates sold their California farming operations. The growers who replaced the conglomerates were more likely to hire farm workers via intermediaries such as custom harvesters and farm labor contractors who strongly resisted unions.

The fourth explanation is the rise in unauthorized migration, which added vulnerable workers to the farm labor force and made it hard for unions to win wage increases. Figure 2 shows that the number of deportable aliens located — mostly foreigners apprehended just inside the Mexico-U.S. border — was low but rising between the mid-1960s and the late 1970s, the era when unions had their maximum impact on wages. After a lull in the late 1970s, unauthorized migration increased due to recession and peso devaluations in Mexico and peaked in 1986, when there were 1.8 million apprehensions. Unions found it hard to organize workers fearful of being discovered by Border Patrol agents and to win wage

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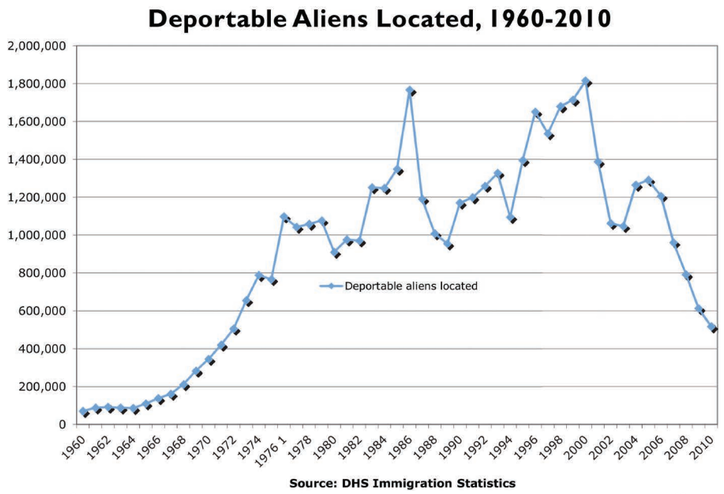


Figure 2: The increasing availability of unauthorized workers has made union action difficult. (Graph courtesy of Philip Martin.)

and benefit increases when farmers knew that striking workers could be replaced by newcomers from Mexico.

Unions have acknowledged difficulties in organizing and representing farm workers. The UFW in particular hopes that comprehensive immigration reforms will legalize currently unauthorized farm workers, making them easier to organize. The Agricultural Jobs, Opportunity, Benefits, and Security Act (AgJOBS), a compromise that was negotiated with farm employers in December 2000 but never passed by Congress, would legalize currently unauthorized farm workers and make employer-friendly changes to the H-2A guest worker program. The trade-off embodied in the AgJOBS compromise benefits current farm workers at the expense of future farm workers. Unions believe that legal workers, grateful for the unions' help in achieving immigrant status, would be easier to organize, even though the H-2A guest workers who are likely to eventually replace them may be harder to organize.

Card Check

Unions do not request secret-ballot elections until they feel confident they will win, and they gauge their support by persuading workers to sign union authorization cards. Because agriculture is a seasonal industry, the ALRA requires that at least 50 percent of currently employed workers sign authorization cards and that employment be at least 50 percent of its annual peak before a union can request an ALRB-supervised election.

In spite of these precautions, the UFW has sometimes lost elections it expected to win. In 2005, the UFW had signed authorization cards from 70 percent of the workers employed at the Giumarra table-grape farm but received only 48 percent of the votes cast in the September 1 election. The UFW's election loss at Giumarra prompted a union push for card check, another amendment to the ALRA that would enable unions to be certified to represent farm workers without secret ballot elections. For example, if card check had been in effect in the Giumarra case, the UFW could have presented the signed authorization cards from 70 percent of workers and been certified without an election. Nonfarm unions have been urging Congress to approve card check in the Employee Free Choice Act for almost a decade, but there is strong resistance to ending secret-ballot elections.

César Chávez insisted in 1975 that the ALRA include secret ballot elections to avoid having employers recognize a union as the bargaining agent for their farm workers without elections. Now, the UFW argues that times have changed. The Teamsters are no longer competing to organize farm workers, and employers have become more sophisticated in encouraging workers to vote against union representation.

The California Legislature approved some version of card check every year between 2008 and 2011, but each of these bills was vetoed by the governor. The 2011 bill, SB 104, the Fair Treatment for Farm Workers Act, would have amended the ALRA to provide a "majority sign-up" alternative to secret-ballot elections, meaning that the ALRB could have certified a union as the bargaining agent for workers, if the union submitted signed authorization cards from a majority of current employees on a farm. The ALRB would have had five days to investigate the petition and then could have certified the union.

Farm employers and major media urged Governor Jerry Brown, who signed the ALRA into law in 1975, to veto SB 104, which he did. Brown said he "appreciated the frustrations" of the UFW in trying to organize farm workers but was unwilling to "alter in a significant way the guiding assumptions of the ALRA."

Conclusions

Almost four decades after California's pioneering ALRA was signed into law, there are fewer union members and contracts in California agriculture than there were before the law passed. Explanations for the failure of the self-help ALRA to transform the farm labor market include flawed union leadership, politics, the changing structure of farm employment, and unauthorized migration. The UFW and many farm worker advocates hope that what they see as the unfulfilled promise of the ALRA can be achieved with comprehensive federal immigration reform, although such reform appears unlikely before 2013.

The peak of farm worker union power appears to have been the 15 years between the mid-1960s and the late 1970s, when unions won one-year wage increases of 40 percent or more, raising entry-level wages on farms with contracts to twice the minimum wage, the equivalent of $16 an hour today. In the late 1970s, seasonal farm workers on unionized farms even received benefits such as employer-paid health insurance and pension benefits.

Recent farm labor trends point in opposite directions for unions. On the one hand, more workers are employed for longer periods in nurseries, dairies, and other farming operations that need labor year-round, providing unions with the opportunity to organize year-round farm workers who have higher earnings. Unions might also try to target growers who sell commodities such as strawberries and citrus to marketers with brand names and those with brand names who hire workers directly, as in table grapes. Unauthorized migration is declining, which may make it easier for unions to win wage increases on the farms where they are certified to represent workers.

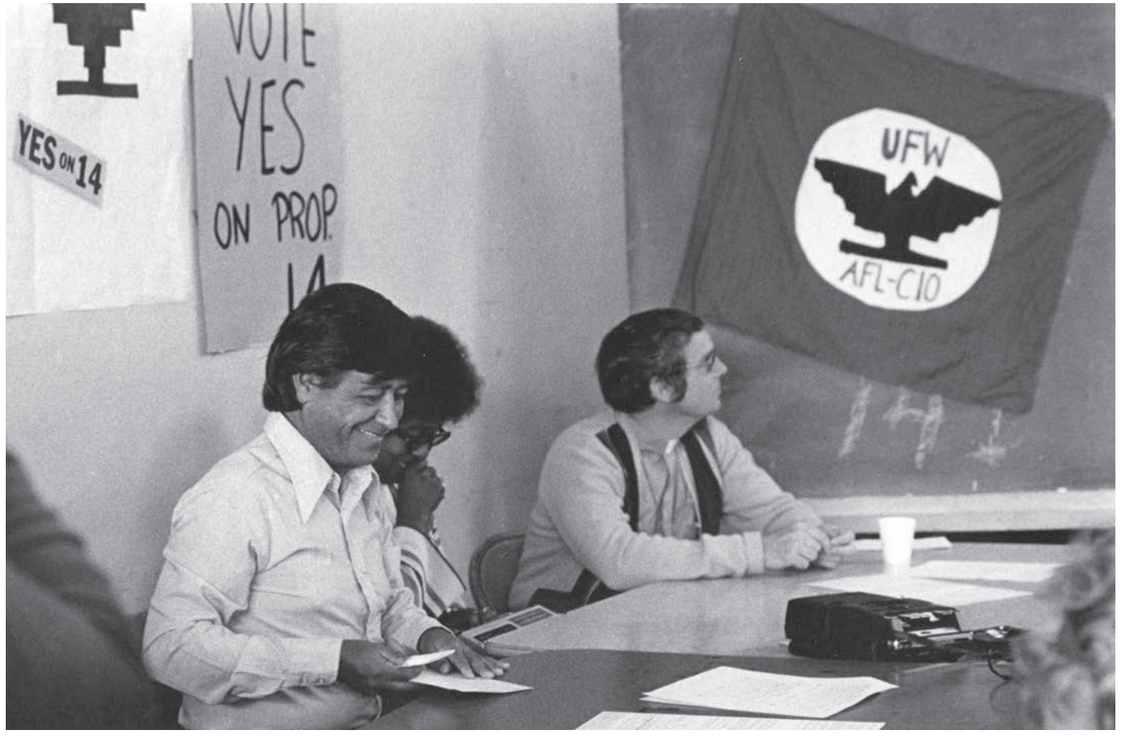
On the other hand, for most, seasonal farm work is a short-term job rather than a lifetime career. As Scottish union leader J. F. Duncan said in 1930: "the first obstacle to the formation of agricultural trade unions is the fact that agriculture is not regarded as a life occupation by the great majority of those who begin to work in the industry as wage earners. In every country in the world, agricultural workers seek to escape from agriculture into other walks of life, and the more vigorous and enterprising among them leave early."

Philip Martin is a professor of Agriculture and Resource Economics at UC Davis and chair of the UC Comparative Immigration & Integration Program. He spoke at the CLAS Summer Institute for Teachers on July 19, 2012.

VIDEO AVAILABLE AT CLAS.BERKELEY.EDU

Cesar Chávez attends a meeting in Santa Maria, California.

Credit: Cesar Chávez in Santa Maria. ¡Viva la Causa! — A Decade of Farm Labor Organizing on the Central Coast — Traveling Exhibit Traveling Exhibit | Manuel Echavarria (photographer), Special Collections, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.



Andy shows off his tattoos.
(Photo by Anthony Fontes.)

GUATEMALA

El Fish and the General

by Anthony Fontes

Andy, aka El Fish, aka El Ripper, aka José Luis Cuéllar Velázquez, was a secret witness for the Guatemalan government in several high-profile murder trials against his old gang, the Mara Salvatrucha, until his former homies found and murdered him. The Mara Salvatrucha and its nemesis, Barrio 18, are the two dominant transnational gangs waging war across urban Central America. Their violent evolution in the post-Cold War era has made them a media spectacle and helped build public support for militarized responses to peacetime crime known as the *mano dura* (iron fist). Their rank and file are primarily children like Andy, who had just turned 18 when he died. In Guatemala, ex-general and current President Otto Pérez Molina based his entire 2011 campaign on combating what many Guatemalans consider out-of-control crime. Nearly a year into his presidency, Pérez Molina has struggled to fulfill his campaign promise to lower Guatemala's murder rate, which is among the highest in the world. Andy's life and death, the ease with which his gang committed spectacular murder, and his government's inability to protect him, demonstrate the deeply rooted, complex obstacles facing the ex-general in his war on peacetime crime.

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September 26, 2011
One month before Pérez Molina wins the presidency

"*¡Mano dura, cabeza y corazón!*"—"Iron fist, head and heart!" goes the sing-song campaign jingle over the taxi's radio. Pérez Molina's campaign message is simple: "I am," he tells voters, "your best chance for security." His message works powerfully in a year in which the country's homicide rate is 41 per 100,000, eight times that of the United States and 50 times greater than in Germany. Pérez Molina rarely speaks of his military career fighting in the civil war's most violent epoch, when he commanded troops operating in the western *altiplano*, the conflict's bloodiest theatre. But the voters know it, and the majority hope he will be the iron-fisted general that he makes himself out to be. My taxi driver shares this opinion.

"Being a military man, maybe he can put things back in order, at least a little, so that the violence goes down," he says, "because right now, man, it's really bad. In the last four years, crime has gone way up. Before, there was no extortion. Nothing. Now you can't even start a little business, 'cuz the gangs will start bothering you. You can't start anything."

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While narcotrafficking may be the United States' biggest concern and the most talked-about criminal threat internationally, for the average Guatemalan it matters much less than the insecurity of everyday crime. Cell phone robbery, car-jacking, and extortion plague urban life. For many Guatemalans, extortion, in which gangs and other criminal groups use the threat of violence to extract payments from urban transport companies, small businesses, and families, is considered especially parasitical. As Isabel Aguilar of Interpeace, a global anti-violence nongovernmental organization, said, "Extortion is seen as a permanent thing, even worse than immediate bodily violence. It leaves one without hope. Why are you going to work if they're going to take away the little you earn?"

And it isn't simply the brute quantity of crime or how it saps economic hopes that has undermined Guatemalans' faith in a democratic system of justice, it is also its intense and public nature.

Case in point — back in 2010, El Diabólico, a maximum leader of the Mara Salvatrucha doing time in El Boquerón, a maximum-security prison housing only active members of the Mara, ordered operatives on the street to decapitate five people. Why? Prison authorities had failed to re-institute privileges rescinded in the preceding months, and the Mara wanted to send a message. The leaders of the biggest gangs or *clikas* in the metropolitan area met at a local waterpark and coordinated the mission. Each clika was to provide a head. They chose their victims randomly, profiling only for vulnerability. The victims had no relationship whatsoever to either 18th Street or the Mara Salvatrucha. The assassins wanted to keep their message pure and untrammeled by gang rivalries: after all, it's relatively

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Photo by Anthony Fontes.

Otto Pérez Molina on election day.

easy for the general population to dismiss gangster cadavers. But random victims strike fear, because they could be you.

In the end, they only managed to kill four — one clika failed and was subsequently punished by the others. After decapitating the four victims, the clikas placed the heads at various public locations around the city in the early morning: one in front of a popular shopping mall, one at the entrance to the Congressional building, one at a busy commuter exit, and the last in a poor urban neighborhood. With each head, they left a note addressing the government. "This is happening because of all the mistreatment and injustice that exist in the prisons of this country. If you do not pay more attention to this mistreatment, we will hold the Ministry of Government and the penitentiary system responsible for what happens going forward because of their abuses of authority." Media outlets across the country flocked to publicize the grisly affair, amping up the gang's publicity across the region and beyond.

For nearly two years, the crimes remained unsolved. Gangs are notoriously difficult to infiltrate, according to many experts, and the Guatemalan authorities have very little experience in undercover operations. Then, in a raid in Zone 5 of the capital, investigators picked up Andy. He had left the Mara a year earlier to escape retribution for accusing his gang leader of snorting cocaine, which is prohibited by internal codes of conduct. In an effort to save his own life and, he claimed, to take vengeance against the Mara Salvatrucha for killing his family, Andy agreed to give state's evidence in the case of the four heads.

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June 10, 2012
Special hearing in the Tower of Justice, Guatemala City

Before a judge and a small army of prosecutors, Andy gives a blow-by-blow description of how his clika hunted their victim.

"The two cars left from La Paz and went to Alyoto. They wanted to pick up this one guy, but they couldn't because a patrol came. Since the *vatos* only carried

9 millimeters, they didn't want a shootout with the police… So they went to La Riqueta. In Riqueta, they hit a guy with the car and acted like they were gonna take him to a hospital, but the vato didn't want to get in the car, and another patrol arrived. From there, they went to La Primavera, and there, they found nothing. And the vatos were pissed. And from there, they went to La Frutal where I heard El Pensador, the leader of my clika, say, 'Look at that dude…' They put a cloth and a bag over his head so he wouldn't have a clue where he went."

For two hours, Andy keeps the court spellbound, as he recounts the crime in frightening detail. He remains calm and collected throughout, as if he were engaged in a casual conversation over beers with friends.

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With Andy's help, government investigators broke the case open, arrested several Mara Salvatrucha leaders, and managed to take apart, at least temporarily, one of the most powerful MS clikas in the country.

The novelty that Andy presented for experienced prosecutors shows how far the Guatemalan justice system has to go in order to face down the multiple criminal threats preying on society. First of all, negotiating with alleged criminals who might give evidence against their higher-ups — a strategy that is well-established in the United States and throughout much of Latin America — is relatively new here. "Giving criminals a favor for cooperating has never been in our culture," said a prosecutor who chose to remain anonymous. "We are used to punishing only. It is a foreign idea." Over the last two years, the Public Ministry has been trying to train their 5,000-plus investigative attorneys in key pieces of law like that which was supposed to protect Andy. They have a long way to go.

With his intimate knowledge of the gang's structure, safe-house locations, and buried victims, Andy was helping investigators prepare for dozens of operations. But he was kicked out of the Public Ministry's witness protection program and died a week after gaining the judicial immunity he had been promised. During the course of the investigation, he and three compatriots who had been "gang associates" — known as *paros* in gang vernacular — but not bona fide homies, were locked in

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Mara Salvatrucha graffiti, Guatemala City.

Photo by Anthony Fontes.

Photo by Anthony Fontes.

The "Hands of Peace" Fountain commemorating the signing of peace accords in 1996 lies just outside the Palace of Justice in Guatemala City.

a room for three days without food. The stipend money Andy was supposed to receive never materialized. When they complained, no one listened, and when they complained more loudly, they were kicked out of the witness protection program. When I met him, Andy was still spending a few days a week with investigators at the Public Ministry who had taken him under their wing. Meanwhile, he had thrown in with the Little Psycho Criminals of Barrio 18, MS's arch rival. He thought they might give him protection, since the government had not. Rodrigo, Andy's prosecutor friend, lamented after his death: "He hadn't even begun to give us 1 percent of what he knew. We had such plans…" As he spoke, he held up a sheaf of papers and waved them in my face. "These are applications to get Andy back into the witness protection program. All rejected."

The problem of witness cooperation goes well beyond a ramshackle witness protection program. I spoke with Edwin Marroquín, the lead prosecutor in the decapitations case, in a Pollo Campero, Guatemala's most popular fast-food chain. Over fried chicken, he told me that the most intransigent problem facing efforts to fight crime is that the majority of Guatemalans are afraid to report crimes to the police. The authorities are unable to respond to violent crime, because they don't even hear about it until a body shows up. Some commentators attribute this "culture of silence" to the residual effects of civil-war-era state terror. Whatever the antecedents, there is a very reasonable immediate rational for maintaining silence. Why report a crime to the police if they aren't likely to show up and if doing so invites revenge from the culprits, who have less than a 2-percent chance of being brought to justice anyway? It simply isn't worth the risk.

Other deep, systemic obstacles to effective crime-fighting abound: a justice system — from the National Civil Police to the public ministry to the prisons — rotted by narco-fueled corruption; underpaid, undereducated, and overworked prosecutors and judges; and multiple criminal threats that evolve faster than the authorities can hope to keep up with.

Given these enormous difficulties, the populist appeal of heavy-handed military strikes has a certain pragmatic logic. But for some experienced crime-fighters, it is a useless façade. In August 2012, I spoke with Police Commander Eduardo Orozco of the National Civil Police. He heads the Model Police Station in Villanueva, a sprawling metropolis bordering the country's capital. With special funding from the U.S. embassy, his office is seen by higher-ups as an island of honesty in an archipelago of corruption. He also coordinates the joint army-police operations against narco-traffickers in the country's northern jungle. The army, according to Orozco, is quite useless for fighting street crime. Constitutionally, they are not allowed to intervene against citizens, unless the president declares a state of emergency and imposes martial law. Otherwise, they can only be "puppets with guns," creating a presence but not doing much more than that. The only way to fight street gangs and other increasingly organized crime syndicates, he argued, is by taking them apart one by one.

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May 24, 2012
McDonald's, Zone 5, Guatemala City

Over burgers and fries, while middle-class adults eye Andy nervously and their children shriek in the ballpit, he tells me why he is doing his bit to take apart the Mara Salvatrucha — the gang that murdered his family and made him into a killer.

"I'll explain it this way — I'm 17, almost 18 now. When I'm 30 and the FBI comes here to Guatemala, I'm going to know all about both gangs. I'll have information on everyone. So when they come, FOM! I'll help them get rid of all this. That's my game. Still infiltrating, finding out where the guns come from, all that. When the real good guys get here, I'll give them a hand, and we'll hit 'em with everything… For now, I'll help the government kill the Mara Salvatrucha. Kill those sons of bitches who don't give a shit about killing innocent people. Those guys don't care dick about killing little kids. I don't go for that kind of thing. How can you take the life of a little kid?"

But then he shakes his head and his shoulders slump as if he were deeply, deeply tired.

"Anyway, I don't give a shit. I'm already dead. I lose nothing. When my time comes, they better come at me from behind, because if not…"

…

Andy lies dead, June 2012.

Photo by Anthony Fontes.

Three weeks later, they shot Andy — five bullets to the back of the head.

Anthony Fontes is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Geography at UC Berkeley.

Photo by Asa Perry.

A sign reading "enough insecurity" hangs from a tall fence.

ARGENTINA

The Politics of Insecurity

by Hernán Flom

Argentina is by no means the most dangerous country in Latin America. Its homicide rate, 5.5 per 100,000, is among the lowest in the region according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. By comparison, the rates in Brazil, Mexico, and Venezuela are much higher at 21, 22.7, and 45.1 per 100,000 respectively. So why talk about violent crime in Argentina at all?

Despite the favorable statistics, violent crime is a recurring reality in the lives of Argentine citizens. According to various surveys, including the Latin America Public Opinion Project and Latinobarómetro, respondents from Argentina mention crime as their greatest concern. Indeed, Argentina's self-reported victimization rates, which mainly refer to property crimes (e.g. theft, burglary, etc.), are among the highest in Latin America, and the vast majority of citizens express a fear of being the victim of violent crime. Naturally, this subjective insecurity is fueled by the sensationalistic coverage of criminal events, especially in the current context of overt confrontation between the government and the country's most powerful media groups. Since 2009, when the administration of President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner passed a law that negatively affected the interests of the main media corporations and took over specific high-revenue projects, such as the broadcasting of soccer, the media has had an added incentive to play up coverage of violent crime — both to boost revenues and to aggravate the administration. However, the excesses of the yellow press do not completely explain the population's persistent anxiety, as the national government often claims. More importantly, news headlines only provide a superficial description of the country's main security issues.

This article delves into the deeply embedded problems of Argentina's security system. These deficits are a far greater cause for concern than the periodic tales of murder and violence that appear in the news, although they cannot be considered separate phenomena. Three interconnected aspects of the security system are most worrisome: first, the advance of organized crime and the reticence in confronting it; second, the lack of political control over the police force; and third, conditions in the penitentiary system. Permeating all three is an increasing politicization of security issues, often reflected in tensions between the national government and the country's most populous province, Buenos Aires. While there have been some positive initiatives undertaken in all of these areas, after a decade of continuous economic growth under the progressive, center-left governments of Néstor Kirchner (2003-2007) and Cristina Fernández de Kirchner (2007-present), there have been few significant improvements.

Progressives Take Charge... Or Do They?

After years of hesitation and neglect, the Fernández de Kirchner administration recognized the need to actively intervene in security policy. The signing of the 2009 Democratic Security Agreement by representatives from all parties as well as by non-governmental organizations was an important first step. The agreement stressed the need for political oversight of security policy and was intended to break the national and provincial governments' habit of delegating crime control to the police. Traditionally, there has been an implicit — and sometimes explicit — pact between politicians and the police in which the latter could maintain their illegal protection rackets and organizational autonomy, as long as crime was maintained at tolerable levels.

The next step was the creation of a separate Security Ministry in December 2010. Former Minister of Defense Nilda Garré, who is known for her firm stance on human rights, was appointed head of the new agency. Her appointment not only had symbolic impact by placing a woman in charge of the federal police force but also showed the Fernández de Kirchner administration's commitment to making significant changes in the governance of security, especially in the Greater Buenos Aires Metropolitan Area (AMBA). However, the appointment of former military officer Sergio Berni as Secretary of Security — the second-ranking post in the Ministry — chilled hopes for reform. Berni is seen by many as representing the "old way" of managing security politics in Argentina.

The Nation, the Province, and the Police

Despite having some of the lowest crime rates in the country, the province of Buenos Aires holds a central place in the national security controversy. With more than 15 million of Argentina's 40 million inhabitants, the province is the country's political, economic, and cultural hub, as well as the Fernández de Kirchner administration's primary electoral stronghold. The current tension between the president and Buenos Aires Governor Daniel Scioli, a potential contender within the Peronist party for the 2015 elections, makes insecurity in the province a key area in which to gain (or lose) political advantage. The national government has increasingly deployed the Gendarmería Nacional (National Police) to the province, displacing the provincial police forces, particularly in impoverished neighborhoods and access points connecting the province to the City of Buenos Aires. According to some analysts and members of the province's judiciary, this initiative has decreased the level of violence in vulnerable areas. It is extremely hard to corroborate this claim, however, since the relevant crime statistics, which are quite dubious to begin with, are not publically available. Even for researchers, it is nearly impossible to obtain this data through official channels, because it is routinely classified as "sensitive information" in order to refuse requests. Moreover, the province of Buenos Aires implemented a new methodology for counting reported crimes in 2009, which has impeded the construction of a national index.

Those supporting the Security Ministry's initiative claim that the National Police are less corrupt than the provincial police, at least in part due to the fact that they have historically been in less contact with potential sources of corruption. Critics of the policy point to the numerous illegal exchanges that occur along the national borders that the Gendarmería is in charge of patrolling, including the smuggling of drugs, humans, and other contraband. Moreover, they argue that militarizing urban security is a palliative for deeper structural problems and is unsustainable over the long term, citing it as just another example of crime policy that is attributable to political expedience rather than a comprehensive strategy.

Markets for Crime

Internationally smuggled goods make up a large proportion of the informal and illicit markets in the AMBA. However, these markets are also supplied with internally stolen goods as well as with products from clandestine sweatshops that make use of forced labor. To the extent that the criminal justice system works in Argentina — as in most countries — it is dedicated to "removing" the bottom-tier operators in these illicit networks, typically poor, young men who often resort to violence to acquire illegal goods. These episodes are what typically make the headlines. However, there seems to be little concern

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Photo by Kala Moreno Parra.

March against insecurity, Buenos Aires.

for tracking down the kingpins or breaking up the illicit markets, which triggers suspicion about the connections that these higher-level "entrepreneurs" are likely to possess.

In the last few years, Argentina has sporadically witnessed different types of crimes — from mafia-style executions to seizures of gargantuan amounts of drugs — that did not exist before or that were mainly attributable to rogue police death squads. These and other signs point to a transition away from Argentina's traditional role as a drug-transit country for contraband headed to Europe by way of Africa. Increasingly, Argentina has also become a drug consuming country, especially of cocaine residue by the poor, and even a drug producer, as evidenced by the large number of synthetic drug labs discovered in recent years. However, it is extremely difficult to establish any pattern in relation to this phenomenon, as one cannot infer, for instance, the total volume of illicit materials introduced into the country from the size of seizures. On a similar note, convictions for major drug-related offenses, human trafficking, and money laundering remain few and far between.

It seems extremely unlikely that expanding criminal networks can be neutralized with the existing police apparatus, especially in the province of Buenos Aires. Unfortunately, the provincial police have themselves been one of the main unresolved security problems in Argentina, as evidenced by the numerous corruption scandals and horrendous crimes perpetrated by police officers that have come to light over the last 15 years. While no government can establish a crime control strategy that does not involve the police, especially in a province as large as Buenos Aires, political authorities have tended to neglect police corruption and abuses in exchange for relatively low or tolerable levels of crime — as well as a share in the proceeds from protection rackets. This "crime governance" logic is becoming increasingly exhausted, as criminal activity increases beyond what the police are able to handle.

At the same time, civil society's demands for security are becoming more pressing and frequent. While citizen participation is desirable in terms of holding leaders accountable, it can often lead to the undesirable outcome of politicians formulating responses based on specific episodes rather than general patterns. Buenos Aires, for instance, has the highest turnover rate among all the provinces for both police chiefs and security ministers. The central place that the media holds in the current political scenario means that public officials are often more worried about responding to, or preempting, media crime reports than about designing and implementing more substantial polices. Given this context, it is not surprising that Argentina's security problems are persistent and recurring.

Prisoners: Too Few or Too Many?

Despite the lack of strong action against organized crime, there has been a persistent increase in the number of incarcerated individuals in the country. Argentina's penitentiary system more than doubled in size between 1996 and 2010. The absolute prison population has increased from around 25,000 to 60,000 over the same period, and the imprisonment rate per 100,000 has jumped from 71.5 to 165. More than half of these prisoners, not counting those detained in police stations, are locked up in the province of Buenos Aires. What is most alarming about this increase in incarceration is how little it has done to prevent crime.

Those imprisoned — predominantly young, lower-class men without jobs or secondary education — generally occupy the lowest tiers of the criminal hierarchy, making them easily replaceable. Individuals with more power and resources, on the other hand, are able to exploit the corruption and legal loopholes in the judicial and penitentiary systems in order to receive short sentences when they do get caught. This bias towards locking up "amateur criminals" largely accounts for the judicial system's saturation. Also, more than half of the prisoners in Buenos Aires are jailed without having been convicted.

Upon release, it is extremely hard for these individuals to avoid being drawn back into criminal life. Rehabilitation of criminals is, at best, a marginal concept in Argentine prisons, which are characterized by abhorrent living conditions stemming from overcrowding and neglect. Guards are few, unprepared, and underpaid, so the prisoners themselves set the rules of coexistence inside the prison. This reality means that all inmates, but especially first-time offenders and the young, have no choice but to submit to the mandates of tougher criminals. Over time, they tend to absorb the prison's norms and codes of behavior. In this sense, jails are increasingly "schools of crime." In this system, prisoners are only removed temporarily from society, and in most cases, they are extremely damaged in the process, while the networks that employ them persist unaffected.

Meanwhile, one of the main crime-fighting initiatives, at least in the province of Buenos Aires, has been to build more jails. No politician will jeopardize his or her popularity by championing the cause of the most objectionable elements of society, especially given the ardent punitive sentiment that emerges after each "shocking" criminal episode.

In conclusion, Argentina's security situation is increasingly problematic due to several factors: first, the gradual proliferation of complex criminal organizations; second, a large "available" population to supply these networks; third, an anachronistic security apparatus; fourth, a fervent civil society given to dramatic demands; fifth, media groups that will exploit the business of crime news as much as possible; and, finally and perhaps most dramatically, a political class that lacks either the know-how, resources, or willingness to tackle this situation in depth. Despite the seemingly favorable statistics, these factors undoubtedly reveal a worrisome state of affairs.

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Jail cell, Campana Prison, Argentina.

Photo by Ansilta Grizas, www.ansiltagrizas.com.ar.

FILM

The Method in the Madness

by Erica Hellerstein

A wizened old man reclines on a sun-dappled staircase, pontificating about cinema between sips of *mate* before an audience of three young film students.

"We are all living in a movie of our own making."

The camera zooms in on his face, punctuated by prunish wrinkles, taupe sunspots, and a Homeric gray beard. He shoots an impish grin.

"Do you think reality would be like this?"

. . .

The intangible lines separating madness from sanity, reality from fantasy, and memory from imagination, have captivated artists for generations.

In "Vanishing Landscapes," renowned Argentine writer-director Eliseo Subiela explores what defines — and breaks — these lines through the story of his maddeningly incongruous protagonist, Remoro Barroso.

Barroso, played by Latin American film giant Fernando Birri, is an elderly psychiatric patient who claims to have once been a famous movie director. With his billowing beard and penchant for esoteric one-liners, Barroso is the picture of pensive sagacity. He spends his days enshrined inside the bleak halls of an insane asylum, absentmindedly muttering and scribbling in a mysterious notebook.

One day, Barroso is jolted out of his routine when three ambitious young film students cross his path. They are interested in producing a documentary on the elusive director's fall from success to obscurity. Barroso and the hospital staff agree to let the students film him, offering a glimpse into the life of an accomplished cineaste, overtaken by something that resembles madness.

Conflict keeps the plot steadily moving along. The students' first stumbling block is a crucial part of Barroso's identity — his name. After scouring online movie databases in search of clues about Barroso's past, they soon discover that his name is nowhere to be found. It is as if he never existed. A false name, they conclude, whipped up by Barroso to conceal who he truly is — or was.

And who is that person? The students debate his cinematic claims one day on the train. Is he a lunatic posturing as a venerated director past his prime? Or is he who he says he is: an old-time filmmaker, inexplicably erased from the chronicles of Argentine film?

Their research soon uncovers a twist in the plot. Barroso, they find, bears a remarkable resemblance to the vanished Mario Gerding, an alcoholic director accused of murdering a famous actress in the 1960s. As they continue their search, more clues begin to link Barroso to Gerding. According to one of the students' film professors, Gerding lost the majority of his films in a laboratory fire that ravaged Argentina's collection of silent films. In a moment of lucidity, Barroso informs the students that his films cannot be found because they were lost in the same fire.

To further complicate matters, Barroso begins revealing puzzling technical film tips to the students. A director, he says, should never film a traveling shot that circles his actors, because they will remain trapped inside that circle and the film will have no soul. His musings, while bizarre, demonstrate familiarity and experience with filming and directing. The documentarians are left to wonder who the film is truly about: the forgotten Remoro Barroso of the present or the mysterious Mario Gerding of the past.

The latter half of the film seeks to answer these questions, while tackling broader themes of memory, the confines of orderly society, and the artistic definition of reality.

In the process, it renders a touching picture of a charming auteur past his prime. A man perennially outfitted in a black hat and coat, prone to bouts of depression and euphoria, cackling and wailing, a savant shrouded in cloaks of nonsense. Sure, these are notable traits of the insane. But they are also attributes of the sane: the roguish playground where the mind comes to romp after sleepless nights, crushing stress, romantic disappointment, and profound trauma.

Throughout his career, Subiela has produced a wide range of works that explore many of these topics. Born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1944, he received early recognition for his talent, creating his first film, "Un Largo Silencio" in 1963, when he was just 19 years old. That film thrust him onto the country's stage, and he has stayed there ever since. His works often muse on love, madness, death, and the metaphysical and psychological problems that people confront throughout a lifetime.

CLAS organized a screening of "Vanishing Landscapes," followed by an intimate discussion with Subiela. A small crowd of fans filled the room, eager to engage in a dialogue with the director.

He discussed the process of working with Fernando Birri, an Argentine filmmaker often considered "the father of new Latin American cinema," as a "pleasure and adventure." Birri, who convincingly played the idiosyncratic Barroso, added his own artistic flourishes to the role, improvising and inventing lines on the spot, explained Subiela.

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Fernando Birri as Remoro Barroso.
(Photo courtesy of Orgon Films.)

And the character they molded embodies one of Subiela's most recurrent thematic interests. Madness is a topic that permeates many of his films. The subject has always attracted him, he said, but he does not know why. Other concepts that loom large in the film — reality, death, and time — are also present in many of his works. "All of my films are connected," he said, "each one is like a scene of a larger movie."

To create a successful scene, the angle of the camera must be impeccable, Subiela explained. Barroso's stated aversion to encircling actors with a traveling shot was not a metaphor or the obsessive rant of a lunatic. What he really spoke of was the importance of camera placement. But sometimes even the masters make mistakes. After a long day of shooting, Subiela explained that he would often ruminate on his work over a whiskey. Sometimes, he would realize that he had placed the camera at the entirely wrong angle, and ruined the scene. But by then, it would be too late.

The celebrated Russian director Tarkovsky once said: "There are two basic categories of film directors. One consists of those who seek to imitate the world in which they live, the other of those who seek to create their own world. The second category contains the poets of cinema."

Audience members would likely agree that Subiela is in the latter's elite ranks, among the iconoclasts who challenge the boundaries of reality and the world they inhabit. He certainly paints his ideas upon a Tarkovsky-inspired canvas in "Vanishing Landscapes." But the film's real success lies in its humorous treatment of the protagonist. Though the topic may be somber (an old man withering away in an insane asylum), its exposition is anything but.

Subiela reminds the audience not to take life too seriously. His serenity is a breath of fresh air to a generation stuck on overdrive. During the discussion, he reenacted a simple exchange he had with a young film student on the set.

"Eliseo," she asks, "have you heard of the internet?"

For a brief moment, he is silent. His cartoonish face reveals nothing as he contemplates the question.

"I've heard something about it," he finally concludes, earnestly, "but I just don't have time."

CLAS screened "Vanishing Landscapes" followed by a discussion with Argentine filmmaker Eliseo Subiela on October 16, 2012.

Erica Hellerstein is a student at UC Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism.

Fernando Birri as Remoro Barroso.

Photo courtesy of Orgon Films.

Photo courtesy of Kelly J. Richardson.

Platini Queiroz gets ready for the show.

FILM

Life on the Tightrope

by Débora Silva

The year is 2008 and the scenario a violent slum controlled by drug gangs in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. A big-top circus tent is set in an abandoned parking lot in Praça Onze, a district in the heart of Rio. Inside the tent, children and young adults participate in a project called Circo Social (Social Circus). They learn the art of the trapeze, acrobatics, juggling, and contortionism as an alternative to the violent and crime-ridden life outside the tent. For these aspiring performers, life is a struggle. Their homes are unstable, and most people in their community — themselves included — have dropped out of school. The circus project is perhaps the best thing they have ever experienced in their lives.

This story might be perceived as just another social project designed for residents of at-risk communities in a third-world country. The young Bay Area filmmaker and UC Berkeley alumna Kelly J. Richardson, however, saw the situation as a unique opportunity to produce a compelling documentary.

Richardson reflected on her time at Berkeley during the CLAS screening of her film "Without A Net," recalling the classes she took in Latin American Studies, Spanish, Portuguese, Theater, Dance, and Journalism. "I think I had the inspiration to become a storyteller," she said.

According to Richardson, the idea of producing "Without A Net" — a documentary that depicts the experiences of a group of young circus performers — was conceived because of the "deep personal connection" she has with performance art. After years of physical training in gymnastics, dance, and theater, Richardson travelled to Salvador, Brazil in 2006, to join a summer circus program. While in Salvador, she heard about the Social Circus project, which was designed for at-risk children and teenagers living in poverty. The project provided the participants with teachers, a space to practice, and opportunities to perform. After learning more about the program, Richardson started interacting directly with the student-performers and gradually became empathetic to their plight.

"I got to know them as people and as fellow performers and watched their shows. I thought they were really interesting people, with fascinating stories to tell," she said.

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Photo courtesy of Kelly J. Richardson

The performers practice.

"I started thinking those stories would work well in film, and the footage would be really bright, really interesting and exciting to watch. I thought that the combination of factors would make a very good film."

The stories she heard — tales about the youngsters' brushes with the law and association with drug gangs, memories of incarcerated or murdered siblings, and their challenges to get enough to eat each day — were worth documenting, she decided.

"I was interested in the concept, the whole idea of using circus as a tool for social change," said Richardson. "But more importantly, when I heard the stories of what it was like to grow up in the slums, where there is a lot of risk in just getting to the end of the day, but with the excitement of finding a way to get through these situations, I saw a resemblance between the way the people live their day-to-day lives and the way they were performing in the circus."

Compelled to produce the documentary, Richardson returned to the United States at the end of 2006 and applied to the Fulbright Foundation for support. After being awarded the scholarship, Richardson's hard work really began: although she was familiar with Brazil and knowledgeable about the performing arts and journalism, she had no formal training in documentary film production. "I had one whole year from the time that I was informed about the scholarship until the time I began to film to learn as much as I could about filmmaking," she said.

Once her project was funded, Richardson returned to Brazil in 2007 to carefully explore the concept behind the Social Circus. Knowing there were several similar projects throughout Brazil, she decided to visit a few of them. She ended up in Rio de Janeiro, where she was fascinated not only by the life stories of the performers but also by the complexity of Rio as a city.

"It is such a rich, cultural place, and the personalities there are so vibrant. Rio is full of extreme contrasts. There is this huge wealth in direct contrast with extreme poverty," Richardson said. "And the people I met in the circus were full of life, so enthusiastic, really good characters. Exactly what you want to find in a documentary."

The filmmaker spent a year in Rio de Janeiro in an effort to build trust with the subjects of her documentary. During the process, she developed a special connection with four performers — the illiterate trapeze-student Djeferson; the teenagers Bárbara, an acrobat, and Rayana, a contortionist; and the nine-year-old performer, Platini — who later became the main characters in "Without A Net."

In addition to finding the ideal location and the perfect characters for her documentary, Richardson, who had never dealt with a camera before, had to attend a variety of film classes and learn a multitude of techniques in less than a year. She took classes at the Film Arts Foundation (before it merged with the San Francisco Film Society), the Bay Area Video Coalition (BAVC), UC Berkeley, and Berkeley City College.

"I was really lucky to have had such a great offering of classes, video production, storyboarding, editing. I had access to equipment and had an excellent adviser, John Antonelli. He became my mentor and gave me advice in filmmaking techniques."

Armed with some essential knowledge of the filmmaking process, a Panasonic HVX200 camera, and funds from her Fulbright scholarship, Richardson returned to Rio de Janeiro in 2008 and spent the next 10 months filming "Without A Net." The result of her work is a 60-minute documentary that portrays the lives of the central quartet — Djeferson, Bárbara, Rayana, and Platini. Like many participants in the Social Circus project, these performers strive to gain more expertise each day, despite the harsh circumstances in the slums where they live. Inside the circus tent, in the abandoned parking lot of Praça Onze, they learn a variety of skills with the goal of winning a spot in the end-of-year show. In preparation for the curtain rising on opening night, they rehearse relentlessly, often ignoring the physical risks that are inherent in trapeze and contortion. "Without A Net" is a documentary that carefully examines the connections between risk, desire, poverty, and circus, said Richardson.

"There are many benefits in circus training, physical benefits, like in many sports," she said, in an effort to explain the complexity of her documentary's central theme. "However, there are risks, many possibilities that people can be injured. But this is the thing that these performers want the most. It is their only option. Like Bárbara says, 'Doing circus is very good, cool, and gratifying. It's just that if we thought about the risks, we'd never do it.'"

The complexity of the circus also inspired the young filmmaker to come up with a suitable name for her documentary. The title "Without A Net" emerged in Richardson's mind once she reflected upon the similarities between circus and real life. Both offer excitement, but they can also be full of risks.

"The idea of being on a tightrope or on the trapeze, when someone has to catch you, you really have to trust," said Richardson, explaining the connection between circus and life. "These performers' lives are so precarious. They don't have a back-up plan if something doesn't work out. They don't have the security of money if their career doesn't work out… They are without a net."

Richardson's debut documentary made its Bay Area premiere at the Mill Valley Festival in the beginning of October, after an Oscar-qualifying screening in New York and Los Angeles. The film was also presented during San Francisco's Documentary Festival in November. Currently, the 30-year-old filmmaker keeps herself busy exploring her next film project while improving her circus skills in studios throughout the Bay Area. But if anyone ever questions whether she is a performer or a filmmaker, Richardson does not hesitate to answer:

"I'm a filmmaker with a circus past, and I continue to practice circus because I love it."

Kelly J. Richardson is the director of "Without A Net." She spoke for CLAS on October 23, 2012.

Débora Silva is a graduate student in the Graduate School of Journalism at UC Berkeley.

LITERATURE

On the Impossibility of Narrating

by Luiz Ruffato (translated by Deborah Meacham)

I'm from Brazil, a third-world country on the edge of capitalism, a nation rooted in violence:
violence against Indians, decimated in the early days of discovery;
violence against blacks, enslaved and exiled forever;
violence against poor Europeans and Japanese, who landed there, always an ocean away from their ancestors;
violence against those from the Northeast and Minas Gerais, cheap labor segregated into tenements and slums.

I come from São Paulo, the sixth-largest urban area in the world, with nearly 20 million inhabitants. A metropolis where the second-largest fleet of private helicopters in the world soars above buses, trains, and subways that spew out workers into overcrowded stations;
wealthy traffickers sit entrenched in their mansions, reading the news about poor traffickers hunted down by a corrupt and violent police force;
politicians steal at the municipal, state and federal levels;
the picture windows of chic restaurants reflect the hungry, dressed in rags;
rivers rotten with sewage, mud, poison;
slums entwined with futuristic buildings;
universities of the highest caliber groom the next generation of the political and economic elite, while at the margin, schools with underpaid, poorly trained and unprotected teachers crank out new employees;
the most advanced medical technology in Latin America impassively watches the queue of those condemned to death: men as victims of violence, women as victims of the complications of childbirth, men and women as victims of tuberculosis, children as victims of diarrhea;
walls hide the ebb and flow of the tiny lives outside.

The vast cityscape of São Paulo. (Photo by Ana Paula Hirama.)

And that is São Paulo; Canaan fertilized by the indigenous, black, mixed-race and immigrant sweat — more than half the population has Italian surnames, and descendants of Portuguese, Spaniards, Arabs, Jews, Armenians, Lithuanians, Japanese, Chinese, Koreans, Bolivians, and more than 50 other nationalities fill the avenues, streets, and alleyways.

How does one translate the chaos of this city to the pages of a book?

I think that a writer should be like a physicist who studies Nature in order to understand the mechanisms by which the Universe works. Each step in the direction of this knowledge results in significant changes to one's worldview and, therefore, an immediate need to develop new tools to continue the search.

The novelist's object of study is the Human Being immersed in the World. And, just as Nature, the Human Being is an endless mystery — what we have are descriptions, some better than others, of life during certain historical periods. And as the objective conditions change, the novelist — like a physicist — feels the need to create tools to delve more deeply into human nature, often making use of advances in other fields of knowledge.

As the heirs of the 20th century, we have experienced tremendous change firsthand: Einstein and Heisenberg deconstructed our ideas of time and space; Freud and Lacan mangled our sense of self, Marx and Ford blasted the foundations of the ancient world of work, directly impacting our daily routine; Nazism brought back our barbarism; Baudelaire and Poe, by way of Benjamin,

showed us the Man in the masses — and we then had Kafka, Proust, Pirandello, Joyce, Faulkner, Breton, the *nouveau roman*, Oulipo… Now, the 21st century unveils our uncertainties: superstring theory, neuroscience, industrial robotics, the Internet, megacities...

However, if external events can modify our condition as human beings (for example, the crisis of formal employment that rocks our psychological security), then we must admit that we are forced to devise new ways to understand ourselves, immersed in this world full of multiple meanings. It is anachronistic, at the very least, to continue to conceive of the novel as an action taking place within a given space and time, as an attempt at being an authentic account of real, individual experiences.

Let's take a closer look. Economic inequality, which infects and rots the social fabric, pervades human nature itself. Time and space, for example, are experienced differently by someone who lives in the comfort of a mansion in a wealthy neighborhood rather than surrounded by the foul stench of sewage from a slum. While time is elastic for some — those who have vehicles speeding through the streets and avenues — for others, time is compressed into train cars packed with people or at a near standstill in eternal traffic jams. And if a space is infinite for some, since distant destinations like the United States or Europe can be reached in a few hours, for others, it is barely the space that the body occupies.

Furthermore, when a person leaves his homeland — and this is always a worst-case scenario, when absolutely no other option exists — he is forced to abandon not only his language, customs, and setting but, above all, the bones of his loved ones, proof that he belongs to a place, to a family that has, in short, a past. When he settles somewhere else, the immigrant has to invent himself from scratch, launching out with each new day.

How do we write biographical stories if we are dealing with characters who have no history?

These are the dilemmas that I faced when I began to reflect on how to make the city of São Paulo a fictional space, how to translate all of its complexity onto the pages of a book. Then I remembered an art installation at the 1996 Bienal Internacional de Artes de São Paulo, "Ritos de Passagem" (Rites of Passage) by Roberto Evangelista: hundreds of shoes previously worn by men and women, adults and children, tennis shoes and dress shoes, flip-flops and slippers, boots and sandals, crocheted baby booties and combat boots, jumbled together and piled up in a corner... Every shoe was engrained with the story of the feet that used them, engrained with the dirt of the roads they had traveled.

I realized that instead of trying to organize chaos — which is, more or less, the objective of the traditional novel — I just had to incorporate it into the process of making fiction: exposing my body to the smells, voices, colors, flavors, and collisions of the megalopolis, transforming the collective sensations into individual memory.

Strolling by the bus stops and funerals, the sites of massacres and supermarkets, evangelical churches and low-income housing, slums and prisons, hospitals and bars, football stadiums and boxing clubs, mansions and hotels, factories and shops, shopping centers and

"Every shoe was engrained with the story of the feet that used them, engrained with the dirt of the roads they had traveled."

Rua Libero Badaró, São Paulo. (Photo by Jurandir Lima.)

schools, restaurants and motels, bars and trains...

Picking through the trash for books and appliances, toys and menus, saints and calendars, old newspapers and old photographs, sympathy ads and advertisements for services that fix financial problems.

Understanding that time is not gradual and sequential in São Paulo but successive and simultaneous.

Embracing fragmentation as a technique (the stories make up the Story) and understanding instability as a symptom — the unstable architecture of the novel, the unstable architecture of urban space.

The violence of invisibility, the violence of not belonging, the violence endured by those who must construct subjectivity in a world that wants us to be homogeneously anonymous.

The impossibility of narrating: school books, radio broadcasts, overheard conversations, crime stories, short stories, poems, newspaper stories, classified ads, bland descriptions, high-tech communications (messaging on cell phones, online dating sites), religious sermons, collages, letters... Everything: movies, television, literature, visual arts, music, theater... A "literary performance"…

And language accompanies this turmoil — not composition, but decomposition.

The city — my body's map of scars.

Luiz Ruffato is an award-winning Brazilian author. He served as the Distinguished Brazilian Writer in Residence at UC Berkeley in spring 2012 and spoke for CLAS on April 20, 2012.

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Darko Cotoras, a Berkeley student with support from CLAS, searches for endangered spiders on Rapa Nui (Easter Island).
(Photo courtesy of Darko Cotoras.)

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