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JLAUS

Journal of Latin American Urban Studies

Volume 7, Fall 2005/Winter 2006

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Contents

Consumer Fraud Associated with Driver's License Policy Regarding Latino Immigrants Julia Marlowe and Jorge H. Atilas	1
Religion and New Political Actors in Brazil Joanildo A. Burity	22
The Spread of Participatory Budgeting in Brazil: From Radical Democracy to Participatory Good Government Brian Wampler and Leonardo Avritzer	37
Films Reviewed: Colombian Films – <i>Hair Therapy; Following One's Way</i> and <i>There's No Room for So Many People</i> María Inés Martínez	53
Book Review: <i>Capital City Politics in Latin America, Democratization and Empowerment</i> , David J. Myers and Henry A. Dietz, eds. Kenneth Mitchell	59
Books Received	62

JLAUS

Journal of Latin American Urban Studies

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The *Journal of Latin American Urban Studies* (JLAUS) – formerly titled *Urban History Workshop Review* – is a new peer-reviewed journal on Latin America designed to bring together interdisciplinary research on urban issues. The purpose of JLAUS is to consider and study the history of urbanization and to interrogate contemporary urban issues in Latin America including citizenship, political change, globalization, economic development and class transformation. JLAUS also examines the consequences of urbanization such as crime, education, state formation, community and cultural development, religion and identity. JLAUS seeks to showcase and highlight research in progress or specific elements of larger projects that address urbanization and the urban setting.

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Journal of Latin American Urban Studies

Mission Statement

Urbanization and urban culture have been part of Latin America since Pre-Colombian times continuing through the colonial period and into the 20th century. From the 1940s to the 1980s, urbanization accelerated when Latin America transformed from a predominantly rural population to a predominantly urban population. This fundamental transformation is the defining feature of late 20th-century Latin America. The historical and contemporary shift from rural to urban instructs the social, political, economic and cultural lives of Latin Americans, and it has implications across fields of discipline for scholars, theorists, activists and critics. The purpose of the *Journal of Latin American Urban Studies* is to consider and study the history of urbanization and to problematize and interrogate contemporary urban issues in Latin America including citizenship, political change, globalization, economic development and class transformation. *JLAUS* also examines the consequences of urbanization such as crime, education, state formation, community and cultural development, religion and identity. *JLAUS* seeks to showcase and highlight research in progress or specific elements of larger projects that address urbanization and the urban setting.

Consumer Fraud Associated with Driver's License Policy Regarding Latino Immigrants

Julia Marlowe and Jorge H. Atilas***

Introduction

The question of driver's licenses for undocumented immigrants is a controversial issue in the United States. Debate on driver's license reform is underway at both the federal and state levels of government (Simon 2004; Higa 2005; O'Driscoll 2004). Two U.S. Congressmen have introduced a bill aimed at driver's license reform (Lungren & Shawn 2005; "Press Conference with Representative James Sensenbrenner (R-WI) and Representative Tom Davis (R-VA)."), and several states are adding restrictions to their driver's license requirements (National Conference of State Legislatures 2002; Zall 2004). The primary opposition to licenses for undocumented aliens is that the licenses are used as a form of identification. The terrorists who hijacked the airplanes for the 2001 attacks on the Trade Towers and the Pentagon used American driver's licenses from Florida, Virginia and New Jersey to board the planes (Zall 2004).

However, restrictive policies may have unintended consequences. The U.S. Supreme Court and immigrant advocate groups recognize that an automobile is a necessary mode of transportation (Delaware v. Prouse, 440 U.S. 648, 662 1979; Higa 2005). Without a valid driver's license from the state in which they live, many immigrants drive without a license, obtain an international license, obtain a license from another state, use a license from their home country or use a counterfeit license. Any of these options may result in the immigrant being arrested for violation of state law (GA. CODE ANN. § 40-5-20(a)). Furthermore, without a valid driver's license, immigrants may be victims of unscrupulous sellers of automobiles and automobile insurance (Federation for American Immigration Reform 2004).

The qualitative research study reported here addresses some of the problems Latino immigrants in Georgia have had with respect to automobile-related consumer fraud. It is likely that many of these problems stem from the inability of undocumented aliens to obtain a driver's license in Georgia, a state which has undergone a rapid

increase in its Latino population in the past decade (GA. CODE ANN. § 19-11-9.1 (a.1) (1), 2002; U.S. Census Bureau 2000; NILC 2003).

Review of Literature

Policy Views and Consequences

Both the Center for Immigration Studies and the Federation for American Immigration Reform have published reports citing problems associated with policies that allow undocumented immigrants to obtain driver's licenses. Specifically, both organizations expressed concerns about the use of licenses as official identification and the associated national safety concerns (Federation for American Immigration Reform 2004; Dinerstein, Wolfsohn and Rector 2002). The National Council of La Raza, the National Immigration Law Center, the Mexican American Legal and Educational Fund, and other groups who serve as advocates for immigrants are in support of immigrant access to driver's licenses (American Immigration Lawyers Association, Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, National Council of La Raza, and National Employment Law Project 2004). These organizations state that the lack of a valid license results in (1) more uninsured motorists, (2) more arrests (which clog the legal system), (3) an erosion of community trust, (4) a proliferation of false documents and identity theft, and (5) a decrease in public safety. They also argue that such license restrictions are ineffective in enforcing immigration law and decreasing terrorism (American Immigration Lawyers Association, Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, National Council of La Raza and National Employment Law Project 2004; National Council of La Raza 2004; Peri 2004). Although increased restriction on immigrants is often viewed as a conservative platform, opinions do not always fall along party lines. Some politicians support an access policy because they support the agricultural and insurance industries or are sympathetic with Latino voters (Simon 2004).

A restrictive driver's license policy encourages a black market for counterfeit driver's licenses and automobile insurance cards (Federation for American Immigration Reform 2004). Some immigrants knowingly purchase these black market items, believing that they have no other options. However, other immigrants purchase automobile insurance thinking that it is legitimate and are surprised to find out that the insurance was bogus. Immigrants may unknowingly purchase stolen automobiles if they are misled by a fraudulent seller. These crimes of consumer fraud could be lessened through policy changes.

Consumer Fraud and the Disadvantaged

Consumer fraud is widespread in the United States; one estimate is that consumers lose tens of billions of dollars yearly (Henkel 2001). Consumer fraud data are collected by numerous agencies and organizations, including the Federal Trade Commission, the United States Postal Inspection Service, the National Association of Attorneys General and private groups such as the Better Business Bureau and the National Consumers League. Precise data are not available because fraud is difficult to detect (Norrsgard and Norrgard 1998; Steele 1975).

Definitions of frauds, scams and unfair business practices are imprecise. Consumer fraud, according to consumer economists, exists whenever sellers knowingly misrepresent products or services with the intent to take advantage of the consumer (Garman 2002). The Federal Trade Commission, the primary federal agency charged with protecting consumers from unfair business practices, defines unfair practices as “those that cause substantial injury to consumers...[and are] not reasonably avoidable by consumers” (Federal Trade Commission 1995, p. 4). However, many fraudulent businesses operate in only one state; hence, they are not under federal jurisdiction.

Consumer fraud targeted to the disadvantaged received much attention in the 1960s and 1970s during the war on poverty and the consumer movement of that period. Seminal works by Caplovitz (1963) and Andreasen (1975) focused on disadvantaged consumers. Andreasen identified barriers to effective consumption by disadvantaged consumers. Consumers may have characteristics that provide a barrier to effective consumption. These characteristics include low levels of education, poor management skills and an inability to gather appropriate information. A second barrier is a market structure where consumers are trapped in a locality and must shop at stores that charge higher prices and have lower quality merchandise. A third barrier to effective consumption is the exploitation of disadvantaged consumers by fraudulent merchants who use unscrupulous methods in selling to their victims (Andreasen 1982).

As a subset of disadvantaged consumers, low-income immigrants are often victims of consumer fraud (Anderson 2004; Friedman, Gurwitz, Herrera, Jr. 2000; Lee and Soberon-Ferrer 1997). Latino immigrants are often exploited because they are relatively new to the community, have limited access to markets, have limited knowledge

of English, have low levels of formal education and low incomes and may be lacking the social support of family and friends (Andreasen 1982; Freidman 1998; Rumbaut 1997). As a result, many Latino immigrants limit their choices within the market to sellers who speak Spanish. Legal status of the immigrants may further limit their participation in the marketplace.

The literature documents the susceptibility of Latino immigrants to predatory lending, money-wiring, used-car and vocational school scams and scams promising legal immigration status (Friedman, Gurwitz, Herrera, Jr. 2000; Henkel 2001; Goldstein 2000). A recent Federal Trade Commission survey indicates that fraud targeted toward Latinos continues to be a problem (Anderson, 2004). Newspaper articles have also addressed this concern (Swarns 2003, Rincón 2003; Prieto Zartha 2003).

The increase in Latino immigrants in a community results in the emergence of businesses to serve the needs of Latinos. The U.S. encourages immigrant entrepreneurs (Rumbaut 1992) and in 2000, about seven percent of Latino workers were self-employed (Saenz 2004). Many of these businesses are models of successful Latinos serving the community, but unfortunately, some sellers take advantage of recent immigrants and engage in consumer fraud (Jones 2001; Williams 2000; Marlowe and Atilés 2003). Affinity fraud is a term given to sellers who pose as friends of the consumer, even though their object is to take advantage of the consumer. One recent example of this behavior involved the fraudulent selling of investment instruments to the military by retired military persons (Securities and Exchange Commission 2004). Latino immigrants who choose to purchase goods and services from Spanish-speaking sellers are also often victims of affinity fraud (Friedman and Herrera, Jr. 2002).

Immigration

Much of the immigration to the United States since 1970 has been from Hispanic countries, with Mexico constituting the highest percentage (Rumbaut 1996). Latino immigrants come to the United States in search of employment; however, the ratio of undocumented to documented immigrants has increased in the last decade (Chavez 1996; Saenz 2004; Atilés and Bohon 2002). The U.S. Immigration Act of 1990 increased "...pressures for illegal immigration among the less skilled..." (Rumbaut 1992, p. 281). Georgia is one state that has felt these increased pressures; the population of Latinos in Georgia increased almost 300% in the 1990s (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). The influx of Latino immigrants in the

state provided a much needed labor force for the expanding economy of the 1990s, and as with other regions in the U.S., the increased buying power of the Latinos expanded the economy (He & Hobbs 2000; Humphries 2002; Saenz 2004; Francese 2003).

The huge increase in the Latino population over the past decade coupled with a restrictive driver's license policy for undocumented immigrants makes Georgia a prime state for research on consumer fraud targeted to Latino immigrants. Reliable research data on the various types of consumer fraud are very limited because statistics on fraud are almost impossible to obtain (Friedman, Gurwitz and Herrera, Jr. 2000). Therefore, a qualitative study was undertaken to investigate whether there is evidence that Latino immigrants are targets of fraud.

Methodology

Most consumer fraud studies have used data that come from cases reported to law enforcement and consumer protection agencies (Alston 1986; Fattah and Sacco 1989). To extend the data, Friedman (1998) conducted interviews with elderly consumers who had had success identifying consumer fraud; his findings revealed that the types of fraud targeted to the elderly population were more extensive than official records would indicate. As Friedman documented, case files from law enforcement or consumer protection agencies are unlikely to provide a complete picture of consumer fraud, especially fraud targeted to undocumented immigrants who are unlikely to report the incidences. Given the limited law enforcement data and the desire for more in-depth information, a qualitative research methodology was chosen for this study.

Truth and reality-oriented theory in qualitative research is useful when evidence is gathered for the purpose of examining assertions and corroborating claims. This theory is particularly appropriate for a study investigating recent immigrants' experiences with consumer fraud. Assertions exist, but there are few data to support such assertions (Patton 2002). Qualitative research often seeks to verify experiences. Multiple data collection methods are useful in obtaining a full range of experiences (positivist approach). These experiences are obtained by asking questions (reality testing) such as: "What is really going on? What are plausible explanations for verifiable patterns? How can we study a phenomenon so that our findings correspond, as much as possible, to the real world?" (Patton 2002, p. 91).

These qualitative research methods allow researchers to investigate how something happens rather than examine the outcomes. Even if law enforcement agencies had accurate data on consumer fraud, it is unlikely that the data would provide much detail. Experiences captured in the consumers' own words help researchers understand more fully the phenomenon of consumer fraud (Patton 2002). One goal of qualitative research is to identify themes or patterns that can help researchers identify hypotheses or models and lead to suggestions for policy makers and outline directions for further research (Krueger 1998, Patton 2002).

Data Collection

Purposeful sampling using multiple methods was used so as to gain insights from those most likely to have had experiences with consumer fraud, either directly or indirectly (Patton 2002, p. 234). Three sampling methodologies were used to enrich the data.

The first set of data was collected from interviews with professionals who served as key informants in the study. A convenience approach was used to identify professionals who either work in the consumer protection arena or work directly with Latino immigrants in helping solve their problems in the Atlanta-Athens area of Georgia. Professionals included one police detective, one sheriff, three attorneys, one judge, three immigration administrators, two administrators at the Governor's Office of Consumer Affairs, one businessman who employs Latino immigrants and seven social service workers or community educators.

Key informants were interviewed in fall 2001. All 19 key informants signed consent forms indicating their willingness to participate in the interviews. An interview guide was developed to help structure the conversations. For example, the researchers would ask, "Do you know of any cases where a Latino immigrant has had a problem with any kind of consumer fraud?" Follow-up questions were also asked, such as "Could you explain what happened?" Each interview session lasted one to two hours, was audio taped, and notes were taken by the two researchers. Key informants cited cases of consumer fraud that had occurred with Latino immigrants. While the information was anecdotal, there were similarities among the various anecdotes. For example, the sheriff, the police detective and one social service worker related stories of abuse by a bail bondsman.

The other two types of data collection were from focus groups and individuals in a sample of recent Latino immigrants in Athens, Georgia. A moderator's guide was developed by the researchers to facilitate discussion (Krueger, 1998). The researchers used the information gathered from the key informant interviews to frame relevant questions for the moderators. The moderator's guide was designed to encourage participants to provide responses with little prompting; for example, the moderator would ask "Have you purchased a car?" However, there were sets of follow-up questions for each category if the participants needed additional prompting. For example: "Where did you purchase it from? From a used car dealer? A friend? From an advertisement? Someone recommended by someone else? Did you get a title? Do you feel you paid a fair price? Have you been able to keep the car? Why not?"

Focus groups ideally consist of fewer than 10 participants who are likely to be more willing to share information as part of a group than if they were asked individually (Krueger 1998; Barbour, Kitzinger and Simms 1999). In spring 2002, 20 Latino immigrants participated in four focus groups conducted in an informal setting in locations convenient to the participants: a school, a midwifery clinic and soccer fields (football outside the U.S.). The locations were chosen to encourage participation; informal settings often foster more openness on the part of the participant (Green and Hart 1999). Recruitment of focus group participants occurred in a variety of ways. A Latino parent-teacher liaison from an elementary school arranged a focus group session with four parents of Latino students. The director of a local midwifery practice arranged a focus group session with four Latino expectant mothers. A manager of an adult soccer team in an international league arranged two focus groups with Latino players and some of their spouses, with seven in one group and five in the other. A Spanish-speaking moderator conducted each focus group. One or both of the researchers was present at each of the focus groups and took notes. Participants were willing to discuss problems they had with fraudulent practices.

Recruiting for the focus groups proved difficult and a third sampling methodology, intensity sampling, was also enlisted by interviewing clients of Catholic Social Services. The interviews were conducted by a Spanish-speaking interviewer who spent approximately five hours a day at Catholic Social Services over a period of two weeks. Neither researcher was present during the interviews. Twenty-five immigrants were interviewed; two immigrants in seven of the sessions and one in the remaining 11 sessions. The interviewer,

using the moderator's guide, asked participants to share their experiences. While focus groups have the advantage of group interaction, individual interviews may result in sharing of experiences that a participant would be reluctant to share in a group setting (Michell 1999). Michell cautions researchers "against using focus groups as the sole method of enquiry in all circumstances" (Michell 1999, p. 36).

For both the focus groups and interviews, the moderator and interviewer read the consent form in Spanish to all participants and obtained the signature of those willing to participate. The focus group conversations and the interviews were audio taped. All participants, in both the focus groups and the individual interviews, answered a brief demographic survey that required the participant to check appropriate information from given choices, such as married, divorced or single. The form was in English and Spanish. The interviewer/moderator helped participants with the short survey form if the participant was not literate. Participants received either a \$10 gift certificate to a large discount store or a tee-shirt if the discount store was not located in their area.

Data Analysis

Audio tapes were transcribed from the interviews with key informants, the focus groups and individual immigrants. Information was categorized and entered into a computer. Spanish statements were translated into English. These data were then coded into categories of fraud and entered into a spreadsheet program.

The two researchers and a graduate student independently studied the data to uncover themes and patterns. After independent analysis, the researchers and the graduate student determined areas of discrepancy among the three individuals. Discrepancies were then discussed and analyzed in a group meeting. Summary sheets were then prepared to use in identifying the themes and patterns that emerged. One theme that emerged from all three data sets is that the inability to obtain a valid driver's license is likely associated with two types of consumer fraud: one type in which immigrants knowingly commit fraud by purchasing counterfeit documents, the other in which immigrants are susceptible to unscrupulous sales tactics in the purchase of automobiles and insurance.

Findings

Key Informants

Information from the 10 key informants indicated specific instances of consumer fraud targeted to Latino immigrants. Law enforcement officials related incidents of immigrant consumers who unknowingly purchased stolen cars. Some immigrants were arrested for not having a driver's license or automobile insurance and were further disadvantaged by relying on bail bondsmen who gave them misinformation. According to one law enforcement officer, several Latino consumers believed that they had purchased legitimate automobile insurance only to find out later that the insurance company did not exist. The fraudulent insurer was exposed after several consumers were independently stopped by police for traffic violations and the address on their insurance cards matched that of a hair salon.

Many of the arrests of Latino immigrants stem from the driver not having a valid driver's license and/or automobile liability insurance. Once arrested, immigrants were unaware of the local laws governing the fee structure for use of bail bondsman; hence they were exploited. In three cases, a bail bondsman told a relative of the arrested person that he would get the arrested individual out of jail for a certain price. In Georgia, the percent of the bail the consumer should pay the bondsman is set by the local sheriffs. The price quoted by the bail bondsman was the entire bail amount, not the 7% set by the sheriff. The family member, however, said he paid the full amount of bail. The bail bondsman then paid the fine and pocketed the remainder of the bond amount. According to two of the key informants, there have been a few cases where a bail bondsman required the wife of an arrested individual to have sex with him as part of his service. This kind of sexual abuse is probably rare, but does illustrate the desperate position in which many Latino immigrants find themselves.

Table 1: Demographic Information from Latino Immigrant Participants

Gender	male 19	female 26						
Ages	range 17-59 years	mean 33.5 years	mode 35					
Country of origin	US (Puerto Rico) 1	Mexico 25	Peru 5	El Salvador 5	Cuba 1	Guatemala 8		
Marital Status	married 27	single 9	divorced 2	living with partner 7				
Children	no children 13	had children 32	mean # of children for those with children 1.7					
Schooling	no schooling 7	primary school 26	secondary school 9	college 3				
Employment	employed 27	unemployed 10	not in labor force 8					
Housing	own home 9	renting 35	live in someone else's home 1					

Demographic Information of Latino immigrants

A total of 45 Latino immigrants participated in the study; demographic data are presented in Table 1. Eight of the male immigrants were employed in construction work and eight of the females were full-time homemakers. Other sources of employment were varied and included food services, nursing, agricultural packing, sales, factory work and cosmetology. Most (42 out of 45) had moved to the area for economic reasons. Nine individuals cited having relatives in the area. Information on length of time in the area is available for only 21 of the participants; these had lived in the area an average of three years. Immigrants were not asked about their legal status. The Office of Human Research Protections in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Participants provides guidelines for human subject approval in research. Human subject approval was granted only if immigrants were protected and not asked about their documentation status. However, given the responses to questions about fraud, it is likely that most, if not all, of the participants in this study were undocumented.

Fraud Cited by Participants

Themes that emerged from the interviews conducted with focus groups and individual immigrants were similar to those from the interviews with key informants.¹ Participants had come to the area for economic improvement and needed an automobile to get to work.

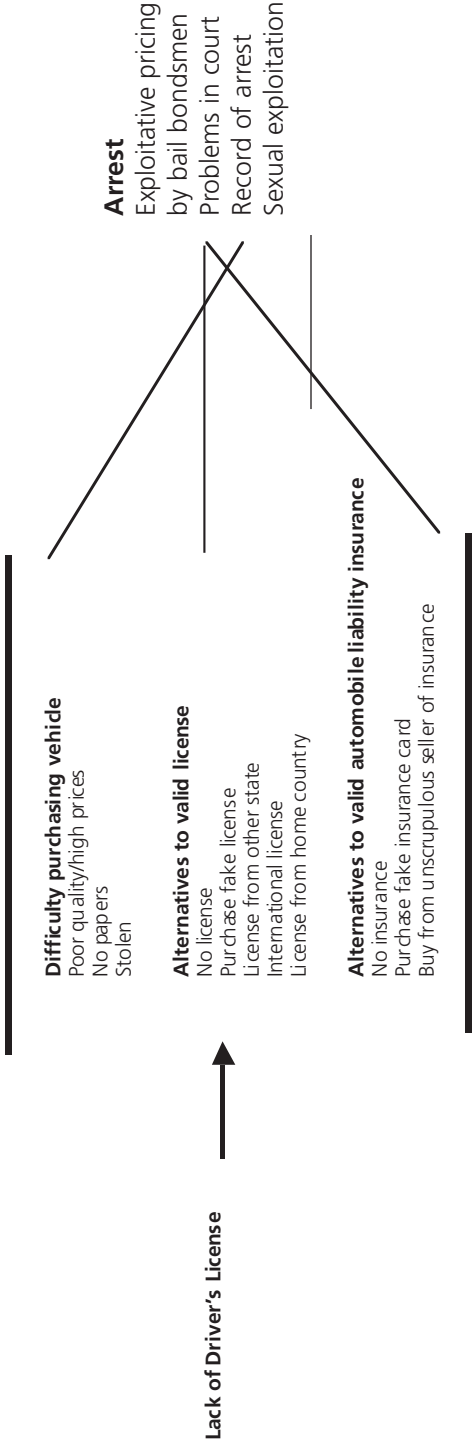
Purchase of automobiles: Immigrants purchased cars without proper ownership papers. For example, *"Hay lugares que te venden carros sin papeles."* [There are places that sell cars without papers.] Another participant mentioned that a friend unknowingly purchased a stolen vehicle. *"...alguien compró un carro a un comerciante y después de darle el dinero lo reportó como robado."* [...someone bought a car from a dealer and after he (dealer) got the money, he reported the car as stolen.] Other problems with automobile purchases included paying exorbitant prices and/or buying cars that later needed many repairs. Evidence of such problems stem from statements such as, *"Mi hijo compró un carro que no le sirvió para nada, ... pagó US \$900 y US \$700 en arreglarlo y todavía le falta."* [My son bought a car that was not worth anything, ...he paid \$900 for it and then \$700 to fix it, and it still needs more repair.] Several participants mentioned that they purchased cars from dealers who later threatened to take the cars away if the consumers did not pay more for "extra" insurance.

Purchase of driver's licenses: Many participants expressed the need for a driver's license. One participant noted the importance of having a license *"Si andas sin licencia te cobran US \$5,000 y pierdes el carro porque te cobran muy caro por ir a sacarlo."* [If you drive without a license, you get a fine for \$5,000 dollars and you lose the car because it is too expensive to get it back.] The difficulty in getting a valid license was a topic about which the participants had strong feelings. Two participants experienced difficulty with a problem where change was apparently made in rules. *"Yo este año fui a solicitar la licencia y tenía todos mis papeles, un "Social Security" y pasaporte, pero no me la dieron. Antes te daban la licencia aunque tu pasaporte no tuviera visa pero ahora no."* [This year I went to get my driver's license and I had all my papers, a Social Security number and a passport, but they did not give it to me. Before you could get your license even though your passport did not have a valid visa, but now you can't.] *"Bueno si no tienes papeles de residencia ya no puedes conseguir licencia, pero si puedes renovarla."* [Well, if you don't have resident papers, you no longer can get a driver's license, but you can renew it.]

Several participants mentioned that they had been able to obtain a drivers license from another state.² *"Tengo licencia de California y he ido a renovarla [en Georgia] pero piden muchos requisitos. En California es más fácil sacar la licencia."* [I have a California driver's license and I went to get it renewed (in Georgia), but they ask for a lot of requirements. In California, it is easier to get a driver's license.] *"Carolina del Norte, Nueva York, Florida y Virginia son estados donde te dan una licencia por 30 días or media licencia [temporal]. Pero tienes que tener una persona que viva alla. Vas y buscas la licencia completa al momento que se te finaliza la media licencia. De \$30 a \$50 dólares es lo que pagas."* [North Carolina, New York, Florida, and Virginia are states where they give you a driver's license for 30 days, or a temporary license, but you must have a person that lives there. You get the real license when the temporary has expired. You pay between \$30 and \$50.] Obtaining a driver's license from a neighboring state has become more difficult as is evidenced by the statement, *"Antes en Carolina del Norte y en la Florida se podía conseguir licencia, pero despues del 11 de septiembre las cosas han cambiado."* [Before in North Carolina and Florida you could get a driver's license, but after September 11, things have changed.] Some participants had obtained an "international drivers license," which they thought was sufficient.

Purchase of automobile insurance: Problems with buying automobile insurance also appear to have become more pronounced, as evidenced by the comment, *"Ahora ya hay problemas para comprarlo (seguro). Antes no, pero ahora tienes que tener licencia de Georgia."* [Now there are problems to buy it (insurance). Before there wasn't, but now you must have a Georgia driver's license.] However, there were misconceptions: *"Yo sé por mi mamá que ahora puedes comprar el seguro para el carro con la licencia Mexicana, pero si no tienes la licencia Mexicana pues no se puede."* [I know from my mother that now you can buy the car insurance with the Mexican driver's license, but if you don't have one you can't.] One woman stated that her daughter initially purchased automobile insurance, but the mother makes the payments; however, she does not have receipts: *"Yo no tengo ningún recibo de mis pagos si me llega a parar la policía... la compro mi hija, pero yo hago los pagos. Me amenazan que me la van a quitar, pero yo estoy muy puntual con mis pagos desde que la compre."* [If the police was to stop me, I don't have any receipt of my payments ... my daughter bought it (insurance), but I make all the payments. They threaten me with taking it (the car) away, but I am on time with the payments ever since I got it.]

Figure 1: Consumer Problems Associated with Inability to Obtain a Valid Driver's License



Conclusions

Recommendations from Latino groups, such as National Council of La Raza, propose allowing undocumented immigrants to obtain driver's licenses. Other groups, such as the Federation for American Immigration Reform, are opposed to lenient driver's license policies. U.S. Representatives Sensenbrenner (R-WI) and Davis (R-VA) have proposed a bill calling for driver's license reform. However, in a press conference, Davis stated that the bill would allow states "to issue a driver's license to whomever they want," but that the license could not be used as official federal identification for boarding an airplane ("Press Conference with Representative James Sensenbrenner (R-WI) and Representative Tom Davis (R-VA)"). Therefore, the issue should be about identification mechanisms rather than the permission to drive a vehicle in the U.S. Tennessee passed a bill which attempts to deal with the problem by issuing a "Certificate for Driving" that would be clearly distinguishable from a driver's license and not valid for identification (An Act to Amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Sections 55-50-102, 55-50-303, 55-50-321, 55-50-322, 55-50-323, 55-50-332 and 55-50-337, Relative to Driver License Issuance).

The findings for the qualitative study reported here support less restrictive driver's license policies. Results of this study cannot be generalized to the population of Latinos in Georgia because a random sample was not possible. However, the findings imply that certain types of consumer fraud could be eliminated or decreased if undocumented immigrants were able to obtain driver's licenses. Figure 1 provides a summary of three categories of consumer problems associated with the lack of a valid driver's license. Many of these problems may lead to arrest, where immigrants may find themselves once again targets for fraud.

Incentives for exploitation by sellers of automobiles stem from policies that prevent undocumented immigrants from obtaining driver's licenses. Unscrupulous merchants take advantage of the immigrant's lack of knowledge of the local marketplace and charge high prices for substandard automobiles. Other merchants may give misinformation about policies associated with automobile ownership, such as automobile registration requirements. Lack of an established network of friends and family, coupled with a lack of English fluency and undocumented status, encourage many Latino immigrants to turn to persons who appear to be friends and offer to help the new immigrant purchase an automobile. In many cases the consumer is exploited by these intermediaries.

Immigrants who need to drive typically know that they need a driver's license. However, some immigrants believe that a license from their home country, an international driver's license or a license from another state will suffice. Some immigrants will choose to drive without a driver's license and others will knowingly commit fraud by purchasing a counterfeit license. All of these actions are a violation of the local policies that require a valid Social Security number to obtain a Georgia driver's license. Therefore, all undocumented immigrants who choose to drive face the prospect of being arrested.

Without a valid driver's license, a consumer cannot obtain the required automobile liability insurance. Thus, there is an incentive for exploiters to sell counterfeit insurance documents. Although some participants knowingly purchase a counterfeit insurance card and commit fraud, other consumers believe they have purchased legitimate insurance and are unaware that the insurance company did not exist.

Public policy that excludes undocumented immigrants from access to the traditional market (e.g., access to driver's license and bank accounts) encourages the existence of a black market. Immigrants turn to fraudulent sellers to obtain consumer services or products. Changes in public policy could reduce consumer fraud targeted to Latinos in Georgia. Legislators need to understand the causes of consumer fraud when deliberating on pending legislation. The fraudulent services provided by unscrupulous bail bondsmen would also decrease because fewer immigrants would be arrested for driving without a license in the first place. Furthermore, fewer accidents would involve uninsured motorists. Law enforcement officials in the area have expressed their support for such policy changes (Baxter 2002).

A study that compares consumer fraud targeted toward Latinos in states with a favorable driver's license policy to fraud in states without such favorable policies should be conducted to verify that unfavorable driver's licenses policies lead to more consumer fraud. The study reported here was a small qualitative one; however, findings indicate that there are serious problems in the area of consumer fraud for recent Latino immigrants in the state. These findings can be used by policy makers, social service professionals, and educators who work with Latino immigrant populations. Education of the general public is needed to help citizens realize the unintended consequences of excluding undocumented immigrants from the traditional market.

¹Typically data gathered from focus groups and intensity samples are different due to the method used in collecting the data. However, the information gathered from both the focus groups and the intensity sample interviews were similar with respect to the identification of consumer fraud. Therefore, these two groups are considered together in reporting findings.

²Two neighboring states, North Carolina and Florida, did not require Social Security numbers for obtaining a driver's license; however, they have added restrictions in the last few years.

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Religion and New Political Actors in Brazil

Joanildo A. Burity***

There has been a consistent growth of religious pluralization in Brazilian society, which has led to greater public presence and demographic changes to the religious affiliation of Brazilians. This is both bringing new religious groups into political life and changing the image of a fully Catholic country. As of the mid-1980s, largely coinciding with the process of transition to democracy, Protestant groups (particularly Pentecostals) became politically vocal and secured spaces of representation at federal, state and municipal levels. Their profile prompted other groups — including the Catholic church — to redefine their strategies and seek more political prominence. In the last few years, Afro-Brazilian and Spiritualist groups have also attempted to gain public visibility.

At the same time, a slow process of recognition of religious groups as partners took place among non-religious actors. Governments and civil society organizations intensified their links with the emerging religious actors. Partnerships in governmental programs involving religious organizations, participation of religious organizations in civil society networks dealing with social problems, and electoral visibility of religious identification are some of the important sites for this recent politicization of religion.

This article will explore some of these developments while seeking to connect them to the broader process of change experienced by Brazilian society in the last decades. Particular attention will be given to the forms of articulation between religious and non-religious actors that have emerged out of those developments.

I

Few people would question that the recent experience of democratization of Brazilian society resulted in an accentuation of processes of differentiation. Difference emerges both in the sense of a wider pluralization of the number and kinds of social actors, and in the sense of a growing acknowledgement that differences are a corollary of the advances in democratization and that people must learn to live with them. Such a consensus zone, nevertheless, does not lead very far, since it remains to be established *to what extent* such a differentiation, as just characterized, is tolerated, and *which*

differences are publicly recognized, that is, have their access to public existence secured against persecution, harassment and discrimination.

Such issues become even harder to tackle when one adds two other acute problems: persisting social exclusion and changing state-society relationships. Exclusion, in the Brazilian case, is a longstanding trait of the social order. But it was deepened due to the effects of the accelerated conservative modernization in the 1970s, external debt crisis, concentration of income, increased poverty and repressed expressions of popular dissatisfaction and opposition. The profound global changes to the structure of capitalism during the following decades only expanded the local matrix of exclusion, but are not the origin of it.

On the other hand, a plurality of actors had converged over the 1970s to constitute a public space for the return to democracy in the face of common opposition to the military. In the wake of the transition to democratic rule, those opposition forces realigned and some parted company. The absence of the former enemy, the ideological crisis faced by the left towards the end of the 1980s, and the emergence of a widespread celebration of neo-liberal views of the free market, flexibility and deregulation within the political centre and right, altered the balance of forces, dissolving the former opposition camp and regrouping parts of it. The need for rethinking old practices and the struggle to gain space turned radical actors more collaborative with the state, more reflexive, and more pragmatic about the definition of objectives, forms of action and alliances. There was also, in line with claims for decentralization, state downsizing and privatization, a certain "return to the local" or an attempt to rethink public policy and participation from the vantage point of localized and fragmented experiences. As a consequence, more exchanges between government, civil society groups and local organizations proliferated through the discovery of partnerships and networking.

The growing availability among civil society groups for interacting with the state translated into an increasing concern with building up networks of solidarity, consultancy, information, communication, activism and political articulation. This took the form of civil society and public policy networks. Networking came to a significant extent in response to disorientation spurred by the ideological crisis on the left and to the influence of the international discourse of NGOs and multilateral organizations.¹ It has been cast as a recomposition of

grassroots and civil society activism through pooling together material and symbolic resources to give greater efficacy to that activism.

As of 1995, networking also became part of governmental discourse. Social policy was one of the central stages for this change, as can be seen through the federal Solidarity Community program. A renewed emphasis on collaboration between state and society was now expressed through the ideas of networks *and* partnerships, which were intended to appeal for civil society (NGOs and private companies) to share responsibilities in social policy action with a steering government that refused to take a direct role in providing social services.

As these networking efforts evolved during the 1990s, more composite collective and political actors emerged. Though their public face appeared more or less unified, their actual format was very much that of underlying networks or articulations of groups and organizations of different sizes, reach and profiles, as has been stressed by analysts such as Melucci (1996), Castells (1997) or Santos (2005). Through an ever more complex enmeshment of such network discourses, forms of action, agendas and mobilizations sought to become more feasible and deeply rooted in everyday life (cf. Doimo, 1995; Scherer-Warren, 1999; Burity, 1994, 2003).

II

One of the most remarkable aspects of this context is the effervescence in the religious field, particularly coming from the evangelicals, and the ways in which this connected with the above developments. On the one hand, religious change reflected the new conditions for the emergence of social, political and cultural differences. On the other hand, new and old religious actors were part of the picture above, whether by seeking political space or becoming involved in partnerships and networks (cf. Burity, 2003; 2005; Sanchis, 2003; Estudos Avançados, 2004).²

Evangelicals had been growing in Brazil for decades, but they boomed over the past fifteen years and started to seek to take advantage of their significance.³ Among them, the neo-Pentecostals stood out as the most controversial actor in the public debate, both for their forthright proselytizing and high political profile.

The Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, the largest of these neo-Pentecostal denominations, officially supported and funded candidates at all levels. It also appointed bishops and pastors to conduct its political strategy, through planning and monitoring the performance of its representatives, negotiating and articulating coalitions, and issuing statements on various political issues. More recently such strategies have also been followed by other evangelical groups, even mainline Protestant ones (cf. Oro, 2005; Machado, 2005).

In the 2002 national elections, evangelicals amassed significant political purchase by electing 60 representatives, from different parties and ideologies (mostly conservative) to the National Congress.⁴ A presidential candidate (Anthony Garotinho) and a candidate for vice-president on the Lula slate (former senator José Alencar, a member of the Liberal Party, largely controlled by the IURD) were evangelicals. Garotinho, the former governor of Rio de Janeiro, then in the Socialist Party, adopted a more radical discourse than Lula himself and achieved 15 million votes (17.9%) in the first round of the election. A geo-referenced comparison of the percentage of his votes in each region and that of the evangelical population reveals strong parallels between the two, suggesting some correlations. Garotinho's substitute as Governor of Rio during the year 2002 was former senator — and later Minister for Social Assistance in Lula's cabinet — Benedita da Silva (Workers' Party) and was also evangelical. She ran for election in 2002 against Garotinho's wife, Rosinha Matheus, also evangelical, who won the contest.⁵

The Catholic Church, initially taking a more moderate, even defensive line, eventually gave in to the adversary's strategy and joined the competition for influence and political representation. It has become more common to find candidates in recent electoral campaigns who identify themselves as Catholic — an uncommon practice so far, apart from some cases of people linked to either the Catholic grassroots, base-community left or the very conservative, right-wing movements within the Church — and speak directly to the Catholic voter. Alongside this the Church has tried to regain political terrain by reinforcing its traditional engagement with political issues and public-policy debates (cf. Oro, 2005).

As a result, the field of religion has become very sensitive in Brazilian politics. On the one hand, the evangelical presence has definitively broken the image of an almost monolithic religious field. It has also undermined traditional views about the quietist,

politically conformist profile of evangelicals because there is now considerable political activity coming from different ideological quarters, though it remains still mainly conservative.

On the other hand, the importance of religious associationism as a source of social capital and the number of local initiatives by Catholics and Protestants in the area of welfare provision and community development have caught the eye of government and party leadership. This has led to the increase in partnerships for the implementation of social programs and the recognition of the mobilizing force of religious communities for political and electoral objectives (cf. Burity, 2003). Even if this may be an instrumental move from the government, there is also a growing visibility of religious NGOs⁶ or social relief networks⁷ as well as their interlacing with secular civil organizations in broader articulations.

This marks off a new visibility for religious identity, bringing onto the public sphere demands for recognition, representation and participation in national politics and culture, and prompting articulations with other relevant social actors. Frontiers have become porous and there are negotiations under way which raise issues both for the collective actors or institutional politics, and for the religious field itself. For instance, to what extent can religious communities further democratize or get involved in institutional politics?

Thus, a process of redefinition of the contours of the religious field in a pluralistic direction have been coupled with a certain kind of politicization of it. The cultural dynamics of religious life has produced effects on the public sphere, whether in the form of demands for recognition or participation, raising localized reactions from secular actors against the danger of religious presence in public affairs, or through involvement in concrete policy implementation. This has not compromised the properly social and cultural dimensions of religious competition, which has its specific dynamics, though concerns have been raised that it might spill over to the political system.

In their political strategies, these new religious actors have not acted as marginal groups. They have not resorted to the creation of a religious party so far, and their concern for controlling media spaces shows that they are not trying to merely protect a religious sub-culture. They are trying to expand it as a viable alternative for cultural and political identification. This is not to say they behave homogeneously. At their best, they live up to the basic tenets of

liberal and democratic politics; at their worst, they reproduce several of the well-known vices of Brazilian politics — clientelism, patrimonialism and corporatism. Their performance in parliament has not contributed to anything growing worse. They are still seen as strange, particularly by the media and some public figures. But there may be a lasting, hegemonic effect in all this: religious groups feel more anxious to harness different kinds of arguments and social support for their cases and identities and thus politicize their identities as well as other, non-religious ones.⁸

With democratization, as a Brazilian political analyst puts it, “fears, resentments, anxieties, passions and hopes could move across more easily and meet new themes, new foci, new horizons of signification” (Soares, 1994:189). Therefore, there is more room for expressing these feelings and practices of signification through different vocabularies and repertoires of action. Religion is one of them.

As the spaces for expression and social experimentation pluralize, politics has become an area for investment, but does not lend its semantics to each and any movement in society. Religious communities and religious identity have discovered the legitimacy of existing alongside other forms of personal and collective experience and of publicly demanding that present inequalities and asymmetries be redressed. Notwithstanding, the perplexities and ambiguities of the recent structural adjustment policies have led many to draw on the traditional reserves of religious discourse in order to voice their resistance and criticism of such trends.

Finally, the transversal character of many contemporary issues (gender, ethnicity, family planning, bio-ethics, nuclear weapons, etc.), by blurring the classical liberal distinction between public and private, allows for positions and demands through which religious discourse and institutional practices become an object of public debate or actively engage such debate. Social movements, such as the early 1990s Movement for Ethics in Politics and the Citizenry Action against Hunger, Poverty and for Life, both rejuvenated the importance of moral principles and philanthropy, classically associated with religious discourse and institutions, and helped lower the scepticism towards the social impact of religious community participation (cf. Landim, 1998; Soares, 1998). This is reinforced by the recognition by many who are involved in local activism that religion can motivate action, protect against despair, offer a moral condemnation of drug addiction, violence, and family fragmentation — all too common ordeals for poor families in urban

areas — and contribute to reinforce community ties and personal self-esteem. Such representations are often connected to issues of citizenship and active participation (cf. Mariz, 1994; Mariz and Machado, 1997; Burity, 2002a; Freire-Medeiros and Chinelli, 2003).

What could be the place of religion in the strive for extending citizenship rights and practices toward the poor? In field research I have found two clearly distinct answers among religious social activists: one, that prescribes the intervention of churches in social struggles; the other, which prefers to keep a line of separation between community activism and religious preferences. The difference is not due to a perceived incompatibility between religious and socio-political commitments. It is rather a difference in object related to the weight of institutionalized action: the first stance seeks to broaden the reach of religious commitment beyond the limits of institutional religion, promoting an intra-mundane social action, whereas the second stance tends to prevail among religious activists who do not count on the explicit support of their churches or religious leaders for their involvement in social and political issues. This group is faced then with the need to legitimate its engagement in grassroots activism without reference to religious justification; though identified as religious people, they do not invoke such allegiances in their public discourse.

In both cases, the very concern about the links between religion and the actions on behalf of the local community leads to avoiding any proselytizing at this level, and this points to an interesting acknowledgement that the people's needs take priority over their religious differences, which certainly exist and meet or clash in other areas of daily life. It is significant to note that informants from different religions try to single out within their own traditions the elements that allow for or justify service toward the other in need or even outright political engagement for social transformation.

III

As already indicated, social policy programs and civil society are other sites in which changes occurred to state-society relations over the 1990s and intersected with the dynamics of the religious field. Networks of civil society groups have attempted to build up alternatives to the de-investment in inclusive policy strategies. The call to networking both as a *model* and *strategy* has become a buzzword for civil society actors and even some government agencies' staff. On the other hand, the insistent drive toward

transferring implementation, funding, or simply initiative as such, of social programmes to groups in civil society has led to the emergence of policy and action networks, the introduction of new themes, such as gender, ecology, anti-racism and a growing concern with issues of identity. These have become important variables for policy-making and for civil society organizations themselves.

In this process, religious organizations have been reaccredited as legitimate partners and interlocutors of social policy initiatives (cf. Burity, 2003). For all the laic tradition in state policymaking in the Brazilian republican tradition (despite the massive influence of the Catholic Church in nationwide political affairs), two elements have tipped the balance here: (i) significant evangelical growth and high political profile, and (ii) the destination of public funds to projects sponsored or implemented by religious organizations. Both developments do raise a number of controversial issues.

The growing number of experiences of religious participation in grassroots and governmental initiatives to tackle poverty and exclusion is only one aspect of the picture. Case studies of local communities and neighbourhoods, initiatives of hundreds of religious charities or NGOs across the country, or the constitution of networks and partnerships including government and non-governmental agencies at the municipal, state and federal levels, bring to light a myriad of small scale projects covering issues such as education, health, cultural action, basic professional training, tackling violence, community organization, rural development, housing and race and gender inclusiveness.

The other part of the picture has to do with the discursive mix of recognition and interpellation of religious organizations as potential partners in the social policy strategy of the Cardoso and Lula administrations, with state and municipal counterparts following various rationales. Here the discourse of partnership abounds. It is clearly part of the broader strategy of channelling public funds to social projects submitted by civil organizations to government agencies and chosen from according to criteria defined by the latter. Alternatively, it is part of attempts to map out the different forms of civic association existing in certain priority areas — health, education, housing, children, poverty, community development, etc. — and building up networks and partnerships with them to tackle some of those issues, often in a fragmented and focalized way.

Several reasons are offered — though in a tentative and often improvised mode — to legitimize such engagement with religion. Let me give three examples. First, research and opinion polls have consistently shown a high level of public trust in churches and religious leaders (cf. Moisés, 1995; Burity, 1998; Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network, 1999; Melo, 1999), which encourages attempts to attract them for social policy initiatives when the mistrust in government action has become endemic or the skin-deep commitments of former governments to social justice advise other routes toward legitimating some unpopular policies.

Second, some academic literature and multilateral organizations' recent emphases on the importance of enhanced civic associationism as a sign of democratization, policy effectiveness and resistance against undue interferences from the state and the market — the issue of social capital — have also come to ground social policy discourse (cf. Burity, 2003). Again, evidence of the extended networks of religious communities all over the territory has reinforced the view that through enlisting their collaboration, the reach of governmental policies can be dramatically amplified. From a civil society perspective, such gains in associative life and experience represent both an expression of stronger civic life, a larger share in political decision making, and a promise of contributing towards deeper citizenship and democratization.

Thirdly, religious involvement in social policy has also been facilitated by the impact of identity claims on public policy. Gender, race, culture and religion have become currency in the efforts to render the public sphere more inclusive. The discourse of international cooperation and multilateral agencies has progressively incorporated those issues under the heading of multiculturalism or social capital as necessary components of fairness, inclusion and participation in political decisions.

The questions raised by all these developments are many, ranging from legal and political issues concerning the constitutional status of the relationship between church and state (which should be carefully distinguished from the question of the relationship between religion and politics (cf. Burity, 2005), to the relationship between religious and cultural disputes or intolerance and the development of a democratic civic culture (Giumbelli, 2002; Burity, 2004). There is also the issue of the participation of religious actors in the composition of new political subjectivities in times supposed to announce the wane of religion as a public force.

IV

To conclude, there is little question about the politicization of religion in Brazil. However, it is not the same as the Catholic experience of the base communities between the 1970s and 1980s, as much of this activism has not been anti-systemic. Because there is a strong component of a struggle for inclusion in the mainstream of Brazilian social and political life and a deliberate attempt to reorient politics towards collaboration, consensus and managerial decisions, such a politicization has more of the character of a political recomposition of the major partners with stakes in the public sphere (increasingly defined as a hybrid of state and non-state actors). The fact that the emerging religious minority — the evangelicals — has managed to find a place at the heart of national politics is an indication that there is no perceived significant threat on either side of the politics/religion border. Rather, the field is seen as full of possibilities and perspectives for both.

Another dimension of politicization has to do with the response that other religious groups have given to the evangelicals' high public profile and proselytizing strategies. Whether miming the successful strategies of neo-Pentecostal politics or deciding to vie for political influence and public visibility, the effervescence among religious groups across the country is remarkable (cf. Burity and Machado, 2005). There are also legal disputes involving claims about intolerance by neo-Pentecostal preachers against followers of Afro-Brazilian religions. This contributes to a climate that oscillates between tension and ecumenical calls for settlements.

Thus, in a context where both secular and religious actors have had to cope with paradigmatic changes to the way they used to take up their place in society and politics, the pluralizing trends introduced by democratization and social differentiation has reshaped several of their assumptions and practices. The ideological crisis and the redefinition of the role of the state in social provision have also stimulated a more intense participation and to some extent collaboration between civil society groups and governments. Besides, the deteriorating social condition which civil society activism has had to respond to in the last fifteen years, prompted the building up of networks of which, increasingly, religious organizations have become part.

Thus, one can see a convergent process in which political spaces have been opened for new religious actors in Brazil. On the one hand, social organizations have sought to rearticulate a more influent collective actor through networking and actively seeking participation in policy formation and implementation. On the other hand, religious actors redefined their relations with politics and social activism, both opening up spaces for conservative groups and creating new opportunities for those whose action was strongly referenced in civil society. It is especially among these that the common grounds for partnering and networking have been more intensely explored.

¹ The boost was enormous for Brazilian civil society organization given by the UN Conference on the Environment (Eco-92), in Rio, as well as the Conferences on Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995) and on Women and Development (Beijing, 1999). Their closer links with transnational and international non-governmental organizations and with official development agencies of the international cooperation system not only strengthened their bargaining power and visibility but also enriched their resources for collective action. On the other hand, the line taken by those multilateral organisms, particularly by the mid-1990s, in favouring a central role for civil society involvement in the public policy cycle — with varying ideological orientations, though mainly inspired by neo-liberal and third way discourses — led to the need for the government to seek such partnerships, thereby strengthening civil society as a political actor in its own right.

² For a more theoretically sustained argument on these processes, see Burity, 2004; 2005.

³ The 2000 Census showed that 15% of the Brazilian population is evangelical, compared with 9% in the 1991 Census. This represents an amazing growth of 60% in ten years. For more detailed explorations of these figures, see Jacob et alli, 2003.

⁴ This represents a 25% increase in the number of evangelical representatives in the former legislature.

⁵ Months later, both Garotinho and Rosinha Matheus left the Brazilian Socialist Party (PSB) and joined the conservative Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMDB).

⁶ Such as Coordenadoria Ecumênica de Serviço (CESE), Visão Mundial-Brasil, Diaconia and Koinonia.

⁷ For instance, the Rede Evangélica Nacional de Ação Social, created in 2003, with the participation of 100 organizations from different Brazilian states (<http://www.cbe2.com.br/carta-principios.pdf>).

⁸ This has for instance happened to the Universal Church and its opponents for over a decade (cf. Giumbelli, 2002).

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The Spread of Participatory Budgeting in Brazil: From Radical Democracy to Participatory Good Government

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Participatory forms of decision-making proliferated in Brazil in the two decades since the return to democratic rule in 1985. The most well-known institution, Participatory Budgeting (PB), was adopted by municipal governments as a means to clean up government spending, to encourage active participation by citizens in public life and to re-direct resources to low-income neighborhoods. By 2004 there were 170 active PB programs, up from the original 13 in 1989.¹ Overall, at least 250 municipalities had experimented with PB between 1989 and 2004. The spread of PB was spurred by several overlapping but distinct processes including the electoral successes of leftist political parties, the positive publicity surrounding PB as a result of several major prizes being awarded to municipal governments that adopted PB, the expansion of civil society networks and the willingness of centrist politicians to adopt policies that had been pioneered by leftist political parties.

During the initial phase of PB's adoption, from 1989-1996, PB was a radical program that was conceptualized as a key component of a broader transformation project that sought to overhaul Brazil's political and social environment.² Progressive social movements, neighborhood associations, non-governmental organizations and reform-oriented politicians advocated the adoption of PB as a means to challenge social exclusion and hierarchies that have long marked Brazilian social and political relationships. As a result of the widespread adoption of PB programs, the institutional context of municipal policy-making has been modified as hundreds of municipalities allow direct citizen involvement in budgetary decision-making processes. By the late 1990s, the direct participation of citizens in policy-making venues moved to the center of municipal politics in Brazil. The direct participation of citizens in policy-making venues is no longer advocated by a few lonely groups on the political left but has influenced what is considered to be "good government" in Brazil.³

We have two aims in this essay. We first bring together the data on all known cases of PB to demonstrate PB's growth and spread. We show how the basic social, political and demographic factors associated with a municipal government's adoption of PB shifted between 1989 and 2004. During the initial phase of PB's adoption most governments were run by the leftist Workers' Party (*Partido dos Trabalhadores*) (PT), but by 2004 over half of PB programs were run by non-PT governments. The second purpose of this essay is to examine the relationship between PB and civil society organizations to show why groups from political and civil societies jointly advocate the adoption of PB. Since there are no comparable sets of data on civil society for Brazilian municipalities, we analyze the experiences of 11 municipalities in the state of Minas Gerais to show that municipalities with denser networks of civil society organizations are more likely to have PB programs.

What is Participatory Budgeting?

Participatory Budgeting is a year-long decision-making process in which citizens negotiate among themselves and with government officials in organized meetings over the allocation of spending on "new" projects in urban infrastructure, such as health care clinics, schools and street paving. Citizens are mobilized to attend meetings, in which they vote for public policies and elected community representatives. PB programs combine elements of direct (i.e., direct mobilization of citizens in decision-making venues) and representative (i.e., electing representatives) democracy. They also involve an intense negotiation between a participatory budgeting council and the mayor's office on the municipality's investment priorities. These programs pay increased attention to governmental transparency and social justice. The purpose is to transform how local governments in Brazil function, often described as clientelistic and personalistic.⁴

Brazil's authoritarian regime (1964–1985) centered authority at the national level. It revoked mayors' elections in state capitals and centralized financial resources in its own hands. The Brazilian 1988 Constitution delegated authority to states and municipalities. Today, municipalities in Brazil control nearly fifteen percent of all public spending, which helps to explain why social movements, non-governmental organizations, neighborhood associations and politicians have focused so much attention on budgets at the municipal level.⁵ Brazilian mayors enjoy considerable autonomy, allowing them to initiate new programs with only minimal

interference from municipal legislative chambers. The new constitutional system creates incentives for municipalities to support participatory policies, in particular the relations among mayors and urban social movements.

PB programs are housed in the mayoral administration and are governed by a clear structure of rules that are drafted by governments and civil society organizations. The rules help define who gets what and how they get it. The rules are specifically crafted to reward high citizen participation, encourage public debate, depend on co-administration processes, redistribute resources and promote transparency. PB is self-regulating in most municipalities, as governments and PB delegates devise rule changes when deemed necessary. The rules of the game are similar but not identical in the majority of PB programs. While the rules do vary, it is possible to identify a core set of rules that most PB programs follow which can be conceptualized as municipal-wide and intra-regional. The municipal-wide rules include the division of the municipality into regions, the distribution of resources among regions based on social justice criteria, the establishment of a yearly cycle and the election of a "PB Council" that works with the government to manage the larger PB process. The intra-regional rules include the criteria for selecting specific project and broad policies, the election of PB delegates and PB councilors and the establishment of "oversight" committees that monitor the implementation of public works.⁶

Why Participatory Budgeting?

Civil society organizations (CSOs) grew rapidly in democratic Brazil. In particular, neighborhood associations were among the main proponents of the democratization of the budget in Porto Alegre in the 1980s.⁷ Across the country, CSOs advocated for the implementation of PB because it gives them greater access to important decision-making venues and public officials. Since the criteria for distributing goods within PB is a combination of technical, territorial and mobilization factors, CSOs with greater capacities of mobilizing are often the strongest supporters of PB because the process helps to reinforce their practices and mobilization efforts. Governments are willing to adopt PB as a means to heighten contact with CSO leaders, demonstrate their commitment to a new form of democracy and be associated with the "good government" branding of PB.

PB was initially part of a broader transformative political project that the PT believed would help to create new types of citizens, transform state-society relations by delegating authority to citizens and overcome basic restraints associated with representative democracy.⁸ While the broader transformations have only partially materialized, PB has had another effect, fusing direct participation in government with Brazilian notions of good government. Elsewhere, good government has been associated with decentralization, client-focus social policies, limiting corruption, but what is distinct in the Brazilian case is its tie to “good government.”⁹ PB has reshaped “good government” in two ways. First, citizens (especially civil society activists) are directly involved in the deliberation over and selection of public works. Citizens not only decide policies, but also monitor the implementation of public works. Second, the mayoral administration and municipal legislators now spend less of their time engaged in efforts to direct where and how public works will be allocated because citizens now make these decisions. This leads to lower levels of corruption because entrenched bureaucrats and politicians are no longer directing where and how funding is allocated.

PB’s image as a “good government” program began in the mid-1990s when several municipal governments that adopted PB were awarded important governance awards from institutions such as the United Nations, Ford Foundation and Brazil’s prestigious Getulio Vargas Foundation. In 1996, PB programs were recognized by the United Nations’ Habitat Conference in Istanbul as one of the world’s 40 best policy programs. Other international institutions, such as the World Bank, Ford Foundation and the International Budget Project, have disseminated information on PB to encourage local governments to adopt similar institutions.¹⁰ The earliest PB programs placed greater emphasis on the direct participation of citizens as means of empowerment, while many programs being implemented during the 2001-2004 period emphasized “cleaning up government.”¹¹

Political Party Change Over Time

The last 15 years has been a period of exponential electoral growth for the Brazilian left both at the municipal level and the federal level. The PT gradually increased its share of votes within the left and nationally.¹² This process helped to increase the number of PB experiences due to the PT’s promotion of PB. By 2004, the number of municipalities with active PB programs ballooned to 170,

up from 13 in 1992. Table 1 contains data on the political parties that implemented PB between 1989 and 2004. During the initial phase of PB's implementation, between 1989 and 1996, the PT and their allies on the political left were its primary proponents.

Table 1
Political Affiliation of Mayor in Municipalities with PB

	Total number	%PT	% Leftist	% Centrist	% Conservative
1989-1992	13	92%	92%	8%	0
1993-1996	53	62%	72%	26%	2%
1997-2000	112	42%	57%	38%	5%
2000-2004	170	47%	57%	35%	8%

Source: "PB in Brazil."¹³ Note: PT is included with "leftist" category

During the 1997-2000 mayoral administration period, parties other than the PT began to implement PB at high rates. Centrist political parties, most significantly the PSDB in the states of São Paulo and Minas Gerais, began to implement this form of participatory democracy in 1997. Conservative political parties were still lagging behind but would begin to implement greater numbers of PB programs in 2001. We must keep in mind that the majority of Brazil's municipalities were controlled by conservative or centrist parties (e.g. PMDB) in the 1997-2000 period. Left-of-center parties were consistently implementing PB when they won office, but conservative parties would only occasionally do so.

During the 2001-2004 period, the most obvious change was the increase to 170 municipalities with PB, up from 112 in 1997. Leftist parties implemented 57% of all cases, which is explained by the growing electoral strength of the PT. Centrist and conservative parties also increased their share of PB experiences. Centrist and conservative parties were more likely to adopt PB in states where the PT did well at the ballot box with the exception of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, of which Porto Alegre is the capital. In Porto Alegre and Rio Grande do Sul, PB is so closely associated with the PT that their centrist and conservative rivals are not willing to adopt it.

Although the most significant increase among PB cases in 2001 was the number of conservative parties that implemented PB, it is a relatively low number of cases. The increase was unexpected because Brazil's conservative and rightist political parties do not have a history of actively supporting the direct participation of citizens in policy-making venues and have not been active leaders in efforts to improve government transparency processes. In the Northeast of Brazil, which is a poor region marked by extreme social and political inequalities, conservative parties implemented PB in greater absolute numbers than have leftist parties. The fact that the conservative parties are adopting PB suggests that the in-roads made by the PT at the municipal level of government in the south and southeast of Brazil are having a direct impact on the policy programs among political parties that had not previously invested in participatory or "good government" practices.

Human Development Index

Brazil is a very stratified country with extreme economic and social differences between regions and within cities. Though Brazil has more than 5,500 cities, only 225 have more than 100,000 inhabitants. The political spectrum in Brazil follows the country's inequalities. The PMDB, a large centrist party that was important in the 1980s, still governs more than 1,000 cities in Brazil. The PT receives most of its electoral votes in a little more than 400 cities.

The Human Development Index (HDI) measures a municipality's standard of living based on per capita income, longevity and literacy rate. PB programs were initially implemented in wealthy municipalities that had higher levels of income and higher HDI scores than comparable municipalities.¹⁴ The Workers' Party's initial electoral successes were in the wealthier, larger municipalities, which meant that the initial dissemination of PB was in large metropolitan regions that, too, are wealthier. For the purposes of comparison, we limit our analysis to municipalities with more than 100,000 residents, a total of 225 municipalities out of a potential universe of over 5500. The reason is simple: The disparity in HDI between large and small municipalities is significant. The mean HDI score in 2000 for all Brazilian municipalities was .699, but it was .783 for municipalities with more than 100,000 residents and .696 for municipalities with less than 100,000 residents.¹⁵ Thus, if we limit our comparison to municipalities with more than 100,000 residents, it is possible to identify differences among regions and over time.

Among municipalities with more than 100,000 residents, municipalities that had PB during the 1989-1992 period had a mean HDI of .788 and municipalities without PB had a mean HDI of .719.¹⁶ During the 1993-1996 period, municipalities with PB had a mean HDI of .763 and those without had a mean HDI of .717. There was a clear difference between the municipalities that had PB and those that did not: Municipalities with a higher standard of living were more likely to elect leftist political parties, which had built broad electoral coalitions based on social movements, unions and the more progressive sectors of the middle class.

During the 1997-2000 period, the differences in mean HDI (2000) between the municipalities with and without PB begins to flatten out and are reduced even further by the 2001-2004 period. For the 1997-2000 period, the mean HDI was .801 for municipalities with PB and .779 for municipalities without PB. During the 2001-2004 period, HDI for municipalities with PB was .793, while municipalities without PB had an average score of .781.

By 2004, the differences in HDI did not correlate with whether or not a municipality had PB, but correspond more strongly to the municipality's region. In the south and southeastern regions of Brazil, there was virtually no difference in HDI scores based on whether or not a municipality had PB. However, there were significant differences in the north, northeastern and center-west regions, which were analogous to the differences during the 1989-1996 period: Wealthier municipalities in the poorer regions appear to be their region's leading adopters, just as the wealthier municipalities in the south and southeast led the reform movements during the early 1990s.

Therefore, we can see two different processes taking place in the 1990s. First, during PB's initial phase of adoption, adoption was mainly in wealthy cities of the south and southeastern regions of Brazil. By the late 1990s PB was adopted by a greater range of municipalities in these regions, not just the wealthiest. The second process is the adoption of PB by wealthy cities in the Northeast of Brazil. This process has not yet expanded to more municipalities with mean HDI scores. Among the nine state capitals in the northeast the PT won in the 2004 elections, five are in the north and northeast (Recife, Fortaleza, Aracaju, Rio Branco, Porto Velho), which creates the expectancy of a future spread of PB. If the spread of PB in the northeast and north follows the same trend as its spread in the south and southeast of Brazil, we will begin to see smaller and poorer municipalities begin to adopt PB.

Size and Region

The size of the municipality and its location are also correlated with the variation in the implementation of PB programs. These factors are included in Table 2 for the 2001–2004 period. PB was most frequently implemented in municipalities with between 100,000 and 500,000 inhabitants. These numbers demonstrate unequivocally that mayors, NGOs, and civil society organizations in Brazil's largest cities are implementing PB. Unlike New England's "Town Hall" democracy that flourishes in small communities, PB programs have been implemented and have functioned well in larger municipalities.¹⁷ Successful early programs in large municipalities such as Porto Alegre and Belo Horizonte encouraged mayors and civil society activists in medium-sized cities to experiment with this program type.

Table 2
PB 2001-2004
Size and region

Total Municipal Population	South	Southeast	Center-West	Northeast	North	Total
Less than 20,000	7	11	1	2	4	25
Between 20–100,000	8	29	0	5	2	44
100–500,000	18	38	4	17	5	82
500,000 to 1 million	0	6	1	4	0	11
More than 1 million	1	3	1	2	1	8
Total	34	87	7	30	12	170

Source: "PB Brazil"

Table 2 also contains relevant information on the spatial distribution of PB cases. Sixty-nine percent are located in the six states that make up the south and southeast regions of Brazil. (South: Rio

Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, Paraná; Southeast: São Paulo, Minas Gerais and Rio de Janeiro). The majority of Brazil's largest and wealthiest municipalities are located in these two regions, so the current pool of PB cases reflects the general trends. PB is now found in every corner of Brazil, although it continues to have a more significant presence in the south and southeast.

Table 3
Civil Society Organizations in Minas Gerais

Municipality	Adopted PB?	Total Municipal Population	Total number of CSOs	Number of CSO per 1000 residents	Number of PT members per 1000 voters
Timóteo	Yes	71,478	321	4.49	32.6
João Monlevade	Yes	66,690	237	3.55	9.3
Ipatinga Gov.	Yes	212,496	640	3.01	51.3
Valadares	Yes	247,131	615	2.49	4.5
Caratinga	Yes	77,789	189	2.43	2.88
Belo Horizonte	Yes	2,238,526	2,531	1.13	3.68
Divinópolis	No	183,962	210	1.44	3.31
Barbacena	No	114,126	242	2.12	2.67
Sete Lagoas	No	184,871	414	2.24	3.06
Paracatu	No	75,216	255	2.55	2.08
Conselheiro Lafaiete	No	102,836	285	2.77	1.69

Source: "PB Brazil"

Civil Society

The adoption and spread of PB across Brazil's landscape was also intimately related to civil society-political society relationships in each municipality. Some authors have focused on the development of civil society in Porto Alegre as the primary explanation of the initial adoption of PB.¹⁸ Other authors emphasize the organization of political society, especially the role of the Workers' Party in the most successful PB programs.¹⁹ In this section we identify characteristics in civil society that are associated with the likelihood that a municipality will have PB.

Conceptualizing, measuring and operationalizing civil society and its relationship to PB are not easy tasks in Brazil today. The concept of civil society has been broadly defined in Latin America and suffers from a lack of analytical precision. On the other hand, it is difficult to create a precise quantitative measure due to the incomplete data that has been collected by Brazil's Census Bureau.²⁰ It is vital to use measures that allow us to compare data among municipalities with different political and civil society histories. To capture how civil society interacts with political society and how this affects the likelihood of adopting PB, we collected comparable sets of data in 11 municipalities in the state of Minas Gerais. The state of Minas Gerais was selected because it is a microcosm of the broader Brazil and PB environment. Part of Minas Gerais is industrialized, with one foot firmly in the wealthier southeast, but the northern part of the state is more similar to the poor and economically stratified northeast. In 2004, 12.4% of all PB cases were in Minas Gerais, thus demonstrating that the state was strongly represented in the adoption of PB and 47% of these cases were in municipalities governed by centrist and conservative parties.

Civil society organizations have been active participants in the founding and implementation of the most well-known case studies of PB.²¹ Due to the continued importance of civil society organizations to the implementation of PB programs, we surmise that the density of civil society organizations (non-religious organizations) is positively correlated with PB. Among the 11 municipalities we studied in the state of Minas Gerais, the number of civil society organizations per thousand residents of each municipality that had PB at some point over the last 16 years was 2.97 while the average in municipalities that never had PB was 2.13. The cities that were the earliest adopters of PB (Ipatinga, Timóteo and João Monlevade all adopted between 1989 and 1992) have the

highest per capita CSOs, which demonstrates that the implementation of PB in the early 1990s required a stronger civil society than its implementation in the late nineties. The municipalities of Governador Valaderes and Caratinga have lower per capita association averages, but they are still higher than the average from the municipalities that never adopted PB. The municipality of Belo Horizonte, which had PB from 1994–2004, had a lower figure of 1.13 civil society organizations per thousand inhabitants, but this is largely attributable to the large size of its city (2.4 million residents) as scale influences civil society organization. The municipality of Conselheiro Lafaiete has a per capita rate that is higher than either Caratinga or Governador. Conselheiro Lafaiete is an industrialized municipality with an active trade union but civil society organizations were not connected to reformist politicians. The PT just won the mayor's office in the 2004 elections. This body of evidence indicates that while the density of civil society organizations is an important explanation for the adoption of PB, we still need to establish the link between civil society and political society.

To link civil society to political society, we examine data on the formal party affiliation of voters to the Workers' Party. Formal party affiliation is low in Brazil but the Workers' Party has one of the higher rates of formal affiliation at 5.3 members per thousand voters.²² Municipalities that initiated PB during the first phase (1989–1992) have an average of 14.5 members per thousand voters. In the state of Minas Gerais, the three early adopters of PB (Ipatinga, Timóteo and Joao Monlevade) have very high levels of affiliation adoption. Ipatinga is noteworthy because it has 51 members per thousand voters, ten times higher than the national average and has, in absolute numbers, more affiliates than Belo Horizonte. Again, we can see that for the implementation of PB a very high level of PT affiliation is required. PT affiliation also seems to be the explanation for continuity. Ipatinga has had PB for sixteen years and after the PT defeat in 2004, the newly elected mayor immediately claimed his willingness to continue with PB.

Thus we can identify two relationships between civil society and political society. First, the number of voters that are formally affiliated with the PT is positively correlated to the likelihood that a municipality will have PB. The higher levels of affiliation is driven by the PT's control of the municipal government as well as the higher levels of formal affiliation associated with strong ties forged between unions, civil society organizations and the PT. Second, in all of the cities where PB was adopted in the state of Minas Gerais,

there was a higher than average density of civil society associations. Since PB depends on the joint participation of citizens and government officials to make policy decisions, this finding confirms what has long been established in the single-case study studies.²³ Therefore, the number of civil society associations and the number of formal members of the PT are highly correlated with the existence of PB, even in municipalities that are not governed by the PT. The data from Minas Gerais demonstrates that PB is more likely to be adopted when there is increased activity among citizens in civil society organizations and when there is increased activity among leftist political factions. Two segments initially promoted participatory democracy in Brazil: civil society organizations and leftist political parties, of which the PT is the most important.

Conclusion

In this article, we trace the development and spread of Participatory Budgeting (PB) across Brazil. PB was initiated in Porto Alegre in Brazil's southern-most state in 1989. Sixteen years later, this participatory democracy decision-making process has spread to every region in Brazil, almost every state, and in municipalities ranging in population from 5,000 to ten million.

Early adopters, in the 1989–1996 period, were in largely wealthy municipalities in the south and southeast governed by the PT. Beginning in 1997, not only did other leftist parties actively adopt PB, but centrist and conservative politicians began to adopt PB in states and regions where the PT does well at the ballot box. The growth and spread of the PB has mirrored the expansion of the PT due to electoral pressures, the spread of “good government” ideas and increased networking between civil society organizations. When the PT improves its electoral performance in a state or region, centrist and then conservative politicians begin to adopt PB.

PB programs require the active participation of governments and civil society organizations. During the initial wave of adoption, civil society organizations were often strong advocates for PB, pushing municipal governments to adopt. During the second wave of adoption, it appears that governments were choosing to adopt PB in municipalities where civil society activity was not quite as strong. While this article does not address PB's impact on policy-making outcomes or democratic behaviors, it is likely that the effects of PB will be different based on the level of CSOs' involvement in public life. PB's emphasis on direct participation, transparency and accountability

has influenced the meaning of "good government" in Brazil. Policy programs that attempt to follow the "good government" model now directly incorporate citizens into decision-making venues. The PT's electoral success in 2004 suggests that PB will continue to spread throughout Brazil. As PB spreads, we should continue to see increased attention paid to transparency and accountability as CSOs now associate their access to policy-making venues with their ability to hold governments responsible for their actions and policies. The spread of PB is helping to transform basic policy-making processes at Brazil's municipal level. The election of 400 PT mayors in 2004 should help to spread the principles of direct participation, accountability and transparency to far-flung corners of Brazil.

¹ The data for this survey project was initially collected by two research teams, one led by Brian Wampler and the other led by Leonardo Avritzer. In November 2003 we joined forces to avoid the duplication of research efforts and to speed the project along. To identify if a municipality implemented PB, we started with the “most likely” cases, such as leftist administrations or municipalities that had previous PB programs. We drew from the lists of non-governmental organizations, such as Instituto Polis and FASE, as both organizations had been involved in tracking the spread of PB programs across Brazil. The list from 2001-2004 is not complete as there are municipalities that implemented PB but were not included in our database. Thus, there were at least 170 municipalities that implemented PB during the 2001-2004 mayoral administration, but it is likely that there were dozens more that implemented this experience. For an excellent book on the 1997-2001 PB programs, see Ana Clara Torres Ribeiro and Grazia de Grazia. 2003. *Experiência de Orçamento Participativo no Brasil: Período de 1997 a 2000*. (São Paulo: Editora Vozes, 2003).

² Leonardo Avritzer, *Democracy and the Public Space in Latin America*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Gianpaolo Baiocchi, “Participation, Activism, and Politics: The Porto Alegre Experiment and Deliberative Democratic Theory,” *Politics & Society* 29(2001):43-72; Rebecca Abers, *Inventing Local Democracy: Grassroots politics in Brazil*. (Boulder: Westview, 2001), William R Nylene, *Participatory Democracy versus Elitist Democracy: Lessons from Brasil*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2003); Brian Wampler and Leonardo Avritzer, Participatory Publics: Civil Society and New Institutions in Democratic Brazil. *Comparative Politics* 36 (2004) 291-312.

³ John Guidry, “Not Just Another Labor Party: The Workers’ Party and Democracy in Brazil.” *Labor Studies Journal* 28 (2003):83-108.; Wendy Hunter, “From Opposition Movement to Government Party: Growth and Expansion of the Workers’ Party in Brazil.” Paper presented at the 100th annual meeting of the American Political Science Association meeting, Chicago, Illinois. September, 2004.

⁴ Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, *Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press 1995); Avritzer 2002.

⁵ Alfred P. Montero, “Devolving Democracy? Political Decentralization and the New Brazilian Federalism,” in Peter R. Kingstone and Timothy J. Power, eds., *Democratic Brazil: Actors, Institutions, and Processes* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000).

⁶ It is not our intention to provide a detailed explanation of the Participatory Budgeting's complex process. See Rebecca Abers, "From Clientelism to Cooperation: Local government, participatory policy, and civic organizing in Porto Alegre, Brazil," *Politics and Society*, 26 (October 1998), 511-537; Boaventura de Sousa Santos. "Participatory Budgeting in Porto Alegre: Toward a Redistributive Democracy," *Politics and Society*, 26(October 1994), 461-510; Gianpaolo Baiocchi, "Participation, Activism, and Politics: The Porto Alegre Experiment and Deliberative Democratic Theory" *Politics & Society*, 29(2001), pp. 43-72. Brian Wampler, "Guide to Participatory Budgeting." May 2001. <http://www.internationalbudget.org/>

⁷ Avritzer, 2002.

⁸ Tarso Genro, *Porto da Cidadania* (Porto Alegre: Artes e Ofícios, 1997).

⁹ Seele, 2004.

¹⁰ Wampler 2000; Renata Villas-Boas, "Expediências de Orçamento Participativo no Brasil: Formatos organizativos e metodológicos dos orçamentos participativos nos municípios de Porto Alegre, Belo Horizonte, Santo André e Icapuí." Unpublished World Bank Report; Ana Cláudia Chaves Teixeira, Carla Almeida Silva and Evelina Dagnino. 1999. *The Brazilian Report on Civil Society*. Report prepared for Ford Foundation conference, March 1999, Capetown, South Africa.

¹¹ Brian Wampler and Helio Bautista, "Fortalecimento Financiero do Município com Justiça Social a Serviço da Cidadania." *20 Experiências de Gestão Público e Cidadania*, edited by Marta Farah and Helio Bautista. (São Paulo: Fundação Getúlio Vargas, 2001); Hunter. 2004.

¹² Hunter, 2004; Avritzer, 2002.

¹³ Leftist parties include the Workers' Party, Green Party, Socialist Party of Brazil and the Communist Party of Brazil. Centrist parties include the PSDB, PMDB and PDT. Conservative parties include the PL, PFL, and PTB.

¹⁴ www.pnud.org.br/idh/ and www.ibge.org.br.

¹⁵ www.pnud.org.br/idh/ and www.ibge.org.br

¹⁶ www.pnud.org.br/idh/1990 data

¹⁷ Wampler and Avritzer 2004; Abers 2001; Nylen 2003.

¹⁸ Wampler and Avritzer 2004; Avritzer 2002; Marcelo Silva, "A Construção da Participação Popular: Uma discussão sobre as condições de possibilidade da experiência de democratização da

gestao municipal em Porto Alegre," in Leonardo Avritzer and Zander Navarro, eds., *A Inovação Democrática no Brasil*. (São Paulo: Cortez, 2002); Zander Navarro, "O 'Orçamento Participativo' de Porto Alegre (1989-2002): um conciso comentário crítico" in Leonardo Avritzer and Zander Navarro, eds., *A Inovação Democrática no Brasil*. (São Paulo: Cortez, 2002).

¹⁹ Adrian Lavalley, Peter Houtzager, and Arnab Achrya. "Lugares e atores da democracia: arranjos institucionais participativos e sociedade civil em São Paulo" *In Deliberação e Participação Social no Brasil*. edited by Vera Schattan P. Coelho and Marcos Nobre (São Paulo: Editora Letras, 2004); Gianpaolo Baiocchi, "Participation, Activism and Politics: The Porto Alegre Experiment" in Archon Fung and Erik Olin Wright, *Deepening Democracy: Institutional Innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance*. (London:Verso, 2003a).

²⁰ See www.ibge.org.br; Avritzer 2004.

²¹ Wampler and Arvitzer 2004; Abers 2001; Navarro 2002.

²² Source of data is from the PT's national office. All data is from 2000.

²³ Abers 2001; Avritzer 2002; Navarro

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Film Reviews

by **María Inés Martínez*****

Hair Therapy

A Film by Andrea Saïd

23 minutes / Color / 2000

Sale/video: \$225

Rental/video: \$50

Distributed by First Run Icarus Films

In *Hair Therapy*, four women between twenty and thirty years of age speak of their lives and loves. The director, Andrea Saïd, realizes that she shares a similar worldview with the other women she is interviewing for her documentary. Andrea's camera becomes a mirror where she sees her own image reflected in the lives of her subjects. She then decides to include herself in the documentary and to speak of her own doubts, insecurities and search for identity. This feminine quest for a new identity is symbolized in the film by constant haircuts and changes in Andrea's hairstyle. This search for identity is expressed differently by each woman, who understand that women in the twenty-first century must challenge old beliefs and be more accepting of uncertainties.

In this short, getting a haircut is not a meaningless activity. A haircut and change in hairstyle represent an act of self-affirmation from a feminist perspective, where autonomy in decision making is paramount. The movie opens with a shot of a woman cutting her own knotty hair, practically tearing it out. This act symbolizes her rejection of the traditional image of beauty. Later on, Andrea reveals that cutting and tinting her hair represent her declaration of independence from social and family pressures to conform.

A new hairstyle implies a search for a new identity, leaving the old behind, opening up space for self-reflection, allowing women to re-create their self-image and better understand their relationship with men and society. From this perspective, the film gives voice to three other women who have embarked on similar journeys. The short allows women to tackle the most intimate issues as they question their lives. It tracks their self-awareness as members of a society that confronts them daily with their fears and solitude. Fear of being

alone and at the same time fear of sharing their lives with another, a feeling of uncertainty is omnipresent. They assume the search for a new feminine identity and also the search for a partner.

The first woman addresses the difficulty of building harmonious, loving relationships in a social context characterized by violence and intolerance. She also has difficulties coming to grips with love and sexuality, as well, as an overweight woman, she must confront prejudice due to her physical appearance, and the struggle to express her love and sexuality.

Ana, who notes that relations among couples are marked by individualism and independence, corroborates these reflections on sexuality. She accepts these changes as irreversible, but nevertheless questions this individualistic quest for solitude as an easy escape from the challenge of building a loving relationship.

Asenethe sees her generation as rejecting any form of commitment, a generation that lives for the moment rather than for eternity. As she tells her latest boyfriend, instant gratification is much more attractive than a long-term commitment. Asenethe accepts this difficulty of living for the moment, but at the same time recognizes that she can love responsibly without building up false hopes of creating an idealized, married couple living "happily ever after."

This short talks about various difficulties women face in their love lives, yet pretty much ignores the world around them, such as the violence and machismo of Colombian society. Nevertheless, it successfully asks a series of open-ended questions about women and their need to create new models and perspectives on love and sexuality. It appears that 21st century Colombian women must constantly re-define and challenge concepts of femininity.

Following One's Way

A film by Diego Fernando Hernández

26 minutes / Color / 2000

Sale/video: \$225

Rental/video: \$50

Distributed by First Run Icarus Films

The main character in this movie is Ilona, a young singer. The first scene shows Ilona walking down a dark street that will bring her to a restaurant where she will perform. This darkness symbolizes the daily struggle faced by Ilona in order to support her family. Like millions of Colombians, her family is "desplazados" (displaced people) as a result of the civil war plaguing the country. In different scenes throughout the movie, Ilona is seen criss-crossing Bogotá, trying to earn a living singing on buses and in restaurants for tips. Ilona is also the single mother of a three year-old daughter and struggles to find time to spend with her little one.

Ilona's family also traipses around Bogotá, moving from one decrepit apartment to another, unable to find adequate housing, like so many other families displaced by political violence. Ilona composes songs that express her feelings about the armed conflict, displacement, poverty and hunger that exist in a country torn apart by war. She sings of the housing crisis affecting the displaced, "How can we have a home if we can't afford one?"

On top of these challenges, Ilona faces additional obstacles and pressures. Her mother is unhappy with her frequent absences from home and implores her to spend more time with her young daughter. The producers of a concert want her to expand her limited repertoire, demanding she create more songs, and go so far as requesting she sing in English, even though she doesn't speak the language at all. With her meagre earnings, Ilona is unable to adequately support her family. Nevertheless, she struggles on and denounces the indifference surrounding her in one of her songs: "I'm not bothering anyone, let me live in peace, no one will die because of my actions."

Poorly lit scenes predominate in the movie. The last scene is a sombre, exterior shot where Ilona is eating a meal at a soup kitchen in a poor neighbourhood. In *Following One's Way*, filmmaker Hernández exposes the tragic reality facing the millions of internally displaced people in Colombia. (Colombia is only surpassed by Afghanistan in sheer numbers of internal refugees due to armed

conflict). The film details how woefully inadequate government assistance programs have been to meet the needs of the displaced. The film adopts a pessimistic stance, showing the cruel reality of the displaced in Bogotá, where their most basic needs remain unmet. Nevertheless, they have not lost all hope and continue to dream of a better world. As Ilona sings, “I’m not bothering anyone, let me live in peace, no one will die because of my actions”.

For Ilona’s family to be displaced in Colombia not only implies to be marginalized but also to be silent. In *Following One’s Way*, Hernandez explores a way to talk about the problems and frustrations of displaced people in Colombia. The film is relevant because it gives voice to people that have been condemned to silence by political violence and neglected by a callous government.

There’s no Room for so Many People

A Film by Hemel Atehortua

30 minutes / Color / 2000

Sale/video: \$225

Rental/video: \$50

Distributed by First Run Icarus Films

Going to the corner store to buy the newspaper is part of Edgar’s daily routine. He pores over the “help wanted” ads, as he has been unemployed for the past three months. Edgar travels around the city, submitting his resume left and right, soliciting jobs by phone, but is unable to find work. While he has experience as a security guard, his desperation leads him to offer to work for free as a waiter in a restaurant, hoping to learn the trade and eventually land a paying job. Employers promise to call him, but he never hears back from anyone. Edgar remains unemployed and marginalized.

One of the key scenes in the short is when Edgar visits the government employment centre. The spectator realizes that Edgar shares his predicament with many others. The camera scans a long line-up of unemployed people waiting to meet a job counsellor. In one of the dialogues, a woman states that the real number of unemployed is much higher than official government statistics; she says, “We know there are four million unemployed, not one million.” As the camera follows Edgar into the employment centre, it becomes clear that the administrative paper-pushers cannot help Edgar find a job. The director of the film presents a critique of the Colombian government, which lies about the magnitude of unemployment, and tries to hide behind a bureaucratic smokescreen.

Edgar and his partner, Angelica, wander around the city looking for alternatives, as their future appears fragile and uncertain. While sharing responsibility for their three-year-old daughter, Angie, they are also awaiting the arrival of a baby. Terminating the pregnancy is not an option, as Angelica is seven-months pregnant, but they are thinking of giving the baby up for adoption. The adoption agency informs them that their baby will be well provided for, but their doubts persist. The couple does not know what to do. They are also considering a move from Bogotá to Barranquilla, where Edgar's family is willing to help them. Angelica's mother offers to care for their daughter for a few months, while they have their baby and get settled into their new life in Barranquilla.

The lack of job prospects frustrates Edgar and Angelica's attempts to build a secure, stable future. They continually improvise, are subject to all sorts of pressures and have difficulty making decisions. In *There's no Room for so Many People*, Edgar and Angelica's plight is a microcosm of Colombian society, where people face chronic economic insecurity, which then wreaks havoc on their family life.

Unfortunately, there are parts of the film that portray Edgar as an irresponsible and weak 33-year-old, unable to support his family. His mother and sister speak judgmentally of him, without taking into account that his goals cannot be realized due to unemployment and a desperate economic situation. Edgar is one of the many victims of the Colombian economy, where unemployment hovers around 20 percent. Blaming the victim only adds more stress to the burden of being unemployed.

In *There's no Room for so Many People*, Hamel Atehortua portrays the daily struggle for survival faced by many Colombians. Many scenes were filmed in San Mateo, a poor neighbourhood where Edgar and Angelica live. Other shots feature dirty, potholed streets of central Bogotá. Atehortua shows society from the bottom up, the ramshackle, semi-destroyed spaces where marginalized Colombians live.

The tragic finale shows the impact of the economic crisis on the family. Edgar and Angelica are forced to sell their meagre possessions in order to pay for their bus fare to Barranquilla. Uncertain of the future, they leave their daughter Angie in the care of her grandmother and await the arrival of their baby. Angie bids farewell to her parents amidst tears and anguished cries. The last scene expresses the pain and anguish inflicted upon the Colombian poor, due to the economic crisis.

Atehortua doesn't pretend to give easy answers to the unemployment problem, and his characters are not one-dimensional. Edgar and Angelica's departure for Barranquilla represents a family rupture, with no guarantees for economic success. Their relatives wish them good luck, but a feeling of doubt and uncertainty pervades the film to its end. *There's no Room for so Many People* is characteristic of an alternative cinematographic genre, which avoids simple, Hollywood-style plots. It aims to alert the public to the social and economic problems facing contemporary Colombia. While this film was produced on a miniscule budget, it is thematically rich and demonstrates that director Atehortua is able to explore and contextualize an important social problem like unemployment and portray its human cost.

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Book Reviews

Kenneth Mitchell***

David J. Myers and Henry A. Dietz, eds. *Capital City Politics in Latin America, Democratization and Empowerment*, Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2002. Bibliography, contributors, index, 408 pp; hardcover \$32.50.

This timely volume by David Myers and Henry Dietz (editors) examines municipal democratization and empowerment in Latin American capitals from the 1940s to 2000. Latin America is the most urbanized region of the world and capitals tend to dominate national politics, economics and culture. Today capital mayors — historically, obscure presidential appointees — are freely elected and influencing local and national politics. However, no comprehensive, comparative study of capital politics exists in the democratization literature. This collection fills this void and complements the earlier volume by Dietz and Shidlo (editors), *Urban Elections in Democratic Latin America* (1998).

Myers' introductory chapter develops a framework for capital city politics based on historical, political economy (ISI, debt crisis, neoliberalism) and demographic insights. Table 1.1 (p.8–9) reveals Latin America's dramatic rural-to-urban demographic shift after WWII, while Tables 1.2 (p.11) and 1.3 (p.13) depict capital city municipal institutional changes before and after democratization. Then Myers summarizes Huntington's *Third Wave* model before proposing "five themes of change since WWII" (p.12) to assess municipal democratization and empowerment in Latin American capitals. These are: empowering municipal political institutions, security concerns, attitudes of entitlement as constraints on capital city mayors, changing influence of interest groups on capital city politics and the urban built environment.

Alan Gilbert and Julio Dávila in chapter 2 examine the institutional context of Bogotá and find Colombia's stable party system and history of regionalism curtailing real municipal empowerment in the capital. In chapter 3, Miguel de Luca, Mark Jones and María Inés Tula's informative account of Buenos Aires notes that the city traditionally supports the middle-class Radical Party while the province of Buenos Aires backs the working-class Peronist Party, and that Peronist presidents (Juan Perón, Carlos Menem) and

congressional majorities empowered provincial governors rather than non-elected and elected (after 1996) city mayors. In chapter 4, Steve Ellner and Myers attribute pre-1980s centralized rule in Caracas to oil wealth, a stable party system financed by oil, and serious guerrilla insurgencies; 1980s decentralized rule to falling oil prices, weakening traditional parties and disappearing insurgencies; and 1990s centralized rule to reforms under President Hugo Chavez. In chapter 5, David Jickling and Alexandra Garcia-Iragorri are thoroughly pessimistic about both democratization and empowerment in elite-dominated Guatemala City. Dietz and Martín Tanaka in chapter 7 are cautious about whether democratization has empowered municipal institutions in Lima — where military rule stopped and democratization started in 1979 — because the collapse of traditional parties at the end of the 1980s marked a new period of highly informal, personalistic politics in the capital. In chapter 8, Diane Davis' historical account of Mexico City examines first how the authoritarian Institutional Revolutionary Party's (PRI) desire for popular support resulted in resources and corporatist structures for capital residents, and then concludes that the first free mayoral election in 1997, won by the left-center opposition, did not change Mexico City's clientele and patronage politics or improve its security, infrastructure and environmental problems. Peter Siavelis, Esteban Valenzuela Van Treek and Giorgio Martelli's intriguing chapter (chapter 9) examines municipal institutions in Santiago, where no one city mayor resides but instead where three mayors rule three strategic, class-divided districts in the Santiago metropolitan area, before arguing that the latter, despite the shift to free mayoral elections after Pinochet, continues to empower the president and national ministries over municipal authorities. Sao Paulo is the lone non-capital in the volume, which means that the geographic linking of municipal and federal political institutions, a unifying theme of the collection, does not hold in chapter 10. Brasilia's relevance aside, Lawrence Graham and Pedro Jacobi's excellent chapter depicts the lively ebb and flow of democratic yet clientelistic municipal politics by illuminating how diverse actors and interest groups compete for power, and how institutional constraints and innovations (such as "participatory budgeting") guide political behavior. Lastly, Myers and Dietz write an insightful, concise summary (chapter 11), noting the collection's significant findings.

Overall, the volume is well written and scholarly. Readers take away valuable insights regarding capital city politics from each chapter. Refreshingly, jargon and quantitative analysis are curbed. Instead, actors such as mayors, city councils, community organizers,

governors and presidents are examined, institutions such as constitutional provisions and changes are contextualized, and historic national and municipal interaction is analyzed. However, “democratization and empowerment” may have been a poor choice over, say, “continuity and change” or perhaps just *Capital City Politics in Latin America*. It is unclear whether empowerment relates to mayors, city councils or city residents and interest groups, and whether it is measured in mayoral autonomy from national institutions, access to the ballot box, response to civil society, or better public services. Readers appreciate the “continuity and change” in capital cities more than coherent municipal democratization and empowerment — indeed, Huntington’s democratization model as presented in chapter 1 is a rough fit for most of the collection’s case studies. Joseph Scarpaci’s chapter on Havana (Chapter 6) is curious in a democratization and empowerment collection, and, methodologically, linking these to blackmarket vendors and tourism raises some alarm. The Dominican Republic appears in the first Dietz volume and Santo Domingo would have been a better choice. Again, chapter 1 links municipal empowerment to Huntington’s democratic third wave and the 1980s debt crisis and neoliberal policies, yet some chapters (Bogotá, Guatemala City, Mexico City) emphasize pre-1980s events. Finally, some chapters embrace a civil society approach to democratization and empowerment and downplay institutional factors (Havana, Mexico City) while others barely mention civil society and limit discussion to municipal institutional considerations (Bogotá, Buenos Aires and Guatemala City).

The collection is appropriate for undergraduate courses in Latin American politics and Latin American studies, and for graduate courses on Latin American politics, urban politics and democratization, although the lack of a paperback edition is unfortunate. The collection can serve a general audience as well, for students visiting the region — on exchange, for language instruction or for fieldwork — often reside in or frequent capital cities and will value the collection’s insights.

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Books Received

The books listed below were recently received by the editors. A listing here does not preclude a review in a future issue.

This Small City Will Be a Mexican Paradise: Exploring the Origins of Mexican Culture in Los Angeles, 1821-1846. By Michael J. González. University of New Mexico Press, 2005. 254 pp.

When States Kill?: Latin America, the U.S., and Technologies of Terror. Edited by Cecilia Menjívar and Néstor Rodríguez. University of Texas Press, 2005. 374 pp.

Mexico OtherWise: Modern Mexico in the Eyes of Foreign Observers. Edited and Translated by Jurgen Buchenau. University of New Mexico Press, 2005. 285 pp.

Tools of Progress: A German Merchant Family in Mexico City, 1865-Present. By Jurgen Buchenau. University of New Mexico Press, 2004. 267 pp.

Zone of Tolerance: The Guaymas Chronicles. By David E. Stuart. University of New Mexico Press, 2005. 296 pp.

The Ambivalent Revolution: Forging State and Nation in Chiapas, 1910-1945. By Stephen E. Lewis. University of New Mexico Press, 2005. 283 pp.

Black Atlantic Religion: Tradition, Transnationalism and Matriarchy in the Afro-Brazilian Candomblé. By J. Lorand Matory. Princeton University Press, 2005. 383 pp.