



CENTER FOR Latin American Studies

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY



FALL, 2002

Challenge to Impunity in Guatemala

By Paula Worby



AP Photo/Jaime Puebla

After twelve years of pursuing her sister's murderers, Helen Mack watched history unfold in a Guatemalan courtroom this fall. With 400 international observers filling the courtroom, three high-ranking officers stood trial for being the intellectual authors of the Sept. 11, 1990 murder of Myrna Mack.

Mack was a well-known anthropologist who studied the impact of the country's civil war on rural villagers. As dusk fell that September

evening, she was brutally murdered as she left her office in Guatemala City.

In October, the panel of judges found Col. Juan Valencia Osorio, a retired military officer and member of an elite presidential guard, guilty of ordering Mack's assassination. He was sentenced to 30 years in prison. Two other officers were found not guilty.

The human rights case set a new standard for prosecuting military officials for abuses within their own country.

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Chair
Harley Shaiken

Vice Chair
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Editor
Rachael Post

Design and Layout
Geof Oppenheimer

Photography
AP Photo-WWP
Jennifer Alix
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Annelise Wunderlich

Contributing Writers
Lydia Chávez
Margaret Chowning
Dwight Dyer
Sebastian Etchemendy
Jason Felch
Susie Hicks
Mary Beth Kaufman
Beatriz Manz
Harley Shaiken
Paula Worby

The CLAS Newsletter is published three times a year by the Center for Latin American Studies, The University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720-2312

A supporter sings while holding a paper with a Myrna Mack song and image during a commemoration of her death on Wed., Sept. 11, 2002 in Guatemala City.



Letter From the Chair

This fall the Center for Latin American Studies (CLAS) is inaugurating an exciting new program, "The U.S.-Mexico Futures Forum." With the support of the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, CLAS is collaborating with the International Studies Department at the Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México (ITAM) to develop fresh and innovative approaches to the U.S.-Mexico relationship.

The Forum is unfolding on a number of interrelated levels. First, CLAS and ITAM are seeking to establish an ongoing, binational network of leading scholars, policy makers, public intellectuals, and leaders from labor, NGO's, and the business community. While bringing a diverse set of experiences and viewpoints, all participants are open to new perspectives and willing to explore new directions. The first of these meetings will take place in Cuernavaca, Mexico in mid-November.

Second, CLAS has organized a series of seminars and public events with the input of our colleagues at ITAM. We report on three of these events in this issue: a journalist's perspective on contemporary events, a discussion of the politics of petroleum, and a colloquium with Ambassador Jeffrey Davidow, who recent-

ly stepped down as the U.S. ambassador to Mexico. As it happened, Representative David Bonior was visiting CLAS the day Ambassador Davidow spoke. At the colloquium, a fascinating discussion ensued between the two on Mexico, migration, and the U.S. Congress that highlighted the spirit and the value of the forum as a place to explore new possibilities.

In addition, this semester we have organized discussions on the Latino vote with Professor Bruce Cain, the Director of the Institute of Governmental Studies at U.C. Berkeley; on migration with Professor Philip Martin, U.C. Davis; and on perceptions of democracy in Mexico and the United States with Professors Roderic Camp, Claremont McKenna College and Alejandro Moreno, ITAM. Later this semester we will be hosting events with Ambassador Adolfo Aguilar Zinser, Mexico's representative to the United Nations and Professor Albert Fishlow, Colombia University, among others.

Finally, we are establishing new working groups with faculty, graduate students, and staff to continue an ongoing dialogue and develop new research and policy directions. We look forward to reporting on our efforts in future editions.

— Harley Shaiken

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The “Frozen Enchilada:” Journalists Discuss a Shunned Mexico

By Jason Felch

Early in 2001, Mexico’s Foreign Minister Jorge Castañeda announced the creation of a bold new package of reforms that would transform the relationship between the United States and Mexico. The package, whose five inseparable ingredients he called “the whole enchilada,” were favorably received when President Vicente Fox addressed a joint session of Congress in the first week of September, 2001.

A week later the world changed, and with it the Bush administration’s priorities. In a matter of days, Mexico went from the top of the U.S. agenda to an afterthought on the agenda. According to a panel of well-known journalists who spoke recently on the subject of U.S.-Mexico relations, the “enchilada” has been frozen ever since.

Ginger Thompson, Mexico correspondent for The New York Times; Mary Beth Sheridan, a former Mexico correspondent who now covers immigration for The Washington Post; and Dolia Estévez, Washington correspondent for El Financiero, spoke in Berkeley at “The U.S.-Mexico Futures Forum,” a forum sponsored by the Center for Latin American Studies in collaboration with the International Studies Department at the Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México.

The three spoke of the Fox administration’s frustration with the lack of attention Mexico now receives from the United States. A year ago, during the State visit, Sheridan said that Fox was so confident that he called for the two nations to agree upon migration reform and a guest worker program by the end of the year. But a year later, in what Sheridan referred to as “The Reform That Wasn’t”, little has been achieved.

Ginger Thompson, who has covered Mexico for several years for The New York Times, touched on the frustration and



Allison Davenport

inevitability with the words she chose to describe the current Mexico-U.S. relationship: “stalled, strained, unstoppable.”

The result has been a setback for the relationship and for immigration reform, Thompson said. Fox, who is fond of saying he is the president of 123 million Mexicans, went out of his way to court the 23 million estimated to be living north of the border, Thompson said. But after the last year of stalled talks with the United States and political foot-dragging at home, the Mexican president may be considering compromise.

“In the game of foreign policy,” said Thompson, “the U.S.’s interests have trumped all.” After Sept. 11, “Mexico blipped off the U.S. foreign policy screen.”

Estévez echoed that sentiment, saying, “The U.S. has forgotten about the rest of the world.”

The lack of significant change since Sept. 11 may be an accomplishment in itself. The terrorist attacks had the potential to profoundly set back the U.S.-Mexico relationship. But many

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The poster warns those who want to cross the border: “There are roads with no return. Never trust immigrant traffickers.”

Oil: A Gift from the Devil?

By Jason Felch



AP Photo/Victor R. Calvano

A Mexican Air Force helicopter takes off from a PEMEX oil platform in the Gulf of Mexico.

Will Mexico privatize its sacrosanct petroleum industry? The question has come to the fore once again, thanks to the threat of war in the Middle East, recent talk of increased Mexican production, and President Vicente Fox's campaign promise to reform Mexico's energy sector.

Yet the thought of privatizing PEMEX, Mexico's national petroleum company, cannot be raised without also raising the historical shadow that has accompanied it since birth, that of Lazaro Cárdenas.

Cárdenas, the PRI's founding father, nationalized Mexico's oil industry in a defiant move against foreign companies in 1938. In the words of Daniel Yergin, who chronicles the history of the petroleum industry in his book "The Prize," nationalization was "a great symbolic and passionate act of resistance to foreign control, which would become central to the spirit of nationalism that tied the country together."

Today that glue still binds, and the Mexican voter may rule out the privatization of PEMEX, which some analysts say Fox still favors.

These conflicting interests were the basis of a lively conversation at the Center for

Latin American Studies in September as part of the panel discussion titled "The Politics of Petroleum and the Future of the US-Mexican Relationship."

The panel brought together Michael Economides, professor of Engineering at the University of Houston and a well-known energy analyst, and José Alberro, former CEO of PEMEX Gas y Petroquímica Básica (Gas and Basic Petrochemicals) and currently director of LECG, an economic consulting firm. They were joined by Sandy Tolan, a veteran journalist who has covered petroleum and natural resource issues, and currently teaches a class on the collision of politics and petroleum in Latin America at UC Berkeley.

The question of privatization is a complex, technical one, and should not be treated simply, Alberro said. He readily admits that PEMEX suffers from corruption and gross inefficiencies. "An integrated monopoly, like PEMEX, is the surest recipe for inefficiency," he said. But, citing the recent corruption scandal involving Enron, "to go from a nationalized corrupt company to a private, foreign corrupt company is not a good tradeoff."

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Interview with Helen Mack

By Beatriz Manz

On the 12th anniversary of Myrna Mack's murder and a few weeks before the verdict, I sat down with Helen Mack at her home to reflect on the steps that took her along the tough, dangerous route to challenge impunity in Guatemala. She was resolute, determined and surprisingly serene. She spoke candidly about the personal and political challenge she faced.



Photo courtesy of Beatriz Manz

Beatriz Manz interviews Helen Mack in her home in Guatemala City during Myrna's trial.

MANZ: What were the principal charges against the three military officials, and why is the trial historic?

MACK: They were charged with being the intellectual authors of my sister's murder. It is the first time in Guatemalan history in which the intellectual authors have been put on trial.

MANZ: Why now?

MACK: It's been a long process. But, it's important that it happens now because Guatemala remains a place where the military still believes it was truly victorious in the country's civil war. They are unwilling to concede and that has helped to obscure the truth. But truth is powerful and that is why what really happened is coming to light.

Myrna gave her life for the masses and that is why I continued with the case. Like Myrna, we must think about the dignity of all Guatemalans—those who have never been recognized or taken into account. What the case does precisely is to rescue the human side of

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A Guatemalan War Story of Triumph

By Lydia Chavez

Over the years, I have heard Beatriz Manz talk about her relationship with Myrna Mack. It is a remarkable story of friendship in the midst of civil war. Myrna, a Chinese-Guatemalan, and Beatriz, a Chilean immigrant to the United States, bonded early on because of their love for Guatemala and their fearlessness in documenting the war. Their collaboration ended on September 11, 1990 when Myrna was murdered by government forces. The story might have ended there, but an unlikely friendship grew out of that tragedy. For years, Beatriz had known Helen as Myrna's conservative younger sister: a woman without any apparent interest in challenging authority. But tragedy breeds the unexpected. Myrna's murder transformed Helen's view of herself and her country.

The story of these three friends, Myrna, Beatriz and Helen is worthy of a novel. It is a story of trust; of how individuals can use the power of the institutions they work for to help promote

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Landmark Decision in Salvadoran Lawsuit

By Mary Beth Kaufman

For five weeks this summer, I observed as the horrors of state repression in El Salvador were replayed in a small federal courtroom in South Florida. The civil lawsuit was brought against two former Ministers of Defense of El Salvador who held power in the 1970's and 1980's during the military's worst periods of human rights abuses. As witnesses pieced together the context of war and the torture and mass murder of civilians for the jury, the consequences of U.S. policy also became apparent.

"I am lucky to be alive," testified Juan Arce Romagoza, a physician who was detained and tortured at National Guard headquarters in San Salvador in 1980. "I have many friends and fellow doctors who were killed by the National Guard, death squads and the military. I am one of the few who can tell their story."

Defendants Generals José Guillermo García and Eugenio Vides Casanova, present for the trial, listened to the often excruciating testimony.

"I joined this case to tell the truth, to denounce what happened to me, and to tell of the torture. I have had this with me for more than 20 years," said Neris González, a catechist,

who was eight months pregnant when she was captured and tortured at the National Guard post in San Vaccinate in 1979.

Carlos Mauricio, a former professor at the National University, who was captured and tortured in the National Police headquarters in El Salvador in 1983, directly addressed one of the defendants. "I need an answer from General Vides Casanova why I was detained and tortured for no reason, and why he did nothing to stop it or prevent it," he said.

Romagoza now runs a community health clinic in Washington, D.C. González, who was left for dead and lost her son as a result of the torture, currently works for an ecological organization in Chicago. Mauricio lives in San Francisco, and works as a high school teacher and poet.

The case was the first in which plaintiffs confronted military commanders in a U.S. courtroom for human rights abuses. In a historic decision, the jury awarded more than \$54 million to the three plaintiffs. "In order to prevent torture, we must fight impunity," Mauricio said after the jury delivered its verdict on July 23 this year.

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Atlatcatl, a special forces battalion of the Salvadoran military, was responsible for numerous human rights abuses, including the massacre at El Mozote.



Giuseppe Dezza

Possibilities and Challenges for the U.S. and Mexico

By Dwight Dyer

On October 14, 2002, Jeffrey Davidow, former U.S. Ambassador to Mexico (1998-2002), offered his views on the opportunities and challenges for the United States' relationship with Mexico. Ambassador Davidow, whose tenure in Mexico straddled the historic change of parties in the Mexican presidency in 2000, spoke at Berkeley as part of the U.S.-Mexico Futures Forum.

According to Ambassador Davidow, the United States' relationship with Mexico is of great consequence, since "it is the country that has the greatest impact on the daily lives of most American citizens." Not only is it a large neighbor with a population of one hundred million, but it also is America's second largest trading partner, poised to take over Canada within a decade. Moreover, the Mexican presence in the U.S. is influencing profoundly the development of manufacturing and agricultural industries, as well as fueling demographic changes sweeping many states in the Union.

Although economic integration and demographic inter-penetration are proceeding at a fast pace, policymakers are not engaged in an active discussion about the direction the relationship may take in the future. Consequently, there is a dearth of information on the many issues that potentially will shape it. No doubt speaking from personal experience, Ambassador Davidow considers that nothing in this relationship is easy, given the conflictive and tortured past that informs the attitudes and the gamesmanship on both sides of the "Tortilla Curtain."

While speaking about the specific issues that made his tenure interesting, Ambassador Davidow suggested that, in general, the relationship is now better than ever before. The



Melinda Peraza

growing levels of cooperation and exchange across the federal governments, state governments and non-governmental organizations reflect the understanding that shared problems need shared solutions, rather than unilaterally imposed decisions.

Talking candidly about the institutional differences between the PRI and PAN administrations, he pointed out that, although PRI presidents engaged the United States intensively, they thought it inconvenient to publicize this cooperation because of the regime's nationalist ideology.

The PAN president, on the other hand, has "a [lower level] of hypocrisy." Publicly open cooperation is the new government's preferred *modus operandi* and, despite differences in approach to some issues between the two countries, the growing closeness is leading to positive results. Ambassador Davidow cited several examples, including anti-drug trafficking policy, where "Mexico's greater competence in prosecuting drug cartels and the U.S. Congress's quiet relegation of the insulting annual certification" have improved outcomes. He also cited health policy, which targets tuberculosis outbreaks among migrant workers, and education

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Left:
Ambassador Jeffrey Davidow

Argentina's Economy: From Poster Child to Basket Case

By Sebastian Etchemendy

The Argentina of the 1990's was a model of economic reform to orthodox economists and international financial institutions alike, said Manuel Pastor, a professor of economics at UC Santa Cruz. Pastor, who was the first speaker in the Bay Area Latin American Forum at the Center for Latin American Studies in September, said the country tamed inflation, pursued radical tariff



Veronique Laughlin

liberalization, and adopted a currency board that fixed the peso to the dollar. This helped stop domestic monetary expansion and forced the government to curb fiscal deficits. The government's tightening of monetary matters through the currency board was seen as a source of Argentina's stability.

Massive privatization and vast amounts of capital flooded into this historically crises-ridden economy, helping to control deficits. The experiment seemed to be working: Argentina reached outstanding growth rates from 1991 to 1995. The exchange rate overvaluation triggered a huge increase in imports and a consumption boom that fueled the political ambitions of former President Carlos Menem and his Minister of the Economy, Domingo Cavallo. The team faced no major hurdles and was reelected in 1995.

Argentina's capacity to resume growth in 1996 and 1997 after the Mexican peso crisis seemed to confirm the robustness of its fixed exchange rate, Pastor said. Argentina could keep investor's confidence and weather the storm in spite of—and, for many, because of—a virtually powerless government in monetary matters. Argentina's highly liberalized and privatized economy had become the "poster child," the paradigm of neo-liberal reform for the

international financial establishment, Pastor explained in his presentation titled "From Poster Child to Basket Case: Argentina on the Edge."

Then the unexpected happened in 2001: five presidents in two weeks—one of whom lasted only 40 minutes—a default on public debt of about \$140 billion, a currency that lost 75 percent of its value after December 2001, a freeze on citizens' bank deposits and a 13 percent decrease in GDP. Nearly 50 percent of the population quickly fell below the poverty line in a country that was once proud of its buoyant middle class, Pastor said.

What is the link between the success story and the recent tragedy? There are two generally contrasted analyses of Argentina's economic disaster. The first focuses on the exchange rate policy, and the second, which is mostly touted by orthodox economists, is based on state spending. Pastor clearly falls among the first group of economists. In his view, the seeds of the future collapse were already present in the exchange rate policy pursued in the 1990's. Pastor explained that radical tariff liberalization, coupled with the increasing overvaluation of the exchange rate, began to undermine local

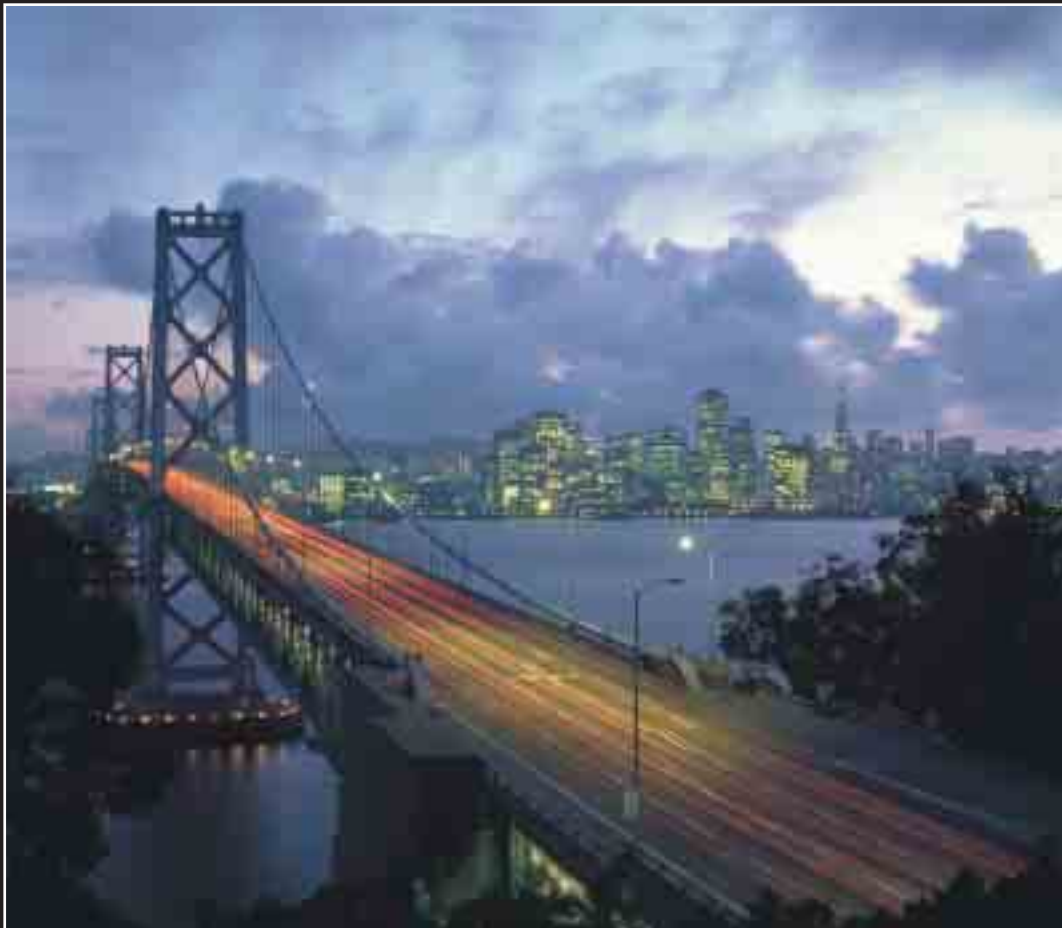
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Demonstrators in Buenos Aires protest economic decline, problems in healthcare and growing social inequality.

A Chilean Views the Bay

"Only here you could see San Francisco Bay, and, when night was just beginning—a clear San Francisco night—if you squinted, looking through the window that you had to clean off with your fingers to see through, you could also see the string of cars crossing the bridge that connected the peninsula with Oakland and Berkeley, where that very afternoon I had taken a relaxing nap in R. L. Stevenson's home ... and it looked like the movement of stars, or of luminous lizards, or of giant reptiles, and it did my soul good."

—Antonio Skármeta



An excerpt describing a view of the Bay Bridge at night in Antonio Skármeta's short story, "Cinderella in San Francisco." Skármeta is a well-known Chilean author whose novel, *Ardiente Paciencia*, inspired the internationally acclaimed film, *The Postman (Il Postino)*. He is now Chilean Ambassador to Germany.

“A Seminary of Discord”: Rebellion in an Eighteenth Century Mexican Convent

By Margaret Chowning

An archive is to a historian as Disneyland is to a seven-year-old: you never know what wonderful thing awaits you in the next magical kingdom, or in the next dusty bundle of documents. It could be something so unexpected that it changes a whole project. I originally went to the ecclesiastical archive in Morelia, Michoacán in 1999 to begin work on a book about women and the church in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Mexico. Poking around in boxes of material on convents, I came upon a cache of worm-eaten correspondence, interviews, and commissioned reports concerning what the bishop called a “rebellion” in the convent of La Purísima Concepción in San Miguel el Grande, today San Miguel de Allende.

The documents were misfiled with material from another convent also called “La Purísima Concepción,” a Capuchin convent in Salvatierra. It is easy to see how the filing error was made, but it meant that the standard documentation on the San Miguel convent that was filed properly under “Concepcionistas” (documents associated with the entrances and professions of nuns, records of the episcopal visitations, account books) had never been married to the wonderfully rich material on the rebellion in the convent, mistakenly filed under “Capuchinas.”

Together, the documents from these two different boxes have allowed me to piece together a story that stands on its own and has intrinsic interest. But it is also an important story in a scholarly sense. Although many people have reacted to my short synopsis of this project with shock (“Rebellious nuns?”), as anyone who has studied convents will attest, the battles fought and issues debated in this convent

were in fact relatively commonplace. Periodic attempts on the part of authorities (both within and outside the convent) to impose greater austerity and discipline on nuns, and resistance (sometimes very vigorous) to those attempts, were probably the rule rather than the exception, not just in New Spain but in Europe and the rest of Latin America, not just in the eighteenth century but since well before the Council of Trent in the mid-sixteenth century. Internal dissension over what constitutes proper observance of one’s vows is, then, a theme familiar to historians of female (and for that matter male) religious.

But it is rarely possible to develop such a theme with much subtlety, since what went on behind the walls of convents was meant by the church to remain mysterious, and great lengths were gone to in order to prevent the “scandal” of disobedience and dissent in nunneries from being widely broadcast. Put another way, we know that other nuns in other convents have rebelled against authority, but we often don’t know how or even why to any satisfying degree; we don’t get a sense of the personalities involved; we can’t really fathom what was at stake for the nuns who resisted and for the nuns who upheld the principles of reform.

The documentation on this convent, however, allows us to construct a detailed narrative over the twelve-year period of the rebellion, using correspondence that contains the responses of the rebellious nuns, the “obedient” nuns, the bishop and the local vicar to moves made by the others. It gives us not just the voices but the personalities of the nuns and other actors, making it possible for us to empathize with all of them

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Photo courtesy of Margaret Chowning

The nuns ended their rebellion in part because of their devotion to the convent’s young founder, the saintly María Josepha Lina de la Canal, (at right) after her untimely death in 1772 at age 36.

Machismo Gone Underground

By Susie Hicks

“Es que mi marido es muy especial.”

“My husband is a very special man.”

Therapist Marina Castañeda has found that, spoken by a Mexican woman, this statement often means the exact opposite. In these cases the husband’s behavior, far from being special or unique, is typical in its *machismo*. He expects nothing less than unwavering attention, service, and subordination from the women close to him. “Sometimes I wonder,” Castañeda muses, “if all of my female patients are married to the same man.” *Machismo* has become one of those sticky topics of “cultural difference” that enter into international dialogues on many levels, especially with increasing integration of the economies of the United States and Mexico. The image of *machismo* as national “character” nourishes stereotypes of Mexican men and women internally as well as north of the border.



For Castañeda, Mexican psychotherapist and author of *El machismo invisible* (2002), *machismo* is a form of male domination usually justified by supposedly inherent biological roles for females and males, and executed culturally by the creation and maintenance of separate masculine and feminine “areas.” For many people in Mexico and the United States, this definition of *machismo* is nothing new. What is new, according

to Castañeda, is that *machismo* has “gone underground” in Mexico: in cities and among the middle and upper classes that form the focus of her studies, it is no longer fashionable in public discourse. But it remains ever present in practice.

In her talk, sponsored by the Center for Latin American Studies on Sept. 19, Castañeda outlined a hidden discrimination—embedded in language, double standards, and double binds—that exerts a negative force on public life and modern democracy. Drawing on her observations as a therapist, interviews, and personal

experience, she concluded that the problem is that women are adopting new roles, but men are not. For a society in transition, Castañeda said, *machismo* is the “testing ground where we will see if indeed Mexico is changing, how deeply it is changing, and how quickly it is changing.”

Where does Castañeda see the footprints of *el machismo invisible*? Everywhere from cars and cell phones to workplaces, household conversations (or non-conversations)

and friendships. In her experience, wives rarely drive because they say their husbands only criticize their driving. Husbands now use cell phones to keep constant tabs on the activities of their wives. “Stoic” men punish women with silence in the home, burdening the wife with the emotional work of the relationship. Men and women rarely, if ever, form friendships with the opposite sex because of rigid expectations

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Challenge to Impunity in Guatemala

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“This is the first time anywhere that a high ranking military official is being judged in his own country for a political crime without an amnesty law in place [that would limit the possible penalties],” said Amy Ross, a recent Ph.D. graduate in geography from UC Berkeley, to the Associated Press. Ross currently works as a professor at the University of Georgia, specializing in international war crime tribunals.

In the Guatemala of 1990, political murders faded quickly into oblivion since few Guatemalans had the wherewithal to challenge the military. Mack’s case proved to be an exception.

Helen Mack, a conservative business woman, surprised everyone by deciding to pursue her sister’s case. The journey would transform her from someone with little awareness of the war’s aftermath in Guatemala to becoming the country’s single most articulate and effective advocate for judicial reform.

Her first victory came in December 1991 when Noel Jesús Beteta, a “specialist” in the military presidential guard, was detained as a chief suspect in the assassination. But his arrest triggered efforts by the army to derail court proceedings at all costs.

The principal police detective on the case was gunned down after opposing a cover-up to conceal military participation; witnesses went

into exile, and as many as 12 judges shuffled the case from one to another between 1992 and 1993.

Nevertheless, Mack, with ongoing support from U.S. academics and the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, continued to pursue the case and in 1993, Beteta was condemned to a long prison sentence. “For the first time it was proved in judicial proceedings that an agent of the State was responsible for a politically-motivated crime,” Mack said.

A United Nations sponsored inquiry estimated that the military was responsible for 93 percent of human rights violations that occurred during Guatemala’s long civil conflict from 1962- 96. Myrna’s assailant was among the first to be tried and jailed.

But Mack and the lawyers understood that Beteta was not alone. He did not have any personal motive to murder Myrna, and the sophisticated stakeout and surveillance activities before her death pointed to a highly trained unit with extensive resources. Someone had given Beteta and his accomplices their orders. The three commanding officers—a general and two colonels—directly and indirectly in charge of Beteta were therefore accused with the intellectual authorship of the crime.

Between the time that charges were brought against the three officers in 1994 and

The Mack trial gets underway in the Guatemala City court on Sept. 5, 2002.



AP Photo/WWP

the trial start date on Sept. 3, 2002 the case went through several more judges and innumerable delays as the military's defense lawyers filed dozens of frivolous motions stalling the process.

Meanwhile, Helen, the staff at the foundation Helen had founded in Myrna's name to champion justice, and Myrna's former colleagues at AVANCSO were subject to surveillance and threats on a regular basis. State prosecutors, lawyers for the Mack family, and the judges themselves were not exempt. Every time the case seemed closer to trial, surveillance and mysterious "incidents" occurred, including break-ins and anonymous threats.

The trial opened to a packed courthouse of more than 400 observers, including foreign diplomats and dozens representing international law, human rights, and academic organizations. The 11 witnesses during the four-week trial included retired generals, two Catholic Bishops who had relied on Myrna's help, former president Vinicio Cerezo and Myrna's condemned killer, Beteta himself. The army defendants did not deny that the crime was politically motivated, but gave contradictory statements about the role of the army unit where Beteta was employed. Mostly their defense rested on the simple denial that they, personally, gave orders or had knowledge of the assassination before it occurred.

The joint case of the state prosecutor and the Mack family rested on the following:

1. Beteta is a convicted killer, but did not act alone. In the past Beteta implicated two of the defendants by name (statements he now retracts) and the decision-making hierarchy implicates all three.

2. Beteta worked for the Estado Mayor Presidencial (Presidential Guard or EMP). The EMP nominally is a secret service corps that provides security to the president and his family. The open secret in Guatemala is that the EMP has long operated as a parallel intelligence unit within the government and is associated with the "dirty war" operations during the armed conflict and beyond. However, this has never been proved in court nor is it easily established through government documents.

3. The motive for the crime was related to Myrna's research and her networking role concerning the plight of the war-displaced. Academic research and humanitarian concern was dangerous because in 1990 the army still followed a wartime doctrine that equated victims of army violence (potentially hostile to the army that had persecuted them) with sympathizers of the guerrilla movement. Myrna's research made this population visible and their suffering real. Furthermore, her personal ties and support for the Catholic Church, non-governmental organizations, and international academics was also labeled "dangerous" under a perverse optic of national security.

Myrna's daughter Lucrecia, just 17 when her mother was killed, was relieved to see the process unfold. "Bit by bit the [trial has made] the pieces fall into place," she said midway through the trial. "With the truth revealed publicly, it can no longer be denied. I believe that the trial is exposing, not only what happened with this particular crime but also how the army operated and the suffering that the army caused to huge numbers of human beings—civilian non-combatants."

Paula Worby worked in Guatemala from 1988 to 2000 with returning refugees and the internally displaced. She is currently a Ph.D. student in public health.



A poster rallies for justice during the Mack trial.

Paula Worby

Salvadoran Decision

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The journey to that emotional day began in 1998 when the Center for Justice and Accountability in San Francisco filed the lawsuit on the plaintiffs' behalf. The lawsuit, also supported by a pro bono legal team which included Carolyn Patty Blum of the International Human Rights Law Clinic at Boalt Hall, based its claims on two U.S. laws: the Alien Tort Claims Act and the Torture Victim Protection Act. The laws enabled the Salvadoran refugees to file a civil suit against the two former generals, who had retired to southern Florida.

The plaintiffs' case was based on the theory of command responsibility, a legal doctrine used in the Nuremberg and Tokyo tribunals following World War II, and more recently in the war crimes tribunals established for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. It allows military and civilian commanders to be held responsible for the actions of their subordinates.

The lawyers had to convince the jury of seven women and three men, none of whom knew El Salvador's history, that the Salvadoran generals knew or should have known of abuses, and failed to take reasonable actions to prevent or punish these abuses.

Each day, the plaintiffs and defendants sat only a few feet away from one another, the plaintiffs at a table facing the jury, and the defendants facing the judge in the small federal courtroom. Testimony revealed the details of terror carried out by state forces in El Salvador, who were heavily funded by the U.S. government, particularly during the Reagan administration.

Expert witness Terry Karl of Stanford University told jurors how the height of the violence against the civilian population occurred during 1979-83, when García was Minister of Defense and Vides Casanova was Director-General of the National Guard and later Minister of Defense. During that period alone, 30,000 unarmed civilians were killed or disappeared by state forces.



Giuseppe Dezza

A child walks in front of police at a peace march in El Salvador in the 1980's.

"Mass state terror is not an accident," Karl told the jury. "This violence against civilians was carried out by uniformed military and security officers. Every knowledgeable observer attributes 85 percent of the abuses to these forces."

Robert White, Former U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador in 1980 and 1981 led the jury through cables that are now declassified, which he had sent to Washington. The Ambassador's cables told of numerous meetings with the defendants in which he urged them to curb the violations. When the Ambassador would refer to either of the defendants, plaintiff's lawyer Peter Stern would ask whether it was the same man who was now seated in the courtroom. "Yes," the ambassador would say, "right over there."

A Catholic priest who lived in El Salvador at the time, Paul Schindler, also testified. He described how the dead and mutilated were left with signs warning that anyone who tried to bury the bodies would also be killed. "If I awoke to pounding on the front door, I knew it was a

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“A Seminary of Discord”

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and to appreciate the complicated dynamics of having committed your life not only to God but to your community.

So, this book is important because it tells us much more than we are usually able to know about the internal functioning of a convent that, like many others, experienced factionalism and even rebellion. It shows us the fragility of discipline and harmony in a small, permanently enclosed community, and the spiritual agonies that resulted when rhetoric about the convent as a garden of sublimely selfless virgins (certainly internalized by the nuns themselves) did not match reality.

But it is also important because of what it tells us about the world beyond the convent: urban society, colonial ideas and politics, and the changing role of women in the church. We see the town of San Miguel el Grande—its colonial charm now captured in time, delighting tourists and North American expatriates—in a different light because of what we know about this convent. We see the ways that piety, civic pride, and Creole wealth could combine to shape a small town; we wonder whether the troubles in the convent, surely well known outside its walls despite the best efforts of the bishop and the vicar, had an effect on the town's image of itself, since the convent was imagined as a reflection of all that was good about the Christian society of San Miguel.

We might even infer (though this requires our own flight of imagination) that the convent was meant by the citizenry to stand in serene counterpoint to the grubby, dreary, amoral, contentious world of the textile factories where many of the wealthy members of that small society had made or invested their fortunes; that the nuns—serene, chaste and racially pure—would somehow balance out and temper the heavily mulatto and mestizo population of exploited and, they feared, potentially dangerous factory and shop workers. The failure of the convent to live up to this ideal must in some ways have been understood as a failure of the church's important social role as upholder of morality and stability.

The story of the convent also gives us a window into the changing intellectual life of the colony in the eighteenth century. Because the rebellious nuns justified their actions, and the obedient nuns theirs, using the “modern” language of reform and individualism, it allows us to see how the ideas of the Enlightenment and, later, liberalism, penetrated parts of the colonial world (the female convents) that are not usually thought to have been much affected by these trends.

Finally, through the story of this convent we glimpse changes in the relationship between women and the church—my original project—shifted over time as thinking about what was the feminine Christian ideal, and what role women should play in defending the faith shifted. La Purísima was founded in a last rush of full-throated enthusiasm for the cloistered nun as a model for women in general. But within two generations, in a process that became overtly obvious after independence, the church had begun to pay more official attention to and lavish more resources on lay women than female religious. The only convents that were encouraged were those that played a clear social role: the teaching orders, and later the nursing orders.

Contemplative convents like La Purísima were allowed to languish; they became an anachronism even within the thinking of the most conservative church intellectuals, and support for them wavered between non-existent and grudging. The *de jure* end for convents in Mexico came in 1863, with the ex-claustration order of President Benito Juárez that forced the nuns out of the convent and into private homes. But the *de facto* end had come much earlier. The ironic postscript is that once the nuns of San Miguel were no longer allowed to live in the convent built for them with such optimism in the 1760's, they finally found a spirit of community which supports them to this day—a spirit which, as this story shows, eluded them for the first hundred years of their history.

Margaret Chowning is a professor in the history department at UC Berkeley.

Journalists Discuss a Shunned Mexico

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photo by Greg Louden

From left to right:
Dolia Estevez, Mary Beth
Sheridan, Ginger
Thompson

of the feared reactions—a long term sealing of the border, a purge of illegal immigrants, the hampering of new trade relationships—never materialized.

While documents are being scrutinized more carefully today, the number of admittances along the border has not decreased significantly, trade continues to grow, and there have been few moves against the estimated 10 million undocumented immigrants, Sheridan said.

Why? Sheridan believes it is because the relationship between the United States and Mexico has undergone a subtle but deep change. “Latinos have reached a critical mass” in the United States, Sheridan said. Twenty percent of Latinos now live in “new immigration cities” like Atlanta, Washington, DC, and Raleigh. Likewise, the American business community has begun to recognize the contribution that Latinos make to the economy.

The continued integration of Mexico and the United States, the journalists agreed, is not something that can be stopped. It can only be managed, or mismanaged.

Estévez, who has an up close view of the relationship as the Washington correspondent for Mexico’s *El Financiero*, said that as a result of the lack of interest by high-level administration officials toward immigration after 9/11, the relationship with Mexico is being “managed” by

middle level bureaucrats.

Secretary of State Colin Powell seems to pay little attention. “He is totally focused on terrorism and Iraq,” she said. Now the office of North American Affairs at the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Estévez said, is known by insiders as “the Office With No Solutions.”

Mexico’s attitude has changed lately. Castañeda snubbed Washington officials at a recent meeting, and a key Mexican career diplomat in Washington has been replaced by an inexperienced newcomer, two of the journalists said.

Estévez said that, in her view, the long term answer for many of the problems in the bilateral agenda is to invest massively in Mexico’s development to close the wage differential (1 to 7) and perhaps to negotiate a North American Union modeled on the European experience.

Accomplishing this might well mean compromising on immigration reform.

“Mexico may forego the enchilada,” Thompson said, “and try for chilaquiles.”

Jason Felch is a graduate student in journalism and Latin American studies.

Landmark Salvadoran Decision

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bad morning,” said Father Schindler. “Someone had been taken overnight.”

The defendants testified on their own behalf, portraying the situation in El Salvador at the time as one of chaos. García testified that he never had any proof of torture. “Twenty years ago,” he explained, “to speak of human rights in El Salvador was not like it is now.” Vides Casanova also denied responsibility. “I never knew of a single act of torture when I was Director-General of the National Guard,” he told the jury.

But the jury failed to believe them. Particularly damaging was the defense’s own witnesses, Edwin Corr, former U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador from 1985 to 1988. Corr admitted that U.S. officials had informed the Minister of Defense of human rights abuses. However, he stated, that the generals were not “ministers of human rights, but ministers of defense.”

And finally, the jury, judge, and others in the courtroom heard the voices of the dead, the disappeared, and the many others who could not be present, as their stories echoed through the statements of the plaintiffs and witnesses.

“I came to tell my story and also the story of thousands of others—those who were killed and those who are afraid or unable to speak,” Mauricio said.

The moment the jury returned with the verdict, a sense of extreme anticipation filled the courtroom. Mauricio stated on the way to the courthouse that regardless of the verdict, he felt he had already won by publicly accusing the two generals in a courtroom. González likewise stated in her testimony that her participation in the case, independent of the outcome, was homage to her lost son.

All of the plaintiffs have stated repeatedly that the case was about justice, not money. Because of an amnesty law passed in El Salvador in 1993, the possibility of criminal or civil prosecutions in El Salvador for human rights abuses during the period in question has been foreclosed. A civil lawsuit in U.S. courts represented the only recourse for holding the defendants responsible for their role in the terror carried out against the civilian population in El Salvador.

The generals were not present for the verdict. In some ways, their absence contributed to the euphoria that filled the courtroom that day. As the judge’s assistant read the jury’s findings one by one, tears streamed down the



photo by AP Photo/WWP Luis M. Alvarez

Neris González, one of the plaintiffs, leaves the court in West Palm Beach, Fla.

faces of most of those present in the courtroom: tears of joy, grief, exhaustion and exhilaration. González reiterated to the press that the case was a victory for the thousands of victims who had “cried out for justice.”

In a recent book on post-war Bosnia and Rwanda, Elizabeth Neuffer wrote: “Justice is not just a court verdict. It is also a personal journey.” In the Romagoza case, the court verdict was certainly a long-awaited moment. But the moment was also part of a journey—the journey of the three plaintiffs, of the thousands they represented, and those who continue to struggle against impunity.

Additional information on the case may be found at <http://www.cja.org>

Mary Beth Kaufman, a student at Boalt Hall School of Law, worked as a law clerk on the Romagoza case with the International Human Rights Clinic.

A Guatemalan War Story of Triumph

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Giuseppe Dezza

Members of the Communities of Populations in Resistance (CPR) head to the hills in rural Guatemala.

justice; and how one person, ever so slight, can make a difference.

I asked Beatriz to talk about it and, rather than rephrase what was already well said, here are the notes of our conversation.

I met Myrna in the mid-1980's when she was working for a news organization in Guatemala, and I was conducting research in the rural areas. Although we liked one another, she was quite reserved regarding her personal life and her family. So our relationship developed slowly.

In 1987 she asked if she could accompany me to the Ixcán rainforest where I was conducting research. The village where I was going was at the heart of the counter-insurgency war. She had heard a lot about this region but had not been there because it was one of the most dangerous areas of the country. But it was where she wanted to be, and so we traveled to the military controlled region of the Ixcán. The journey was difficult because of the heat, the mud, the bugs, and the dangers, but she kept on saying, "I can't believe I am in the Ixcán." Even when we had to bathe in the Tzeja River she was happy.

She was very helpful to me in the

research on that trip. She was much better organized than I and had a system for approaching everything. We divided up the village three ways, because it was a very complicated mix of ethnic groups. Elizabeth Oglesby, a former student from Tufts University, was responsible for interviewing one ethnic group, Myrna and I, the others. It was clear that Myrna was an excellent mentor and over the years, she trained several of my students including Diane Nelson, who is now a professor at Duke University; Paula Worby, who is a graduate student at Berkeley, and Elizabeth Oglesby, now a professor at the University of Arizona. Later Paula and Liz worked along side Myrna on her last research project on the internally displaced Mayan population in Guatemala.

After the trip to the Ixcán, Myrna and I became quite close. Her home, which was a huge extended family home in Guatemala City, became my home. She also came to stay with me in the United States.

The last time I saw Myrna was a few weeks before she was murdered. I was scheduled to conduct interviews in refugee camps in Mexico. So she suggested that I go from there to visit her. By that time she also knew my husband, Harley Shaiken, and our 11-year-old daughter Mariela, and she invited them to come along. She rented a car in her name so we could show Mariela "the tourist sites of Guatemala." Myrna wanted very much to give my daughter a good impression of her country. Knowing now that her house was already under surveillance and that we were driving a car rented in her name is quite unnerving.

But then, we were unaware of this, and the three of us went with Myrna and her friend Pepe to Antigua and other nearby towns, and we spent the last two days in Guatemala City at her home. As she drove us to the airport, we made plans to return in December. Before we boarded the plane, she gave us all a big good-bye hug. That was the last time I saw her.

On Tues. Sept. 11, 1990, at night, I received a call in Berkeley, that Myrna had been killed.

Berkeley had an organization at that time called FACHRES, which supported human

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Oil: A Gift From the Devil?

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Oil's symbolic value in Mexico has taken on larger proportions than its economic value. Mexico's biggest challenge, according to Alberro, is to create "a non-ideological solution to the problem."

Such a solution will come from the semi-privatization of Mexico's energy sector, Economides argued. While PEMEX's existing business is likely to remain in the hands of the government, new reserves, particularly deep-water wells in the Gulf of Mexico, may be given a special classification. This would allow the entry of large foreign investors, without which the multi-billion dollar platforms needed to extract the oil could not be built, Economides said.

Economides also believes Mexico's natural gas industry may be sold off to foreign companies, a fact that could have a significant impact on Mexico's energy future. It is not oil but natural gas, Economides argues in his book "The Color of Oil," that will dominate the energy markets in the near future. With a gas supply of about 45 trillion cubic feet (comparable to the estimated supply of

the United States) Mexico will become a net gas importer by 2010, Economides estimates.

How will this shift in the energy balance affect the relationship between Mexico and the United States, given that a significant factor today is Mexico's ability to provide the United States with some of the vast amount of oil it requires for economic growth? It was a question anticipated by Tolan, who described a telling visit to another of Latin America's oil producing countries, Ecuador. Though that country's reserves are estimated to last just seven more years, few there are planning for a post-petroleum economy, Tolan said. In fact, production is being doubled.

The three panelists, despite differences in approach to the oil dilemma, did manage to agree on one thing: oil, for all its apparent good, may very well be a gift from the devil. On the verge of nationalization, Cárdenas is reported to have said that it is better to destroy the oil fields than let them be an obstacle to national development.

Jason Felch is a graduate student in journalism and Latin American studies.

Possibilities and Challenges ...

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spending, where a recent agreement made \$50 million available for cooperation programs between universities across the border. Unfortunately, the press does not pick up on these successful areas as much as it does on the one large, contentious issue: migration.

Since President Bush's first visit to Mexico in April, 2001, the Mexican government has made migration the centerpiece of its U.S. foreign policy, asking this country to combine efforts to arrive at a fresh, new approach. Responding to the challenge raised by President Fox, who styled himself the representative of the more than 20 million Mexicans and their descendants who live in the U.S., a bi-national commission was set up.

The initial Fox-Bush euphoria that "enthralled policy actors", Davidow relates, led them to think it would be easy to address this complex, multidimensional problem and to disregard the obstacles. However, the two sides soon started speaking at cross-purposes. The U.S. demanded that actions be taken to "stem the flow of 'temporary' workers across the border," but this was of little interest to Mexico. The Mexicans proposed that the Bush

administration redefine the legal status of undocumented workers, but naively expected the Executive to overlook Congressional reservations. Progress was slowly being made when the 9/11 attacks occurred, changing the agenda completely.

This unfortunate turn of events generated the perception in Mexican public opinion of a sudden, downward spiraling in the relationship with the United States. "A largely self-inflicted wound," says Davidow, because the Mexican government should have been more adept at managing the huge expectations it had helped create previous to assuming office. Also, Mexico has committed the same mistake the United States did twenty years ago: reducing a complex relationship to one issue. "[What] the U.S. did with drugs, Mexico has done with migration." Although he thinks there is a lot of room for improvement in this area, Ambassador Davidow acknowledged that uniting the diverse strands that thread into the migration web is not impossible.

Dwight Dyer is a graduate student in the political science department

Machismo Gone Underground

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for social relationships.

Perhaps some of these phenomena have a familiar ring to North Americans. Castañeda wants to stress, however, the ways in which *machista* behavior is deeply entrenched in Mexican society in a way that is incompatible with democracy and capitalism. It is the language of power, a system that promotes authoritarian patterns of communication and hierarchy.

“Mexico is a country where men are attended by women from the moment they are born to the moment of their death—pampered and spoiled by wives, mothers, daughters, and sisters . . . young girls are always told, *atiende a tu hermano*—‘attend to your brother’—but young boys are told, *cuida a tu hermana*—‘watch over your sister,’” remarked Castañeda. “We are being governed by men who have never gone to a PTA meeting, never been to the supermarket, and don’t know how to deal with real life because they’re above it all. I am convinced that we will not succeed in carrying forth a democratic transition if these kinds of men are running the country.”

Castañeda also noted that because this authoritarian language pervades Mexican society, women, too, could become *machista* when in positions of relative power. Responding to a question from the audience, she elaborated on how these strict gender roles might be confused by male immigration to the North. Mexican men in the United States are often required to perform duties such as cleaning and dishwashing that are reserved for women in Mexico, while women take on new responsibilities at home.

If women are actively taking on new roles, why aren’t men changing? Castañeda

points to domestic service as a “bulwark” of *machismo*; while middle-class Mexican women file into new jobs outside of the home, maids keep men accustomed to being served at all hours of the day. Nannies also contribute to “deep cultural inertia,” according to this view, by smothering young boys in particular with near-constant physical attention.

For Castañeda, domestic service is just another example of culture lagging behind the Mexican projects of industrialization, modernization, and the attempt to fashion a more representative government. Nevertheless, Castañeda concludes that “*machismo* is not on its way out because we say so. It’s on its way out because it’s incompatible with modern life, incompatible with democracy.”

Democracy, she explains, calls for open debate and joint decision-making, but the Mexican husband accepts little discussion from his own wife. Efficient capitalism and entrepreneurship, in

Castañeda’s view, demand versatile and industrious people; but thanks to a rigid gender-based division of labor, “what it all boils down to is that we have half human beings on either side of the fence.”

Castañeda believes that, even with social transformations accelerated by economic development, change will be slow and difficult because of the entrenchment of these behavior patterns in daily life. The best way to effect change, Castañeda’s central project, is to make *el machismo invisible* visible.



Monica Pons

Right: Marina Castañeda

Susie Hicks is a graduate student in the geography department.

... From Poster Child to Basket Case

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productivity. Brazil's devaluation, the Euro's depreciation to the dollar—and, therefore to the peso—and the economic crises in Asia and Russia only made things worse. Eventually, currency appreciation destroyed the competitiveness of the “real economy” and sparked a predictable shrink in investment and growth. Unemployment increased, reaching 25 percent by 2001, while the rate of gross fixed investment plummeted. In this context, former President Fernando de la Rúa had little room to maneuver within the constraints of the inherited exchange rate system. His attempts to adjust and further push deflation—the “zero deficit policy”—combined with an IMF approved emergency packet, proved useless.

Pastor argued that exchange rate fixation can have disastrous consequences in a world of capital mobility. But he acknowledged that some of the explanations given by more orthodox economists—such as the continuous rise of government spending in the second half of the 1990's, especially in the provinces, and the lack of labor reform to help the private sector face the decline in competitiveness—are also valid. Pastor's argument would suggest, however, that the structural problems caused by the convertibility scheme were in place long before fiscal problems arose. Fiscal problems stemmed from the lack of competitiveness and the internal recession, and not the reverse.

Pastor concluded that Argentina's sudden conversion to a “basket case” after years of being hailed by the Washington financial establishment should prompt officials to rethink the whole financial architecture of globalization. Pastor's compelling argument challenges policy makers to examine the feasibility of continuous deflation policies in democratic societies with relatively mobilized civil societies. His case also shows that it is important

to consider whether nation-states and state officials with little power in changing policy can really bring “certainty” and “predictability” to emergent economies. Two examples show how governments can maintain a substantive capacity of policy intervention even in the context of liberalization. The first is Chile, which kept a fundamental source of foreign exchange through its control of the copper production, and the second is Mexico, which developed a

strong policy of export promotion while maintaining control of its main exporter, oil giant PEMEX. Even in a global economy, these and other examples demonstrate that liberalization with a domestic state strategy is possible and even helpful in avoiding the disastrous consequences of powerless policy makers.

Sebastian Etchemendy is a doctoral student in the political science department



A rioter smashes the window of a bank in Buenos Aires to protest the economic crisis

Interview With Helen Mack

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Guatemala's history; the story of the masses. It has to be rescued, because of the many who refuse to recognize or admit that hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians died.

MANZ: How did you continue with so many obstacles?

MACK: First, I want to say that I don't think I would have had the courage to bring charges had I not been inspired by the memorial Berkeley held for Myrna less than a month after her murder. When I returned to Guatemala, I decided to file charges. That was precisely Oct. 10, 1990. I did it because I really felt inspired and strengthened by the support from the academic community.

I didn't create the case; it was created by many and everyone played a role. Had it not been for one police officer who really investigated the case and gave his life doing his duty, there would have been no case.

From the very beginning academics and the human rights community lent their support. Then there was the political support. If we place ourselves in 1990, imagine the impact of a delegation of U. S. Congressional members visiting Guatemala to help in the case of a Guatemalan woman's death. That helped to create the political climate to pursue the case.

And then the many people here. Seeing

the people at AVANCSO, Clara, Gonzalo—all of them who were really worried about Myrna's death. They were trying to do all they could in their limited space. And also you. That is why I say that this is not "my case" it the case of all of us.

MANZ: Did you ever come to a moment where you thought you were going to be unable to do this, for one reason or another? That they could have said that legally there is no case here or no proof?

MACK: I think it was clear to me that I would never give up. There is a song that says "do not fear to hope; success is not the prize." I have the lyrics here and carry them with me. This is what helped me during this struggle.

I went through a crisis about a year ago. The fact that the trial was held up last year was the cause of a personal crisis for me, but at the same time it gave me strength. This was the year in which I grew strong. As Ricardo Falla said, "While there is hope there is life."

MANZ: Can you tell us how these twelve years have personally affected you and your family?

MACK: My life has taken a 180-degree turn. In the midst of pursuing the case, I've moved from one side to the other.

MANZ: Can you tell us briefly about it?

MACK: If someone knew me before the death of Myrna, they would know that my life revolved in a very conservative circle, linked precisely to the oligarchy—to the same side as the military. They would also learn about my family history. My father's family land was expropriated during Mao's time. My father was going to be executed during Arbenz's time, and just as the "liberation forces" entered the country—during the coup of



Photo courtesy of Helen Mack

Myrna Mack poses with displaced people in the rural countryside during Guatemala's civil war.

Interview With Helen Mack



Photo courtesy of Beatriz Manz

Helen Mack speaks with Myrna's daughter, Lucrecia, during the trial in Guatemala City.

1954—my father was saved from execution. We have a family trajectory that makes one side with the conservatives, right?

Myrna was always rebellious, but I believe it was mostly because of the social conscience taught to us at school. The Monte Maria School, a Mary Knoll run private school, gave us all a social conscience. Even though I moved within conservative sectors, my social conscience was there, and it facilitated my conversion when I saw firsthand what Myrna was investigating. My first conversion was to really fight for the same cause as Myrna.

MANZ: And the second conversion?

MACK: The second occurred at a more personal level. I took part in a retreat in June of this year, and the experience gave me a spiritual perspective and focus. When I went to the retreat, I was at a stage of crisis. Through the experience of the retreat, I saw clearly the way to proceed. Last year I was unprepared, but now I feel calm. Not everybody is spiritual, but the theme of spirituality has pervaded my life. I

don't know how this situation can be understood in any other way.

MANZ: And lastly, how do you see the future?

MACK: I still see a future. I think there is a light, but we will have to fight for it. It is not easy in a society like ours in which indiscriminate violence happened so cruelly and perversely—even more so than other places in Latin America.

Two hundred thousand Guatemalans died, including a whole generation of intellectuals, academics, and politicians. So why is it that the counterinsurgent mentality and the national security doctrine still prevail in Guatemala? This is why this case is important. I think that Guatemalans know that things still have to change, but fear restricts them.

If anything, this opens a door of hope.

Beatriz Manz is a professor in the geography and ethnic studies departments at UC Berkeley.

A Guatemalan War Story of Triumph

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rights in Central America. I suggested we hold a memorial for Myrna on Campus. The organization was very supportive and so was Chancellor Tien. I called Myrna's family and told them it would be nice if someone could come. The next day Helen, Myrna's sister, told me she and Myrna's only daughter Lucrecia, 16-years-old at the time, would attend.

I was surprised Helen wanted to come, and I prepared my colleagues for her visit. Helen, like the rest of her family except Myrna, was conservative. She belonged to Opus Dei and worked closely with well-known right wing political figures. Some of her best friends were related to the oligarchy and the right wing MLN party. I had no idea what Helen might say to us, but I felt that she and Luki needed our love and support at that moment, and I asked friends here in Berkeley not to engage Helen in political discussions.

During the memorial, I could see that Helen was moved by the warmth and affection that everyone clearly felt for Myrna, but I still had no sense of what she thought about her sister's research or the murder.

At the time I was living in Del Mar, in southern California, so I invited Helen and Luki to return with me to relax. We both remember very well a walk we took on the beach one evening. She began to ask me questions about my work and about Myrna's work. She had found one of my books at our home and began to read it, which I was sure she would disagree with and make her upset. But she wanted to talk about it. That night we sat down at the kitchen table and began a long discussion. She wanted to hear more about the trips I had taken to

Guatemala and about Myrna's research. Before the murder, she would see me at her house with her sister but did not have a clue what I was doing in Guatemala.

We drove her to the airport, and the next day in Guatemala she began the legal process to bring to justice not only the killer but also those who ordered Myrna's death.

Over the next 12 years, Helen had the support of Myrna's colleagues, but she was on the front line and her courage was daunting. Yes, she got dispirited, but I could see that she would never drop the case.

I went to the trial this past September in Guatemala City, and for the verdict on October 3rd. When Helen sat in front of the general and two colonels who were charged as the intellectual authors of the murder, I was in total awe at what this woman had accomplished. When she addressed the judges and pointed her finger at the military officers sitting to her left, I realized that it took a truly extraordinary woman, with courage and unwavering determination, to get to this point. She was doing this for her sister but also for the 200,000 Guatemalans killed in that brutal war.

It was impossible for me to watch Helen and not think of Myrna. In the end, the two are very much alike. Like Myrna, Helen is a non-conformist. They both have an inner strength, quiet courage and determination. They both offer Guatemalans hope. They made a difference in a country where visible and powerful symbols are desperately needed.

Lydia Chavez is a professor in the Graduate School of Journalism at UC Berkeley.

Tinker Grants Enable Students to Do Research in Latin America

The Center for Latin American Studies provides funding for graduate students to carry out summer field research in Latin America and the Caribbean with the generous support of the Tinker foundation. During the summer of 2002, thirty grants were awarded to students from a range of departments and professional schools. Sample projects are highlighted in this issue of the CLAS Newsletter.



Children pose in a field outside Batey Lechería, Dominican Republic.

Defending Access to Education in the Dominican Republic

Timothy Griffiths, a student at the Boalt Hall School of Law, went to the Dominican Republic to gather evidence to support the case of two young Dominican women of Haitian descent before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Both young women were initially denied Dominican birth certificates, violating their right to a nationality. The oldest was also expelled from school due to missing documentation, violating her right to access to education. Griffiths researched the circumstances of similarly situated children in the Dominican Republic, interviewed education officials about the impact of new Dominican laws allowing undocumented children into public schools, and visited the clients and their families. He also helped gather expert testimony to assert the psychological and emotional impact of these violations on the young women. He worked directly with non-governmental organizations, the Dominican-Haitian Women's Movement (MUDHA) and the Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL), along with Boalt's International Human Rights Clinic.

A man receives dialysis on a street in Buenos Aires as part of an effort to make healthcare available during the economic crisis in Argentina.



Veronique Laughlin

The Effects of 'Zero Deficit' on Argentina

Veronique Laughlin, a student at the Boalt Hall School of Law, traveled to Argentina to study the effects of the economic crisis on the country's health care system. A number of citizens could no longer access the medication needed for their illnesses. Drastic reductions in medical provisions and the limited access to medication in public hospitals are two factors that highlight the severity of the country's economic problems. At the Center for Social and Legal Studies (CELS), Laughlin worked for the Program on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (DESC). She researched the effects of the devaluation of the peso tied to the dollar, the effect of the government's "zero deficit" economic policies on Argentina's health care system, and, particularly, on the physical conditions of hospitals in the city of Buenos Aires since December 2001.

A mother and her children live in the favelas that surround Rio de Janeiro



Annelise Wunderlich

Community Media in Brazil's Favelas

Annelise Wunderlich, a student in the Graduate School of Journalism and Latin American Studies, worked for a non-profit media organization in Brazil called *Agencia de Noticias das Favelas* (News Agency of the Favelas or ANF). The organization works to promote media skills and a greater understanding of citizenship among the impoverished residents of Rio de Janeiro's favelas, or shantytowns. The central tenet of ANF is that Brazil's poor, mainly black, shantytown dwellers, need greater representation in the national media—which is largely controlled by a few white, wealthy families. Most media portrayals of favela inhabitants in Brazil center on drug-related crime and violence. Wunderlich helped residents to produce their own news stories on issues that they face on a daily basis.

Paul and Sheila Wellstone: In Memoriam

Senator Paul Wellstone and Sheila Wellstone were frequent visitors to the Center for Latin American Studies. Their warmth, passion, courage and sense of hope inspired us all. In the wake of a tragic plane crash, we mourn the loss of both as well as their daughter, Marcia, their three colleagues Will McLaughlin, Tom Lopic, and Mary McEvoy and the two pilots.

Paul and Sheila were married 39 years; they were partners in every way. There was no clear division of labor; their hearts, souls, thoughts, and passions were so intertwined, inspiring both their lives.

Prior to being elected to the United States Senate from Minnesota in 1990, Paul Wellstone was a professor of political science at Carleton College for over two decades and a community organizer for even longer. He saw no contradiction between these two roles. Throughout his life he had a deep commitment to human rights and a love for Latin America that infused all that he did.

I visited Tijuana with Senator Wellstone in 1993. Paul met with civic leaders and toured factories with industry officials, as one might expect a Senator to do, but he also spoke with environmental and community leaders and ordinary people about their lives. He took the time to visit the poorest communities and to sit down with people in their homes to talk about their dreams and their fears, their families and their futures.

In late 2000, Senator Wellstone became the first United States Senator to journey to Barrancabermeja, Colombia, a place aptly described as the “deadliest town in the Americas.” In this town, at the vortex of unspeakable violence, he risked his life to talk with Jesuit priest Francisco de Roux and the people of the community. Amidst the devastation, he wanted to show his support for human rights and the struggle to carve a more decent life out of this threatened area. He made

a deep impression when he spoke about the experience at CLAS the following spring. He would have been touched to know that a CLAS graduate, now back in her native Colombia, wrote to mourn his loss and what she termed a “loss for the Colombian people.”

In front of his Senate campaign headquarters in St. Paul, people have

come all hours of the day and night to pay homage. They have left bouquets and candles, photos and notes.

One was in Spanish: “Gracias por entender las necesidades de los inmigrantes en Minnesota y gracias por ayudarnos. Vamos a tenerte en nuestros corazones para siempre. Te queremos.” (Thank you for understanding the needs of the immigrants of Minnesota and thank you for aiding us. We will hold you in our hearts forever. We love you.)

Another summarized our feelings, “What a terrible loss, what a wonderful man!”

— Harley Shaiken





Children of the Amazon: The Photographs of Denise Zmekhol
on view: august 26 - december 10, 2002

Center for Latin American Studies
University of California, Berkeley
2334 Bowditch Street
Berkeley, CA 94720-2312
clas@uclink4.berkeley.edu
Tel: 510-642-2088
Fax: 510-642-3260

clas.berkeley.edu