Discussions of the challenges of preserving digital information and resources usually focus on the behaviors of the producers. How persistent are the resources produced? What provisions has the producer made for future accessibility? How do measures taken by producers to solidify their control of materials, such as copyright and encryption, impede preservation?

The Center recently completed an investigation of how libraries might archive “primary source” digital materials, namely documents mounted on the Web by political groups. The report of the investigation is now available on the Center’s Web site (see Political Communications Web Archive). When it comes to preservation the Political Web is a particularly tricky domain. We found it useful to examine the behaviors not only of the producers but of the users. We explored

*continued on next page*
who those users are, how they use digital objects and communications, and what they need to support those uses.

In answer to the “Who?” question we found, predictably, a number of academic historians and social science researchers who are now using Web content as the basis for their research. These included University of Texas Professor of Economics Harry Cleaver, who studied in depth how the Zapatistas in Chiapas, Mexico, used the Web in the late 1990s to publicize and gain worldwide support for their insurgency. Cleaver assembled on his Web site, Zapatistas in Cyberspace, www.eco.utexas.edu/Homepages/Faculty/Cleaver/zapsincyber.htm, many important electronic texts, such as online communiqués from the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN) and postings to their supporters’ listservs, as well as links to places where similar documents of the struggle were archived elsewhere. Many other documents have disappeared. It was interesting to see how Cleaver has taken on the role traditionally played by librarians and archivists, by maintaining his own publicly accessible archive of source materials.

Besides academic scholars, researchers in the public policy community also rely heavily upon Web sites and documents as critical evidence in their work. Studies published by policy research organizations like the Rand Corporation, Brookings Institute, and others in the last few years show a growing tendency to cite Web-based documents and data. Given the importance of such studies to national and international policy and decision-making, persistent presentation and “sourcing” of such evidence is critical.

A conference on human rights archives in South America’s Southern Cone, organized by Deborah L. Jakubs at Duke University in October 2004, called attention to yet another community of users who will rely on libraries to preserve and make available source materials, many of them in digital form. These are the survivors of those who disappeared or were killed under military dictatorships. The archives assembled by human rights organizations in the region are valuable resources to those who seek to know the fate of relatives and friends lost under repressive regimes, and for subsequent governments’ efforts to prosecute human rights violations.

Two upcoming events will help us learn more about the needs and behaviors of researchers. With support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, we are working with the Library of Congress to convene a group of leading Latin Americanists, to discuss new and emerging research needs in five fields: history, public policy, economics, cultural studies, and law. The information obtained will give the Center, the Library of Congress, and the Foundation a better sense of where resources for cataloging, preservation, and digitization might be deployed in the future.

This spring, the Yale Center for International and Area Studies and the Yale University Library will host an invitational conference to explore ways in which scholars and libraries can help shape the scholarly resources that will support global studies in the future. The conference will bring together the Global Resources Network Advisory Board (chaired by Barbara Allen of the Committee on Institutional Cooperation) and faculty members and librarians from Yale and other universities.

Together these events will shape and inform the Center’s agenda for preserving and developing resources for Latin American and other international studies. With a keener sense of the needs of scholars and other users, we can provide more useful resources, digital and traditional, for advanced research.

—Bernard F. Reilly, Jr., President
This year, the Latin American Microform Project (LAMP) will mark its 30th anniversary. Formed by the foremost specialists of Latin America in North American libraries through the Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials (SALALM), the project was established to promote better access to materials from Latin America that are otherwise unavailable or at risk of being lost to scholars if not preserved. LAMP emphasizes original microfilming of materials and focuses on publications largely inaccessible due to location, environmental conditions, or bibliographic obscurity.

LAMP’s early history has been well documented in Carl W. Deal’s engaging article “The Latin American Microform Project: The First Decade” (originally published in Microform Review, Vol. 15, No. 1, Winter 1986). In the article, Deal highlights some of the early acquisition projects as well as several important aspects and challenges to cooperative microfilming of Latin American material.

At the time of the article’s publication, LAMP was at a critical point in its development, seeking to expand its membership and ramp up preservation activities on a major scale. From its original constituency of 16 member libraries, LAMP now has 43 members and annual revenues of $33,000, making it the largest of the microform projects under the Center’s umbrella. Since 1986, LAMP has scaled up its activities, taking on larger and more complex projects, some of which are described below.

LAMP’s Important Early Acquisitions

In its first 10 years, LAMP concentrated heavily on valuable newspapers and journals from Latin America, particularly Mexico and Brazil. In the mid-1980s, LAMP also began filming and purchasing archival records in microform. The following are noteworthy early LAMP acquisitions.

El Dictamen (Veracruz, Mexico); 1920–1947
This daily was a major early newspaper in Mexico and represented the commercial perspective of merchants in Veracruz and Mexico City.

Peru Today and West Coast Leader (Lima, Peru); 1910–1940
These titles are critical for researchers engaged in the study of Andean commercial, industrial, and financial development and its political and social ramifications in the early 20th century. The implantation and expansion of English and American interests in Latin America are essential elements in the historical evolution of the region.

Zig-Zag (Santiago de Chile); 1905–1964
Chile’s premiere periodical publication, useful for researchers of Chilean politics, literature, and society. This illustrated weekly features contributions from Chile’s most respected writers, including Pablo Neruda, Gabriela Mistral, Pedro Prado, and Pablo da Rokha. It is particularly important for the period up to the 1930s.

Vertical Files of the Library of the Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños (Hunter College)
This collection of clippings, pamphlets, flyers, unpublished papers, and reports documents a wide range of social and political developments in Puerto Rico as well as in the “barrios” of the United States. Most unique are ephemera and periodical publications of political parties and groups such as the Partido Socialista, Partido Comunista, Partido Nacionalista de Puerto Rico, and others.
LAMP emphasizes original microfilming of materials and focuses on publications largely inaccessible due to location, environmental conditions, or bibliographic obscurity.

of newspapers representing approximately 300 film years. Its collection of government publications has expanded from its original holdings of Brazilian “Relatórios” (reports of chief administrative officers) to incorporate ministerial reports, presidential messages, official gazettes, statistical bulletins, and important archival holdings.

Of course, the collection extends far beyond these narrow parameters, encompassing literary journals, pamphlet collections and other gray literature, corporate records and institutional archives, and other rich sources for primary research. Given its breadth, the collection can only be covered summarily in a report such as this, and the following will document but a few highlights of the collection and activities of LAMP over the past 30 years.

Memorias

The collection of reports from Latin American ministries is one of the crown jewels of the project, and by far the most extensive and ambitious microfilming project done by LAMP to date. Latin America’s government ministries (Ministerios, or sometimes Secretarias) are the operational organs of the Executive branch, often imbued with substantial authority to promulgate rules and regulations. The official publications of the republics constitute the largest available body of historical documentation about administrative, economic, social, and cultural conditions in these countries. They are a major, and occasionally the exclusive, source for statistical data from early independence periods.

These materials were found to be a compelling project for major preservation efforts, as the documents themselves were often issued in limited runs on poor-quality paper. In the U.S., the materials were scarcely held and dispersed among many scattered collections, often inaccessible due to poor bibliographic control and “well along the road” to disintegration. In 1985, LAMP successfully applied to the National Endowment for the Humanities for a $255,300 grant to assemble and preserve more than 235 complete or near-complete titles from all Latin American countries. Issues were compiled from the Library of Congress, New York Public Library, and additional institutions, and filmed at the Library of Congress. The project completed its original term in 1992, though LAMP and the Library of Congress continue to cooperate on filming additional titles of this class.

Theological and Religious Periodicals

As Latin America engaged in social and political transformation in the 20th century, grassroots movements were greatly influenced by the belief systems of the responsible individuals. The journals and bulletins issued by various churches and organizations are an important source of study of how religion affected, and was itself changed by, the social, economic, and political environment in the region. Religious journals had been considered early in the project’s history, but did not come to the fore until 1991, when Princeton Theological Seminary proposed a project to film ca. 130 religious periodicals from its collection. The journals are derived from 17 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean and represent a wide range of Christian and ecumenical perspectives.

Human Rights Documentation

LAMP has increasingly become more interested in archives with substantial human rights material. LAMP acquired film of a large set of court documents (processos) from Brazil’s Military Supreme Court. Copied in secrecy, the “Brasil—Nunca Mais” project documented the cases of more than 7,000 persons arrested, charged, convicted, and/or executed by the court between 1964–1979. In a more recent project, LAMP worked with the Fundación de Protección de la Infancia Dañada por los Estados de Emergencia (PIDEDE), a human rights institution in Chile, to organize and preserve case files of children and families affected by the torture and brutal treatment of the Pinochet dictatorship.

International Cooperation

A practice adopted early by LAMP was to cooperate with institutions in Latin America to film materials held in situ. A number of projects involved filming in countries with archival filming capacity. In many cases, LAMP members or scholars would identify institutions or agencies with filming equipment during field visits and negotiate on LAMP’s behalf. Later, archives identified through the Harvard University Program for Latin American Libraries and Archives (PLALA) became prime candidates for follow-on preservation activities.

LAMP entered into a Convenio in 1992 with the Biblioteca Nacional in Mexico and the Hemeroteca Nacional to exchange film and work jointly on projects. In 1995, the Biblioteca proposed to film ca. 1,500 bound volumes of books, pamphlets, manuscripts, maps, articles, and other documents held in the Coleccion Lafragua. Many consider the
Colecion unsurpassed for the study of early 19th century Mexican intellectual history. The filmed collection contains almost 20,000 items (on 236 reels), though a comprehensive reel index has been unavailable. LAMP is negotiating the full bibliographic description of the set.

LAMP has also periodically worked with the Biblioteca Nacional in Argentina, most recently in 1997, to film holdings of Crítica, an influential title from Buenos Aires considered one of the first “modern” Latin American newspapers.

International cooperation has never been a particularly simple process, particularly in areas with scarce resources for preservation or restrictive regimes. As a case in point, LAMP sought to participate with the Instituto de Historia de Cuba to preserve valuable scholarly periodicals. However, due to bureaucratic and administrative challenges, this project achieved only moderate success, producing eight titles from the late 19th century on microfiche.

Similarly, LAMP’s long-standing project to film Haitian newspapers at the Institution Saint-Louis de Gonzague was challenging and required a high degree of maintenance to stabilize. Conditions in Haiti, as in Cuba, were difficult, especially in the period of government transition in the mid-1980s. The filming agency suffered staffing and power problems, and the destruction of its equipment in riots following the overthrow of “Baby Doc” Duvalier. Still, these preservation efforts netted more than 50 titles of early Haiti newspapers in scattered runs.

Some projects met worse fates, providing LAMP important lessons on the challenges of working in Latin America. In Bolivia, for example, attempts to preserve material in the corporate archives of the Aramayo-Francke mining company, one of the principal mining ventures of the 19th century, met with one setback after another. The preservation staff was robbed at the rail station on arrival. Labor problems resulting from 10 deaths in the mines caused delays in archival access, and power fluctuations caused several burnouts of the film equipment. Finally, suspicions from the local authorities in Tupiza led to the confiscation of the filming equipment and the threat of incarceration of the filmers—effectively terminating the effort. Miraculously, 34 rolls of material were completed and are available for consultation. A copy of the film was delivered to the National Archives in Bolivia.

By far the most successful cooperation with an international partner was with the Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro. LAMP’s second major project engaged the Biblioteca to microfilm its holdings (and those of the Arquivo Nacional) of the annual reports (Relatórios) of the presidents of the 20 Brazilian provinces published between 1830 (when the provinces were organized) and 1889 (when they became states of the republic). The Biblioteca made extensive efforts to identify and collect all additional reports it could locate in Brazil, creating a far more comprehensive collection.

So successful was the collaboration, LAMP engaged in several subsequent projects with the Biblioteca Nacional

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**Recent LAMP Acquisitions**

**Archivo José E. Miguens**

The Archivo Miguens, held by the Biblioteca Max von Buch at the Universidad de San Andrés, contains primary source information on public opinion research conducted by the Centro de Investigaciones Motivacionales y Sociales (CIMS) in Argentina from 1958–1973. Polls conducted over this period explored attitudes of the population on such themes as privatization, international conflicts affecting Argentina (especially border disputes), perceptions of political parties, the military, the Catholic Church, social institutions, etc. The polls were conducted in the capital as well as several other cities and regions. A comprehensive index is available at [http://www.udesa.edu.ar/biblioteca/colecciones/miguens/miintro.htm](http://www.udesa.edu.ar/biblioteca/colecciones/miguens/miintro.htm)

**Publicaciones Políticas y Culturales Argentinas (C. 1917–1956)**

The Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Cultura de Izquierdas en la Argentina (CeDInCi) specializes in all formats of printed materials issued by the political left and anarchist movements in Argentina. LAMP assisted in a project to preserve periodicals, books, pamphlets, flyers, and other material published by communist, socialist, anti-fascist, and other leftist groups. A comprehensive guide to the collection, published by CeDInCi is available at [http://www.crl.edu/areastudies/LAMP/collections/cedinpci.pdf](http://www.crl.edu/areastudies/LAMP/collections/cedinpci.pdf)

**Nascimento Archive (project in progress)**

Abídos Nascimento was the first Afro-Brazilian senator in Brazil and an activist for Afro-Brazilian human rights since the early 1930s. The archive chronicles the evolution of 20th century Afro-Brazilian consciousness. It includes personal papers, news clippings, manuscripts, correspondence, theses and dissertations, mimeographed material from various world events, and other ephemera including dramatic works by such groups as the Convict’s Theater, founded by Nascimento.

**Standard (Buenos Aires, Argentina) 1861–1874; 1938–1939; 1942–1959**

Filmed at the Universidad de San Andrés, this is a major English-language title in Argentina.
to film the *Almanak Laemmert* (1844–1889, reporting on the Brazilian Imperial Court), the ministerial reports (*Relatórios ministeriais*) of the Imperial Period, and provincial presidential reports of the First Republic (1889–1930). Further work, extending the cooperative arrangement through the 1990s, expanded the coverage of ministerial reports through 1960 and added federal presidential reports for the period 1889–1993. The assistance of the staff at the Library of Congress field office in Rio de Janeiro has been invaluable to this effort.

LAMP continues to pursue these types of projects, most recently working with repositories in Brazil and Argentina to film newspapers, journals, and archival collections. The relative strength of preservation capacity in Latin America and increasing contact with archives in the region has allowed for continual new opportunities for the project.

**Brazilian Government Document Digitization Project**

LAMP was invited to propose a project exploring aspects of digitization from microfilm, and in 1994 the Center was granted $225,000 from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to digitize its collection of Brazilian government publications. Building on the successful cooperation with the Biblioteca Nacional, LAMP selected these materials because of their scarcity, importance, and volume. Completed in December 2000, the project digitized more than 670,000 page images of government publications, as follows:

- Provincial Presidential Reports, 1823–1930
- Ministerial Reports, 1821–1960
- Presidential Reports, 1890–1993
- E.H. Laemmert Almanak, 1844–1889

Details of this project were presented in past issues of *FOCUS* (Spring 2002 & March 2000). The detailed final report may be found on the project’s Web site. LAMP’s collection is freely available to institutions participating in the project. Other CRL members may benefit through limited borrowing of materials. Items are cataloged in OCLC and available through the Center’s online catalog. Any institution may join the project to participate in the selection and preservation of materials and contribute to the strategic direction of the ongoing activities of LAMP. For more information on LAMP, its collections, governance, and news, please visit: [http://www.crl.edu/areastudies/LAMP/index.htm](http://www.crl.edu/areastudies/LAMP/index.htm).
The Center recently acquired a significant corpus of Latin American scholarly materials. Listed below are noteworthy acquisitions in key areas: history and culture, social and economic history, and politics, as well as new holdings of newspapers and dissertations on a range of subjects. As a convenience, OCLC record numbers are furnished as reference to more complete bibliographic information.

**History and Culture**

*Latin American History and Culture: An Archival Record*

Series IV: The Mexican Rare Monograph Collection, 1548-1890: From the Holdings of the Sutro Library of the California State Library

The Mexican Rare Monograph Collection, 1548-1890 is one of the largest Mexican book collections in North America. Held by the Sutro Library Mexican Collection of the California State Library, the collection contains more than 3,000 pre-1900 imprints covering a vast range of topics. In the field of economics, there are works on commerce, finance, and taxation policy; publications on government that cover national and state policy and politics; and legal materials that address criminal justice, public welfare, inheritance, and litigation. There also is a large number of titles on Mexican Indian cultures and their religious and social mores, and a good representation of early Mexican materials in the fields of language and literature.

The Sutro Library Mexican Collection is of immense value for research on the history of Mexican culture, religion, and politics. It is noteworthy for having remained intact and relatively unused since its purchase in 1889. As a consequence, the collection offers opportunities for research in areas that are often diminished in collections that have been disaggregated.

This collection contains approximately 269 microfilm reels in seven parts:

- Part 1: General Periodicals and Almanacs, 38 reels
- Part 2: Philosophy and Theology, approximately 38 reels
- Part 3: Theology and the Catholic Church: Liturgy and Ritual, approximately 49 reels
- Part 4: Theology and the Church: Various Subjects, approximately 40 reels
- Part 5: History and Social Sciences, approximately 26 reels
- Part 6: Political Science and the Law, approximately 47 reels
- Part 7: Education, Arts, and Sciences, approximately 31 reels

For more details, see the guide for microform collections or OCLC# 54108910.

*Foreign Office Files for Cuba: Parts 1–3*


Offering the complete Cuba files of the British Foreign Office for 1959 and 1960, this part charts the beginning of an era which would eventually bring the world to the brink of war. The
documents offer new perspectives on issues relating to the revolution in Cuba from the end of the Batista regime to Fidel Castro’s takeover and first year in power. OCLC #49045158

Part 2: Cuba and the Bay of Pigs Invasion, 1961
This set of Foreign Office Files for Cuba for 1961 begins with the cessation of diplomatic relations between the US and Cuba on January 3, 1961. The files contain detailed reports, memoranda, and correspondence relating to events that involved worldwide repercussions. Together these documents provide a British perspective on a year that saw John F. Kennedy take office and the CIA-backed Bay of Pigs invasion. OCLC #50434057

This set of the State Department’s Central Files on Mexico span a dynamic period in Mexican history that encompasses the country’s reevaluation of its relationship with the US, its widening urbanization, and the emergence of a democratic PRI party. The collection includes American diplomatic reporting on Mexican and inter-American affairs, as well as primary material on electoral politics, labor issues, constitutional revision, communism, financial affairs, the relationship of church and state, and more. Many of the materials focus on cross-border trade, economics, political stability, nationalization, the country’s role as bulwark against Cuban communist activities, and other topics. This new edition in UPA’s Confidential US State Department Central Files is essential for understanding this eventful period of political, economic, and social transformation in Mexico and Latin America. OCLC #54428641

Social and Economic History and Politics
Princeton University Latin American Microfilm Collection
This collection of pamphlets, serials, broadsides, flyers, and posters provides access to a wealth of primary sources on the constantly changing political and social scene in Latin America. The materials primarily cover events of the late 20th century and encompass a broad range of countries and topics, including:
- government reports
- conference and working papers
- research center working papers
- literary magazines and journals
- political campaign documents
- election results and statistical studies
- legal documents
- newspapers
- speeches
- publications of human rights organizations
- labor union tracts
- and mission statements of religious groups

Some of the topics covered are: politics and government, women’s and gender issues, religion, human rights, and socio-economic conditions.

In addition to substantive textual materials, the collection is supplemented by ephemera relating to political campaigns, strikes, etc. The collection covers the rise of political parties in Peru, Chile, and Brazil as military regimes withdraw from governments. The countries best represented are Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Cuba, with emphasis on materials that document socio-economic and political conditions. Coverage for Peru, Nicaragua, Bolivia, and Uruguay is more narrowly defined than with neighboring countries, but the collection still provides a substantial body of materials on the major topics. For the remaining Latin American countries, overall coverage is not comprehensive but rather has emphasized particular topics or periods.

The collection includes materials on and from the following countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canary Islands, Central America/Panama, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Uruguay, Venezuela, West Indies. See record OCLC# 55013846 for more details and guide.

North American Congress on Latin America
Archive of Latin Americana
The Center for Research Libraries has recently acquired the North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA) Archive of Latin Americana. This collection, the result of a project sponsored and underwritten by the New School for Social Research, consists of ephemera and serials relating to socio-economic and political conditions in Latin America from the 1960s through the 1980s. The Archive is the largest and most extensive collection of its type, and features a wide range of materials documenting left-wing sentiment, including serials, reports, flyers, pamphlets, posters, manuscripts, and correspondence. The perspective of the right wing is represented in the Archive through documentation of military governments and the Church.

Links to Related Center Resources
Latin American topic guide
Global Resources newsletter
The NACLA archive consists of 339 microfilm rolls that are arranged by country, subject, and chronology, and subdivided into the following topics:

- politics
- government
- constitutions
- laws and codes
- socio-economic conditions
- agriculture
- solidarity groups
- human and civil rights
- racial groups
- women’s and gender issues
- culture
- church and religion
- environment and ecology

The archive contains material from 28 Central and Latin American countries. For further bibliographic detail, see the guide for microform collections or OCLC# 39128578.

The Archive contains material that previously was unavailable or difficult for scholars to access. The availability of these materials promises to transform existing Latin American scholarship and provide new perspectives on the forces that shaped Latin American political and socio-economic life during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s.

Newspapers

ICON: At Work in Latin America

The International Coalition on Newspapers (ICON) has included newspapers from Latin America in its work for the past several years, with additional titles slated for preservation microfilming as part of its current grant. During ICON’s initial funding period, two titles from Buenos Aires, Argentina, were microfilmed: El Libre Pensador (1878–1884) and La Razon (1920–1946; 1957–1960).

The film for El Libre Pensador—a virtually complete record for its first years—covers a period of political turbulence leading up to civil disturbances at the end of the century, a period that also marked the end of the wars against indigenous populations in Argentina and the rise of president Julio Roca. This era was one of accelerated immigration, exceptional economic growth, financial speculation, and, increasingly, government corruption.

La Razon began publishing in 1905, coinciding with the rise of Argentina as an influential representative in the region. Election reforms of the times led ultimately to the rise of radical regimes and ushered in a new era of politics in Argentina, reflected in frequent political battles between conservatives.
and liberals and strong opposition by revolutionary movements. A happy outcome of the *La Razon* filming was that, once completed, the print was deposited in the archives of Clarin in Buenos Aires, which now owns *La Razon*.

The second group of Latin American titles undertaken by ICON involved the University of California-Berkeley as a partner. Berkeley filmed runs of several titles from Mexico on behalf of ICON, including *La Antorcha* (Chihuahua, 1935–1949), *Hispano Americano* (Tijuana, 1943–1948), *El Hombre Libre* (Mexico City, 1933–1941), and *El Popular* (Mexico City, 1938–1949). They also filmed Venezuela’s *Caracas Journal* from 1946–1949, and the Center’s print of *La Prensa*, the Barranquilla, Colombia daily, for the final years of its publication (1955–1960).

ICON’s current list of titles to preserve includes two titles from Bolivia, one each from Costa Rica and Peru, and a 35-year run of *El Universal* (Caracas, Venezuela) that fills the gap before the Library of Congress’ microfilm began in 1944. The Bolivian papers are both from La Paz. *Epoca* was one of the earliest published in Bolivia, from 1845 to 1867. It was launched by President Jose Ballivián and had among its collaborators Bartolomé Mitre, the Argentine president and founder of the leading paper, *La Nación*. *El Diario*, Bolivia’s oldest current newspaper, was started in 1904 by a prominent family in La Paz and reflected their conservative philosophy. It will be filmed from its inception to 1917.

*Diario de Costa Rica*, from San Jose, was established in 1919 and gained prominence in the 1930s and 1940s as a platform against communism in the region—and sometimes as a defamation tool of political opponents. The reports issued in the paper gained the attention of the United States, which labeled Costa Rica one of the main sources of communist development in Latin America. The years 1936-1942 and 1952-1955 will be filmed to fill gaps in existing film. *Vanguardia*, the final title from Latin America to be filmed, was considered a leftist paper and professed to be “the voice for what the people think.” ICON will collect issues to film the most complete run possible from its 1945-1963 timeframe, an important period for the study of Peru’s fledgling democracy and the frequent clashes between populist and radical political movements in the region.

**Dissertations**

*Colombian Dissertations Deposited at Center*

A total of 95 Colombian university doctoral dissertations from the first half of the 20th century were added to the Center’s collections in 2004 by the State University of New York at Buffalo. The dissertations are on the subjects of law, social sciences, political science, and finance. SUNY acquired these works in the 1960s with its purchase of the Gran Colombia Collection, an extensive body of material on the country of Gran Colombia before and after it was transformed into the nations of Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, and Venezuela.

While the vast majority of Gran Colombia materials were assimilated into Buffalo’s collection and attracted significant scholarly interest, the dissertation collection generated little interest. In 2004 administrators at Buffalo decided that the 95 doctoral dissertations would be more useful as part of the Center’s foreign dissertation collection, and donated them to the Center. The addition was especially welcome, as acquiring dissertations from South America can be labor intensive. A list of titles can be found at: [http://www.crl.edu/PDF/pdfBrochures/colombian_diss_buffalo.pdf](http://www.crl.edu/PDF/pdfBrochures/colombian_diss_buffalo.pdf).
In September 2002 the Center’s Collections and Services Advisory Panel (CSAP) contracted with David Block, Director of World Area Collections at Cornell University Library, to conduct an assessment of the Latin American segment of the Center’s Foreign Documents Collection. The objective was to gain an understanding of the extent and content of the collection and to use the information to generate recommendations for development of the collection.

**Extent of Collection**

The Center’s Latin American government documents are held within its general and area studies collections in original and microform formats. The corpus is described and accessible through 3,421 records in the Center’s online catalog. More than 75 percent of the materials, which are primarily serials, were identified as “legacy” collections that were deposited in the early 1950s by the Center’s founding members.

The collection includes materials from 19 Latin American counties: Argentina (609 items), Brazil (579 items), Mexico (434 items), Venezuela (366 items), Colombia (294 items), Cuba (185 items), Costa Rica (165 items), Guatemala (127 items), Chile (120 items), Uruguay (111 items), Peru (107 items), Bolivia (101 items), Ecuador (79 items), El Salvador (57 items), Haiti (35 items), Panama (30 items), Nicaragua (17 items), Paraguay (13 items), and Guadeloupe (2 items).

**Content of Collection**

An evaluation of the strength of the Center’s holdings was conducted by comparing the Center’s holdings of materials from Brazil, Cuba, and Mexico to the definitive compilation of Latin American official serials contained in Mesa’s *Latin American Serial Documents*. These three countries were selected for comparison due to their size, administrative complexity, and potential interest to North American researchers. The comparison indicated that the Center holds 23 percent of the titles identified by Mesa (Brazil, 21 percent; Cuba, 43 percent; and Mexico, 15 percent), which was characterized as a “respectable” collection.

Further review of the collection revealed a consistent but modest number of titles within any single administrative body. In addition, runs of a given title were sometimes short and incomplete. When the Center’s holdings were compared with those in other libraries with strong collections from these three countries, significant overlap was found (Brazil: University of California-Los Angeles, 78 percent; Cuba: University of Florida, 62 percent; Mexico: University of Texas, 100 percent).

The assessment acknowledged some areas of unique or rarely held materials, such as a group of Cuban documents that were unduplicated by University of Florida holdings, and a number of state documents from Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, and Venezuela.

**Conclusions**

The Center’s collection of Latin American official serials is typical of the genre as represented in North American research libraries. It was not purposefully built, has no specific focus, and is neither a large nor complete collection. Even so, the documents have inherent and research value, and the collection has pockets of strength, perhaps even uniqueness, such as its state-level materials. Many of the titles are from the 19th century and, therefore, are unavailable for purchase on the book market. The report also noted that the materials were in good physical condition, a benefit of the Center’s environmentally controlled storage facility.

**Recommendations**

The assessment recommended that the Center increase access to its Latin American government documents through the assurance of MARC cataloging, enabling the full range of identification and lending, and take advantage of collaborative bibliography through alliances with associations such as the Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials (SALALM), Latin American Microform Project (LAMP), and Latin Americanist Research Resources Project (LARRP).

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Center supports advanced research and teaching in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences by ensuring the survival and availability of the knowledge resources vital to those activities.

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