

Book presentation

Decirla en pedacitos: estrategias de cercanía



by **Guillermo Rebollo Gil**

Presentation by:

Dr. Manuel S. Almeida

Associate Professor,

School of Human and Social Sciences
Universidad del Este

The author, Dr. Guillermo Rebollo Gil, Assistant Professor at the School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Communications at the Universidad Metropolitana, will be present to share with the public.

Thursday, September 5, 2013, 11:30am
Demo-Kitchen, ISHCA,
Universidad del Este, Carolina



Book presentation

Polifonía caribeña y otros ensayos breves,
by **Carmen Centeno Añeses**

The book will be presented by:

Dr. María I. Báez Arroyo

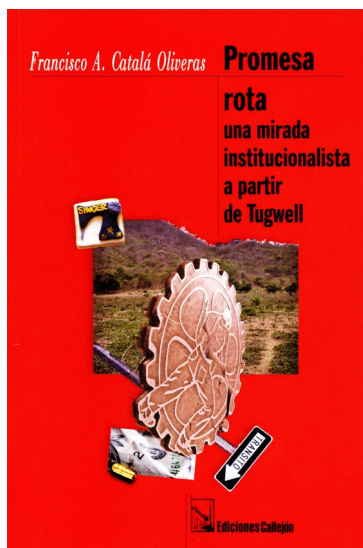
Associate Professor, School of Social Sciences,
Universidad del Este

The author, Dr. Carmen Centeno Añeses, Associate Professor of the Humanities Department of the University of Puerto Rico at Bayamón will be present to share with the public.

Thursday, September 26, 2013
11:30am

Jesús T. Piñero Collection

Activity sponsored by: Jesús T. Piñero Collection, Institute for Transdisciplinary Studies/UNE, School of Human and Social Sciences/UNE and
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Pathways, shortcuts and dead ends – Puerto Rico's Economy in the 20th century

Promesa rota: Una mirada institucionalista a partir de Tugwell

Francisco Catalá Oliveras
Ediciones Callejón, 2013.

Without a doubt, economics is the topic of the day. Everyday our newspapers bring information about crisis, debt, scarcity and “ingenious” plans to solve the government’s financial problems. Nevertheless, very few of the authors of these articles provide the reader with any sort of historical or social context other than blaming the “previous administration” or some nameless bureaucrat. However, the university professor and economist Francisco Catalá Oliveras has published a work that not only offers the reader an historical context for understanding this process but also provides an invitation to serious reflection, dialogue and action.

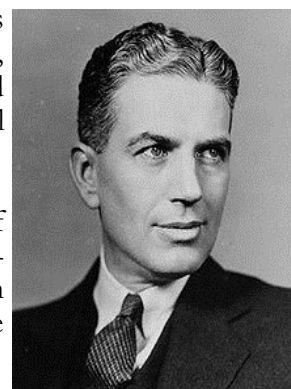
Professor Catalá has a long and fruitful relationship with both the labor and cooperative movements in Puerto Rico and this background is obvious in his down-to-earth approach in this text. In addition, his skill as an educator is also evident in the manner in which he presents his information and arguments in clear and understandable language.

The book has four main sections. In the first, the author presents the principal concepts of the institutional economics movement. He summarizes the important contributions of thinkers such as Thorstein Veblen and John Commons to this school of thought. In the second section, he provides the reader with a description of the life, work and ideas of Rexford G. Tugwell, economist, public servant, professor, member of Franklin Roosevelt’s “Brain Trust”, last American governor of Puerto Rico and one of the favorite targets of the conservative leaders and politicians of his day. After this brief description, the author analyzes Tugwell’s contributions to Puerto Rico during his term as governor (1941—1946). Under his administration and with the collaboration, at times less than enthusiastic, of Muñoz Marín and his recently organized Popular Democratic Party, an impressive number of institutions and agencies were created, organizations that gave the Puerto Rican government its principal characteristics during much of the twentieth century. Catalá identifies as the “emblematic” institutions promoted by Tugwell as: the Puerto Rico Planning Board, the Development Bank (*Banco de Fomento*) and the Development Company (*Compañía de Fomento*). During his administration numerous other agencies were created, among them: the Cement Company, the Glass Company, the Paper and Pulp Corporation and the Agricultural Company. In addition, during his governorship the Law for Cooperative Societies was approved.

In the second half of this work, Dr. Catalá gives us a detailed description of a process he calls the “change of direction” (*desmandamiento*) from the work and vision of Tugwell that has been undertaken by all the administrations that have followed him. He defines this process as a “change in order and a change of direction” in the Island’s economic policies. He identifies as the principal pillars that began this process as Law 346 of May 12, 1947, better known as the “Industrial Incentives Act (a law to which Tugwell was firmly opposed) and the “Gag Act” (*Ley de la Mordaza*), approved in 1948 and utilized during the 1950s to suppress political dissidence in Puerto Rico.

In the last two chapters, Catalá analyzes the results (all too well known by most) of this process of change of direction: unemployment, sub-employment, deteriorating infrastructure, emigration, an insidious control by political parties of all government agencies, a deficient educational system and an overwhelming public debt. With ample statistical evidence, the author illustrates how many of these situations are the result of this more than fifty-year old process.

In this work, Catalá offers us a text that stimulates thought and invites us to evaluate the paths we have travelled as well as the economic and political errors and triumphs of the past sixty years.



Rexford G. Tugwell

During the month of October, the Piñero Collection will be sponsoring a presentation of Professor Catalá’s book. We will shortly be announcing the day and hour.




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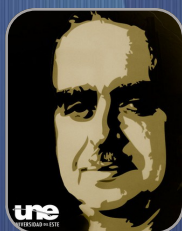


The **Carta Informativa** is the work of:
Leticia Delgado, Norayma Celpa and Jaime Partsch

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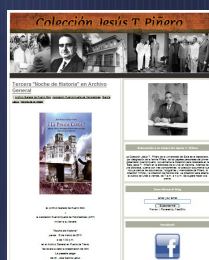
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