

# **2008 OPENING CONVOCATION**

**Tuesday, September 9, 2008**

**Campbell Memorial Chapel**

*3:55pm Move all parties to the Chapel.*

*3:58pm Cue music*

*4:00pm Begin Processional*

## **THE ORDER OF THE PROCESSION:**

*Flag bearers (U.S. and Brazil)  
Senior faculty marshal, Dr. Lenz  
Seniors (1 column)  
Faculty Marshals  
Faculty (2 columns)  
Platform Party (1 column)*

## **PRELUDE (3:45pm-4:00pm)**

*Cue music*

## **PROCESSIONAL (4:00pm)**

*Processional Music begins*

*Music begins. The USA and Brazil flag bearers move to the flag stands on the ground to the right in front of the stage, place the flags in the holders. Flag bearers exit the stage area. Dr. Lenz leads the processional down the center aisle of the Chapel, carrying the University staff. The seniors, led by Cindy Kerr, will follow Dr. Lenz down the aisle to the rows of seats marked "seniors". The faculty, led by the faculty marshals, process in two lines into the chapel to the rows of seats marked "faculty". The platform party will process into the chapel last.*

*(Cue music to fade.)*

*Dr. Barazzone moves to the podium at the same time Dr. Lenz approaches the standing microphone.*

As the music fades, Dr. Lenz bangs the staff on the stage and calls the proceedings to order.

**DR. LENZ:**

Madame President, let the Chatham University Opening Convocation Ceremony for 2008-2009 now begin.

*Dr. Lenz resumes his seat on the stage.*

**DR. BARAZZONE:**

Please remain standing for the singing of the U.S. national anthem by Lauren McGee and the singing of the national anthem of Brazil by Lilly Abreu. You may take your seats following the anthems, as we enjoy a performance by the Chatham University choir.

**NATIONAL ANTHEM**

*Lauren McGee '11 performs the Star Spangled Banner. After Lauren finishes, Dr. Barazzone goes to the podium.*

## NATIONAL ANTHEM OF BRAZIL

*Lilly Abreu performs the National Anthem of Brazil.*

## CHATHAM UNIVERSITY CHOIR

*After the choir finishes, Dr. Barazzone goes to the podium.*

## WELCOME

### **DR. BARAZZONE:**

Thank you, Lauren, Lilly, and members of the choir. If you're like me, you've spent most evenings over the past few weeks listening to campaign promises to deliver. As someone already in a position to deliver, I am proud to tell this Board and Administration has delivered on our promises!

One year ago today, those here will well remember, we gathered in this hallowed and historic space on a

particularly *sweltering* September day, to the greatest applause of the day: my promise to you all that we would renovate and air condition this chapel before a year had passed.

Today, as we sit in this beautiful, newly renovated building, enjoying the new ceiling, paint, carpet and, yes, air conditioning, we can proudly say: Mission Accomplished!

First, thank you to the Board of Trustees for approving this and to the donors of the approximate \$530K to renovate this building. There were three foundations that contributed and nearly \$365K from estate of Fraus Griffith Gordon '53.

I'd like to thank all who worked so hard to bring this venerable old building up to modern standards, starting with Walt Fowler, Vice President of Finance and Administration; Bob Dubray, Director of Facilities; and Dawn Roerink, Manager of Housekeeping, who shepherded the renovation through completion. A special thanks as well to Lori Anthony of the Interior Architecture department for her help and expert eye with the design elements inside the chapel. Please join me in giving them, and all who worked on this project, a big round of applause for a job well done and the Board for their approval. Next come cushions!

I was thinking, as I prepared my remarks, that what's happened with this chapel is a bit of a metaphor for what happens at Opening Convocation. Like the renovation of

this old and historic building, Opening Convocation is a mix of the old and the new, of tradition and change, of ties to the storied past and the promise for an exciting future.

Let me start with one example of how Opening Convocation bridges the old and the new – or in this case, the Middle Ages and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. As said at the new student welcome when we wear our academic regalia here today, we welcome all to the Academy beyond Chatham and we take our places in a long line of scholars and students stretching back to the distant past and infuse it with the energy, scholarship and discovery of the present.

Opening Convocation also signifies the start of a new academic year at this institution that has welcomed

incoming classes of students for 139 years. It is a time when those who gather here today take their places in a distinguished line of faculty and students stretching back to 1869.

Convocation is also a time when we greet new individuals and welcome familiar faces back to the campus community. I'd like to start by welcoming a few of those familiar faces who have joined us today. We have three members of the Board of Trustees with us: Murray Rust, the Chair of the Board; Sigo Falk, a former Chair of the Board; and Gretchen Hart, who also serves as President of the Alumni Association. Please join me in giving our Board members a warm welcome! We also welcome the Global Focus Advisory Board: Pedro Paulo Bretz and Flavio Sha-meets.

We also welcome a new member of Chatham's administrative team. Dr. Zauyah Waite, our new Vice President for Student Affairs, is with us today, although she will not officially report for duty until September 22d. But she was good enough to travel here today from Toledo, Ohio, where she serves as Associate Vice President for Student Affairs at the University of Toledo, to share this occasion with the Chatham community and begin meeting you. Zauyah, would you please stand and allow us to welcome you to the Chatham community?

We also welcome new faculty and students who have joined us this year. Would all new students – First Years, Transfer Students, international students, and graduate students – please rise and be recognized?

Would all new faculty members who are here rise and be recognized?

We also welcome back all staff, faculty and students who have returned to campus after summers of travel, study, research, and adventure. Best wishes to all of you for the new year!

And welcome to those with us in spirit such as all our on-line students, they are an important element of the Chatham Community.

Finally, but certainly not least, we welcome the members of the Class of 2009, the “Grand Old Seniors,” as they begin their Senior year at Chatham College for Women.

We look forward to their leadership and continued

accomplishments this year, and wish them the very best for the year ahead. Would the members of the Class of 2009 please stand, turn and face the audience, so that we can congratulate you all as you begin your final year at Chatham?

My final remarks, let us not forget that Opening Convocation also marks the official beginning of the Global Focus Year at Chatham. This 2008-09 academic year at Chatham University will be devoted to the Year of the Americas: Brazil. Earlier in the ceremony you heard one of our faculty members, Lilly Abreu, sing the Brazilian national anthem. Lilly will be performing Brazilian songs at the campus celebration in the AFC that will immediately follow this ceremony, and I invite you all to attend.

There are many events planned including a visit by Antonio Patriota, the Brazilian Ambassador to the US, on October 30.

Our next speaker, is a very special guest. We have with us this year a Fulbright Scholar from Sao Paulo, Brazil: Dr. Heloisa Pait. Dr. Pait is a graduate of the University of Sao Paulo, where she received a B.A. and M.A. in Economics, and the New School for Social Research, where she received her Ph.D. in Sociology. She has taught courses in Social Psychology; Media, Culture and Education; and Media & Globalization to undergraduates and graduate students at Sao Paulo State University. This semester she will be teaching two courses at Chatham: one called Contemporary Brazil and the other on Diversity

& Identity in a Global Context. We are honored to have her with us this year, and pleased that she is here today to talk about her country. I would like to invite Heloisa to the podium, and invite the members of the Chatham community to join me in giving her a warm welcome to Chatham.

## **THE YEAR OF LATIN AMERICA: BRAZIL**

### **HELOISA PAIT:**

#### **Brazil in the 21th century:**

#### **Economic and cultural contributions for a global society**

Abstract: Brazil is a large country, with impressive regional diversity and an intriguing political history. With a strong economy and a growing presence in the global society, Brazil still faces many problems that are familiar to many undeveloped countries. The middle position Brazil occupies in the world can actually be an important asset, if

we are able to use it intelligently to foster dialogue among nations with different values and aims. The parallel histories of Brazil and the US, which include the colonial past, industrialization and its consequences, and the construction of a multicultural society, can serve as an exciting entry point for students who are for the first time thinking seriously about the larger world where they live. Brazilians are best known for their particular sociability: friendly, personal and eager to find common ground in face of conflict. The country has built entire industries around national cultural forms, such as soccer, soap operas, music and Carnival. Culture and entertainment serve today as bridges in a diverse and often fragmented global society, and Brazilian contribution can be significant in this realm as well.

Many have said that Brazil is not exotic enough to attract the attention of those expecting large differences from tropical cultures, but not developed enough to be seen as a full-fledged partner in a global society either. We Brazilians confront a similar dilemma regarding our role in the world, which our most important thinkers have examined in depth. Brazil was present at many, if not all, important modern events – the Industrial Revolution, 20<sup>th</sup> century avant-garde movements, the Second World War – but most of times Brazil was at the margins of these events. My students here at Chatham are learning about a large country, with an impressive regional diversity and an intriguing political history. Coming from São Paulo, a state that attracts people from the many Brazils – from the Amazonian North, from the traditional costal Northeast, from the recently developed West and from the more

European South – I am able to tell them about this diversity and reflect upon it and as well.

Brazil has today a strong and growing economy, but Brazilian society still faces many problems that are familiar to less developed countries. This intermediary position can actually be an important asset for the world, if we are able to use it intelligently, fostering dialogue among nations with different values and aims. For us at Chatham, during the year of Brazil, this Brazilian feature can serve as an exciting entrée for the entire community, and especially for students who are for the first time thinking seriously about the world they live in and the cultures they will interact with throughout their lives. Whether you are a forward-looking businesswoman or someone searching for your African heritage; a University professor putting off paperwork or a college student reflecting on your career choice; an Asian

immigrant trying to adjust or a third- or fourth-generation American proud of your grandparents' accomplishments, you will find someone just like you in Brazil. If you decide to learn about Brazil during this year, I guarantee that at a certain point you will start wondering who would you be today if your foreparents had taken a different ship.

Brazil is undergoing, as we speak, a revolution. It is a silent revolution, so you might not see it on TV. In 20 years, Brazilian economy grew by 60% in real terms, and today our GDP is US\$ 1.3 trillion. This is 5 times Venezuela's product, but still 10 times smaller than the American economy. When I was growing up, Brazil suffered with the oil shock, but today a much higher demand is met domestically. In the past 20 years, college enrollment tripled in Brazil, and universal secondary education is today an attainable target. I was a tall

Brazilian in the 1980's. Today, walking in the streets of São Paulo I realize I am of average height. There are actually 10 times more overweight than underweight Brazilians, which is in part the result of technological advances that dramatically cut food prices.

Our domestic problems absorb us: what to do with traffic in our major cities? How to deal with corruption in all levels of government and society? Are we going to be able to clean up the Tietê and the Pinheiros Rivers, which define the city of São Paulo, much like the Allegheny and the Monongahela Rivers define the city of Pittsburgh? What to do with a prison system that was hijacked by organized crime? How to prevent child obesity? Brazil's problems today are problems of development rather than problems of underdevelopment. Our democracy seems strong. We have had fair presidential elections since 1989,

with no constitutional breach, which may well be a Latin American record. Our media is sufficiently diverse to cover political and social events from different and competing points of view. Our leaders seem to prefer to deal with the critics as they are rather than pay the price of another authoritarian cycle. Although we do not have a strong culture of legal protection for free expression, society has been vigilant about recent censorship attempts.

Let me give you a few current examples that show how our intermediary position plays out in the international arena. In 2001, in order to implement a successful health program, the Brazilian government received preferential prices for AIDS-fighting drugs. At the WTO, however, Brazil demanded that Canada stop subsidizing their aircraft industry so that a Brazilian manufacturer could take advantage of free market opportunities. Brazilians

might be critical of the effects of globalization in our country, but Brazilian influence is beginning to be questioned as well. In 2006, for example, Bolivia seized the assets of a Brazilian company with substantive investments there. We might be a bit annoyed by the amount of American songs in our radios and films in our theaters. At the same time, we know that the Portuguese cultural elite is not that happy either with the transformative role that Brazilian soap operas and Brazilian Portuguese have in their cherished language.

Brazilians ask themselves how they can support, as a country and as global citizens, the American intervention in Iraq. Yet as we speak, Brazil's armed forces are in Haiti, as part of a UN peacekeeping mission, one that you might not be surprised to learn has had limited results in bringing security and development to this neighbor of ours.

We do have one foot in the global society, the result of decades of strenuous efforts from Brazilian in all segments of society. We still see this global society, however, as an often alien, mysterious entity. We are part of it, and we would like very much to be included in it. Now that is not a terrible contradiction to live in. That is actually a blessing. We have the resources to produce, generation after generation, the best soccer team in the world and – the world roots for the team. Who else is the best anything in the world and still receives unconditional international sympathy?

“She is going on and on about this industrialized country, but when is she gonna start talking about Brazil?”, you are all wondering. And you are right, because the distinctive and essential trait of Brazilian culture, a particular sociability, is something that you do have to pay

attention to if you decide to go to or to study Brazil, or to interact with Brazilians. As an American once told me – about me and my Latin American friends, I admit – “I enjoy spending time with you, because you just talk, you don’t argue, you don’t debate issues. One subject leads to another and this flow of words and laughter is a pleasure.” We enjoy food. We enjoy the company of each other. We enjoy lifelong friendships. We keep our in-laws in the family even after the divorce. We’ll make any sacrifice for a day in a crowded beach. Our cities stop to watch soccer games. We need to laugh and cry every night with the soap opera characters who are like a second family for many of us. We also take special pleasure in complaining about the government and gossiping about the boss, practices that come together maybe with a sense of

political alienation and with the weight of economic restraints.

Being able to enjoy the things we have with us, and the people we have around us might be our own very special contribution. Of course every culture has its enjoyments, but we make an art of them. Culture, and music, and sports, and foods, and all sorts of life pleasures have always been powerful glues in diverse societies, Ancient and Modern. The Olympics of Greece, the poetry of medieval Spain and American rock in the 50's and 60's meant much more than individual entertainment. They meant that different people could at once reinforce common values and test each other in a friendly manner. The extremely diverse global society we live in today demands places and cultural forms like those, at once rich and welcoming. And Brazil has built entire

industries around national cultural forms. Soccer, soap operas, domestic tourism, music, Carnival and other popular festivities are today important sources of income for many Brazilian families. They are still fun, in spite of their commercial aspect.

I invite you then to look at Brazil during this year with a double gaze: Look at it as a peaceful partner in a global economy that is trying to deal as creatively as possible with a host of challenges. Open the New York Times and search for Brazil: you will find the country in every section of the paper: medical research, business and the economy, the arts, energy and the environment. But don't lose sight of the fact that our best contribution to the world is our rich oral culture and our distinctive sociability. Enjoy our food, listen to our music, read our literature and watch

our films. Above all, try to meet as many Brazilians as you can. Our richest asset is our own people.

THE OPENING OF THE 2008-2009 ACADEMIC  
YEAR

**DR. LAURA ARMESTO**

Thank you, Heloisa, for your wonderful introduction to Brazil. We feel fortunate to have you here with us, and we look forward to exploring your country's culture and history with you throughout this academic year.

For the past several years, we have opened our academic year with a message from one of our distinguished faculty

members. Your journey at Chatham is guided by your faculty members, and I hope that whether you are a new student or you are returning, you will get to know your faculty members and the wonderful work that they do. This year, it my great pleasure to introduce Dr. Sheryl St. Germain, Professor of English and Director of the MFA program in Creative Writing, to open the 2008-2009 year.

*Dr. Armesto returns to her seat; Dr. St. Germain moves to the podium.*

### **SHERYL ST. GERMAIN**

I want to welcome you to a year of new beginnings, a year filled with hope and growth for you, for Chatham, and if you've been paying attention to the news lately, the United States. As you join (or rejoin) the intellectual community of Chatham and meet others from different areas of the country and the world, it may find your own identity

challenged. How do you know who are you when things are changing so quickly here and in the world? How do you *matter* to this community? How do you keep your own life in balance with so many new classes, friends, and responsibilities?

I have two relatively simple things to say to you this afternoon, and one of them comes out of a belief that the one thing that can never be taken away from you is your voice and your particular way of seeing and moving through the world. That doesn't mean you shouldn't accept challenges to your ways of seeing—it's crucial to your growth as a citizen that you do so—but you also need to feel at peace with who you are and where you come from. And I'm here to tell you that even if you come from a troubled family or difficult life experiences, you can turn that around.

When I was a first year student in college, I was ashamed of my background. I was ashamed that my father had died young, an alcoholic, that my brother had also died young of a drug overdose. I was ashamed of my family's poverty, of the way we talked as natives of New Orleans. We sounded, I thought, like mobsters. We sounded, I thought, like people who had never studied English. But as I developed as a writer, I came to see that my most genuine poems occurred when I spoke in a voice that embraced my roots, that I moved more surely through the world when I acknowledged and embraced my wonderful but screwed up family, my gorgeous but messy city, and yes, even the funny way we talked. And three years ago, when Katrina struck and took more lives and homes from my family it was my deep sense of who I am and where I come from, my deep love of that place and the damaged

family that helped me navigate that disaster, and helped me to write about it in ways that I hope spoke to others who had also suffered.

[Intro and read “Getting Rid of the Accent” poem, 2 minutes]

So, keep your way of talking, don’t try to sound like everyone else. Listen and learn from your teachers and friends, grow, but don’t forget your roots, they will sustain you when times are hard.

The second and final thing I want to say to you has to do with joy.

Yes, you need to get to your classes on time, yes you need to do your classwork and participate in discussions.

Yes, you need to think of yourself as a citizen in this community. But those things are not necessarily goals to

aim for in and of themselves. These are *side effects* of loving what you do, *side-effects* of being passionate about your work and studies. You won't have to remind yourself to do your work if you've found a way to make it a joyful experience, something in which you really take pleasure. You won't need to remind yourself to speak up in class if you have found a way to love what you're doing. Find ways to feel *joy*, to feel exquisitely *present* in your classes, doing your reading, writing and calculations. I'm using the word *joy* and not happiness because happiness too, should not be a goal in and of itself but is rather a side effect of a life lived joyfully, a life lived and felt fully. Follow your joy because you want to end up, when you graduate, doing something that you love.

When I was a sophomore in college I was conflicted about my major. I had started out in English, because I loved

reading and I love language. Then I felt guilty because it seemed like too much fun. It seemed like I should suffer more. So I changed my major the second semester to nutrition. Now that was hard, all the science courses, learning about why my entire family was obese and why every food I loved was bad for me. I did well for a year, but when, at the end of my sophomore year I was finishing my last humanities core course (a literature) class I'd take as a science major, I became inconsolably sad. I went home at the end of that term miserable, and, after much soul-searching, wound up becoming an English major again the following term, *following my joy*. And here I am over 30 years later never having regretted that change, still full of joy every time I read a book or write a poem or teach a class that gets others to love reading and writing.

The truth is, I would probably have been a miserable, sad, Nazi nutritionist. Maybe a little thinner, but not as happy and plump as I am now. 😊

Let me end by reading you a poem called “Joy.” It’s a love poem, but also a poem about being so present in the world that you feel filled with it.

End with “Joy” poem, 1 minute

*Following her remarks, Dr. St. Germain returns to her seat. Dr. Barazzone moves to the podium.*

## **CLOSING**

### **DR. BARAZZONE:**

Thank you, Sheryl, for your insights and your joy – of living and learning; thank you, Heloisa, for sharing with us your insights about Brazil; and thank you to everyone here for all you do for Chatham University.

Please stand now for the singing of the Alma Mater, which will conclude today's ceremony. Please remember to join us for a reception and entertainment immediately afterwards in the AFC.

## ALMA MATER

*The Choir leads the singing of the alma mater.*

*At the alma mater's conclusion, Dr. Lenz moves to the standing microphone.*

## CLOSING OF THE CEREMONY

### DR. LENZ:

*Dr. Lenz bangs the staff.*

Madame President, the Opening Convocation Ceremony is now concluded – let Chatham University's 139<sup>th</sup> Academic Year now begin!

## RECESSIONAL

*Cue the musician to begin playing the recessional.*

*The Platform Party leads the processional, exiting the platform using the same aisle that they entered during the processional. The Platform Party is then followed by the faculty and the seniors.*

*The reception is being held in the AFC gymnasium.*