

## EDITOR`S NOTE

Dear Readers,

This issue of *História, Ciências, Saúde – Manguinhos* is going to press as Rio de Janeiro plays host to the Rio+20 Summit and the city experiences the hubbub of events, flurry of press coverage, and general turmoil that all this implies. You can't help but talk about it. The overriding tenor in the media and on the streets is one of skepticism regarding the concrete results that may come from the confabulations of the "high command," overwhelmingly willing to pay a steep price when it comes to the outlook for us, our children, and the creatures with which we share this planet, in exchange for an ultra-short-term objective: saving a civilization model that is in crisis not only in traditional capitalist societies but in societies that have arrived at equally destructive modes of capitalism via socialist revolution. But if top echelon government authorities are busy negotiating – or, in Brazil's case, extolling the age-old policy of the 'economic miracle' as the most forward-thinking alternative – those on the lower rungs of the totem pole, as it were, have thrown themselves into preparing a diverse array of events, through institutional and nongovernmental initiatives. For the average citizen, it's hard to separate the wheat from the chaff and get ones bearings amidst this plethora of exhibits, debates, and demonstrations, particularly when our eyes and ears are assailed ad nauseum by an opportunistic onslaught of advertising, underwritten by corporations and government agencies that often abet environmental degradation.

The Oswaldo Cruz Foundation did not allow health to be relegated to the shadows of either official or alternative discussions but took a clear and commendable position, offering the public a full program of activities. This included debates on sustainable development, the environment, and health; food and nutritional security; basic sanitation; chemical security (particularly the impact of pesticides on health and the environment); social movements and health equity; anti-transgenic movements; and social and environmental justice. Fiocruz's programming also featured a website ([www.sauderio20.fiocruz.br](http://www.sauderio20.fiocruz.br)) with interviews, commentary, and documents on the relation between health and the environment, one of which – "Health at Rio+20: sustainable development, the environment, and health" – was open to public collaboration.

In partnership with the Inhotim Institute of Contemporary Art and Botanical Gardens, in Minas Gerais, and Eletrobras Furnas, a state-owned energy utility, Fiocruz's Museum of Life opened an exhibit entitled "We of the World" ("Nós do mundo"), where visitors can enjoy interactive displays related to the topics under discussion at the conference (<http://migre.me/9xxNH>). The exhibition also serves to commemorate three anniversaries: the

museum's 13th, the Casa de Oswaldo Cruz's 25th, and the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation's 112th. Display panels address consumerism, climate change, environmental degradation, energy sources and consumption, and social inequality. Visitors can pedal a bicycle that transforms mechanical power into electrical, or activate a timeline on the debates that led up to Rio+20. A miniature house demonstrates how much energy is used by even the most insignificant home appliances, while a barcode scanner at a simulated supermarket provides environmental information on items commonly found on our shopping lists.

And what have we at *História, Ciências, Saúde – Manguinhos* done? This and subsequent issues will boast the FSC seal, awarded for compliance with environmental protection standards in forest management. The Forest Stewardship Council, a nongovernmental organization headquartered in Bonn, Germany, was founded in the early 1990s to foster responsible forest management around the world. It was only in 2001 that Brazil created an affiliate organization, known as the Conselho Brasileiro de Manejo Florestal. The FSC has been working with forested countries to see that an amendment is included in the conference's official document, highlighting the vital role such mechanisms play in the transition to a 'green economy.' The idea is to convince governments to commit to this socio-environmental certification as a means of encouraging sustainable practices and contributing to the preservation of tropical forests and resources. The issue is already gaining space on the agenda of public purchases and contracts, and that's where we come in: printing our journal on FSC-certified paper.

One of the articles in this issue meshes with the topics debated at Rio+20: "‘Hot’ Earth in the mass media: the reliability of news reports on global warming" by Celso Dal Ré Carneiro, professor at Unicamp's Institute of Geosciences, and João Cláudio Toniolo, graduate student majoring in philosophy at the same university. The authors surveyed news reports on global warming published by the UOL, *Folha.com*, and *Folha de S. Paulo* media group. Positions ranged from full agreement with the predominant position, which is that the cause of global warming is strictly anthropogenic, to complete denial of this thesis. Included in the minority position is the 'geological' approach to our planet's evolution: before the human species appeared, the Earth went through eras that were either much hotter or colder than today. According to the authors, most news writers, who take only anthropic causes into account, overlook the uncertainty inherent to scientific work. The authors state: "Within the Earth sciences, geology has comprehensively shown that the Earth's climate changed in the past and will continue to change in the future. Human interference can intensify the transitory effects of certain changes but we will never reach a scenario of global warming whose causes are solely anthropogenic, an idea that the media outlets analyzed herein try to promulgate."

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