

THE INTERCONTINENTAL YOUTH CAMP 2001-2005: LINKING
OPEN SPACE ACTIVISM, THE WORLD SOCIAL FORUM, AND
IMAGINARIES FOR ALTERNATIVE WORLDS

by

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Dedication

This M.A. thesis is dedicated to all people and peoples in the world who believe in the cause of establishing alternative worlds, and who are making alternatives come into being in their own lives and in worlds of social activism.

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Abstract

The Intercontinental Youth Camp (IYC) has opened distinctive spaces of experience to link activist networks, the World Social Forum (WSF), and alternative imaginaries. It originated in reaction to the inaugural WSF in Porto Alegre, Brazil, although both initiatives emerged in 2001 in broader struggles to challenge neoliberal globalization. Some 80,000 campers from diverse backgrounds and mostly under 30 lived in the five Camps, which lasted from six to ten days. Four took place in Porto Alegre and the other (in 2004) in Mumbai, India. The IYC's central imaginary of horizontal self-management was largely shaped by Camp organizers and key volunteering onsite; the WSF and local political conditions were also crucial. While the Camps exhibited contradictions – such as those arising from hierarchical leadership and many participants more interested in apolitical partying than in social change – they cultivated exciting possibilities for an emerging new political generation of human agents.

List of Abbreviations Used

ABONG	Brazilian Association of Non-Governmental Organizations
ASF	African Social Forum
COA	Camp Organizing Committee of the IYC
CSMs	Civil Society Movements
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CUT	Brazilian Workers Central Union
ES	Economy of Solidarity of the WSF/IYC
Ecovillages	Ecological Villages
EZLN	Zapatista National Liberation Army
IBASE	Brazilian Institute of Social and Economic Analysis
IC	International Council of the WSF
IWG	Indian WSF Working Group
IYC	Intercontinental Youth Camp
MST	Brazil's Landless Workers Movement
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
NSMs	New Social Movements
OC	World Social Forum Organizing Committee
PT	Workers Party of Brazil
PUC	Pontifical Catholic University
RRGN	Global Resistance Network
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programs
WEF	World Economic Forum
WTO	World Trade Organization
WSF	World Social Forum

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