

In Memory of Eduardo Mendieta
December 28, 1963–December 17, 2025

“To be moral is to have the fortitude and courage to look at the world through the eyes of the homeless, the destitute, the refugee, the orphan, the single mother displaced by war, the inmate in a prison where their lives are being wasted.”
Eduardo Mendieta

Our former colleague Professor Eduardo Mendieta died this week after a long experience with cancer. Eduardo was a member of our department from 2001 to 2015 and was an exceptionally energetic presence at Stony Brook. Along with Edward S. Casey, Eduardo helped found our MA Program in Philosophy and Art in 2006. He was a highly-regarded scholar and a dynamic teacher. He specialized in social and political philosophy, Latin American philosophy, critical theory, and philosophy of race. His influence as a mentor and advisor continues.

Mendieta was born in Pereira, Colombia. He earned his B.A. in philosophy at Rutgers University, his M.A. in Systematic Theology at Union Theological Seminary, and his doctorate in philosophy at the New School for Social Research under the direction of Richard Bernstein. He taught at the University of San Francisco from 1995 to 2001 before joining the Stony Brook philosophy department, where he was Director of the Latin American and Caribbean Studies Center from 2005 to 2008 and chair of the Department of Philosophy from 2012 to 2015, after which he moved to Penn State. He also held visiting positions at the Universidad Iberoamericana and the European Humanities University. Mendieta was executive editor of *Radical Philosophy Review* from 2003 to 2007, and a founding editor of the American Philosophical Association's *Newsletter of Hispanics in Philosophy*.

Mendieta investigated diverse topics including animal rights, colonialism, Latin American philosophy, globalization, mass incarceration, and torture, often by building on the conceptual resources of Frankfurt School-style Critical Theory. His many publications include *The Adventures of Transcendental Philosophy: Karl-Otto Apel's Semiotics and Discourse Ethics* (2002), *Global Fragments: Globalizations, Latinamericanisms, and Critical Theory* (2007), and *The Philosophical Animal: On Zoopoetics and Interspecies Cosmopolitanism* (2024). *Abolition Democracy: Beyond Empire, Torture and War* (2006) is a series of interviews between Mendieta and Angela Davis on mass incarceration and torture.

Mendieta will be long remembered by his former colleagues and students at Stony Brook for his vivacity in thinking and acting as well as for the broad scope of his teaching and writing. He was a philosopher with extraordinary moral and political vision, and he will be deeply missed by all who knew him and his work.