

ANALYTICAL SUMMARY

RODRÍGUEZ ZEPEDA, Juan Antonio and OTERO FELIPE, Patricia
IDEOLOGICAL PROXIMITY IN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS OF COSTA RICA,
EL SALVADOR AND HONDURAS
América Latina Hoy, 77, December 2017, pp. 17-45

In this article we test the theory of proximity voting in the most recent presidential elections of three Central American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador and Honduras. For this purpose, we specified Mixed Multinomial Probit models and found that ideological proximity had a relevant effect on voters' choices. Moreover, the ideological distance between those citizens and the candidates affected the latter differently, depending on the partisan context in which they were competing.

Key words: proximity voting; presidential elections; Costa Rica; El Salvador; Honduras.

CÓRDOVA, Abby
THE INCIDENCE OF GANGS IN SALVADORAN NEIGHBORHOODS AND ITS EFFECT
IN POLITICAL LEGITIMACY
América Latina Hoy, 77, December 2017, pp. 47-66

This article explores how the incidence of gangs in Salvadoran neighborhoods erodes trust in the national government. The results show that the levels of trust in the national government vary from one neighborhood to another, depending on their vulnerability to gang generated insecurity. In addition, this article demonstrates that, in neighborhoods with high gang incidence, crime victims and non-victims show similar and low levels of trust in the national government.

Key words: trust in government; public opinion; insecurity; gangs; El Salvador.

MUÑOZ-MUÑOZ, Marianela

AFRO-COSTA RICAN WOMEN AND DELAYED MULTICULTURALISM: CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM OF THE (WHITE) REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA

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The article analyzes the reform of Article 1 of the Political Constitution of Costa Rica to acknowledge the multicultural and pluriethnic character of the nation, in terms of its protagonists and timing of approval. On the one hand, it suggests a relationship between racial formation processes and a constitutional multicultural delay. On the other, it recognizes the challenges and strategies of Afro-Costa Rican women to reframe this reform in terms of social justice.

Key words: multiculturalism; Afro-Costa Ricans; black women; African diaspora; white nationalism.

PIGNATARO, Adrián and CASCANTE SEGURA, Carlos Humberto

TARGETED SENSIBILITY: COSTA RICA'S PUBLIC OPINION AND FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS NICARAGUA

América Latina Hoy, 77, December 2017, pp. 93-114

Previous research has noted the importance of public opinion on foreign policy issues. This study seeks to identify Costa Ricans' public opinion structure, in order to estimate the effect of a relevant international event: the International Court of Justice's decision on the case *Costa Rica vs. Nicaragua*. For this purpose, we use a series of surveys, which have periodically incorporated questions related to foreign affairs. It can be confirmed that the approval of foreign policy and domestic policy are relatively autonomous dimensions. In addition, the models indicate that the perception of foreign relations in the country improved significantly after the Court's decision was known. These results show that public opinion in Costa Rica responds to international events, although this happens in conditions of special sensitivity, such as relations with Nicaragua.

Key words: public opinion; foreign policy; Costa Rica; Nicaragua; International Court of Justice.

MUÑOZ PORTILLO, Juan

POLITICS IN EDUCATION QUALITY POLICIES IN CENTRAL AMERICA

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This paper analyses the adoption of education policies in Central America and Panama during the 2010 decade in three areas: the increase in education expenditure, curricular reforms and teacher recruitment and evaluation rules. The paper argues that

greater foreign direct investment and more international trade are associated with the adoption of these policies. This, in turn, relates to the incentives produced by varieties of capitalism within the region. It is hypothesised that conservative governments under systems with stronger executive powers, have a preference for policy reform in teacher recruitment and evaluation. Historical factors contribute to explain policy change in Costa Rica and the statu quo in Guatemala.

Key words: Central America; education policies; development strategies; varieties of capitalism; institutional change.

CAMINO ESTURO, Edorta

THE MOBILITY OF STUDENTS IN CENTRAL AMERICA: IN SEARCH OF HEGEMONIC KNOWLEDGE?

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The dynamics of Central American students' mobility is characterized by one-way mobility to the Western countries, as centers of hegemonic knowledge, especially the United States. However, there has been an increase in academic mobility to Cuba, which suggests the emergence of an alternative space and a counterbalance to this trend. Instead, mobility towards the Central American region is domestic and peripheral, with more intraregional than foreign contributions, standing on the sidelines of university centers of scientific production.

Key words: international student mobility; Ecology of Knowledge; Eligibility Index; Dispersion index; University.

DEL CAMPO, Esther; GÜEMES, María Cecilia and PARAMIO, Ludolfo

«I CAN'T GET NO SATISFACTION». PUBLIC SERVICES, DEMOCRACY AND MIDDLE CLASS IN LATIN AMERICA

América Latina Hoy, 77, December 2017, pp. 161-187

The rise of new middle classes over the past decade in Latin America has been widely acclaimed, among other reasons because of the role that many believe middle classes play in democratic stability. However, the vulnerability of the emerging middle class and the increase of social protest and mobilizations have dampened the enthusiasm and strengthened the desire to consolidate the gains achieved. The present study aims to identify whether discontent with the state's performance strengthens or weakens satisfaction with democracy. By implementing multilevel and regression models with survey data (Latinobarómetro 2011) for 18 countries in the region, we observe that democratic satisfaction is mainly influenced by the perception of social fairness and trust in the government, but not by self-perception of social class or dissatisfaction

with public services. We conclude that protests expressing dissatisfaction with public services may be expressing the strength of the regime and a demand to strengthen it further, not the opposite.

Key words: middle classes; Latin America; satisfaction with democracy; public services; socio-political claims.

CONTRERAS GARCÍA, Delia

THE CONTRIBUTION OF *VITRAL* MAGAZINE TO THE STRENGTHENING OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN CUBA

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In this study we have analyzed the opinion articles published in the «Civic Education» section of the Catholic magazine *Vitral*, of the Pinar del Río Civic-Religious Center, from September 2002 to January 2004, with the objective of determining their role in strengthening civil society in Cuba. As a methodological tool we chose content analysis, both quantitative and qualitative. Based on the results obtained from the quantification of the selected information, we proceed to the study of their content, within the context of Cuban reality. Prior to that, we establish a theoretical framework, in order to clarify the concept of civil society and its main characteristics in Cuba, as well as the role of the Church and lay Catholics in its promotion.

Key words: Cuba; civil society; civic education; freedom of press; *Vitral*.