

**Volume 4  
Number 1**

**Summer  
2009**

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**Published Annually  
By Texas A&M  
International  
University**

**ISSN 1551-9880**

**The Journal of Social and Ecological Boundaries**

# **JSEB**

**Special Issue: Immigration: Crime, Victimization, and Media Representation**

**Guest Editors:  
Mehnaaz Momen  
Michael Yoder**

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# ***Journal of Social and Ecological Boundaries***

JSEB is a biannual publication of the College of Arts and Sciences at Texas A&M International University; the opinions and perspectives expressed in JSEB are not necessarily held by the College or University.

The creation and publication of this journal were made possible by the generous support of George and Pamela Person, of Laredo, Texas.

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*Beyond Borders'* mission is to provide a forum for exploration of the intersections between disciplines in the social sciences, behavioral sciences and the humanities. Preference will be given to submissions that cross disciplinary boundaries or subspecialties in a field. Researchers are encouraged to use an interdisciplinary approach to study the impacts of openings and boundaries in time, place and space. To this end, the journal encourages collaborative work which challenges the boundaries within and between fields to explore the interstices at which using more than one perspective brings insight in ways that otherwise could not have been imagined. In this way, *Beyond Border* aims to highlight academic connections to examine both openings and boundaries concerning the leading scholarly developments of the day through varying special issue topics. Submissions should be sent to [mmomen@tamiu.edu](mailto:mmomen@tamiu.edu) or [lynne.manganaro@tamiu.edu](mailto:lynne.manganaro@tamiu.edu)

## Introduction: Border Crossing and Immigration

*Mehnaaz Momen*  
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This special issue on Border Crossing and Immigration, edited by Mehnaaz Momen and co-edited by Michael Yoder, is but one segment of the journey to find a new identity for our journal, *JSEB*. Our interdisciplinary journal has produced a number of thematic volumes ranging from bilingualism and immigration to Muslim integration. The whole idea of the border resonates strongly for us, located as we are literally on the geographical and cultural border. While we were forced to take a hiatus in the midst of administrative changes and financial challenges, we were rethinking our mission and the purpose of the journal. We want this journal to reflect the dynamism and change in our institution and community, to engage in a dialogue with the larger academic world about the implications of the border, which can be examined from our experiences in everyday life. We have decided not to continue with the thematic volumes any more. This volume is the last appearance of *JSEB* as *JSEB*. Starting with its next volume, it is going to be called *Beyond Borders*, and we hope to attract articles that will continue to challenge the definition and dimensions of social, political, economic, legal, and spatial boundaries of all sorts. Our journal, from now on, will have a dual presence in print and web formats. We hope to strengthen our commitment to scholarly work and continue to offer a space for interdisciplinary research for thinkers and writers who are ready to challenge any accepted definition of the border and boundaries.

This issue, meanwhile, focuses on border crossing and international immigration, and the three articles on Latino political participation in South Texas, Central American migration to México, and the examination of the Peruvian Roundtable capture the dynamics of border crossing both figuratively and literally. The political mobilization of minority groups is indeed a claim of a new energized identity in the political sphere. The trials and tribulations of immigration and its regularization point us to the opposite process of exclusion. The example from Perú proves that even processes of corruption and political exclusion can be transformed into an inclusionary and positive process. The two books reviewed in this volume complement these issues of inclusion and exclusion.

James Norris probes the topical issue of Latino political participation, which has tremendous implications for national politics as well as Texas politics. The increase in Latino voters and their concentration in states other than traditionally Hispanic ones have infused new energy into our political system. In Texas, Hispanics are projected to become the largest ethnic group by 2015. Although voter turnout by Latinos has been less than impressive, they have made progress in securing political offices in the state. Norris argues that this political success, along with fading overt discrimination, can give rise to high voter turnouts if mobilized properly. A high Latino turnout has the potential to skew the political ideology of the state.

Lindsey Carte provides compelling evidence that immigration, especially where it concerns poor labor forces, is fraught with paradoxical issues: the need for cheap labor but the unwillingness to provide them the rights which would legalize their claims to the dignity of their labor. The Central American migration to México remains an area relegated to the backburner, as the competing issue of third world migration to the U.S. garners much attention. In the midst of our own passionate and

heated immigration debate, there is perhaps a lesson from the Mexican government's regularization plan for undocumented immigrants, about how bureaucratization of a well-meaning program creates temporary citizens and how the poor are unable to take advantage of the cumbersome avenues of legalization that have been opened for them.

Randall Parish analyses the case of Perú to illuminate how institutions can be reclaimed to promote democratic practices, even if they were designed for other purposes. The *Mesa de Diálogo* (Roundtable) in Perú was formed to recommend reforms to the electoral system, legislature, military, and other key institutions. During the disintegration of the Fujimori regime, this institution served to shape the transition to the next government through elections and by avoiding a bloody coup or street rebellion. The irregularities of the 2000 election where Fujimori won a third term (though the Constitution limited the president to two terms) was initially overlooked by the Organization of American States (OAS), but eventually they established the Roundtable to stimulate dialogue between Peruvians to lead democratic reforms. As the corruption charges and scandals began to mount and the government began to unravel, the Roundtable slowly emerged to fill a political void in the midst of a paralyzed system and offer legitimacy for the new election to take place.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone associated with the journal for their contributions: the *JSEB* committee members for their enthusiasm and energy, the authors for their patience, and the TAMIU staff for their skills and flexibility to meet technical challenges. Our Dean, Dr. Thomas Mitchell, deserves special thanks for securing the funding to keep this journal alive. Our commitment is to keep it thriving.

## Minority Empowerment: Latino Political Participation in South Texas<sup>1</sup>

James A. Norris

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Latino<sup>2</sup> Texans stand at the precipice of political power, at least demographically. Within the last twenty years Texas Latinos have increased from 21 percent of the Texas population to more than 32 percent of Texans (Murdock, et al 2002, 10). Moreover, projections based upon the growth rate of Texas' Hispanic population over the last 10 years show that Hispanics will become Texas' largest ethnic group by as early as 2015 and the majority by as soon as 2026 (Murdock, et al., 13-19). Already Texas Latinos have made progress in securing political office in the state. For example, in 1979 Latinos comprised 12 percent of the state legislature and by 1999 Texas Latinos were 23 percent of state legislators (Momayezi 2002). Nevertheless, overall patterns of Latino political participation are disappointing. DeSipio (1996, 59) points out that 4.2 million Latinos voted in 1992, but 10.45 million adult Latinos did not vote. Michelson (2005, 85) adds that less than one-third turnout in presidential elections and less than a quarter vote in congressional elections. Historically, Latinos typically lag some 10 to 30 percent behind Anglos in voter turnout and registration (F. C. García 1997, 31; also see Highton and Burris 2002, 286-287; Hero, et al 2000, 430). Whereas more than 32 percent of Texans are Hispanic, in 2000 Hispanics comprised only 15.6 percent of Texas voters ("Latino Vote Hits 1 Million" 2000). Hence, de la Garza (1996), for example, fears that Latino political clout might never be realized.

Studies of Latino political participation demonstrate that numbers do not necessarily translate into political power (de la Garza 1996; de la Garza and DeSipio 1996; DeSipio 1996; Guerra and Fraga 1996; Martínez 1996; Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980). Nevertheless, the potential remains. If mobilized into political action Latino political power will make more of a mark on politics and policy. This article examines the political mobilization of Texas Latinos for the November 2002 election. During this election the top of the Democratic Party's ticket was Tony Sanchez, a prominent and wealthy Latino businessman. Tony Sanchez' candidacy was touted as "history making," since if Tony Sanchez were elected he would become Texas' first Hispanic governor and a symbol of Latino political success in Texas. Moreover, Texas Democrats hoped that his candidacy would mobilize Texas Latinos into political action and begin a whole new era in Texas politics.

The purpose of this article is to investigate the political mobilization of South Texas Latinos into political participation using a unique new 2002 post-election data set conducted in heavily Latino South Texas. Voting participation was very high for South Texas in the 2002, especially for a mid-term election. Turnout was higher than in any other mid-term election year and exceeded turnout in most presidential election years. Several different explanations of mobilization are examined, both direct, by personal contact or by political party, and indirect. Controlling for SES, three models of indirect mobilization, taken from the literature on African-American mobilization, are compared: compensation theory, ethnic community theory, and ethnic empowerment theory. None of the models seem a satisfactory explanation for voter registration, although there is weak support for one aspect of the ethnic empowerment model, and only ethnic empowerment theory seems to account for voter turnout.

## Political Mobilization

Political participation is customarily explained by socioeconomic background characteristics (henceforth, SES). Studies of political participation have shown that SES characteristics such as age, income, and education strongly effect political participation in general and for Latinos, too (see Uhlaner, Cain, and Kiewiet 1989; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980). Because Latinos are generally younger, earn lower incomes, are less well educated, are employed in lower-status jobs, and a significant proportion are noncitizens, Latino political participation is depressed (DeSipio 1996; Michelson 2005; Norris 2005). Nevertheless, SES alone is an insufficient explanation. For a more complete explanation we must turn to political mobilization. Political mobilization is the process through which people are induced to participate. An otherwise indifferent citizen is mobilized to participate when incited to by the actions of someone else. Mobilization is the key to increasing Latino political participation. DeSipio (1996, 90-91) asserts that in Texas, mobilization of all nonparticipant U.S. citizens could have doubled statewide Latino turnout. Moreover, he reports that in Texas the proportion of registered nonvoting Latinos is quite high.

While Texas Latinos have not been very successfully mobilized in the past, in the recent past another American minority group, African-Americans, has been successfully mobilized into high levels of political participation. After controlling for SES, African-Americans participate at higher levels than Anglos (Verba and Nie 1972). Several explanations exist to explain possible high levels of minority political mobilization and participation. First, mobilization can be described as either direct or indirect. Direct mobilization includes direct appeals to encourage participation. Generally individuals are most readily mobilized by personal contact. Personal contact is not, of course, a mobilization technique limited to minority mobilization, but Texas Hispanic culture suggests that personal contact in the form of a request can be a powerful inducement to action (Richardson 1999).

The second major type of direct mobilization is mobilization by the political parties. Indeed, one of the major functions of the political party is to mobilize its electorate into political participation. Moreover, often the success or failure of a political party is measured by its success or failure to mobilize its voters. Political parties generally mobilize most successfully their core partisans (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993), but they normally also attempt to reach out to new potential voters. Moreover, it is clear that both parties have targeted Hispanics as new potential voters to be mobilized. Republicans claim that Hispanic cultural values are fully compatible with Republican values, but Democrats have traditionally enjoyed overwhelming support from Texas Latinos (Baker 1996; Hero, et al. 2000; Giroux 2002). Moreover, Valdez (1994) found that strong party loyalty contributed to Latino turnout. Yet, Ramírez (2001), also examining Latino turnout, found that strength of partisanship was only significant for the 1996 and 2000 general elections and not significant for the 1998 general election, nor, surprisingly, for the 1998 and 2000 primary elections.

Indirect political mobilization refers to non-SES background or environmental conditions that otherwise encourage political participation. The literature articulates three theoretical approaches to explain minority mobilization into politics: compensation theory, ethnic community, and political empowerment. The first, compensation theory, argues that African-Americans join organizations and become politically active in order to overcome discrimination by the dominant Anglo society (Bobo and Gilliam 1990, 378). "The argument is that blacks. . . compensate for the racial discrimination they encounter in many realms of social life by forming relationships and organizations among themselves, in which they can at least partially escape white racism" (Olsen 1970, 684). The result of organization membership was increased levels of African-American political



activism. Since compensation theory appears to explain African-American mobilization, the theory may also be applied to Hispanics. As a response to discrimination or not, the literature also reports that political participation is enhanced indirectly through membership in voluntary groups such as clubs, charities, religious organizations, and other organizations. Those who are more involved in social life are more likely to be exposed to information and expectations that may motivate political action (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993, 80). Informal discussions at meetings and other gatherings may include political discussions. The meeting agenda may even include some consideration of political issues (Verba, Scholzman, and Brady 1995, 309). Furthermore, it is through organizational membership that individuals may become the targets of direct mobilization efforts. Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) explain that group membership exposes people to selective solidary rewards for political participation making them more likely to participate in politics.

Alternatively, the ethnic community approach holds that minority political participation may be mobilized by ethnic solidarity or consciousness. According to this explanation of African-American political mobilization, strong feelings of group attachment and consciousness lead to the emergence of group norms that encourage political participation to improve group status (Bobo and Gilliam 1990, 378; Sanchez 2006). Ethnic community theory asserts that minorities form a more self-aware ethnic community, which in turn leads to greater social cohesion (García 2003; McClain and Stewart 2006; Miller, et al 1981). Greater social cohesion strengthens the pressures on community members to participate in politics to bring about political and social change (Olsen 1970, 684). Indeed, Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) explain that nonparticipants not only forgo the solidary rewards of social life, but may also suffer social sanctions. Because Hispanics are also a self-aware ethnic community and because South Texas Hispanics are overwhelmingly Mexican American—a single Hispanic community, strong ethnic solidarity may exist to encourage political participation.

The literature on African-American political participation also asserts that African-Americans are mobilized into political participation by political empowerment (Bobo and Gilliam 1990; Gilliam 1996). That is to say, that African-Americans have been mobilized by the example of African-American political success. The presence of fellow-ethnics competing for and winning office energizes African-Americans into political participation. Gilliam (1996, 60) explains how the incorporation of blacks into mainstream politics signaled true system commitment to the principles of American democracy, and the presence of highly visible elected officials raised group pride, contributing to higher levels of political engagement, efficacy, and participation. Moreover the higher the office the greater the mobilization effect; Bobo and Gilliam (1990) identified gains in state legislatures, city councils, and school boards as important to African-American empowerment, but gains at the mayoral level are cited as most significant for empowerment. Logically, the governorship is an even more salient political target for minority empowerment.

In Texas the contemporary account of nascent political empowerment for Hispanics traces back to Crystal City and Zavala County politics in the late 1960s and early 1970s, where, for example, José Angel Gutiérrez became first school board president and later Zavala County Judge (see Shockley 1974; or Gutiérrez 1998 for details). The political leadership and successes of Gutiérrez mobilized fellow South Texas Hispanics into political action. Moreover, Barreto and Masuoka (2004) have shown that the effect of a co-ethnic candidate at the top of the ticket on Latino voter turnout is positive and significant. Their article suggests at least a 10 percent increase in the probability of turnout. Mobilization by empowerment can be explained through effects on individual cost-benefit calculations. For individuals political participation depends upon perceptions

that the benefits of participation outweigh the costs. The likelihood of a co-ethnic winning office and shaping public policy in ways that benefit minority individuals changes the calculation by increasing perceived benefits, making participation more likely (Bobo and Gilliam 1990; Michelson 2000).

### **Data and Research Design**

The data are based upon a random telephone post-election survey conducted in Webb County, Texas in November 2002 through January 2003. Although 637 adults were surveyed, 581, or 93 percent, were Hispanic. For the purposes of this article we only analyze the Hispanic respondents. Because approximately one third of Webb County residents speak only Spanish or prefer Spanish, this was a bilingual survey. Respondents were interviewed in their language of choice, English or Spanish by bilingual university students. Thirty-one percent of the interviews were conducted in Spanish or a mixture of English and Spanish with the remaining 69 percent conducted in English. Webb County is a Latino majority county in South Texas that borders on the Rio Grande River. The largest city is Laredo, the hometown of gubernatorial candidate Tony Sanchez. As a border county, the vast majority of its population is of Mexican origin and between 93 and 95 percent of the population is Hispanic (Texas State Data Center 2000a; Texas State Data Center 2000b).

Two dependent variables are tested in this article, voter registration and voting in the 2002 general election. In so far as voter mobilization is concerned this work is more concerned with voting than with registration, but the act of registering to vote is also a critical form of political participation, since Texans must register at least thirty days in advance of any election to be allowed to vote. It is important to note that voting is actually a two-stage process and that registering to vote is often more difficult than voting (Rosenstone and Wolfinger 1978). Furthermore, evidence suggests that little difference exists in the causes of both voting and registration (Squire, Wolfinger, and Glass 1987; Jackson 1996). However, voter registration for most citizens may have occurred at some earlier time, perhaps many years ago. On the other hand, a few researchers assert that there are differences in the causes of registration versus voter turnout. For example, Rosenstone and Wolfinger (1978) suggest that campaign stimuli have a greater effect on voter turnout than on registration. A second reason this work includes registration as a dependent variable, despite claims of only trivial differences in causation and the likelihood that many respondents probably registered years ago, is because the 2002 election was accompanied by a series of voter registration drives in Webb County. For example, the author and students from the university's Political Science Association sponsored a voter registration drive on campus and at a local shopping mall in January - February and September - October 2002. The local community college sponsored their own voter registration drive, and these efforts were further supported by encouragement and publicity from the William C. Velásquez Institute.

The measure of direct mobilization is the survey question that simply asked respondents if anyone had urged them to vote in the November election. This survey question elicited a simple "yes or no" response. Clearly, if direct mobilization by a simple request does contribute to mobilizing voters the regression coefficient for this variable should be positive and statistically significant. The second measure of direct mobilization concerns political parties. To create this measure a variable was produced that measures the strength of partisanship. The technique used was to "fold" the standard nine-item party identification variable that classifies respondents as "strong Democrat, Democrat, weak Democrat, Independent leaning toward the Democratic Party, Independent-Independent, etc." into a five-item scale where the higher values indicate strong partisanship to

weak partisanship and the lowest value is assigned to Independent-Independents. Since the party message is more eagerly received by those who are identify more strongly with the party, the stronger an individual's partisanship the more they ought to have been mobilized into participation.

To capture compensation theory I use two indicators. The survey asked respondents if they were members of any of four different types of groups: labor unions, charitable organizations, social issue/ citizen's interest groups, or community, school, or church groups. Recall that ethnic compensation theory argues that organizational membership is a route to political activity intended to fight against discrimination (Bobo and Gilliam 1990). The variable (Org. Member) simply counts the affirmative responses of group membership. A respondent may score anywhere from zero (no memberships) to four (four memberships). A second variable measures exposure to discrimination, which compensation theory argues is the stimulus behind the need to join organizations. Respondents were asked if they had experienced any discrimination because of their Spanish heritage such as having been turned down as a renter or buyer of a home, or been treated rudely in a restaurant, or been denied a job, or experienced other important types of discrimination. Their response was either yes or no.<sup>3</sup>

The second indirect model of minority mobilization is the ethnic community model. The most salient aspect of self-identification as an ethnic community differentiated from the English-speaking Anglo community is language. English use is generally associated with the loss of identification with the ethnic community (Eschback and Gomez 1998; Portes and McLeod 1996). Thus, Spanish use is identified with ethnic solidarity. Hence, the variable measuring the strength of ethnic community is the response to the survey question that asked which language the respondent generally uses at home, Spanish or English. The variable is coded from one to five. The value one means Spanish only, the value three means both languages are used more or less equally, and the value five means English only.

The third indirect model, political empowerment, is measured, primarily, by a feeling thermometer for Tony Sanchez, the Democratic Party's Hispanic candidate for Texas Governor. Tony Sanchez is a Laredo and Webb County native; his candidacy alone ought to serve to mobilize a surge of local participation in the November 2002 election. Tony Sanchez' candidacy stands symbolically for Texas Latino political and social empowerment. His candidacy signaled that Texas Hispanics had truly reached the mainstream of Texas politics, and the possibility that he could win the highly symbolic office of governor of Texas indicates tangible progress towards complete political and social equality for Texas Latinos. Politically, his victory marked a revolution—an acknowledgment of the advent of Latino political power and a victory for civil rights and equality in Texas. Moreover, quite recently the Texas governorship was the path to the presidency. Even if such aspirations seem most unlikely for a hypothetical Latino Texas governor, the symbolic possibility remains of importance concerning the mobilizing power of the candidacy of Mr. Sanchez. Respondents were asked to rate Tony Sanchez and a number of other politicians on a scale from one to 100 similar to a thermometer. They were told that: "100 means you really, really like, admire, or identify with the person or group, 50 means you do not have strong feelings of like or dislike, and 1 means you truly dislike the person or group. But choose the value you want to choose. You are not limited to 1, 50, and 100; choose any number between 1 and 100 inclusive—any number that best reflects your true feelings."

The empowerment model also asserts that the empowered should feel more positive about government. Hence, I include as further indicators of empowerment, a measure of a person's interest in politics and a measure of their trust in government. The political interest survey question

asked how closely they followed politics in the news with five possible responses from “never” to “most of the time.” The trust survey question asked, “How much of the time do you think you can trust government officials to what is right: just about always, most of the time, some of the time, or almost never,” was coded from three to zero, respectively.

Lastly, the analyses presented include SES control variables, since these have long been shown to effect political participation. Included are Age, Education, and Income. Age is coded in four categories, 18-30, 31-45, 46-65, and 66 or older. Education is education in years from zero to seventeen years. Income is coded into fifteen categories from less than \$4,999 to the highest category, \$70,000 or more.

## Findings

**Table 1: Voter Turnout for Webb County and Texas 1988-2002 in  
Percent of Registered Voters**

Year	Type Election Year	Webb County	Texas
1988	presidential	49.1%	66.1%
1990	<i>mid-term</i>	<b>31.0%</b>	<b>50.6%</b>
1992	presidential	47.7%	72.9%
1994	<i>mid-term</i>	<b>30.6%</b>	<b>50.9%</b>
1996	presidential	36.1%	53.2%
1998	<i>mid-term</i>	<b>20.2%</b>	<b>32.4%</b>
2000	presidential	35.9%	51.8%
2002	<i>mid-term</i>	<b>42.0%</b>	<b>36.2%</b>

source: Texas Secretary of State ([www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/historical](http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/historical))

### *Webb County Turnout in Mid-Term Elections*

Historically, voter turnout in Webb County lags significantly behind voter turnout, both nationally and statewide. The 2002 Texas election was a mid-term election, but it was also a gubernatorial election. Every Texas mid-term election is a gubernatorial election since they are held every four years. Voter turnout in mid-term elections has always been lower than in presidential election years in Texas and nationally. However, a gubernatorial election may excite some additional participation above and beyond Texas’ core electorate, but the increase is neither very large nor apparent. Turnout rates for Webb County and Texas in recent midterm and presidential elections are compared in Table 1. Webb County mid-term election turnout tends to hover around 30 to 31 percent, but in 1998 turnout was only 20.2 percent.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, in 2002 Tony Sanchez, the Democratic candidate for governor, was a prominent Latino and Webb County/Laredo favorite son; turnout in the county in 2002 rose to an all-time record for a mid-term election, 42.0 percent (Shea 2003). Indeed, this turnout exceeded Webb County voter turnout during the presidential election years of 2000 (35.9 percent) and 1996 (36.1 percent). In addition, Webb County’s 2002 turnout exceeded that of the rest of the state by a margin of six percent. Clearly Webb County residents, who are overwhelmingly Hispanic (95 percent), were mobilized into higher levels of participation in 2002 than in past mid-term elections.

**Table 2: Description of Independent Variables**

Variable	N	Percent Yes	Valid Percent		
Urged to Vote	373	64.2%	65.6%		
Discrimination	179	30.8%	31.5%		
Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
Party ID Strength <sup>1</sup>	454	0	4	2.88	1.17
Org. Member <sup>2</sup>	560	0	4	1.46	1.35
Home Language <sup>3</sup>	581	1	5	2.69	1.09
Tony Sanchez FT	547	1	100	74.4	25.8
Follow Politics <sup>4</sup>	557	1	5	3.47	1.17
Trust Government <sup>5</sup>	564	0	3	1.26	0.76
Age in Categories <sup>6</sup>	577	1	4	1*	
Education in Years	555	0	17	12.8	3.24
Income in Categories <sup>7</sup>	486	1	15	5*	

<sup>1</sup> 0 = Independent, 4 = Strong Partisan.

<sup>2</sup> Number of memberships claimed from zero to four.

<sup>3</sup> 1 = Spanish, 5 = English, 3 = both about equally.

<sup>4</sup> 1 = never and 5 = most of the time.

<sup>5</sup> 0 = never trust and 3 = always trust government to do what is right.

<sup>6</sup> 1 = 18 to 30, 2 = 31 to 45, 3 = 46 to 65, and 4 = 66 or older.

<sup>7</sup> Lowest category is less than \$4,999 and the highest is \$70,000 or more.

The modal value "5" signifies the range \$20,000 - \$24,999.

\*Mode

### *The Characteristics of the Main Independent Variables*

In examining the characteristics hypothesized to contribute to Hispanic mobilization refer to Table 2, which contains the descriptive statistics for main independent variables. Regarding direct mobilization, the vast majority of local Hispanics, 65.6 percent, were urged by someone to vote in the November 2002 election. In addition, with respect to partisanship the mean value is 2.88, which corresponds closest to the value three (3) on the variable, meaning that, on average, the respondent is a partisan, but neither a weak nor a strong partisan. Two variables represent the indirect compensation model, Organization Member and Discrimination. On average South Texas Latinos claim membership in 1.46 organizations, and although there are only 44 non-Hispanic respondents in the survey non-Hispanics claimed membership in 1.93 organizations. Local Hispanics are less active in organization life than are non-Hispanics. Only 31.5% of Latino respondents reported experiencing a significant form of discrimination. Considering that community itself is overwhelmingly Latino, logically most residents may not have had the unfortunate opportunity to experience direct personal discrimination. Portes (1984) reported similar levels of perceived discrimination (26 percent) among Cuban exiles residing in somewhat similar overwhelmingly Cuban Miami in the late 1970s. Yet, rather than a predicted negative relationship between immigrants with

little contact with Anglos and perceptions of discrimination Portes found the opposite, indicating that Hispanics with presumably little contact with Anglos were more likely to perceive discrimination than immigrants living and working in other regions with a greater likelihood of contact with the majority Anglo community (Aguirre, et al 1989, 604). The proxy Home Language represents the ethnic community model. The mean score on this variable is 2.69, which roughly corresponds to the middle response on that survey question, three (3), that both English and Spanish used about equally in the home, but just a bit more Spanish may well be spoken at home since the value is less than three. As mentioned earlier, the majority of people of Webb County and Laredo are bilingual.

Three variables are indicators for the ethnic empowerment model: Tony Sanchez FT, Follow Politics, and Trust Government. The mean feeling thermometer for Tony Sanchez is 74.4. Clearly, Tony Sanchez is viewed quite favorably by local residents. The mean score for Follow Politics is 3.47, falling halfway between “now and then” and “some of the time.” Webb County residents tend to keep themselves informed about politics. On Trust in Government the mean score is 1.26, below the median value of 1.5. This value falls closest to “some of the time,” meaning trust in government exists, but the value is relatively low. Earlier studies of Hispanic political behavior have noted that Hispanics, especially those of the first generation, are more trusting in government than increasingly cynical non-Hispanic Americans (de la Garza, et al 1992; Michelson 2000). Yet, in this survey only 16.5 percent are first generation immigrants.<sup>5</sup> The majority of those surveyed (50.6 percent) are second generation and 32.9 percent are third generation or beyond. It seems likely that later generations learn to become less trustful of government. Even so, the Hispanic respondents to this survey are slightly less trusting in government than a non-Hispanic sample from the 1998 American National Election Study, where the mean score was 1.45 on the same scale.

**Table 3: Logistic Regression on Registered and Vote**

Type of Mobilization	Model	Variable	Registration		Vote	
			B	sig.	B	sig.
Direct		Urged to Vote	.000	1.00	.781*	.029
		Party ID Strength	.248	.197	.311*	.027
Indirect	Compensation Model	Org. Member	.309	.092	.223	.072
		Discrimination	-.412	.409	.466	.206
	Ethnic Community	Home Language	.385	.075	.211	.195
		Tony Sanchez FT	.011	.188	.043**	.000
	Ethnic Empowerment	Follow Politics	.047	.817	.378*	.016
		Trust Government	1.372**	.000	1.002**	.000
Control	SES	Age	.519	.064	.772**	.000
		Education	.295**	.000	.154*	.006
		Income	.059	.457	.008	.874
		Constant	-7.091**	.000	-10.847**	.000
		Chi-square	83.889**	.000	150.048**	.000
		-2 Log likelihood	152.8		265.6	
		Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup>	.437		.507	
		N =	334		338	

\*\* p &lt; .01

\* p &lt; .05

**Table 4: Increased Probability at the Mean/ Median for Each Significant Independent Variable\***

Type of Mobilization	Model	Variable	Registration	Vote
			Probability	Probability
Direct		Urged to Vote (dummy)	----- <sup>1</sup>	19.0%
		Party ID Strength	-----	7.4%
Indirect	Compensation Model	Org. Member	-----	-----
		Discrimination (dummy)	-----	-----
	Ethnic Community	Home Language	-----	-----
		Ethnic Empowerment	Tony Sanchez FT	-----
			Follow Politics	-----
Control	SES	Trust Government	20.2%	24.5%
		Age	-----	19.7%
		Education	4.4%	4.0%
		Income	-----	-----

<sup>1</sup> ----- = Insignificant.

\* Calculated using J. Scott Long's "Excel Workbooks for the Post-estimation Interpretation of Regression Models for Categorical Dependent Variables" downloaded from his web site at < [http://www.indiana.edu/~jslsoc/web\\_spost/sp\\_xpost.htm](http://www.indiana.edu/~jslsoc/web_spost/sp_xpost.htm) >.

### Multivariate Results

Table 3 presents the logistic regression results for both registration and voting. Interpretation of logistic regression coefficients is problematic since they predict not the dependent variable, but the natural logarithm of the odds ratio that the dependent variable equals one, hence Table 4 displays the percent change in the probability for each significant regression coefficient.<sup>6</sup> These cannot be interpreted as standardized regression coefficients, but they do allow us to have some indication of the relative effect of each independent variable in a format we can more readily interpret (Menard 1995). Turning to voter registration, the most notable finding is that almost none of the types of direct and indirect mobilization models have any significant effect on registering to vote. These findings back up those of Rosenstone and Wolfinger (1978). The only significant non-control independent variable is Trust Government. Individuals who are more trusting of government to do what is right are more likely to have registered to vote, lending some, albeit weak, support to the ethnic mobilization model. Moreover, only one of the SES variables, Education, is significant. This result, too, is as expected. Past studies of the whole electorate have shown that Education is a critical independent variable for predicting voter registration (Jackson 1996; Rosenstone and Wolfinger 1978).



With respect to voting, however, the data support direct mobilization by request to vote and by strength of partisanship. Both of these coefficients are significant and signed in the correct direction. Urged to Vote is significant and positive as expected and increases the probability of voting by 19.0 percent. Strength of partisanship is also significant and in the correct direction. Each unit change on this five-value independent variable increases the probability of voting by 7.4 percent. Moreover, the data indicate that neither the Compensation model, nor the Ethnic Community models show any strength. On the other hand, the Ethnic Mobilization model shows strong results; all three of the indicator variables are significant. The Tony Sanchez feeling thermometer is positive and highly significant; a single unit change on this 100-value variable increases the odds of voting by 1.0 percent or over 26.7 percent for one standard deviation change. Follow Politics is positive and significant, and Trust Government is positive and significant. They increase the probability of voting by 9.4 and 24.5 percent per unit increase, respectively.

In retrospect, the failure of the compensation model to mobilize South Texas Latinos into political participation is not very surprising. The compensation model's power to mobilize minority participation occurred during the 1960s and 1970s during the struggle for minority civil rights. While the African-American fight for equal rights inspired a similar and slightly later social movement for equal rights for Latinos, especially Mexican Americans, the movement occurred over twenty years ago. In formal legal terms ethnic equality has been won. Overt discrimination, whether by government or individuals, is largely in the past.<sup>7</sup> As an inducement to higher levels of political participation, it appears its day has come and gone. Bobo and Gilliam (1990) similarly reported that the bases for African-American participation had changed and the compensation model held no power for their 1987 data. Moreover, unusually for South Texas, Webb County is a majority Latino community whose government, politics, and society have always been under local control and never dominated by Anglo politicians.

Similarly, the ethnic community model fails to explain political participation. Considering the hypothetical solidarity of the South Texas Mexican American community this is a surprise. Yet, the real explanation may well be that politics in South Texas better reflect class differences and not racial or ethnic differences (Richardson 1999). Class differences are more salient than ethnic identification in South Texas, although ethnicity remains important in state-level politics. This, too, is largely a result of the county's overwhelmingly Latino population. Alternatively, home language does not correspond very well to ethnic identity; 20 percent of non-Hispanics in the survey use Spanish at home. It is possible, that due to Webb County and Laredo's geographic position on the border with México and the continuous intercourse with non-English speaking Mexicans and immigrants socially, in business, and in family, language persists even beyond ethnic attachment. Regardless, group identification may not be sufficient to inaugurate political participation. Miller, et al. (1981, 495) suggest that participation is not simply a reflection of social conditions. Rather, experience must be politicized through group consciousness and assessments of social justice. Given that South Texas Latinos are not currently politically inflamed by any issue, the failure of the ethnic community model is understandable.

However, this article does indicate that the ethnic mobilization model does have strength for South Texas Latinos. As originally conceived, the model required co-ethnics to be elected to office and make public policy—to represent the ethnic group in government, yet in some circumstances mere candidacy ought to mobilize minorities into action.<sup>8</sup> The candidacy of Tony Sanchez was indeed a major encouragement for voter turnout in South Texas in 2002. The hope that a Hispanic might win such an important and symbolic office empowered Latino citizens to turn out. His

candidacy was perceived as a signal of the incorporation of Latinos into mainstream politics and signaled true system commitment to the principles of American democracy. The high visibility of his candidacy raised group pride, and contributed to higher levels of political engagement, efficacy, and participation. Moreover, this mobilization was especially encouraging to those who are not completely distrustful of government to do the right thing and among those interested in politics. Tony Sanchez did not win, but his example shows that the Latino community can and will be energized by co-ethnic candidates seeking high office.

## Conclusions

These results show that Latinos can be mobilized to higher levels of voter turnout by political success. Although Latino turnout normally lags behind Anglo turnout by as much as 20 or 30 points (García 1997, 31), and the SES characteristics of the Latino population depress potential turnout (Norris 2003, 2005), turnout can surge to very high levels if mobilized by empowerment. In this South Texas county voters turned out in record numbers to support Tony Sanchez. Moreover, these results add support to Bobo and Gilliam's (1990, 387) assertion that causation for the empowerment model is not reversed. That is, they suggest that an alternative explanation might be that higher participation leads to empowerment. Because this test of the empowerment thesis involved a candidate and not the number of incumbent co-ethnic government officials, these results imply that the presence of co-ethnic candidates striving for high office with some chance of success mobilizes participation.

Less clearly, there is also evidence to allow the conclusion that trust in government helps mobilize voter registration by Hispanics. It was hypothesized that the empowered should feel more positive about government. This appears to be the case. It is somewhat expected that Tony Sanchez's candidacy would not exert a large effect on registration since the majority of registrants were almost certainly registered at some earlier time. Moreover, since considering widespread voter registration drives and changes in the law to make registering to vote less challenging since 1993, an interest in politics may not be a prerequisite to registration, but merely a precondition for taking the time and effort to vote.

Furthermore, the ethnic compensation model is not a good explanation at all now that blatant discrimination and exclusion are fading (Jackson 1987, 633). The civil rights movement and struggle are in the distant past for most Latinos, because of their youth. Some argue that class has replaced ethnicity/ race as the major explanation for political activism or lack thereof (Wilson 1978). Moreover, for South Texas Latinos the class explanation may also apply to the ethnic community model, since class is more salient than ethnicity in this region (Richardson 1999; Shockley 1974). A possibly more straightforward explanation for the failure of the ethnic compensation model may well be this South Texas community's overwhelmingly Hispanic population which means there may exist little opportunity for many of the survey respondents to have experienced the kinds of direct and personal types of discrimination tested in this article.

Nevertheless, future research on this subject should be planned to better operationalize the ethnic community model. Despite the research that contends that language use may serve as a proxy for community solidarity (Eschback and Gomez 1998; Portes and McLeod 1996), alternative measures may capture this phenomenon more successfully. In addition, it is worth testing the ethnic empowerment model on a statewide basis as soon as conditions permit. Researchers can hope that in the future funds will be made available for a statewide survey of Texas Hispanics, Anglos, and African-Americans.



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## Rebuilding Democratic Institutions: The OAS Roundtable in Perú

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Since James March and Johan Olsen launched the “New Institutionalism” with their seminal 1984 article (March and Olsen 1984), a generation of scholars has placed the study of political institutions at the center of analysis to explain political behavior and policy choices. March and Olsen held a particular view of how institutions shape political behavior, arguing that they create norms that make some choices acceptable and others unacceptable. Subsequent observers developed other branches of analysis, including rational choice, historical, empirical, international, and societal institutionalism. The core assumption of each is that institutions matter, that institutionally-generated rules and norms, formal or informal, explain the behaviors of political actors. The literature tends to focus on explaining how institutions affect policy choices, and it typically takes the institutionally-generated rules and norms as given. Analysts normally spend far less time and effort understanding the institutions themselves: where they come from, how they work, and why political actors are willing to accept the constraints that they impose (Peters 1999).

Events in Perú in 2000 offer a case that can help to fill this analytical gap by exploring the well-documented life cycle of an institution that was for a time central to political bargaining in Lima. That institution, the *Mesa de Diálogo* (Roundtable), was formed by the Organization of American States (OAS) to “strengthen democracy in Perú” in the wake of May 2000 presidential elections that domestic and international observers uniformly condemned as fraudulent (OAS 2000a). The Roundtable helped to guide the democratic transition as President Alberto Fujimori’s autocratic regime collapsed in the summer and fall of that year, and the country seemed to teeter between street violence and a new military coup.

Designed jointly by Peruvians and OAS operatives, the Roundtable comprised senior members of the Fujimori government, opposition leaders, and civil society, along with OAS representatives. Formed when Fujimori still appeared firmly in control, the Roundtable’s mission was to recommend reforms to the electoral system, legislature, military and other key institutions. When the regime began to disintegrate under the weight of scandal and public repudiation in the late summer, however, the Roundtable became a decision-making body that helped to form a bridge between the Fujimori regime and the subsequent interim government. It helped shape the transition from authoritarian to democratic governance, helped Perú avoid a coup or a more violent street rebellion, and ended with elections for a new government (Cooper and Legler 2006).

As the fruit fly’s short life span makes their species a useful subject for biological studies, the OAS Roundtable’s brief life cycle can provide insights into the origin and operation of political institutions. While it was an OAS initiative facilitated by Canadian good offices, the Roundtable was not a traditional mediation by outsiders, but an institution manned and run by Peruvians. Its well-documented life provides an opportunity to get inside of an institution to answer central questions about the institution itself. Questions include how and why the Roundtable formed. Why were key political actors in Perú and the OAS willing to join the Roundtable and comply with its decisions? How did the Roundtable’s mission and activities shift from making suggestions for democratic reform to making authoritative political decisions? Finally, how does the Peruvian Roundtable fit into our understanding of the New Institutionalism?

None of institutionalism's theoretical branches fully answer these questions, but several – including normative, rational choice, and historical institutionalism – offer partial answers that together help to solve the puzzle. Institutionalists have overlooked the benefits of a cross-cutting approach that combines insights from more than one theoretical approach. To explore that possibility, I first review the key assumptions of the three institutional approaches mentioned above: normative, rational choice, and historical. Subsequently I discuss the Roundtable's creation following Perú's 2000 presidential election, its subsequent evolution, and its role in guiding the regime transformation. Finally, I analyze those events through the lens of the three institutional approaches. While a single case like Perú's cannot provide definitive answers to these questions, it does suggest aspects of institutional analysis that may have been overlooked in the past, while providing interesting possibilities for future research.

### **The New Institutionalism**

Since March and Olsen's seminal work on the "New Institutionalism" renewed interest in political institutions (1984, 1989, 1995), a whole school of political science has focused on ways that institutions shape political behavior and policy choices. Although many of these studies differ substantially on which institutions to place at the center of analysis and over the causal mechanisms through which they work, several key assumptions unite their work. First, institutionalists agree that institutions matter, that they mold human behavior in predictable ways, and that they frequently offer the best explanation for political outcomes. Second, they largely agree on defining institutions as "structural features of society and government that ... involve groups of people in patterned interactions that are predictable, based upon specified relationships among the actors" (Peters 1999). Institutions may thus include legislatures, bureaucratic agencies, parties, interest groups, or patron-client relationships. They affect behavior through formal and informal constraints that shape individual and collective preferences, while they define the strategies most likely to achieve those aims (although how they influence preferences and strategies is under dispute). Finally, members should share a common set of values and/or incentives that inform their relation to each other, the institution, and the rest of the government and society.

The three schools of institutionalist thought that I explore in this paper – normative, rational choice, and historical – differ in their view of the relationship between individuals and institutions and the mechanisms that influence individual and collective behavior. Normative institutionalism, the approach favored by March and Olsen, defines political institutions as "collections of interrelated rules and routines that define *appropriate* action in terms of relations between roles and situations" (March and Olsen 1989). The crucial aspect is the institution's ability to define appropriate behavior by establishing and enforcing norms, which may be formally defined or informally understood. Under this "logic of appropriateness", members accept institutional norms as legitimate. They shape their preferences and behavior accordingly, even when that may harm their personal interests. For example, a soldier may stand and fight when running away may be much more sensible (McDonald 1983), or a judge may render a legally correct ruling despite offers of lucrative bribes or personal threats. Certainly not all institutions are equally effective at influencing behavior. Strong institutions have well-defined norms that they manage to internalize in their members, and most members act in accordance most of the time. Weak institutions may have poorly defined or widely-ignored norms.

Rational choice institutionalism shares with its normative cousin an emphasis on institutions as collections of rules, but it differs in how the rules shape behavior. Like other rational choice



perspectives, it places utility-maximizing individuals at the center of analysis, making personal welfare rather than values the motivating force. In this perspective, rules establish the institution's goals, the menu of actions that can be taken, and how information is structured, and they determine who is included in decision-making (Kiser and Ostrom 1982). Individuals join organizations or institutions and comply with the rules because of anticipated benefits, frequently expressed in career advancement or other personal goals (Peters 1999). For example, a legislator may accept party discipline because that is the only means of securing reelection and advancing to posts of greater responsibility and power.

In the rational choice version, institutions affect political outcomes in two ways – by shaping actors' preferences and determining which strategies are likely to succeed. The aphorism “where you stand depends on where you sit” captures the first aspect well. For example, chief executives who are accountable to a national constituency for national economic performance are frequently free traders, while legislators are more concerned with protecting particular industries within their more specific constituencies. Rules further shape politics by allocating power and thus determining which strategies are most likely to succeed. Rules can be changed much quicker than norms, however, altering the incentives for political actors, and consequently changing political behavior and likely outcomes. Since most political activity occurs within and between institutions like legislatures, cabinets, bureaucracies, parties, and interest groups, the ways that institutional rules shape political competition is fundamental to understanding the outcomes (Tsebelis 1990).

Historical institutionalism differs from the normative and rational choice versions by shifting the level of analysis from the individual to the institution. Less concerned with how institutions shape behavior, it pays little attention to the relationship between individuals and institutions, focusing instead on the persistence of political institutions and their habitual behavior over time. Historical institutionalists assume that institutions carry out their roles, and it matters little whether the enforcement mechanism on individual members relies on norms, material incentives, or some other method. Institutions are viewed less as collections of rules to control members' behavior and more as habitual ways of doing things (Peters 1999).

The center of attention in historical institutionalism is the ability that institutions exhibit to prolong the patterns of behavior established at their founding, possibly long after the original impetus for them has passed (Skocpol 1992). Steven Krasner (1984) refers to “path dependency” and “punctuated equilibria” in describing institutional behavior. He argues that inertia guides their activities and policy choices until a major event, a “critical juncture” (Collier and Collier 1991), forces change or “punctuation” in the institution's equilibrium. Historical institutionalists allow for gradual evolution of organizations' preferences and performance, but they argue that most organizations have defensive capabilities that protect their habitual behaviors from change (Christensen 1997). Allison and Zelikow's (1999) discussion of bureaucratic politics during the Cuban missile crisis is an example. Standard operating procedures set early in the Cold War affected each national security organizations' preferences and the range of alternative strategies offered to the President.

Thus, institutional analysis represents a variety of approaches that together privilege institutionally-generated rules and patterns of behavior as an explanation of political events. Each of the schools considered here – normative, rational choice, and historical – provides unique insights that may help to understand the creation, operation, evolution, and impact of the OAS Roundtable in Perú. The following section will discuss the events that led the OAS to form the Roundtable and later shaped its mission and the role that the Roundtable played in Peruvian politics. Subsequently I will analyze the usefulness of the three theoretical approaches in explaining how and why the Roundtable was formed and how it addressed its objectives.

## The OAS Roundtable

Ten years of crises and de-institutionalization set the stage for the Peruvian Roundtable in 2000. The *Sendero Luminoso* insurgency and hyperinflation topping 7500% decapitated civil society while they discredited traditional parties, Congress, and the Courts. The ensuing decade of Alberto Fujimori's autocratic rule inhibited the re-growth of institutions. Elected in 1990 as an "anti-party" candidate, his only institutional bases of support were the intelligence service led by his personal security advisor, Vladimiro Montesinos, and the military under his hand-picked commander (Cameron and Mauceri 1997). In a self-coup (*autogolpe*) two years later, Fujimori finally closed the Congress, courts, and political parties and ruled by decree.

The 1992 OAS response to the *autogolpe* anticipated the events in 2000. Although Perú's serial crises made the coup popular at home, the U.S. and other members led the organization to threaten Perú's access to international finance. Fujimori responded by adroitly playing the OAS and requesting its help in returning democracy to Perú. With OAS assistance he drafted a new constitution and subsequently held new legislative and presidential elections (Parish and Peceny 2000). Reports of gross irregularities during the election went largely unchallenged by the OAS and other foreign observers (Cooper and Legler 2006). Over the ensuing years Fujimori continued to govern autocratically, with institutional support from the military and intelligence services and a now-compliant legislature. He successfully manipulated the Congress and other weakened institutions through a mixture of corruption, repression, and fraud (Roberts 1997). No one seriously challenged his anti-democratic moves throughout the remainder of the 1990s, although elements of civil society finally began to reemerge late in the decade.

The presidential election in April 2000 took place in a renewed crisis atmosphere, with the out-gunned opposition repeatedly charging the government of cheating. Indeed, Fujimori's presence on the ballot was controversial since the constitution limited presidents to two terms. To get a favorable ruling on that question, he had fired three Supreme Court justices with the backing of the tame legislature and the always-hovering military and intelligence services. The run-up to the election was checkered by accusations of manipulation. In one especially notorious episode, observers discovered a workshop that had turned out nearly a million fake signatures to put Fujimori's new *Perù 2000* party on the ballot (OAS 2000a). The international community nevertheless tacitly supported the elections, as the OAS, the Carter Center, the European Union, and others accepted his invitation to monitor the April 9 balloting.

In the campaign's last weeks, opposition support jelled behind a newcomer to Peruvian politics, Alejandro Toledo. On Election Day, international observers fanned out across the country, and reports of irregularities mounted. Announcement of results was repeatedly delayed over the subsequent three days, during which vote tallies were unavailable to outside inspection. Toledo supporters and other Fujimori opponents filled the streets of Lima and regional capitals, reinforced by unequivocal public statements from the United States and the other international observers that a fraudulent victory would be unacceptable. Combined international and domestic pressure proved decisive, and the final announcement gave Fujimori 49.8 percent of the vote and Toledo 40.3 percent. The government, the opposition, and the election observers began preparations to hold a run-off on May 28 (Balbi and Palmer 2001, OAS 2000a).

Perú's ombudsman, the head of the OAS observer mission, and Alejandro Toledo agreed to several measures to ensure a clean run-off, including equal media attention to both candidates, continual and full access of domestic and foreign observers, and full access to the electoral computing system (LAWR 5/30/2000). Despite several cosmetic changes, however, the government failed to

honor the agreements, and the pattern of heavy-handed manipulation continued. On May 18 the OAS head of mission requested a postponement to correct flaws in the process, which Toledo used as leverage to withdraw from the contest. Fujimori persisted, and the OAS left the country on May 26, two days before the election, declaring that the election preparations “failed to meet the minimal standards of a free and fair election” (Cooper and Legler 2001).<sup>9</sup> All of the other international observers followed suit and left as protesters continued to fill the streets. Toledo called on voters to abstain or nullify their ballots, and when the votes were counted, Fujimori won with an official count of 50.3 percent of the ballots cast. A Lima newspaper noted that the president “had run alone, and lost” (LAWR 5/30/2000). The intensity of street protests grew in Lima and around the country.

The events in Perú occurred at a crucial time for the OAS, from two perspectives. First, nearly ten years had passed since the OAS firmly pledged to defend democracy at the General Assembly in Santiago, Chile. Resolution 1080 provided for concrete collective steps in the event of an “interruption of democratic rule” in any of the member countries. With the end of the Cold War, the wave of democratic transitions from 1980 to 1990, and the United States’ renewed support, the Organization for the first time made serious efforts to fulfill its commitment to democracy. It subsequently implemented 1080 procedures following coups in Haiti and Guatemala, as well as Fujimori’s 1992 *autogolpe*.

The second crucial coincidence was the imminent General Assembly in Windsor, Canada, which convened within days of Perú’s election. Perú inevitably topped the agenda of controversial issues, since the idea of a regional response to a fraudulent election was a radical departure from previous practice. Members tended to divide into three camps depending on domestic politics and the balance between their commitment to democracy or non-intervention. The United States and Costa Rica alone argued for implementation of Resolution 1080 procedures to pressure Perú, and the U.S. actually began the process of withholding bilateral and multilateral finance. Argentina, Chile, and Canada pressed for OAS action, although they shied away from 1080 intervention. Brazil, Venezuela, and México joined Perú in opposing any form of sanctions, appealing to nationalists at home or, in Venezuela’s case, from anti-Americanism tinged with their own fears of intervention.

Everyone nevertheless professed their commitment to democracy, and threatened by sanctions from the U.S. and others, Fujimori provided a solution. As he had done in the 1992 *autogolpe* crisis, he called Perú an “imperfect democracy” and promised to “correct errors to fortify democratic institutions” (Krauss 2000a). Acting on that premise, Secretary General Cèsar Gaviria and the Canadian hosts worked out a face-saving compromise. Resolution 1753 proposed to send a high level mission, at Perú’s invitation, to explore “with the Government of Perú and other sectors of the political community options and recommendations aimed at further strengthening democracy in that country”. The Uruguayan Foreign Minister explained “We are not against Perú. We are responding to a request from a member for help” (Cooper and Legler 2006).

Gaviria and Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy led the High Level Mission, visiting Perú immediately following the Windsor General Assembly. With nothing officially off-limits but the May election results, they consulted with representatives of the government, opposition, and civil society and developed a list of twenty-nine proposals to strengthen democracy in Perú. Their intent was to produce real, not cosmetic reforms, and the twenty-nine points accordingly dealt with a variety of intrusive issues, including specific reforms covering the judiciary, rule of law, freedom of expression and press, electoral reform, congressional oversight and control of corruption, civilian control of the military and intelligence services and professionalization of the military (LAWR 7/4/2000, OAS 2000c). The mission’s intent was to stimulate dialogue between Peruvians, leading

to reforms over a two-year process. To monitor and assist the process they organized the *Mesa de Diálogo* (Roundtable) which organized itself and began work in July 2000.

The Roundtable set to work in an atmosphere of on-going tension across Perú. The opposition, including Toledo, saw it as another Fujimori ploy and continued to fill the streets in protest. At Fujimori's July 28 inauguration thousands of Peruvians from around the country travelled to Lima, and the protests grew more violent with six killed, over a hundred injured, and government buildings burned (Krauss 2000b, LAWR 8/1/2000).

Eduardo Latorre, a former foreign minister from the Dominican Republic headed a small secretariat created to facilitate discussions, and the Canadian embassy to Lima provided the venue. The Roundtable was a Peruvian institution, however. Its membership included eighteen representatives from the government, opposition as well as pro-government members of Congress, and civil society. Members divided into five working groups to address each of the five reform areas left by the Gaviria-Axworthy mission, which turned out to be a useful device for building "trust and deliverables" (Cooper and Legler 2005). As the Roundtable's work progressed, especially after the government began to unravel, the working groups developed a problem-solving atmosphere with each inviting experts and technical advisors to assist (Cooper and Legler 2001). Deliberations developed a pattern in which the government representatives always spoke first, followed by the opposition and finally the civil society representatives. Decisions were reached by majority vote in which only the government and opposition representatives had a ballot (Cooper and Legler 2006).

It is difficult to know if the OAS Roundtable would have had any impact – the government initially accepted none of the working groups' proposals – except for a series of shocks that began in mid-August with the revelation that the intelligence service and military had been selling arms secretly to Colombia's largest guerrilla force, the FARC. The news sparked outrage at home and abroad, and Fujimori responded with a series of proposed reforms, including naming a special prosecutor to investigate the security chief, Vladimiro Montesinos. The President also tried to defuse the situation by opening negotiations with the opposition through the Roundtable.

The second shock fell three weeks later with the "Vladi-video" airing on Lima TV. The government had lost its legislative majority in the spring elections, but over the summer a dozen congressmen switched parties, restoring the government's majority and the legislature's compliance. The Vladi-video helped to explain their defections. Aired on September 14, the video showed Montesinos bribing an opposition congressman to join the government's coalition.<sup>10</sup> The resulting political upheaval was immediate, widespread, and profound, and it finally split the triumvirate of presidency, intelligence service, and military. Fujimori blamed everything on Montesinos, and within days he proposed disbanding the national intelligence service. Subsequently he proposed new legislative and presidential elections to be held in April, in which he would not be a candidate. Montesinos disappeared from public view, and there was a sense that two national power centers had developed, pitting a weakened Fujimori against Montesinos and possibly the military (LAWR 9/19/2000).

From the release of the Vladi-video, Perú underwent a slow-motion unraveling of the decade-old Fujimori regime, as one by one the regime's props collapsed, all displayed publicly by the newly-active media. Montesinos left for exile in Panama, and Congress voted overwhelmingly to disband the intelligence service. With diminished leadership from Fujimori and Montesinos gone, Congress deadlocked on most other issues, and a growing number of government-allied legislators began to defect. News that Montesinos remained in communication from Panama with legislators and army officers provoked more outrage and added to the uncertainty over who

was in charge. Fujimori began touring military installations to rally support, while quietly relieving or transferring Montesinos' allies. Officers began trying to save the institution and themselves, demanding amnesty for crimes during Perú's guerrilla war and distancing themselves from the regime and Montesinos.

The final act began with Montesinos making an unexpected, secret return from Panama on October 23, prompting new fears of a coup. Fujimori personally led searches for his former aide, and Peruvians were treated nightly to televised SUV convoys flying to the last reported Montesinos sighting, the President leaping from the lead vehicle to dash through houses and military bases. Despite persistent coup rumors, the only military rebellion occurred a week after Montesinos' return, when an Army captain in the far south mutinied and fled to the hills with a small detachment. Neither the government nor the military were able to find Captain Humala, although journalists apparently had little difficulty interviewing either him or Montesinos (LAWR 10/31/2000). In the tragic-comic weeks after Montesinos' return, Fujimori's coalition in the legislature evaporated. The chamber finally replaced the President of Congress, a die-hard Fujimori loyalist, with Valentin Paniagua, a respected elder statesman. In mid-November Fujimori left on a tour of Pacific countries and faxed his resignation from Brunei on the twentieth. The following day, Congress declared the presidency "vacant for moral incapacity," accepted the resignations of both Vice Presidents, and installed Valentin Paniagua as interim president until elections could be held in July.

Peruvians made the decisions and directed events throughout the tumultuous summer and fall of 2000, and the OAS Roundtable was at the center of their deliberations, helping to avoid a coup, government repression, and civil violence. It provided a constant reminder that the international community was involved and would not accept authoritarian solutions (McClintock 2001). The Roundtable was also the one institution still functioning where government, opposition, and civil society could have dialogue, and it became for a time the de facto authoritative decision-making body for the nation (Cooper and Legler 2006). Each sector found it useful to continue participating in the Roundtable when Congress deadlocked, and the presidency, intelligence service, and military became increasingly paralyzed. Participants worked out deals to disband the intelligence service, schedule new elections, reform the military, form an interim presidency, among other issues (LAWR 10/3/2000, 10/17/2000). Before it disbanded in January 2001, the Roundtable realized sixteen of the twenty-nine institutional reforms that the Gaviria-Axworthy mission had proposed in June. It also fostered a sense of institutional continuity through the period of regime transition. As newscasters offered nightly commentary on remarkable events that seemingly occurred every day, they often used the Roundtable's pronouncements as the seal of authority.

### **Institutional Prisms**

As the facets of a prism bend light into different colors, the schools of institutional analysis highlight different aspects of the OAS Roundtable, helping to understand its origin and operation. Specifically, we can look for answers to the research questions that prompted this paper, including how the Roundtable formed and why opposing political actors in Perú were willing to join it and comply with its rules. How was it transformed into an authoritative decision-making body, and how does the Roundtable fit into the New Institutionalism? I argue that neither of the main branches of institutionalism fully answers these questions. Instead, at least three institutional approaches – historical, normative, and rational choice – offer useful insights, with each solving a part of the puzzle.

The crux of historical institutionalism is that urgent needs and crises provide incentives to create institutions, and that choices made at the founding tend to stick until another crisis alters institutions' rules. There were three such critical junctures in the Roundtable's life: the tumultuous General Assembly in Windsor on the heels of Perú's roundly-denounced elections, the institutional disintegration following the release of the video showing Montesinos bribing a congressman, and the subsequent formation of an interim government to prepare for new elections. In fact the Roundtable notably did comply with historical institutionalism's predictions.

The Roundtable represented an extremely rare intrusion for the OAS into a member state's internal affairs (one of the few precedents was the less-effectual mission to Perú that Fujimori had requested after the *autogolpe*). Neither mission is explicable except for the particular confluence of forces in the Americas following the Cold War and the Third Wave of democratization from 1979-1990, during which every authoritarian government in the region underwent a democratic transition. Democracy was at the top of the organization's agenda, and several members wanted a forceful response to Fujimori's flagrant electoral manipulation. These included the United States, which in the Cold War's aftermath was newly interested in democracy, along with Canada, Argentina, Chile, and Costa Rica. Even less-activist countries, such as México, were willing to accept a mission, given the United States' less confrontational behavior after the Cold War (Legler and Cooper 2006). The final piece was the General Assembly hosted by Canada, which convened within days of the elections that all international observers, including the OAS's own mission, denounced, and against the backdrop of rising opposition to the elections in Perú.

The goals, organization, and procedures set initially by the Gaviria-Axworthy mission to Lima in June remained remarkably stable throughout the Roundtable's term, as historical institutionalism predicts. For example, the original membership, comprising representatives from the government, opposition parties, and civil society, remained constant with the single addition of government-affiliated parties later in the process. That addition at the Roundtable's second meeting made it a more effective venue for dialogue between executive, legislature, and society (Cooper and Legler 2006). The Roundtable's rules and procedures remained constant, including the requirement for consensus decision-making, and the four working groups organized at the pivotal second meeting remained central to the process. Participants agreed the small group format diminished the initial polarization between opposition and government supporters and developed a more problem-solving atmosphere (Cooper and Legler 2001). Most notably perhaps, the Roundtable persisted in focusing its agenda on the twenty-nine institutional reforms that Gaviria and Axworthy had proposed in their initial June 2000 mission to Perú. The Roundtable effectively used that agenda to direct its work even while the situation changed radically, and by the time that it disbanded in January 2001, there was agreement on sixteen of the twenty-nine points (Balbi and Palmer 2001).

Historical institutionalism predicts such consistency, as well as the change in the Roundtable's scope, when it became an authoritative decision-making body in Peruvian politics. The Montesinos video was the unforeseeable catalyst, followed by an equally dramatic series of events that paralyzed the country's key institutions, including the presidency, intelligence service, military, and Congress. The Roundtable's most valuable service ultimately may have been providing an institutional bridge while the presidency, Congress, military, and intelligence services were paralyzed, and the possibility of a coup or widespread violence was real. It provided a venue where Peruvian political actors could negotiate the way forward, on an almost daily basis following new developments. Key decisions like disbanding the intelligence service, changing congressional structure, and planning new elections were hammered out in the Roundtable. It also provided daily

evidence that the outside world, including the United States and powerful financial interests, was paying attention and would not easily accept a new dictatorship (McClintock 2001).

Historical institutionalism illuminates the Roundtable's origin and its assumption of decision-making authority, as well as the persistence of its goals, organization, and operations through the period. Historical institutionalism cannot answer other questions, however, such as why fraudulent elections generated a crisis at the OAS, why Fujimori requested help reforming Perú's domestic institutions, or why the Roundtable acquired such legitimacy. Normative institutionalism can help to answer these questions. This version holds that institutions embrace specific values that shape their members preferences and behavior, because members acknowledge the values' legitimacy and act accordingly. Democracy was the overriding value that shaped the events surrounding the OAS Roundtable in Perú. Every actor involved, including Fujimori and his allies, nominally but publicly acknowledged the normative requirement for democratic governance, and each was compelled to justify his or her actions based on liberal democratic standards.

The democracy norm, which was at the center of the OAS's actions, had been growing for almost a decade, since the 1991 Santiago Declaration committed the Organization to protecting democracy in the Hemisphere, and Resolution 1080 provided institutional procedures to do so. The OAS had readily used 1080 mechanisms to counter traditional coups in Haiti (1991), Perú (1992), and Guatemala (1993), but with fewer overt "interruptions in constitutional processes", emphasis had shifted to more pro-active interest in strengthening democratic institutions like elections, judicial systems, free press, and civil society (Legler and Cooper 2005). The Unit for the Promotion of Democracy had been created to deal with just these kinds of issues by providing technical assistance from international experts. Training observers and monitoring the 2000 Peruvian elections was an increasingly typical activity. When the OAS's observation team and all other international observers withdrew after denouncing the election, the growing acceptance of democratic norms compelled the General Assembly to take action.

The General Assembly's membership was torn between competing norms of democracy and sovereignty, with this probably the first occasion in which there was a real contest between the two, especially in the absence of a traditional, overt coup. It was remarkable that the United States led the fight for 1080 sanctions against Perú, given its long-standing support for Fujimori, with whom the U.S. had waged a successful campaign against coca cultivation. The U.S. Congress on its own proceeded to cut aid to Perú and pressed the Clinton administration to impose further sanctions (Marquis 2000). Domestic political considerations shaped each country's position at Windsor such that México, Brazil, Venezuela, and Perú vigorously opposed sanctions, though they too were compelled to speak the language of democracy. Fujimori himself provided the seed of compromise by professing his concern for Peruvian democracy and requesting that the OAS send a mission to assist in perfecting it. In this he replayed the gambit that had relieved the pressure from the OAS and the U.S. after the 1992 *autogolpe* (*New York Times* 7/10/2000).

In Perú all political actors had to at least profess support for democracy. Elites and civil society alike demanded public acknowledgement of democratic norms as the *sine qua non* for participating in politics. This represented a remarkable change from 1992 when Fujimori's popularity had soared on the strength of tough action against terrorism and hyperinflation, including rule by decree during the *autogolpe*. In 2000 popular outrage over the mishandled elections triggered demonstrations across the country, especially in Lima, where the level of protest grew until Fujimori's inauguration sparked street battles with police that left a half dozen dead and government buildings in ashes (LAWR 8/1/2000). The international community and Peruvian society finally concurred on the importance of democratic norms.

The Montesinos video two weeks after the inauguration took popular outrage to a new level because of the blatant, cynical rejection of democratic norms that it portrayed. The Fujimori regime never regained its balance after the TV broadcast of Montesinos in action. In the institutional vacuum that ensued, the OAS Roundtable received widespread deference, along with power to make legitimate decisions since it represented the international community's authority on democratic norms. The Peruvian press and public accepted the OAS's democratic expertise and authority; hence, the Roundtable's stamp of approval became necessary for reforms to be widely accepted. This was especially true as the crisis progressed, and the government was increasingly unable to control its previous supporters. In the later stages of the government's collapse, nightly newscasts portrayed daily happenings, using the Roundtable's pronouncements as a standard by which to judge events.

While democratic norms thoroughly colored the discourse between the OAS, member states, and Peruvian political actors during the 2000 national crisis, it strains credibility to argue that norms alone shaped the key actors' behavior. Clearly not all actors were enthusiastic democrats. Fujimori's embrace of democratic values, for example, was clearly a cynical play for time. Instead, rational choice perspectives provide insights into actors' behavior, which often was based on benefits that creating and participating in the Roundtable offered. Rational choice institutionalism argues that political actors join institutions and comply with institutional rules to gain material benefits that otherwise would be unattainable. Institutional rules reward some behaviors and punish others, and they ultimately help to shape actors' preferences by providing benefits for compliance. Indeed, it is impossible to understand how the OAS Roundtable was created and why Peruvian actors were willing to join and go along with its decisions without considering the actors' material and political interests.

Despite the centrality of democratic discourse in the OAS, each of the key actors there had an individual interest in promoting democratic reforms in Perú. Led by César Gaviria, the most active Secretary General in OAS history, the organization itself embraced democracy promotion as a way to enhance its own relevance and influence (Parish and Peceny 2002). The most powerful member of the OAS, the United States, traditionally prefers stability, especially in its own hemisphere. The Fujimori-Montesinos-military triumvirate appeared increasingly unstable, especially after the blatant manipulation of the 2000 elections provoked widespread domestic unrest, provoking the U.S. to look for alternatives. The final straw may have been the revelation of Montesinos and the Peruvian military secretly selling arms to the Colombian FARC (Balbi and Palmer 2001). Democracy promotion also seemed like a useful stick against Venezuela's Hugo Chavez, as he consolidated power with a new constitution in 2000. Finally, democracy promotion helped to sell foreign policy to the United States' domestic audience in the Post-Cold War era (Peceny 1999).

Other OAS member states also had a substantial interest in collectively promoting democracy, especially Argentina and Chile, the two most vigorous supporters of Resolution 1080 sanctions against Perú.<sup>11</sup> Both countries had recent experience with especially brutal dictatorships, and the democratic leaders in both saw collective democracy promotion as a means of guarding against authoritarian reversals in their own countries (Parish and Peceny 2002). Canada, which provided its good offices in Windsor and at its Lima embassy, had only recently developed a political interest in the region and promoting democracy was a way to extend its developing influence. Opponents like Brazil, Venezuela, and México had their own interests to protect, and the need for General Assembly consensus made Resolution 1080 sanctions unattainable. Consequently, the Roundtable seemed the best resolution that the democracy-promoters could achieve.



Perhaps more than the international players, Peruvian actors had direct interests in joining and participating in the OAS Roundtable. Alberto Fujimori embraced the Roundtable as a welcome alternative to 1080 sanctions and more directly threatening bilateral U.S. sanctions. After the disputed 2000 elections, he faced increasing pressures from the international community and growing opposition at home, and the Roundtable provided an opportunity to buy time and deal with these attacks. It was a good maneuver, since he expected that the OAS mission ultimately would be toothless. In this it was a replay of the successful 1992 strategy that Fujimori had used to fend off sanctions by accepting an international mission that in the end had little impact on his rule. Indeed, his estimate of the situation appeared to be working until the Montesinos video radically changed the political dynamic (Cooper and Legler 2006).

The opposition was initially suspicious of the Roundtable, and Alejandro Toledo, the presidential runner up, refused to participate. Toledo nevertheless kept one foot in the game by yielding his seat on the Roundtable to a close ally, while personally remaining outside to lead the street protests. Other members of the opposition and civil society representatives were justifiably suspicious that the Roundtable would lend legitimacy to Fujimori's government, and that he would find a way to negate its influence. Despite their suspicions, the main opposition parties and respected leaders of civil society accepted places on the Roundtable since Fujimori had a lock on the Congress, courts, and other institutions of government. The Roundtable was the only institution available that had a possibility of making a difference.

The mid-September "Vladi-video" was the first in a series of shocks that completely changed the political equation for the government and the opposition and suddenly made the Roundtable attractive to all sides. The revelations and subsequent public outcry paralyzed the presidency, intelligence service, military and the Congress. Extreme alternatives such as a coup, either the traditional variety or a new *autogolpe*, increased repression, or stronger street protests were not in the interests of either the government or opposition. The Roundtable was untainted, and its international credentials lent legitimacy that Peruvians accepted, so it provided a venue for dialogue and decision-making that potentially served the interests of all sides. The crisis presented the OAS with its best opportunity to realize its democracy-building agenda, and the organization pressed its advantage. Fujimori used the Roundtable for support against Montesinos and his military allies as the regime unraveled, and members of the government began to turn against each other. Fujimori, government legislators, and the opposition alike turned to the Roundtable as the crisis unfolded, and the balance of power in the Congress shifted on an almost daily basis. They did so, as rational choice institutionalism argues, because the OAS Roundtable provided opportunities to protect their interests in a fluid and dangerous environment.

## Conclusion

As the end of the crisis neared, massive defections splintered Fujimori's congressional block, and the center of power shifted to the legislature, where the opposition seized control. After Fujimori's surprise resignation, Congress named an interim government and began preparations for new elections, using the institutional reforms that the OAS Roundtable had created. Its mission of bringing together the Fujimori government, opposition, and civil society to reform Perú's democratic institutions was suddenly irrelevant. The Roundtable quickly wrapped up its work, and the OAS team left Perú in January 2001, six months after setting to work.

The Roundtable's brief lifespan suggests that institutional analysts are correct in their common assumption that institutions matter. The Roundtable did not reform the Fujimori regime

as originally planned, and it did not cause the government to unravel. It did, however, shape the outcomes of the crisis that began with Fujimori's disputed election, deepened with the broadcast of the Montesinos video, and ended with the interim government preparing for new elections. The Roundtable provided an authoritative, decision-making institution that bridged the crucial space leading to the interim government, when the other institutions of government were paralyzed. It helped to avoid coups, harsher repression, and greater street violence or rebellion, which were real possibilities. It is not clear, however, if the Roundtable model would be equally successful in many cases, since its effectiveness ultimately depended on the Fujimori regime's unexpected unraveling. In many ways its presence was an historical accident, a case of being at the right place at the right time.

The purpose of this paper was not to study the impact of the OAS mission to Perú, but to explore the Roundtable as an institution – to understand how it came to be, how it was designed and how it worked, how its mission and activities changed, why such a variety of opposing political actors agreed to participate in the Roundtable and accept its decisions, and how it fits into the overall program of the New Institutionalism. Neither of the major institutionalist approaches fully answers all of those questions. Historical institutionalism suggests that the Roundtable's creation and its particular mission were the result of a political crisis that threatened to widen into greater instability and violence. The Roundtable's mission expansion would have been unlikely without the deepened crisis triggered by the shock of the Montesinos video. Normative institutionalism helps to explain the impact of democratic norms, as democracy had become a crucial component of legitimacy in the Western Hemisphere, including Perú, and the OAS had gained the authority to certify democratic credentials. Finally, each of the key players, including the OAS, its member states, and Peruvian political actors, sought to advance their own interests by creating and participating in the Roundtable, as rational choice institutionalism argues. One case is not conclusive, and more research is needed to understand how political institutions are created and how they operate in a variety of conditions. The experience of the OAS Roundtable in Perú suggests that triangulation of multiple approaches can provide useful insights.

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## Central American Migration to Tapachula, Chiapas and México's Immigrant Regularization Program

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The México-Guatemala border has long been the site of significant migration from neighboring Central American countries. The literature on migration to this region has focused on trans-migrants, seasonal and temporary migrants, refugee movements, and human rights (Castillo 1994; Castillo 1990; 2003; Fernandez 2006; Martínez 1993; Ruiz 2001). Little is known about the population of long-term Central American migrants living in the México-Guatemala border region. Furthermore, it is often assumed by policy makers that non-refugee and non-temporary migrants are undocumented and merely traversing México to try their luck at crossing the México-United States border. Though permanent immigration to this area is difficult to quantify, it is commonly accepted among consular officials, researchers, and local residents that immigrants from Central America often settle for long periods of time, or permanently in Tapachula, Chiapas and surrounding localities.

Increasingly aware of the growing number of undocumented long-term migrants residing within its borders, the Mexican government introduced in 2002 a program that granted Central American immigrants the opportunity to apply for a regularization of immigration status through the FM3 (*forma migratoria*) visa. The FM3 is a non-immigrant visa subject to yearly renewal, which allows long-term migrants the right to work in a prescribed region. Drawing upon qualitative interviews carried out in 2007 and 2008 with twenty Central American immigrants and additional interviews with consular officials, academics, members of civil society, and immigration officials, this article describes immigrants' experiences in obtaining, maintaining, and living without the FM3 visa. Based on evidence from this fieldwork, the article argues that the Mexican regularization program fails to recognize the characteristics and realities of Central American immigrants, and falls short of providing comprehensive access to legal and social membership, despite its introduction of the amnesty law. México's regularization program is indeed a positive step in recognizing the needs of Central Americans and other immigrant groups within its borders. However, several inadequacies of this program highlight México's failure to recognize itself as a country of destination for immigrants.

Scholars increasingly note the impacts on migrants' sense of belonging of holding legal citizenship in the receiving society (Menjívar 2006; Coutin 2003). Holding legal citizenship legitimizes migrants in the receiving society in ways that other forms of belonging, such as membership in the local community, working, and long-time residence do not (Bosniak 2000). Central Americans who migrate to Tapachula face considerably fewer cultural and political barriers than their compatriots who migrate to the US. Yet, as the following discussion highlights, documented and undocumented Central American immigrants and their dependents face exclusion and serious challenges to belonging in México. This exclusion occurs even though immigrants have been found to take advantage of increasingly global networks of compatriots that span sending and receiving societies as a form of transnational citizenship (Glick Schiller et al. 1992; Guarnizo and Smith 1998; Ehrkamp and Leitner 2003). The article adds to this discussion by incorporating Coutin's (2003) "legal-non-

\* I would like to thank Rebecca Torres, Michael Yoder, and two anonymous reviewers for comments on this paper. I am also very grateful for the support of the Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies Field Research Grant (2007) and the University of Texas at Austin College of Liberal Arts Graduate Research grant (2008).

existence,” to further examine the ways in which the lack of official citizenship impacts social citizenship.

The article begins with a brief discussion of Central American migration flows to southern México, followed by a discussion of long-term migration to Tapachula, Chiapas. Next, it outlines Mexican regularization policy and its significance to the community of long-term migrants to Tapachula. Finally, the discussion ends with a critique of regularization policy and suggestions for a more efficient policy.

### **Central American Migration to Southern México**

Much of the long-term migratory flow of Central Americans to México is concentrated in the border state of Chiapas, which shares a frontier with the most active migrant-sending departments in Guatemala, those of San Marcos and Huehuetenango (Castillo 1990). In general, Guatemalan, Honduran and Salvadoran migration to the region portrays three specific trends: temporary labor migration, refugee movements, transmigration or stage-migration, and long-term migration. The following section will examine these trends to suggest that temporary and transmigration are linked to increased long-term migration.

### **Temporary Migrants**

Temporary labor migration from Guatemalan provinces helps to support the agricultural economy of Chiapas. Guatemala is a major source of seasonal labor migrants who work in the state's Soconusco coffee growing region or coastal fruit plantations (Castillo 1990, 173; Martínez 1994). Tapachula is the center of this region. Guatemalans are hired largely because of their skill and knowledge of coffee cultivation, and because they are contracted to work for relatively lower wages than Mexicans (Valdez González 2007). During harvest and planting seasons, Guatemalan labor is in high demand. Seasonal migrants generally remain in Chiapas for 30 to 45 days, and they report to have migrated to supplement their salaries (Castillo 1990, 177). According to México's migration regulation agency, the *Instituto Nacional de Migración* (2007) or the INM, in 2005 there were 40,200 documented temporary agricultural workers in the region during harvest months. When undocumented workers are taken into account, this figure grows considerably, to close to 100,000 workers (Martínez 1994). Many migrants are recruited illegally and are often kept in exploitative conditions by their contractors, which complicates the measuring process even more (Grayson 2002; Grayson 2003).

Temporary migration of agricultural workers is not the only trend exhibited in the migration of labor to Tapachula. Unspecified numbers of migrant women seek employment as domestic workers in the city of Tapachula. Most of these women come from Guatemala and are of indigenous descent (Centro de Derechos, 2003). In Tapachula there is an understanding that young Guatemalan women looking for work as domestic servants gather on Sundays in the main square of the city. Although many do not have the proper documentation to work, they are an accepted fixture in the city center, where local residents recruit them for domestic labor (Centro de Derechos 2003). Many of the women suffer from exploitative working conditions, and are often young adolescents. Like agricultural workers, they are an integral part of the labor economy in Tapachula, and though they are undocumented, they are generally not targeted for repatriation or detention, unless denounced by their employers (Centro de Derechos 2003; Valdez González 2007). In southern México, recruitment of temporary Central American migrants for work in the agricultural, service and construction sectors contributes to the formation of migratory chains that evolve into networks (Boyd 1989; Fawcett 1989).

## **Official and Non-Official Refugee Populations**

During the height of armed conflict and civil war in Guatemala and El Salvador during the 1980s, thousands of people fled state-sponsored and guerrilla violence to seek asylum officially or unofficially in México (Mahler and Ugrina 2006; Gammage 2007, Valdez González; Portillo Bonilla 2007). In 2004, 1,681 Salvadoran refugees resided in México (UNHCR 2004). Whereas many more Guatemalans sought asylum in México, more Salvadorans migrated to the United States, which in lieu of granting them asylum, granted them Temporary Protected Status (TPS). As a result, there were far fewer documented and undocumented Salvadorans in México. Though uncounted, there are a number of Salvadorans who fled violence and settled in the rural areas of Chiapas, close to the border, according to an interview with the Salvadoran Vice Consul (Portillo Bonilla 2007). Many of these unofficial refugees remain in Chiapas and are the beneficiaries of a major regularization campaign put in place by the Salvadoran Consulate in Tapachula. The program is an effort to locate expatriates, help them to obtain legal documents in México, and record their location in order to establish ties with this community and ensure that their rights are protected. The “Mobile Consul,” as it is called, is also a major effort to mobilize the Salvadoran community to strengthen ties with El Salvador (Portillo Bonilla 2007).

## **Transmigrants and Stage Migrants**

Recently, scholars and the news media have focused attention on “transmigration,” or migration through México on the way to the United States, as a growing issue (Grayson 2002; Grayson 2003; Ruiz 2001; Castillo 2003). Stage migrants are those trans-migrants that stay in México for a period of time, often working and obtaining temporary documents like the FM3 visa. After the dangerous journey from Central America, many trans-migrants must stay in Tapachula, or another place in México, in order to save money or recover from injuries. Some choose to stay in Tapachula to obtain an FM3 visa, which allows migrants to travel through México openly and legally. If the migrant has no documents, he or she is forced to travel clandestinely along train routes monitored by transnational gangs, substantially increasing their risk for robbery, assault, or death (Ruiz 2001). The use of the state of Chiapas as a migratory way station is acknowledged by officials, as evidenced by the creation of a special law that solely applies to Chiapas. Migrants that do not have children who receive an FM3 visa are not allowed to leave the state of Chiapas, unlike other petitioners who are able to travel anywhere in México (INM Tapachula 2007).

Simplification of the migration of Central Americans to México as merely stage migration neglects to explore the whole set of circumstances responsible for migration (Grayson 2003; Castillo 1990; 1993; 2003). This outlook essentially explains the root causes of migration as purely minimizing risk and maximizing economic benefit. The financial and grave safety risks of traversing México on en route to the United States could cause many potential migrants to reconsider the financial benefit of migrating to the United States. Blanket assumptions based on the pull factor of a US income excludes several important factors related to risk in migrating, and the ability of migrants to increase their income relative to others in the community, as proposed by the new economics of migration theory (Massey et al. 2005). This indicates that there could be other options for the migration of Central Americans, including internal migration or migration to southern México, where relative incomes are higher. Indeed, over half of the participants had intended to continue to the United States upon their initial trip to Tapachula. Those who started as trans-migrants and ended up staying did so because they were robbed, they were afraid of the risk, or were deported from closer to the México-US border.

## Long-Term Migration to Tapachula

There is a lack of quantitative data describing long-term Central American migration to Tapachula. The paucity of information is most likely due to difficulties in collecting data for this highly mobile and marginalized population. According to the National Council on Population (Consejo Nacional de Población), CONAPO (2000), in all of México there are 492, 617 international immigrants. As illustrated by Table 1, in Chiapas as a whole, there are 17,416 international migrants. The largest group of immigrants in México is from the United States, which reflects return migration, and the migration of American born-children of Mexican migrants as well as US expatriates residing in México. Chiapas, however, has very few American immigrants, but had 16,174 Central American immigrants in 2006, though this number appears low compared to the thousands of trans-migrants from Central America who cross the southern border and are detained close by, as displayed in Table 2.

**Table 1: Immigrant Residents in México and Chiapas, according to region of origin.**

	Total	United States	Central America
México	492,617	343,591	40,644
Chiapas	17,416	435	16, 174

Source: CONAPO, 2000. *Población inmigrante residente en México*

In most cases, the use of apprehension data to estimate the stock of undocumented immigrants in a country is problematic. Here it serves the purpose of drawing our attention to the size of attempted migration to México (Espenshade 1995). Using apprehension data to estimate undocumented stock is inaccurate because the numbers include repeat attempts by the same individual, and more importantly because it measures failed attempts, when the focus of this study is on successful attempts (Espenshade 1995). According to interviews and personal observation made by this and other researchers at various border crossings, it is very easy to cross the México-Guatemala border (Grayson 2003; Ogren 2007). Detentions generally take place at checkpoints within the interior and not at the border (Ogren 2007).



**Table 2: Detentions according to regional delegation, 2006**

Delegation	Number	Percentage
Chiapas	90,601	49.60%
Tabasco	23,387	12.80%
Quintana Roo	1,582	.90%
Campeche	882	.50%
<b>Total Southern Border</b>	<b>116,452</b>	
Total Nation	182,705	
Percentage of detentions at Southern Border out of National		63.7%

Source: Data, INM (2007). Table and calculations prepared by the author.

Despite low representation in official data, the historical nature of regional migration flows, as well as contemporary transmigration, suggests that long-term migration deserves closer study. Using data from ethnographic interviews, the following section will develop three case studies illustrating long-term migrant experiences with the processes involved in obtaining legal citizenship. The case studies are based on twenty semi-structured, in-depth interviews conducted with Central American immigrants from Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala in the city of Tapachula. Due to the marginalization and documentation status of many Central American migrants in Tapachula interviews were facilitated through the use a snowball sampling technique. The case studies are representative of common trends viewed in the majority of interviews regarding the difficulties of obtaining the FM3 visa, and the impacts of this difficulty on access to legal citizenship and education for their children. The case studies will build the basis for the next section's discussion and provide insight into the issues that deter migrants from availing themselves of the regularization process, or deter them from maintaining regularized status. The goal of the following sections is to present the account of a small group of Central Americans in Tapachula to convey how their experiences with México's regularization policy illustrate the inadequacies of the policy that inhibit interviewees' ability to ensure access to birth certificates and education for their children.

### Regularization and the FM3 Visa

The FM3 is a non-immigrant visa<sup>12</sup> given to Central Americans in Chiapas since the arrival of Guatemalan refugees in the 1980s to grant refugees greater access to security, justice and the right to work. Since the end of conflicts in Central America, the visa has largely been distributed to undocumented immigrants with the goal of extending greater protection to this group. Beginning in 2002, México's *Secretaría de Gobernación* (SEGOB) and the *National Institute of Migration* (INM) implemented annual "regularization programs" aimed at integrating the population of undocumented migrants living in Mexican territory. Regularization programs were implemented intermittently in order to serve populations of unauthorized immigrants residing in México. The regularization program's main goal is to grant amnesty to unauthorized immigrants. Solicitants of regularization are granted a non-immigrant temporary visa, the FM3 (*forma migratoria*), which allows its holder to work in a prescribed area and legally reside in México. To qualify for the visa and regularization, applicants must have lived in México for at least three years. In 2008, an official at the INM, indicated that the program would soon begin to take place year-round (Interview,

INM 2008). Table 3 outlines the requirements for regularizing immigration status and obtaining the FM3. The FM3 must be renewed on a yearly basis. After five renewals, the migrant may then apply for the FM2, a visa for “immigrants” who intend to stay in México and apply for permanent residency. In most cases, the applicant must renew the FM2 as a permanent resident for another five years before being eligible for naturalization. Immigrants who hold an FM2 visa are allowed to work and live anywhere in México, whereas the FM3 requires its holders to have their employment activities and places of residence approved. SEGOB (Secretaría de Gobernación) reported that in 2007, 43 percent of nationwide solicitations for regularization and the FM3 visa took place in the state of Chiapas. In the same year, 3,099 foreign-born residents of México sought regularization (INM 2007).

**Table 3 Requirements for Regularization of Migration Status and FM3**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed letter of request</li> <li>• Original and a copy of the following:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Current or expired passport</li> <li>-If no passport: birth certificate with identification card; expired FM3 or FM2 visa.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Letter of economic support with copy of writer's identification, signed</li> <li>• Letter confirming job offer, employment w/ID of employer, plus proof of his/her Last tax payment, signed</li> <li>• If applicable, proof of marriage, civil union or engagement signed by both parties Plus two Mexican witnesses, plus copies witnesses' ID</li> <li>• Proof of residence expedited by the municipal government where the applicant lives</li> <li>• Two letters of recommendation by Mexicans, plus a signed copy of their IDs</li> </ul>
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Source: INM Tapachula Office Handout. Table by the author.

As of 2008, the Secretaría de Gobernación (SEGOB) and the Instituto Nacional de Migración (INM) had begun to phase out the FM3 as a regularization tool and temporary documentation device (INM Tapachula 2008). The FM2 will soon replace the temporary FM3 for Central Americans in Chiapas. Before this transition, long-term migrants with the intention of living in México were automatically assumed to be temporary, as evidenced by the visas assigned to them. The distribution of a temporary, non-immigrant visa that creates no pathway to naturalization illustrates the government's failure to acknowledge the existence of long-term migrants. The transition from the FM3 to the FM2 recognizes the needs of immigrants and the fact that many Central Americans are interested in remaining in México.

Immigration status is one of the most important determinants of quality of life, access to services, and opportunity for migrants (Coutin 2003; Menjivar 2006). México's regularization program presents a unique opportunity for Central American migrants to convert their migration status from unauthorized to that of temporary, non-immigrant visa holders. Though the FM3 is an important movement by the Mexican government to incorporate undocumented immigrants into its society, there are many migrants who are unable to attain or maintain their FM3 visas due to their lack of identification documents, their missing the annual program deadline, or their misunderstanding of the process. As a result, the small group interviewed faced many of the hardships meant to be prevented by the FM3. The major focus of interviews was the impact of the regularization process on immigrants (and/or participants' experiences as non-regularized immigrants). The following section describes how Mexican migration policy is represented at its

southern border as a foundation for a discussion of migrants' access to the program, and their experiences as a result of being undocumented.

### **The Regularization Process in Human Terms**

Though all foreign-born individuals who have resided continuously in México for a period of three years are eligible to apply for the FM3 visa, interviewees attested to several barriers to accessing the document. These barriers included a lack of understanding of the application process, the large amount of time required to complete the process, the lack of legal documentation proving identity, the inability to afford the fine, and the yearly renewal fee. The policy assumes that Central American settlers have access to information and to the resources from their home country necessary to apply for regularization. The interviews for this research presented a different reality. Very few participants had the FM3 visa. The following section will describe how long-term migrants experienced the process of regularization and will present the reality of those migrants who do not have an FM3 and who therefore remain undocumented.

### **Migrant Experiences with Regularization**

Participants often expressed their confusion and unfamiliarity with the regularization process. Immigrants were generally misinformed about how to obtain the FM3. Predators seeking to profit from immigrants' unfamiliarity with the process often approached participants. One family that has lived in Tapachula for over twenty-seven years attested to criminality in several interviews and conversations. The matriarch of the family brought her six children to Tapachula from Guatemala after her father was the victim of a political killing at the height of that country's civil war. Today, all of the children are grown yet only one holds the FM3 visa. After a conversation with his wife, who was also from Guatemala and undocumented, the researcher learned that he obtained his FM3 by paying a "licenciado" (attorney) approximately \$1,400 USD to take care of the paperwork. After speaking to another sibling and his wife, along with their mother, it became apparent that no one knew the exact process to necessary obtain documents. None knew that the Guatemalan Consulate could provide substantial support in obtaining passports and a letter that would waive payment of the yearly renewal fees and initial fines. The only sibling who had attempted to obtain the FM3 sought the help of the "licenciado," who while delivering on the FM3 took advantage of the participant's unfamiliarity with the process by over-charging his client. Additionally, it was not clear whether the issued documents were valid.

There is a stark contrast between the life of the brother who has an FM3, be it authentic or false, and the rest of the family. All members of this family live in the same hillside neighborhood characterized by red mud roads with simple one to two room houses constructed of cinderblock or corrugated aluminum, and covered by loosely fitted tin roofs. The regularized brother and his wife share a neat house made of concrete blocks, with a small service patio, living room, and two bedrooms. They have tiles on their floors, and paint both on the inside and outside of the house, a rare luxury in their neighborhood. The "regularized" brother has been able to maintain a relatively good job as a forklift driver in a nearby warehouse. Having the FM3 has allowed this young man to access stable employment and housing while his siblings work several low-paying, high-risk jobs, and live in one room houses with dirt floors in a neighborhood where flooding and erosion are major problems. Without the FM3, his siblings have no access to social security or the social health insurance plan that various jobs in the formal economy offer, and in addition they are not able to travel to other job sites outside of Tapachula for fear of being deported. Despite this family's long-term residence in Tapachula, they continue to remain without basic citizenship rights. They

reported that they had not obtained birth certificates for several of the Mexican-born children in their care out of fear. As indicated in other case studies, these children have no legal identity and will likely be barred access from the education system.

### **Documentation Barriers to Regularization and FM3**

Even though the majority of the immigrants interviewed realized the importance of obtaining an FM3 visa, several explained that they found the process intimidating and beyond their reach. To initiate the National Institute of Migration's (INM) regularization and visa application process, immigrants must first prove their identity, which is often times the first impediment to a successful application. As indicated in Table 3, applicants must supply either a passport or photo identification and an official birth certificate to apply for the FM3. Many immigrants did not have any of these documents, and those who did possessed only expired paperwork.

Though the three Central American consulates in Tapachula can provide some forms of identification such as passports, petitioners of passports and other forms of identification must furnish their official birth certificates. When petitioners do not have a birth certificate, consular officials can request them from their city of birth, though this process can take several months (Chinchilla 2007).

In México, many individuals do not have official birth certificates (Goldberg 2008). The often taken-for-granted document in the United States is not distributed at birth in México and must be applied for by parents who present themselves at *registros civiles* (civil registries or offices of vital statistics). Discrimination, poverty, and cultural differences are just a few of the impediments that parents face in obtaining this essential document. Immigrants in Tapachula without birth certificates face the same hardships in accessing their birth records and identification. However, the added distance, international boundaries, as well as unfamiliarity with the bureaucracies of the sending society and México, intensify difficulties.

Without a birth certificate, other forms of identification are unattainable. Furthermore, access to the education system is curtailed if not prohibited. Birth certificates, ID cards, and passports indicate legal citizenship. The consequences of not possessing these vital documents are evident in the lives of many of the immigrants interviewed, which underlines the strong interconnections between legal citizenship and social citizenship in Tapachula.

Many undocumented Central American immigrants would need to return to the sending countries to obtain their birth certificates or other acceptable forms of identification before applying for the FM3. Such was the case of Renata, a 31 year-old Salvadoran immigrant brought to Tapachula at the age of eleven by her mother, with whom she worked as a domestic worker. Renata was unable to become documented because she has no birth certificate or other identification. In order to obtain identification, Renata has already made one trip to El Salvador to look for her paperwork and she planned to return a second time a few months after her interview with the researcher. Her trip was her first return trip to El Salvador since she left twenty years ago. Upon arrival she was greeted by a family she did not remember. The costs of the trip were burdensome for this single mother of three, who said she had to cross into her country of birth "illegally," by swimming across a river because she had no proof of her nationality.

Renata's dilemma is also indicative of the larger context of discrimination that migrants face in Tapachula. Renata was seeking her documents in order for her son, a Mexican citizen, to stay in school. The teachers at the school her son attended demanded that Renata present her FM3 or valid birth certificate for her son to progress to the seventh grade. Interviewees reported that

teachers unlawfully deny children of undocumented migrants, or undocumented migrant children, these rights to education. This denial reflects the importance of obtaining legal citizenship, in the form of the FM3, for undocumented immigrants in Tapachula. As children and their parents are excluded from community schools, not only do children lose the opportunity to educate themselves, they are pushed closer to the border of legal nonexistence in Tapachula (Coutin 2003). The privileging of identification and documentation by the state represents a burden to migrants. As long-time undocumented migrants try to access avenues of belonging in Tapachula they are met with institutional barriers, both *de facto* (teachers and registro officials) and *de jure* (documentation requirements), that contribute to their exclusion from the community.

Undocumented immigrants' struggles to exist in Tapachula exemplify how exclusion from legal membership can result in severe social consequences. Legal "nonexistence" obviously leads not only to a lack of access to information, but also to poverty. Parents' legal nonexistence impedes their Mexican-born children from obtaining the education they are entitled to. This complication further disenfranchises and marginalizes Central American immigrants and their families. Those interviewed were all interested in obtaining information concerning their rights, but few held the social capital necessary to navigate official channels. Documented migrants that were interviewed had more confidence in dealing with officials, and navigating the school systems and the *registros civiles*, but still complained of suffering discrimination in these spaces.

### **Regularization and the Creation of Temporary Citizens**

Menjívar (2006) describes the difficulties that Central American immigrants to the United States with a temporary status, called Temporary Protective Status, (or TPS) face. TPS is a special status that is extended to immigrants to the U.S. from countries in conflict or suffering from natural disasters, and who are temporarily unable to return to their countries of origin. TPS is meant to temporarily delay deportation. However in many cases, immigrants have held the TPS for several years as the government debated the policy, though the government will often renew it at the last minute. As reported by Bailey et al. (2002), immigrants who held TPS status were constantly fearful that their status would expire, only to have the government extend the TPS at the last minute. Bailey et al. (2002) refer to this experience as "permanent temporariness." Menjívar (2006) argues that that TPS locates immigrants in a space of "liminal legality," in which immigrants are constantly on the verge of being undocumented. "Permanent temporariness" and "liminal legality" have such negative impacts upon immigrants as psychological effects of lacking full citizenship and always being threatened with deportation. The FM3, a temporary non-immigrant visa in need of yearly renewal, creates similar issues in the lives of the informants of this study.

The FM3 visa expands opportunities to work, study, and travel within México, and to travel to the immigrant's country of origin. For several participants interviewed, however, the FM3 was just a temporary resolution that often did not guarantee protection from discrimination or from having to become re-registered. Due to financial hardship, lack of time, and the complicated nature of obtaining documents from their home countries, many who had already obtained the FM3 did not renew it on a yearly basis. Such participants experienced reduced mobility, and faced challenges obtaining the necessary birth certificates for their Mexican-born children to place them in school. One Honduran woman, Doña Ana, whose FM3 had expired, expressed that she had not renewed it because "going from one thing to the next, people have no time to follow everything they say for you to do to get the FM3. They send you from one place to another. So you say, fine, I'll come back to this when I know I'll have a few days free." Though it would be relatively easy for someone with

all of her documents to complete the FM3, for most migrants, the monetary and temporal cost of obtaining the proper identification are deterrents.

Due to the high costs of obtaining proper identification, several participants interviewed gave up trying to take advantage of regularization programs. Several did not know that the INM had periodic programs during which the INM accepts whatever identification applicants have, nor that the INM gives the applicant one year after getting the FM3 to obtain a passport from their country of origin. Not having access to proper identification is just one deterrent to obtaining the FM3. Migrants must pay on a yearly basis to renew the document. Several interviewees were unaware that low-income applicants could petition to have their fees waived. It is unclear if the representatives of the INM tell applicants about this program. Many participants claimed that cost was the main deterrent to their application or re-application for the FM3, clearly a misconception since charges can be waived with a letter of support from the consulate, or from one of the NGO's that supports migrants.

### **Life without the FM3: Spaces of Nonexistence**

The space of nonexistence occupied by the undocumented has its own characteristics, temporalities, and dimensions. Individuals enter this space when they come to the United States without authorization from the U.S. government, or when they remain in the United States after their authorization has expired. Although they are physically present within U.S. territory, such individuals are neither temporarily nor permanently party to the social contract embodied in U.S. law and are therefore officially outside of the social body. (Coutin 2003, 174)

In addition to the legal risks associated with being undocumented, immigrants who do not hold the FM3 visa also face a host of social consequences that emphasize their exclusion. As unauthorized migrants, Central Americans exist literally and figuratively on the fringes of society. Although several of the undocumented immigrants interviewed lived and worked in Tapachula for years and had children who were Mexican citizens, their exclusion from society was not only apparent from their difficulties in obtaining visas, but was clearly manifest in their inability to secure access to education, and in some cases legal citizenship for their own children.

Without a legal record of their birth, these Mexican-born children of immigrants are the most obvious occupiers and victims of Coutin's (2003) space of nonexistence. Children without a legal identity are routinely denied entrance to school in Tapachula.<sup>13</sup> Coutin's (2003) borderland of nonexistence is a very real boundary that is continually present in the everyday lives of the long-term Central American migrants who were interviewed. It functions not only to impede long-term undocumented immigrants from applying for visas and accessing services, but also blocks legally entitled children of migrants from obtaining legal identity and access to education in the sending society.

Both documented and undocumented immigrants challenge the space of nonexistence when they seek to document themselves and register their Mexican-born children. According to Chapter III, Article 30 of the Mexican Constitution of 1917, all children born on Mexican soil are entitled to Mexican nationality (Constitución Política 1917). In spite of this promise, many parents are denied the right to register their children as Mexican citizens because of their own tenuous immigration status. Most commonly, immigrant parents are refused the right to appear on a child's birth certificates if they do not present the proper identification and the FM3 visa. If the child has a Mexican parent, this person is sometimes listed on the birth certificate as the child's sole guardian. This eliminates the legal rights of the unlisted parent. It is illegal to deny a birth certificate to

Mexican-born child, less than six months of age, whose parents can prove his location of birth and present witnesses and pieces of identification (Observation at Registro Civil, 2008). After the age of six months, however, an undocumented immigrant must obtain the FM3 in order to sever legal identity for his or her child. According to the Salvadoran Vice-Consul (2007) and a lawyer from Fray Matías de Córdova (2008), it is not uncommon for families to register their children under the names of their neighbors to allow their child to have legal identity. The lack of a birth certificate effectively blocks the child's access to education, healthcare and other social programs. Though in many cases these practices are illegal, it is quite common for unregistered children of Mexican parents to also face the same exclusion tied to "legal nonexistence." Here exclusion from the public record implies a life marginalized from membership in society as well as a legal identity.

All of the immigrants interviewed in this sample, with the exception of a Guatemalan couple and a Honduran woman who was legally married to a Mexican, have faced difficulties when attempting to register their Mexican-born children. In several cases, parents' struggles to obtain birth certificates were linked to their own lack of identification, including birth certificates. In two cases, immigrants left their homes without any documentation at all including identification, birth certificates, nor passports. This reflects many Central American migrants' weak social and political citizenship back home, as human capital is required to obtain these documents even in their sending society. Since identity documents do not bear the same value in all communities, it is possible that migrants are simply unaware of their importance when they migrate. Regardless of the challenges of life in México, all interviewees reported that they preferred to live in México than their sending communities. All agreed that the poverty and conflict of their sending societies would prevent them from ever returning.

It is important to note also that members of migrant communities are not the only ones excluded by the registration process. According to UNICEF, there are approximately 25,000 children in Chiapas who do not have a birth certificate, and therefore do not legally exist in México (Goldberg 2008). Members of indigenous and rural communities, as well as low-income urban residents often find themselves outside the official structure of governance. For many rural residents, traveling to the registro civil involves deciding between essential responsibilities at home and making a costly journey. For example, a woman who has just given birth to a child in a rural community, with access to few resources, might find it extremely difficult to walk or travel hours to the nearest registro civil. The dictates of the work week, the responsibility of taking care of other children, and the lack of money all prevent families from registering children. Though urban long-time migrants to Tapachula have the advantage of mobility within the city, many do not have access to information regarding their rights to register Mexican-born children. Just as many lack information on obtaining the FM3. An evidence of the large numbers of children not legally recognized in México are the frequent workshops that the municipality holds to grant "*actas de nacimiento extemporáneas*," temporary birth certificates granted on the spot to children, and some adults, who meet the criteria of previous "legal nonexistence" in municipal registers.

Misinformation, fear, discrimination, and lack of experience seem to be key factors that explain why immigrant parents are unable to register their children. Some of the parents interviewed believed that registering children is expensive. Others believed that no matter what their status, they would not be able to register their children as Mexican, because they had heard of difficulties from other contacts. One of the most widespread reasons that children of undocumented parents were not registered was because either the mother or the father was foreign-born, and both parents believed that they would be unable to register the child under the name of the foreign-born parent.

This was the case of Angela, an eighteen year-old mother of a one-year-old son. Angela migrated to México from Santa Ana, El Salvador when she was 11. Angela's partner, a Mexican photographer, insisted that because Angela was undocumented, and because they were not legally married, they could not register their newborn son under the father's name. Her older sister, who has a five-year old son, also believed this. As the five year-old did not have a birth certificate, he was forced to leave his kindergarten class a few weeks after his parents failed to produce documents. If Angela's son does not get his birth certificate, he will likely have the same experience.

This situation represents the deep misconceptions that many interviewees held regarding the process to obtain birth certificates for their children. Though the Mexican government has opened the space for international long-term immigrants to register their Mexican born children, the majority of interviewees are unfamiliar with their rights, and therefore extremely vulnerable to corruption in the registros civiles. Many Central American migrants live in marginal neighborhoods with little access to services and information about how to obtain a birth certificate for their children. To raise awareness of migrants' legal rights, NGOs and government agencies that help families to register children and obtain documentation must target marginal neighborhoods. This would increase migrants' knowledge of their legal rights and allow them to more successfully advocate for themselves and their children.

At the local level, the teachers and officials that unlawfully deny children of undocumented migrants, or undocumented migrant children these rights to education in turn exclude immigrants from social membership in society. Although international human rights law, which México has ratified, guarantees all children the right to study,<sup>14</sup> locally, undocumented immigrants and their children are denied access to education. As children and their parents are excluded from community schools, not only do children lose the opportunity to educate themselves, they are pushed closer to the border of legal nonexistence in Tapachula (Coutin 2003). The privileging of identification and documentation by the state represents a significant hurdle for migrants to overcome. In Tapachula, institutional actors representing the nation state, such as teachers and officials in the *registros civiles* act as de facto agents of the nation (Deeb-Sossa and Bickham Mendez 2008).

## Discussion and Conclusions

Long-term and permanent migration of Central Americans to Tapachula, Chiapas is a phenomenon that deserves greater attention. The case studies elaborated in this article demonstrate that pressing issues of membership, legal identity and access to education deeply impact the everyday opportunities and well-being of Central American immigrants and their families. Central American immigrants must obtain appropriate visas not only to secure their own legal and social membership in Tapachula society, but also to ensure that their Mexican citizen children become members of the society. Even when immigrants are able to obtain the standard, temporary FM3 visa, its annual expiration date threatens a relapse into the space of "legal nonexistence," when the time or money is not available for renewal. Without the proper visa in hand, immigrants are powerless in situations where they are required to advocate for their children's access to birth certificates, and sometimes education, as a result of discrimination. Interviews demonstrated that two major barriers to regularization are the lack of acceptable identification documents, and ignorance of policies that help facilitate regularization when immigrants do not hold the proper documents or are unable to pay fees.

The barriers immigrants face in trying to obtain legal identity or visas are numerous, and include discrimination, inability to meet the burden to prove one's identity, poverty, or simply lack



of awareness or misinformation about the regularization process. Knowledge of these barriers, as well as the severe consequences of lack of documentation, may help to formulate more effective migration policy. The current policy fails to take into consideration the everyday realities of groups of long-term Central American migrants to Southern México. As most research necessarily focuses on transmigration, human rights abuses, and the large numbers of temporary and seasonal migrants in Southern México, policy makers have little ground level knowledge to draw from when formulating new regulations.

To create a more just and comprehensive migration policy, immigration policy makers should employ qualitative as well as quantitative research methods to generate detailed and in-depth information on Central American immigration to México's southern border region. Firstly, the state should consider immigration, rather than just transmigration. Since applicants for the FM3 visa are already required to be residents for three years, the long-term nature of migration should be factored into policy addressing this population. The FM3's yearly expiration date presents roadblocks to immigrants' integration into society. México should vigorously move forward with plans to instate the FM2 "immigrant" visa that leads to naturalization for Central American migrants in order to render them more protections and opportunities under the law.

Since the goal of the FM3 is to regularize the status of undocumented migrants in México, and allow them to work in the formal economy, it is necessary to ensure that processes to access the visa is accessible and well advertised. If regularization is inaccessible and few people are aware of the procedure to obtain the FM3, then its usefulness is jeopardized.<sup>15</sup> Interviews revealed that one of the major barriers to accessing the FM3 was migrants' inability to produce the required identification documents or passports. Acknowledging this, México temporarily lowers the burden of identification required during seasonal regularization campaigns. Requirements to prove legal identity should be loosened, and educational campaigns should take place if the regularization policy is to be effective. México has instated these laws in an effort to improve the situation of undocumented migrant. However, the most vulnerable of them, those without identification and knowledge of the program, are the ones who frequently are unable to access the program and who are, not coincidentally the ones who would most benefit. It is extremely difficult to obtain up-to-date and original copies of birth certificates and identification cards for immigrants living in Tapachula. Obtaining these documents is extremely time consuming, and often means undertaking a trip back to the country of origin. Consulates should develop more efficient methods to obtain birth certificates for clients.

All children born in México are legally entitled to Mexican nationality and citizenship but action must be taken to ensure that the law is upheld. México has also been signatory to international human rights conventions that guarantee that they will provide education to all children. In reality, the lack of a birth certificate prevents many poor and indigenous children from attending school each year, though this is not just a problem faced by migrant children and children of immigrants. An improvement in the accessibility of birth certificates is crucial to eliminating this issue. Currently, birth certificates are only available through visits to registros civiles and in special campaigns that grant temporary "extemporaneous" birth certificates to those without them. Lowering costs and increasing the legal window of opportunity to obtain the birth certificate as an undocumented parent could increase accessibility. Regardless of these measures, however, interviews revealed that discrimination against immigrant parents was a major impediment to obtaining services for children. The social consequences of discrimination, which leaves children without legal identity and access to education, merits further research.



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## Migration and Mobilities: Citizenship, Borders, and Gender

edited by Seyla Benhabib and Judith Resnik. (New York: New York University Press, 2009.  
505 pages ISBN-13: 978-0814776001 @22.00 paperback;  
ISBN-10: 978-0814775998 @75.00 clothbound

### A book review by Mehnaaz Momen

*Migration and Mobilities* is a collection of fourteen articles that explores the tension between globalization and territorial governments through the lenses of history, gender, family and transnational mobility. The authors question the definition of citizenship and border in the new world created by migration and mobility, and illuminate how the old definitions of gender, family and class have seeped into our new consciousness in repackaged modes. The articles are arranged in five sections comprised of the history of gendered citizenship, the global market for women's labor, the construction of the family and the nation-state, the challenge to gendered biases, and the notion of transnational identity. Each of these articles is in dialogue with the other ones in the volume, and together they offer new insights into citizenship by bringing questions of gender, class, and political engagement to the fore.

The unprecedented transnational exchanges of goods, services, and even culture have not translated to unencumbered access, equal rights, and increased returns for everyone in this globalized world. The people who are making the journeys across nation-states often find new obstacles, as their lives are determined by old categories of exclusion. The central theme of all the articles is to explore how nation-states have been impacted by migration and to expose the fault lines of the legal definition of citizenship. The articles range from ancient Greece and Rome to the United States, Canada, and the European Union, with attention to Asian countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia. Instead of providing a contrast, the articles seem to complement in each other, a trait that definitely strengthened the book.

The first two articles situate the concept of citizenship in history. While citizenship was a privilege conferred upon rightful denizens in Athens and Rome, and laws determined who should be excluded, the example of an ex-slave and former prostitute, *Nearia*, being tried for posing as a citizen is a paradox, as *Nearia* had certainly broken the biases against slaves and women by buying her freedom and living a free life for thirty years prior to her trial. The second article continues to explore the lacuna between legal definitions and lived realities by focusing on illegitimate children of U.S. nationals. The U.S. used to grant nationality only through the father, and until the 1930s a U.S. woman could lose her citizenship if she married an undesirable alien. A child who was born to unmarried parents and whose birth was not registered also did not have the right to claim U.S. nationality even if the father was a national. What is interesting is that the implementation of these naturalization laws created a new category of stateless people who could not claim any nation-state as their own.

The global economy requires cheap labor, especially of women, but it is not generally accompanied by any protection for these women. The vast array of domestic labor that has freed first world women to pursue equality in the public sphere further complicates the issue, as gender biases do not seem to be equally potent for all women. Maybe, as the author of the relevant essay suggests, it is time to examine the multiple facets of citizenship rights, instead of clinging

to a universal meaning. The maid in third world countries also mimics this dilemma: the pursuit of economic opportunities by upper-class women often hinges on the exploitation of low-skilled women. The records of abuse the maids face are disturbing, and there is no legal protection even if they are working legally. The role of NGOs in helping migrant women points to the lack of government institutions and legal frameworks to incorporate the rights of migrant workers in Asia.

Immigration and naturalization policies in the U.S. and the European Union still follow a traditional definition of family and motherhood, while the women who have broken these very traditional molds and are migrant workers are being examined for eligibility by these laws. A child not only lacks the right in relation to its parents' immigration and naturalization, but often additionally pays the price of separation from parents. Not only are the laws applied inconsistently to different people, mainly based on their nationality of origin, there is also a built-in double standard as issues of privacy are often flaunted for immigrants.

The last two sections of the volume are geared toward small victories, or at least small crevices, where migrant women might fight for their rights. The discrepancy of women's rights between their countries of origin and their destinations creates cultural conflicts, but there are also positive examples from the Islamic Republic of Iran and Morocco, where family laws have been reformed to give women more control in marriage, property, and child custody. The criminalization of female genital mutilation in Canada took place in the midst of a campaign and coalition, spearheaded by African-Canadian women. But as the next article aptly points out, violence and discrimination against women, if done in the private domain, often are relegated as non-political issues and do not qualify the victims for asylum status. Immigration laws, though they have been cleaned of racial and ethnic biases, still contain strong gender and class biases. The asylum cases reek of indifference to cultural practices and individual actions as opposed to political agendas. Integration and strong democracy seem to be the ideal scenarios to minimize these discrepancies and discriminations.

All the articles make use of pertinent cases and provide us a glimpse into the unjust world of the female migrant worker in both developed and developing world. The concept of citizenship needs to be broken down into smaller rights and examined for its full implications. Even though migrant women, without question, have been marginalized, their mere presence in the public sphere, both in the first world and the third world, has changed our world considerably. These articles are conscious of the class factor and capture the dilemmas of first world and third world women well. But, can there be a bridge between the classes of women? High-skilled migrants, men and women alike, face far less discrimination when they migrate, and the impact of their gains for the low-skilled migrant worker need to be addressed. On the whole, this is a useful collection of essays for scholars in the field to ask provoking questions.

## Global Latinas: Latin America's emerging multinationals

by Lourdes Casanova. (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire and New York: Insead Business Press and Palgrave MacMillan. 2009. 220 pages (164 + Appendix, Notes, Bibliography) + xiv. ISBN-13: 978-0-230-21996-0; ISBN-10: 0-230-21996-9).

### A book review by Michael S. Yoder

Global investment patterns are evolving in some unexpected and interesting ways in tandem with the proliferation of global and regional free trade agreements. It is normal to think of prevailing movements of money across political boundaries as a series of actions by multinational companies based in the advanced countries that carry out foreign direct investment (FDI) in other advanced countries and in developing countries. An example is the *maquiladora* phenomenon of the U.S.-México border region. However, new investment patterns are emerging that turn the conventional wisdom on its head. Emerging markets, including China, India, Russia, Brazil, and México among others, are increasingly home to companies that are expanding their businesses externally, whether into other emerging markets or into the advanced countries. Latin America, while not yet as far along as South and East Asia, is rapidly becoming a source area of globalizing companies, and indeed outward flows of capital across borders.

"Global Latinas" (derived from *Empresas Latinas Globales*) are Latin American companies whose business activities are conducted increasingly across international boundaries. Lourdes Casanova's book of the same name is an important, pioneering work that examines the strategies and recent histories of some of these companies. Their activities range from exports of products to investment in companies in other countries in order to penetrate new markets or derive new sources of raw materials or technology. In 2006, FDI from Latin American countries exceeded \$40 billion, an increase of 115 per cent over the prior year. The stage is set for this tendency to continue, thus making Casanova's monograph timely. She identifies two basic trends among the Global Latinas: those that sell their brands outside their country of origin, and those that set up operations in other countries through FDI. In some cases these strategies overlap as the companies' business plans become more elaborate and they acquire existing operations in other countries.

Casanova employs a case study method involving ten firms that illustrate the Global Latina phenomenon. The book's seven chapters flow logically, yet function as standalone essays. The lengthy introduction provides the key features of Global Latinas and discusses the political-economic contexts within which these companies were formed and currently operate. Chapter 1 focuses on the heads of seven companies and their unique leadership styles and visions. The discussion illustrates the relevance of personal stories in the shaping of this rather new phenomenon. Chapter 2 examines three Brazilian companies (Embraer, Vale, and Petrobras) that began as state-owned enterprises, but became global firms once they were partly or fully privatized. Chapter 3 discusses three Mexican companies (CEMEX, América Móvil, and Bimbo) that, since the implementation of NAFTA, have taken advantage of economic and political trends that enabled them to successfully globalize. Chapter 4 provides some detailed insights into the business models developed by several successful Global Latinas. The chapter reveals that a sophisticated understanding of global business trends, and competence when dealing with potential market-related crises, are necessary to survive and thrive in the unpredictable global economy.

Chapter 5 discusses branding, not only of products but of countries. Each of the Global Latinas upon which the book focuses not only has to create an image of its brand in the minds of customers, but in some cases this is accomplished by tapping into their home country's image abroad, particularly in the realm of consumer products. Chapter 6 examines the links between Latin America and Asia, a relationship that has not always been amicable in recent years, but also one that is unavoidable to companies from Latin America who wish to operate successfully in a global economy. The focus of Chapter 7 is upon the ways that successful Latin American corporations address ecological sustainability and lingering poverty in the region. Chapter 8 summarizes the main characteristics of Global Latinas and provides insights into future legal, political, and financial challenges they will face.

Throughout the book, Casanova quite effectively discusses regional and global economic circumstances underlying the formation of Global Latinas. Import substitution industrialization (ISI) policies were essential to the companies that she examined. ISI policies included protectionism to give family- or state-owned companies a leg up in the battle against competing imported products. It was widely pursued throughout the region until the 1980s, and would prove to be essential to the histories of companies that would go on to successfully globalize. Largely criticized by proponents of neoliberalism for leading to inefficiencies and inhibiting competition, ISI nonetheless provided the basis for the necessary capitalization, expertise, markets, and plants and equipment that would enable the companies to compete globally when they were subsequently privatized. After 1990, free-market policies implemented in accordance with the "Washington Consensus," so widely embraced in Latin America, accelerated the privatization of, among others, steel, telecom, petroleum, and utility companies, most notably in Brazil and México.

Post-ISI free-trade policies motivated the companies that would become Global Latinas to focus on particular niches, and to expand globally in those activities instead of laterally into a breadth of activities, as they tended to do under ISI. Furthermore, as foreign companies began leaving Latin America during tough times, Global Latinas bought them up on the cheap and acquired assets and new markets as a result. Increased prices of exported commodities gave Global Latinas the capital to buy up companies abroad that were engaged in similar activities. Examples of the latter include the acquisition by Mexican cement giant CEMEX of European firms that produced construction equipment, and the acquisition by the Brazilian mining company Vale, and the Brazilian energy company Petrobras of similar operations in many countries outside the region. The result is that "inflows" and "outflows" of investment to and from Latin America have shifted such that outflows of FDI now exceed inflows. However, macro and national economic and political trends, though crucial, were not the only factors that gave rise to Global Latinas. Well-conceived business plans were equally important, which Casanova describes with flair.

The book likely will appeal the most to students and researchers of international trade, economic geography, economic history, international policy, and the economics side of Latin American studies. It would be quite suitable as a supplementary text in these areas at the graduate and upper-division undergraduate levels. It is clearly written and logically organized. The main weakness lies in Chapter 7, which deals with the social and ecological responsibilities of Latin American companies. Although many companies, including some of the case-study Global Latinas, provide products affordable to the poor, they do little or nothing to change the underlying structural traits of neoliberalism that exacerbate poverty among the poorest people of Latin America. Casanova acknowledges that such poverty persists, but does not adequately explain the structural shortcomings of neoliberalism, nor does she point out the paradox that selling products to the poor



results in a transfer of wealth from the poor to companies in the form of profits. However, this one weakness is greatly countered by the book's strengths: a clear and engaging style, and a focus on the increasingly relevant theme of rapidly changing investment patterns across international boundaries emanating from Latin America.



## **Notes on Contributors**

Lindsey Carte is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Geography and the Environment at the University of Texas at Austin. Her research focuses on international migration, Latin America, feminist and political geography, and geographies of agricultural restructuring. She engages all of these interests through her ongoing fieldwork on México's southern border with Guatemala and Belize.

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Dr. Randall Parish completed a masters degree in international policy studies at the Monterrey Institute of International Studies and a doctorate in political science at the University of New México. He taught political science at Texas A&M International University for several years before returning home to Georgia, where he teaches at Gainesville State College, near Athens. In 2000 he was conducting dissertation research in Lima, Perú as the events recounted in this article unfolded.

Dr. Michael Yoder is Associate Professor of Geography at University of Central Arkansas. Trained as a cultural geography, his current research and teaching interests include economic and urban geography. He recently has written a number of published essays on the changing geographies of mid-sized and small cities in México and Texas border cities, and the role of policy making in transforming those urban landscapes. He presently is carrying out an examination of economic promotion and urban land use in a number of micropolitan areas in the US South.



## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> An earlier version of this article was presented at the 2003 annual meeting of the Southwestern Political Science Association meeting in San Antonio, Texas. This research supported by a Texas A&M International University Texas Excellence Research Grant.

<sup>2</sup> Latino and Hispanic are used in this article interchangeably to identify Texans of Spanish-language heritage, regardless of race or origin. In Texas, Latino or Hispanic usually means Mexican American since 92 percent of Texas Latinos are Mexican American (Momayezi 1993).

<sup>3</sup> The two ethnic compensation indicators, Org. Member and Discrimination, are indeed correlated, if only weakly; Pearson's  $r = .168^{**}$ ;  $\gamma = .248^{**}$ .

<sup>4</sup> The figures cited in this paragraph all indicate the turnout rate of registered voters.

<sup>5</sup> About  $\frac{1}{2}$  of this 16.6 percent are registered to vote, and about 30 percent did vote.

<sup>6</sup> These were calculated using J. Scott Long's "Excel Workbooks for the Post-estimation Interpretation of Regression Models for Categorical Dependent Variables." See his web site at: [http://www.indiana.edu/~jslsoc/web\\_spost/sp\\_xpost.htm](http://www.indiana.edu/~jslsoc/web_spost/sp_xpost.htm).

<sup>7</sup> I am not saying discrimination does not exist, nor that its effects are not devastating. Rather, conditions have improved over the last 30 years. To be sure, a great deal of covert and somewhat more subtle forms discrimination such as avoiding contact and conversation remain. In this study 31.5 percent of Hispanic respondents reported experiencing discrimination.

<sup>8</sup> In addition, though not tested, nearly all the local officials in Webb County and Laredo are Hispanic, and unlike other parts of Texas, Anglos never had a stranglehold on local politics nor political office. Moreover, our representatives to the state legislature and to the U.S. House are also Hispanic.

<sup>9</sup> This was the first time in history that the OAS had actually condemned an election in a member state.

<sup>10</sup> Incredibly, Montesinos had filmed himself in the act of bribery. In addition to populist tactics, repression, and corruption, the regime had relied heavily on blackmail to sustain itself and insure a compliant legislature. Montesinos reportedly maintained a library of thousands of incriminating videotapes. The surprise here was that he incriminated himself – and that someone leaked the tape to the media.

<sup>11</sup> Argentina and Chile had been among the biggest supporters of Resolution 1080 when it passed, along with the Santiago Commitment to Democracy, at the 1991 OAS General Assembly in Santiago, Chile.

<sup>12</sup> This type of visa is granted to anyone wishing to enter México to conduct business, study or travel for an extended period of time without the intention of immigrating.

<sup>13</sup> See above discussion on children without birth certificates denied education in México.

<sup>14</sup> See, for example, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, article 13.

<sup>15</sup> This has been acknowledged by INM officials in an interview with the author in March 2008. During the interview, the official told the researcher that due to the inadequacies of the FM3, they would be gradually moving toward granting the FM2 in its place.



Journal of Social and Ecological Boundaries  
Texas A&M International University  
5201 University Boulevard  
Laredo, Texas 78041-1900

ISBN 1551-9880