

Public Opinion and the Future of U.S.-Panama Relations

Using survey data and interviews, this study examines Panamanian attitudes toward the United States and toward the central issues in U.S.-Panama relations. It also compares Panamanian attitudes with opinions toward the United States in the rest of Central America. The study finds that nationalism, system support, anticommunism, and, for the mass public, ideology are the most important variables in determining support for the United States. Elites are more nationalistic and less accommodationist toward the United States than the mass public. Concern about the politicization and misuse of the Panama Canal and adjacent lands has led many in the general public to support a continued U.S. military presence on the Isthmus of Panama.

Associations and Activism: Mobilization of Urban Informal Workers in Costa Rica and Nicaragua

Studies of Latin American civil society tend to assume that popular organizations promote "high-intensity" forms of political participation while political parties mainly encourage voting. This study compares the influence of these two forces in the urban informal sector. Association involvement, low in both samples, is related to "higher-intensity" participation, but the differential influence of associations and parties holds only for Costa Rica; Nicaragua's revolutionary FSLN has fostered a more politically active citizenry.

Economic Policy in Chile's New Democracy

The Aylwin and Frei administrations have taken a cautious approach in formulating economic policies. This article analyzes how they have maintained economic stability, fueled sustained growth, and coped with inflows of foreign capital. While achieving successes in macroeconomic policy, export development, and poverty alleviation, Chile also faces challenges, including high social inequality and the increasing difficulty of dealing with the effects of financial globalization.

Violent Opportunities: The Rise and Fall of "King Coca" and Shining Path

The scope and intensity of political violence in a democratizing society are influenced particularly by regional opportunities arising from state weakness that favor the formation of coalitions against the state. The illicit market for coca in Peru's Upper Huallaga Valley fostered a tactical alliance between Shining Path guerrillas and coca producers that funded Shining Path's national presence. Falling coca prices in the 1990s, combined with key state-strengthening measures under the Fujimori government, destroyed that relationship and weakened the guerrilla organization.