Imaging Boundaries:

Carlos Bolado: The Limits of the Human
Beth Bouloukos
Cornell University

In this paper I examine a film by the Mexican screenwriter and director Carlos Bolado, Bajo California: el límite del tiempo (1998). The protagonist, Damian, crosses the border from California to Mexico and enters into a spiritual quest in the same way the ascetic saints journeyed into the desert. I propose that in this film a particular way of knowing—mostly through the visual and tactile senses—links itself to ontological knowledge via ecstasy and transcendence. Specifically important in terms of vision and touch are the cave paintings Damian seeks; when Damian finally encounters them after much fatiguing exploration, his overwhelming need to touch them ignites a supremely ecstatic state. Proximity and touch continue to push Damian into inner experience through contact with the locals and their history, which is also his, as his family originates from this Mexican town. Along with the tactile, the visual provokes the ecstatic when Damian experiences a vision, highly in tune with early modern mystics, although in this case a shaman appears to him. Through a look at these themes, I explore the ways in which this film models a type of mystical union and transcendence that leads to nuanced realizations about identity grounded in history and community—as opposed to what we find in the works of the 1950’s–1970’s in Latin America. I question whether this shift occurs in response to the growing disconnects related to globalization, which causes people to lose personal, historical, and spiritual connections to their land and cultures.

Condé's La migration des coeurs

Nicole Calandra
University of Massachusetts-Amherst

In this paper I will read Maryse Condé's La migration des coeurs through the lens of Creolization, Edouard Glissant's notion of identity formation as a never-ending process shaped by cross-cultural contact. Because this process is equal parts inevitable and unpredictable, historically violent but potentially fruitful, Glissant sees the fact of Creolization in the world as a sign that the collective "imaginaire" (imaginative faculty) much catch up with this reality; the very concept of identity formation must transcend old questions of land, nation, genetics, or culture. It is due to this failure of the imaginative faculty, argues Glissant in a 1998 interview, that the twentieth century has been so deeply marked by nationalism, racism, and genocide. I will explore how Maryse Condé's novel explores just such a change in the "imaginaire" of...
Caribbean identity through the use of humor. Whereas the content of Condé's novel often tends toward the tragic, ranging across the Caribbean islands of the 1850s, from Cuba to Dominica, to portray the clash between socialists and plantation capitalists after Abolition, Condé's narrative framework is deeply ironic. She relentlessly opens up ironic gaps both between the characters and the reader and between the various narrative voices and the reader to evoke questions of identity that she playfully and provocatively refuses to answer. Written in 1995, Condé's novel acknowledges the traumas of Caribbean history while re-imagining their relation to the Caribbean of the present, positing the notion that Caribbean collectivity depends as much on evolving relationships as on shared histories.

El tiempo y las imágenes en la narrativa colombiana del siglo XXI
Andrea Fanta
Centre College

El reloj es el que marca sin cesar el paso del tiempo. Sin embargo, a veces se hace lento, y en otras, parece vertiginoso. Dicen que la experiencia del tiempo en los niños es tan lenta que se acerca a lo estático y lo que podemos recordar de nuestra infancia está cifrado en imágenes borrosas y congeladas: una habitación, un parque, el mar, un salón, una muñeca. En este trabajo se analizarán los textos Todo pasa pronto de Juan David Correa y El olvido que seremos de Héctor Abad Faciolince. Los anteriores trabajan con imágenes del pasado que desarticulan la percepción lineal del tiempo en la medida en que éstas se presentan como los núcleos de un pasado discontinuo. A partir de este quiebre, este ensayo propone una lectura desde la cual puede surgir otro entendimiento de la historia.

The Man Who Didn't Copy: Jorge Furtado's New Frontiers in Race, Place, and Gender
Gwen Murray
Tulane University

This paper examines how in his films O Homem que Copiava (The Man Who Copied) and Meu Tio Matou um Cara (My Uncle Killed a Guy), Brazilian auteur Jorge Furtado constructs a new Brazilian imaginary. Contemporary Brazilian cinema is dominated by incentivized commercial production, the quest for marketability and narratives that establish, with varying degrees of reality, the sertão and favela to be the prototypical milieus of the Brazilian experience. Jorge Furtado, however, is emerging to challenge these predominant cinematic tendencies. Withdrawn from the regionalism that dominates Brazilian cinema, Furtado’s anonymous urban environment sets the stage for a subconscious discourse on race, masculinity and criminality. Drawing from the film criticism of Ivana Bentes and Robert Stam, the tropes of Brazilian masculinity born from a history of expansionism and the deep-seated patterns of racial inequality, this paper unveils Furtado’s exploration of a symbolic new frontier in Brazilian cinema far from the seen-before scenery of postcard Brazil and the previous performances of race and masculinity. Furtado’s deconstruction of identity also addresses regional issues of criminality and scarcity with neutrality uncommon to contemporary Brazilian cinema. In O Homem que Copiava and Meu Tio Matou um Cara, Furtado founds a new paradigm for crime delineated from the violent manifestations of films like Cidade de Deus; in the face of underdevelopment, he exposes crime as something more rational and commonplace, driven by the desire to escape the monotony of
En su colección de cuentos Otras palabras (2008), Rafael R. Valcárcel, escritor peruano afincado en España, da una nueva vuelta de tuerca a la inmemorial e intrincada relación entre realidad y ficción literaria. La obra se compone de veintiocho relatos urbanos, de los cuales seis se encuentran fuera del libro, en Internet. Uno de ellos, un video expresamente filmado por el autor y que da título al libro, está alojado en el celeberrimo sitio YouTube. Otros cinco se hallan ocultos en la página web de Iberoletras, institución imaginaria que convoca anualmente un premio literario con el que el propio Valcárcel habría resultado galardonado. Este reto al pacto ficcional tradicional se sirve de la concepción de Internet como medio frío, esto es, tal como lo define Marshall Mcluhan (1964), como un medio cerrado que induce a la pasividad, y en que la realidad está ya dada. Sin embargo, la evolución de Internet desmiente tal enunciado, toda vez que, por un lado, propende a fomentar la interacción de los individuos conectados. En el estado presente, el de la web 2.0, son los propios usuarios quienes crean y comparten los contenidos de la red. Internet deja de ser ya una mera fuente de información. La realidad invade el territorio virtual del ciberespacio a través de sitios como Facebook, Flickr o el propio YouTube, que ofrecen a escala global retazos locales y personales de cotidianeidad. Por otro, experimentos como el Bordergames, plataforma que permite al usuario convertir su barrio —sea el madrileño de Lavapiés, Berlín o la favela Alvarenga, en São Paulo— en escenario marginal de un videojuego, deben conducirnos a pensar en que nuestros conceptos de realidad y ficción están sufriendo una seria transformación.

Subaltern concerns and the Intellectuals of Modernity
Steven Latzo 
Binghamton University

The Indian subalternist historian Ranajit Guha has suggested that the transition from modernity to postmodernity has been abrupt; nevertheless, he points to the ubiquity of capital in space and time. If capitalism is one of the threads tying the present to the recent past, then the entanglements of the present might not be unfamiliar to those who have come before us. By advocating new forms of critique, free of the language of those post-Enlightenment critiques whose time is gone, Guha blurs the lines separating the intellectual tools of the Enlightenment from Enlightenment metaphysics. This blurring of boundaries occludes syncretic expressions of identity and inclusion in twentieth century Latin America: expressions which have reemerged and remain progressive in our own time.
**Movements in Cultural Histories:**

*Baseball/Softball in Shaping Female Identity in Southern California and the Midwest from the 1930s-1970s*

Amanda Magdalena  
Tulane University

Baseball has played a major role in the lives of Mexican Americans since the early 20th century. A popular sport in both the United States and Mexico, baseball became a cultural crossroads influencing the formation of "Chicano/a" identity and the expanding traditional gender boundaries for first-generation Mexican American men and women. In this paper, I look particularly at the role of baseball/softball for the Chicana from the 1930s to the 1970s as it foments female agency by creating a non-domestic space of public community participation. In the first section, I describe the demographics and geographic significance of urban Los Angeles as well as rural Corona, California[1] as they influence Mexican American identity construction related to participation in baseball. Then, I evaluate how baseball served as a cultural bridge between Mexican heritage and ideas of Americanization for Mexican settlers in the California region at the time. Within these sections I highlight the Chicana's participation in baseball and how it exemplified a transition from the traditional Mexican female archetype as a domestic, submissive and passive creature to an active social, political, and economic participant in society. By actively occupying the formerly male baseball domain, she is able to carve out a private feminine space, form a network of women throughout the region to address a variety of female needs, and gain agency through the acquisition of leadership and organizational skills. In the next section, I review the historical role of baseball/softball within the context of white, middle to upper class women of the Northeast and evaluate the similarities and differences between the Chicana's experiences with those of White women in the Midwest. Anne Enke's research indicates softball was similarly used by women in this region as a means to gain social, economic, and political influence, as occurred in the case of the Chicana, while additionally creating a liminal public space that accommodated a safe environment for cultivation of a lesbian community. Adopting policies such as "'plan it' don't 'say it,'" a tacit understanding of lesbian participation in softball fostered the creation of a lesbian subculture within a socially acceptable public context. This extensive network of like-minded women of varying race and social status turned the sporting arena into a feminist political battleground in the 1960s and 1970s, making the softball field a forum of political activism. While thus far, little research exists alluding to baseball/softball as a "lesbian" space for the Chicana, Enke's research could be used as a potential model to direct future study within the field.

*Politics in the Latin American Chronicle*  
Turner Hirsh and Jenny Wallace  
McDaniel College

The Latin American Chronicle is a convergence of pop culture and literature and a lot of the time pop culture can be about politics. As the “cronica” grows over time, it has found different ways to recount history or politics. One way we found it growing is talking about different countries
and experiences. Traveling to foreign countries grants a person the opportunity to explore many aspects of a culture, like politics. Political culture is observed and experienced and the “cronistas” compare the different worlds to each other. We also see the recounting of history getting more personal and the ability of others to be their own “Cronista.” A new perspective is gained by recounting history through chronicles, like with Chilean writer Pedro Lemebel. Fact based readings only deal with specifics and numbers and people usually cannot relate to facts. Today, blogs are the newest way for people to tell their own stories in a way very close to a “cronica.” With the blog “Generacion Y,” from Cuba, many people can tell their own story or account of history and become their own “cronista,” in a sense. Our poster will demonstrate how the Latin American chronicle has put a new spin on reporting politics and political concerns and how it has evolved over time. “Cronicas” bring unknown events out into the open so all may see and the “cronista” writes so the readers may react and make connections and so they can truly experience what the author had.

The Man Who Copied:
Models and Technologies of Happiness in XXI Century Brazil

Ana Ros
Binghamton University

This essay is an analysis of the Brazilian film O homem que copiava (2003) by Jorge Furtado. The film tells the story of André, a photocopier operator in Rio Grande do Sul, who uses the new color photocopier machine at work for falsifying money to accomplish his two big dreams: winning the heart of the woman he is in love with—a boutique clerk—and following his true vocation, creating comics. In my analysis I rethink Marxism’s dialectical materialism in the context of dependent countries, where even when working class continues to be deprived from means of production it is constantly participating in, and yet excluded from, the way of life that technology offers and represents. In this case, falsifying money is André’s only way of social mobility. It’s his only way of affording the kind of life he sees and knows through the books and magazine’s sections he copies daily at work (he keeps fragments and partial images of the documents he copies making a puzzle on his wall). The confusion between copied and original bills reflects the failure of categories such as “just/unjust” or “criminal/lawful” to explain and organize societies that undergo clash of classes and temporalities in the pseudo-integrating scene of global culture. In addition, character’s dreams bring together, spiritual and material goals, posing in a new way the question about the relationship between social systems and individuals’ fulfillment in current Latin America.

Peruvian Artistic Action
Jessica Thompson
Fordham University

Colonialism’s legacy, self determination, democracy, and neo-colonialism are all important topics in today’s globalized and mostly post-colonial world. Peru is an interesting example of the successes and failures of a post-colonial country. More than half of Peru’s population lives in poverty, and the people have been subjugated by the Incas, the Spanish, multiple periods of military control, and dictatorships. Since 1980 there have been around seventy thousand deaths attributed to internal violence. The two primary actors in this conflict, the Peruvian government and Peru’s communist organization the Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso), are held responsible for the majority of these deaths. In April of 2000, after the questionable re-election of Alberto
Fujimori, a group of artists and intellectuals called the Colectivo Sociedad Civil (CSC) began artistic demonstrations or “actions” in opposition to Fujimori and more generally government corruption. For example, one of these actions, “Lava la bandera” or “wash the flag,” encouraged Peruvians to bring their Peruvian flag to Lima’s Plaza de Mayo and publically wash it, and then hang it to dry. The movement became widespread with Peruvians washing their flags in the central squares of towns all over Peru. This demonstration of both patriotism and disgust with governmental corruption is especially moving in light of Peru’s repressive history. This is just one example of how art and artistic actions have given voice to the Peruvian people.

Image and Nation Building via Online Tourism Campaigns: Colombia, El Salvador and Paraguay

Jennifer Valdés
University of Florida

Tourism is one of the largest economic resources and fastest growing industries in Latin America. A nation’s official tourism Web site is a significant public relations channel considering the reach of the Internet and the representativeness of content from the country’s perspective. Each nation develops its own tourism Web site for the purposes of publicizing its national image and identity and attracting tourists. Most tourism Web sites are administered by an official government organization, eliciting a legitimate assumption that it is representing and explicating a national image and culture. Competitive pressures from flourishing Latin American neighbors such as Mexico, Brazil and Costa Rica coupled with a growing sense of confidence in the economy have motivated other Latin American nations to develop and invest in their travel and tourism sector. The challenges of promoting a Latin American nation include eliminating negative stereotypes, replacing them with positive impressions, building trust with foreign audiences, and successfully communicating the nation’s image to foreign audiences. The purpose of this paper is to analyze and explore the current online tourism campaigns of three Latin American countries—Colombia, El Salvador and Paraguay. Based on existing literature of image and nation building, this paper evaluates the effectiveness of each nation’s tourism Web site to influence or change the visitors’ opinions, perceptions and images of each nation. Furthermore, this paper seeks to highlight opportunities for Latin American countries to boost their economy and improve their international reputation by optimizing their nation’s image via online tourism campaigns.

Frontiers of the Indigenous:

How globalization has affected indigenous life in El Salvador

Helen Ellis
UCLA

In the late nineteenth century, El Salvador turned to the large-scale production of coffee for export in an effort to participate in the growing global economy, but this participation in the global economy led to the virtual destruction of the country’s indigenous groups, who within a few decades lost their lands and their way of life. Up until the nineteenth century, the majority
of the indigenous people in the area had managed to maintain their language, religion, political organization, social customs and beliefs that identified them as indigenous. The indigenous groups of El Salvador had a communal system of land distribution. But during the process of nation building in the nineteenth century, a centralized government was adopted, one that like the rest of the Latin American governments at the time, embraced ideas of order and progress and whose primary goals were economic expansion. Starting in the 1850s, the government’s main goal was to use all the resources of the country – land, labor, and capital – for the development of an export economy that was based on the production of coffee. The indigenous groups’ land tenure practices and customs were increasingly regarded as an impediment to the goals of the state to join the emerging global economy. In 1932, the indigenous people of El Salvador staged a short-lived revolt against the political, legal, and cultural oppression, and the government responded by indiscriminately killing thousands of indigenous people. This revolt, known as La Matanza, made it dangerous to be indigenous in El Salvador.

“Tragedy of Success:” Haiti and the Failure of Revolution

Natalie Palmer
Cornell University

The piece I would like to orally present is a chapter, “Faithless Sight—Seeing and yet not Seeing: Haiti in The Kingdom of this World,” from my dissertation, “A Tragedy of Success:” Haiti and the Failure of Revolution. My thesis looks to twentieth-century historical fiction to assess the continued import of the Haitian revolution to Caribbean modernity. It does so while explicitly situating Haiti’s sustained discord and economic downturn within literary narratives of the uprising. My chapter reads Alejo Carpentier’s novel The Kingdom of this World as well as his theory, “the marvelous real,” and argues that although the novel is lauded for its treatment of subaltern participants in the Haitian Revolution, Carpentier’s telling of the uprising is truly not concerned with this. In fact, it is more interested in what the insurrection, abstracted from an abject Haitian reality predicated on cyclical conflict and stunted progress, can offer the New World. Consequently, while the tragic mode governing the text relies on Haiti’s marvelous reality to unveil the ironies of human existence, through the text’s movement between the comic and the tragic, Haiti vanishes by the novel’s end. Its dismal reality forecloses Carpentier’s investment in revolution as a means of theorizing regional exception and potential.

La Crónica: A Social Outlet

Paul Donoghue
McDaniel College

Over the course of literary history, there has been an apparent lack of social outlet for the common people, with which came a lack of space for literary minds to express reactions to events and specifically their reflections of society as a whole. The solution to this lack of freedom was la crónica. The term “crónica” is nearly indefinable by nature, but can be summarized loosely as a literary piece in which some sort of personal input creates a reaction to societal events, which in turn could be called a critique. Crónicas, while possibly underappreciated, are an invaluable asset to not only the Spanish speaking world, but past, present, and future world societies. One point of focus would be Jose Revueltas and his usage of
la crónica to formulate a social commentary on the indigenous people of Mexico, specifically those affected by the eruption of Paricutín. In Un sudario negro sobre el paisaje, José Revueltas speaks about Dionisio Pulido, a very poor farmer who, along with his family, is a victim of the volcanic eruption. After having his land, agriculture, and livestock destroyed, he has nearly nothing left. However, Revueltas views the situation as a reflection of the relative ignorance that the indigenous have to everything outside of their own personal circle even if it affects them. This, for Revueltas, is symbolized by the ash, which is the after-effect, and the only thing they seem to notice.

*Ritual and Gender Identity in Modern Maya Communities of Yucatan, México*
Lilia Fernández Souza
Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán

After the European conquest, the Maya, like other American people, were forced to abandon centenary costumes. Even so, in our globalized world, some ancestral practices—many of them flexible and adaptable—are identifiable in contemporary Yucatan. This paper explores modern ritual practices, some of which roots come from very remote time and have been archaeologically recorded. These practices are analyzed from two perspectives: first, their relationship with ancient Mesoamerican cosmovision and religion; and secondly, the relationship between rituals and gender identity, continuity and change of gender roles. We stress that, through rituals, we can discuss the apparently contradictory existence of local components which are, at the same time, conservative but flexible and adaptable to modern world conditions and situations.

*Border Building:*

* Immigration History and its Future in the United States: Theoretical Perspectives

Erika Grosso
Syracuse University

This paper examines the emergence and development of Immigration Acts in the United States and looks at the continuing shifts in levels of restriction within U.S. Immigration Policy. It uses a normative lens to evaluate two of the current features of the U.S. Immigration that have grown out of these changes and evaluates whether these policy features of “immigration commodification” and “immigrant categorization” are just. In addition, this paper uses Pierre Bourdieu’s understanding of different forms of capital to discuss the theoretical and policy implications for U.S. Immigration. This paper situates its argument in the idea that the United States’ vision in regards to immigration was never meant to be focused strictly inwardly due to its foundation on the democratic principles of liberty and equality, and Protestant Christian values. Although the United States faces a unique challenge in regards to migration, its history has proven that it can remain nationalistic in its pride, while continuing to be open to immigration, and internationalist in its purpose. The author will use the works of Michael Walzer, Martha Nussbaum, and Will Kymlicka to attempt to balance this national need and international purpose that are the objectives of immigration policy in the United States. These theories are employed both because of their international consciousness and situational
applicability.

Music, Black Voice, and the Development of Ethnoracial Consciousness among Brazilian Evangelical Protestants

John Burdick
Syracuse University

This article is a contribution to the literature on the impact of expressive culture on political consciousness and mobilization in the context of globalization. In São Paulo, Brazil, the Black Gospel music genre, rooted in North American gospel, helped to generate and reinforce among its artists ideas about an essentialized black voice, while gospel rap does not. The paper argues that partly as a consequence of these ideas, Brazilian Black gospel artists have developed a strong interest in North American black musical history, Black Biblical history, and a striking receptivity to Brazilian black identity movements. In contrast, gospel rappers, with little aesthetic reason to develop ideas about an essential black voice, have a correspondingly weak interest in North American black musical history, Black Biblical history, and Brazilian black identity movements. This ideological contrast, rooted in the experience and practice of two different musical genres, helps explain differential levels of identity-movement mobilization among São Paulo’s black evangelicals.

Buscandomela/Searching: Afro-Dominican Women's Search for Survival Within a Capitalist-World Economy

Griselda Rodriguez
Syracuse University

Buscandomela, which in Dominican common language translates into “searching for survival”, is in reference to Afro-Dominican working class women’s need to search for alternative forms of survival when the ones presented by the Dominican state—which has been entrenched as a ‘peripheral’ state within the larger system of global capital—do not suffice. Through an analysis of the collected narratives of working class Afro-Dominican women in The Dominican Republic, this project utilizes an interdisciplinary framework to illustrate the particular ways in which the histories of racialization, gender, and sexualization among marginalized sectors of society have been utilized as fuel for the capitalist world-economy’s engine. Most importantly, this paper demonstrates that despite the oppressive conditions under which Afro-Dominican women experience their lives, they are agents of change and are vigilant of systemic ruptures that present opportunities to sustain themselves and their families. The variety of their work in so-called ‘informal’ sectors of the Dominican economy exemplifies these opportunities. In addition to the use of theories from Black/Third World feminists and political scientists from and on the Caribbean and Latin American region, the women’s voices also play important roles throughout this analysis.

Arkatecoluca: Small Town Transformation and Legal Alienation

Miranda Cady Hallet
Cornell University
What happens when transnational migrant families own homes, plant trees, and establish businesses in small towns in the American South and Midwest, but still lack a viable path to legal residency? In this paper, based on extensive fieldwork in rural Arkansas communities with Salvadoran transnational migrants, I explore the contradictory dynamics between a growing identification with local geographies and continuing legal exclusion. Most Salvadoran migrants are caught “betwixt and between” categories of national belonging—classified as either “illegal aliens” or “temporary non-immigrants,” they lack rights to political participation or permanent social belonging either in the United States or in El Salvador. These legal exclusions create a mobile space of exception around the body of the migrant, analogous to free trade zones and corporate enclaves, which facilitate the exploitation of migrants’ labor. Legal exclusion also interacts in complex ways with social exclusion through the contradictory production of both invisibility (according to the census, most of the migrants are not there), and hyper-visibility (racialized images of “illegal threat” contribute to scapegoating and police harassment). In spite of this, transnational migrants continue to put down roots in their new places of settlement, purchasing homes, holding down jobs, building churches, yard-saling, transforming the façade of Main Street, birthing children, dying and being buried in their new landscapes of home. As migrants change ethnic frontier spaces into community places, they also come to re-identify themselves as both Latinos and Arkansanos. Nonetheless, migrants’ bodies and subjectivities remain infused with the contradictions between lived experience and legal status.

New Spatial Orders: Writers in the Diaspora Rethink Space and Place: Junot Díaz, Angie Cruz, and Ernesto Quiñonez

Myrna García
Syracuse University

Geographer and social scientist Doreen Massey has studied globalization, regional uneven development, cities, and the reconceptualization of the notions of space and place. Concerning place-based identities, she has argued that:

* places do not have single identities but multiple ones.
* places are not frozen in time, they are processes.
* places are not enclosures with a clear inside and outside.

In several contemporary Latino novels the authors attempt to represent, translate, diversify and rethink notions of space and place. Ernesto Quiñonez’s Bodega Dreams (2000), Angie Cruz’s novel Soledad (2001), and Junot Díaz’s Pulitzer Prize winning book The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao (2007) engage in different ways the resignification of space, place, and home through literature. Some of the questions posed by these texts are: What does it mean to have ‘a sense of place’ or belonging? What relationships exist between place, self, community and memory? What are the different ways in which people try to capture place in writing, and in particular, how have they tried to write about the history of place? Is place becoming more or less important in the context of globalization and mass tourism? What are the ways in which different kinds of place have been idealized or understood over time — private place, public place, natural place, sacred place — and what relationships exist between place and memory? My paper will address some of these concerns.

Globalizing Democracies:
Latin America in the New Global Order

Marcus Freitas
Cerqueira Leite
Advogados Associados

With the ending of the Cold War, the United States became the solo superpower. A new stage in the field of international relations began to be drawn. Expectations were high in Latin America for a renewed commitment of the U.S. towards the region, particularly after the Enterprise for the Americas was launched by President George H. W. Bush. The terrorist attacks in New York City, Washington, DC, and Philadelphia on September 11, 2001, shifted the focus of American Foreign Policy to fight against terrorism, with increased focus on the Middle East. Ever since, Latin America was basically left on its own. The implementation of the Washington Consensus led to many improvements; yet, it caused major frustrations due to unattended expectations. Most regional blocs have lost their strength in Latin America, with each country heavily focused on their own domestic problems, with integration ranking very low in the priorities of countries. Our paper will address why Latin American regionalism seems doomed to failure. A roadmap for its success is based on three major aspects:
1. An improved geographical integration to provide the countries with wider markets.
2. Effective institutions to secure the necessary support for better integration.
3. The consolidation of democracy with mechanisms to ensure a reduction of populism.

The effective consolidation of such aspects is required to ensure the consolidation of Latin America in the new global order and the place it will have within a much wider geopolitical framework.

Analysis of a Cuban Transition Using Six Sigma Engineering Tools

Jorge Romeu
Syracuse University

Our ongoing Cuban research is based on using the quality engineering Six Sigma tool, which has been used successfully to improve or redesign many service and industrial organizations, to the study of a peaceful Transition in Cuba (i.e. a social system). There is no question that some sort of Cuban Transition has already started. Fidel Castro, who headed the Cuban government for almost fifty years, has officially retired. And the Cuban National Assembly has elected his brother, General Raul Castro, as President, thus opening up a new chapter in the history of Cuba. Raul Castro started his presidency by announcing several important economic changes, which will have serious consequences, some negative and some positive. There have also been opportunities lost. On one hand, Cuba failed to release the majority of political dissidents detained in 2003. On the other hand, the 48 year old US Embargo, an archaic remnant of the Cold War, remains in place just as before Raul’s access to power. We believe that Cuba is now in a position akin to that of Spain in the early 1960s, when General Franco appointed Prof. Laureano Lopez Rodo and his Opus Dei team, to lead the country out of its economic malaise. Such economic opening created objective conditions for Spain’s peaceful transition to pluralism, just a few years later. We believe the same may occur in Cuba if Raul Castro chooses to become another modernizer. The alternative (i.e. if all sides stay the present course) could lead to a
situation akin to that of the Soviet Union in 1981, at the death of Leonid Brezhnev. For, Cuban leaders from the Castors generation are also in their late 70s and 80s, and hence may serve for five or ten years. Then, as it occurred in the Soviet Union, it may be too late for a Cuban Gorbashov to stop a national collapse, produced by faltering socioeconomic conditions in the island, yielding disastrous results for everyone, in particular for the Cuban people. In this presentation we analyze the feasibility of a Cuban Transition event. There are some necessary pre-conditions that foster the development of peaceful transitions to pluralism, after long periods of personal or one-party government. We study transitions occurred in Spain, Chile, Brasil, Mexico and Portugal, which have succeeded, and contrast them with those in Argentina, Paraguay, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Haiti, which have had very serious problems and in cases, completely failed. We study them using the tools in Six Sigma and Quality Engineering, looking for similarities and differences in socio-economic, political and other conditions that have appear to have made them successful, or unsuccessful. A list of such pre-conditions is presented and analyzed.

Limits of Regional Mechanisms to Protect Democracy in Latin America
Lorena Vinuela
Syracuse University

This paper analyzes the influence of regional pressures on democracy durability in Latin America. These young democracies have met with constant challenges including attempted coups, economic crises, popular uprisings and falling public trust. Nonetheless, only two democratic governments have been replaced by force. I examine the actions taken by regional actors and organizations to promote democracy and impede the breakdown as well as the mechanisms through which they channeled their influence. Finally, by comparing the differential reaction to challenges to democracy in Paraguay and Venezuela I show the limitations of such interventions. When actors agreed on the legitimacy of the threatened government and unanimously push for a resolution, the impact of their action can be substantive. However, when the legitimacy of the government is questioned, and there is no agreement on the nature of the events, external interventions could worsen the situation and create incentives for bypassing democratic procedures.