TUCLA

X Annual Tulane Undergraduate Conference on Latin America

Saturday, December 1, 2012

Jones Hall 102 and 108
TUCLA

X Annual
Tulane Undergraduate Conference on Latin America

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Sponsored by the Stone Center for Latin American Studies

The Stone Center’s annual TUCLA conference is an interdisciplinary undergraduate symposium in which seniors from the Latin American Studies core seminar present their individual research projects. TUCLA was formally launched in Fall of 2003 as a means to provide Latin American Studies undergraduates with an opportunity to present papers in the style and atmosphere of an academic conference. The conference is designed to enlist all of Tulane’s LAST seniors in a shared discussion of the region, its society and its cultures.
Schedule

- Coffee and Welcome 8:30-9:00 -

- Session I 9:00-10:30 -

Panel 1: People (Jones 102)

Weapons of Mass Persuasion: Ideology, Personality and the Power of the Executive
Adam Ratzlaff, "Castro in the Middle: Cuban Capitalism and the Return of Fidelismo"
Sean Pluta, "Adrift in the Caribbean: Michael Manley's 'Socialist' Jamaica"
Bianca Falcon, "Peronista Fashionista: Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, Self-Representation and the Diversification of Latin American Politics"
Discussant: Dr. Justin Wolfe, Department of History

Panel 2: Exchange (Jones 108)

Friends with Benefits: The Power and Promise of Latin America's New Solidarities
Noah Montague, "(Dis)Organization of American States? Redefining Democracy in OAS Policy Towards Cuba"
Samuel Karel, "Taking ‘America’ out of Latin America: How CELAC is Shaping the Future of Latin America and the Caribbean"
Alexa Schwartz, "More Than A Number: Elite Student Participation in Mexico’s #YoSoy132 Movement"
Discussant: Dr. Martín Mendoza-Botelho, Department of Political Science/Payson Center for International Development

- Session II 10:45-12:15 -

Panel 3: Land (Jones 102)

Integration, Sustainability and Latin America's New (Eco)economic Realities
Katie Gray, "Perplexities of Brazil’s World Cup 2014 Host City Selections: The Dream of National Integration"
Benjamin Lowy, "Bananapocalypse: Cavendish Extinctions, Fair Trade and the Future of the Banana in Central America"
Olivia Pallissard, "Green Eggs and Turtles: Costa Rica’s Playa Ostional Sea Turtle Experiment and ‘Consumptive Conservation’"
Discussant: Dr. Kristin Wintersteen, Zemurray Post-Doctoral Fellow, Stone Center for Latin American Studies
Schedule

- Session II 10:45-12:15 -

**Panel 4: Welfare (Jones 108)**
**Inside Out: Lessons in Localized Development and Community Participation**
Ribeiro, Caitlin, “Breaking the Cycle: Mitigating Marginality in Brazilian Favelas”
Kristina Crouch, “The Silent Voice: The Importance of Local Input in Nicaraguan Housing Development Projects post Hurricane Mitch”
Jennifer Triplett, “Pots, Potatoes, and Progress for Women: Rethinking Feminism in Post-Crisis Peru”
*Discussant: Dr. Ana Servigna, Department of Anthropology*

- Lunch (Greenleaf Conference Room) 12:15-1:00
  (By Invitation Only)

- Session III 1:00-2:45 -

**Panel 5: Identity (Jones 102)**
**Queer and Present Dangers: Race, Sexuality and the Politics of Recognition in Cuba and Brazil**
Ailene Orr, “Racial Quotas or Racist Quotas? Civil Society Responds to Affirmative Action in Brazil”
Madeline White, "Binders full of Women: Cuba’s Mujeres Magazine and Alternative Sexualities and Lifestyles”
Matthew Cranney, “International Cannibalism and the National Exotic in the Age of the Internet: The Music of Bonde do Rolê”
*Discussant: Dr. Christopher Dunn, Department of Spanish and Portuguese*

**Panel 6: Nation (Jones 108)**
**Acceptable Lies, Unspeakable Truths: Healing Relations between State and Society**
Stephanie Gaspar, “Psychoanalysis in Argentina: A Government Strategy to Prevent Neurosis after an Unstable History”
Elizabeth Bobo, “Fighting Today’s Problems with Yesterday’s Tactics: (The Absence of) Police Reform in Post-Dictatorship Argentina”
William Donaldson, “Gangbangers and Politicians: Mano Dura’s Impact on Salvadoran Politics”
*Discussant: Dr. Rebecca Atencio, Department of Spanish and Portuguese*
Paper Abstracts

**Panel 1: People**

**Weapons of Mass Persuasion:**
Ideology, Personality and the Power of the Executive

Adam Ratzlaff, *Castro in the Middle: Cuban Capitalism and the Return of Fidelismo.* Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Cuba fell into a period of economic hardship known as the Special Period. This economic depression caused many changes in Cuba’s economic policies. Despite rhetoric to the contrary, Cuba began to transition away from Communism and Socialism in favor of free market based principles. While some have argued that this has come solely out of necessity, this paper examines the link between the post-Cold War reforms and Fidel Castro’s initial economic objectives for the Cuban Revolution. I argue that these policy changes reflect the ideology espoused by a young Castro in the early years of the Revolution. This connection is made through a comparison of Castro’s rhetoric before 1961 and the policies enacted since the beginning of the Special Period. I analyze speeches related to economic development and the goals of the revolution in the early years of the Cuban Revolution. In this era, Castro clearly states his desire not to be a Communist or Socialist nation in preference of a moderate leftist regime. However, Castro’s vision for a new Cuba did not come to pass due to US animosity and the geopolitical realities of the Cold War era. These external forces pushed Castro to ally Cuba with the Soviet Union and thus, to adopt socialist policies to appease this new sponsor. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Castro is able to return to the objectives originally laid out for the Cuban Revolution, but this time approaching the goal from a different angle. Castro’s dream for Cuba has never been that of a socialist ideologue, but rather of a pragmatist devoted to improving the lives of his countrymen.

Sean Pluta, *Adrift in the Caribbean: Michael Manley’s ‘Socialist’ Jamaica.* Jamaican Prime Minister Michael Manley entered office with all the hope and change that we saw from President Obama before his first term. He left office in 1980 with the country in violent turmoil, with plunging stocks and no hope in the future. How could a nice man, with moderate leftist leanings, cause so many problems? Scholars have been quick to pick sides; some blame Manley for being a socialist, others blame the CIA and the US for meddling in Jamaican affairs. But what if it was all a failure of leadership? This paper examines the role of Michael Manley as a leader trying to stay out of the Cold War frying pan, while sending Jamaica into the fire. This paper views Manley as a moderate, in a culture and region that demanded an extremist

Bianca Falcon, *Peronista Fashionista: Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, Self-Representation and the Diversification of Latin American Politics.* As more women challenge the hegemony of the political playing field, Argentine President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner stands out for not conforming to the traditional model of powerful women. Internationally, women politicians such as German Chancellor Angela Merkel and United States Secretary of State Hillary dress in harsh silhouettes that aim to equalize power and combat male domination. On the other hand, President Fernandez de Kirchner opts for soft yet equally powerful styles that reflect Argentine cultural norms of self-representation. Fashion is a social construct that influences and is influenced by the political
The formation of CELAC and the hopes of regional integration attempts and meetings in the past, but this was different: there was a notable, intentional absence of both the United States and Canada at the conference. The formation of CELAC and the hopes of regional solidarity are unprecedented, and by

Noah Montague, (Dis)Organization of American States? Re-defining Democracy in the OAS’s Policy Towards Cuba. In 2009, the Organization of American States (OAS) decided to remove restrictions barring Cuba from inclusion in the group after a period of over 40 years. While the resolution marked a change in official OAS policy towards the country, the actual results of this action have been limited as the United States has maintained an emphasis on structural change of the Cuban government towards “democratic” ideals that are consistent with the goals of the OAS. Furthermore, the United States has played the largest role in deterring Cuba’s presence from the Summit of the Americas, a meeting held every three years by OAS member states to discuss hemispheric issues. In opposition, however, Latin American states in the OAS have fought against the influence of the United States in trying to bring greater representation to Cuba in the international body and most especially the corresponding summit. This paper analyzes the debate of OAS member states surrounding Cuba’s participation in the Organization of American States and the Summit of the America and the rationale behind the argument of the majority of Latin American States in their opposition to the views of the United States. In this work, I argue that the debate in OAS policy towards Cuba marks a re-definition of the majority of member states in their notion of democracy from a traditional Western style of democracy, towards one that calls for greater inclusiveness and understanding and challenges the hegemony that the United States has enjoyed in the group. My paper proposes that this change in the notion of democracy has sparked inherent conflict within the Organization of American States and has led Latin American states to reconsider its dominance as a regional organization.

Samuel Karel, Taking “America” out of Latin America: How CELAC is shaping the Future of Latin America and the Caribbean. On December 3, 2011 representatives from 33 nations in the western hemisphere met in Caracas, Venezuela for the first summit and formation of CELAC, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States. There had been regional integration attempts and meetings in the past, but this was different: there was a notable, intentional absence of both the United States and Canada at the conference. The formation of CELAC and the hopes of regional solidarity are unprecedented, and by
excluding the United States and Canada, these leaders gathered to discuss the future of Latin America without U.S. interests involved. This paper explores CELAC’s goals to increase regional integration, including opening and expanding trade, improving governmental cooperation, and instituting social reform to lower poverty levels, as providing an alternative to the O.A.S., which is largely dominated by U.S. influence. Although many analysts argue that CELAC will not be successful in accomplishing their goals, this paper argues that the exclusion of the United States and the inclusion of Cuba have made a strong statement and that through CELAC, leaders in Latin America and the Caribbean can improve the region economically and socially, and facilitate a change in the historically hegemonic relationship between them and the United States. This paper looks first at the history of U.S Latin American relations and how U.S influence has shaped development in the region, then analyzes the efficiency and relevance of the OAS, looking at their stated goals and their defense of democracy. Lastly it examines the proposed goals and accomplishments of CELAC to show that while Latin America and the Caribbean have lived in the shadow of the United States throughout their development, they are now emerging as truly independent and powerful nations in the world.

Alexa Schwartz, More Than A Number: Elite Student Participation in Mexico’s #YoSoy132 Movement. In May 2012, Mexican presidential candidate Enrique Peña Nieto of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) visited the Universidad Iberoamericana (Ibero) in Mexico City where he faced massive protests from university students. The students were shocked to see the press report Peña’s version of the event, claiming that these protestors were not students, but ‘thugs’ hired by the opposing political parties. In response, students created a YouTube video featuring 131 Ibero students who were present at the protests. The video went viral on social media websites, and the #YoSoy132 soon became a global student movement. However, the stereotype of the typical Ibero student is someone who is a member of the privileged Mexican elite and out of touch with reality. Why did such a radicalized student movement begin with a population of well-to-do students who traditionally have never felt excluded before? My research suggests that the rise in participation of the elite Mexican youth through the #YoSoy132 movement is a direct consequence of the unfulfilled expectations of a Mexican democracy after the fall of the PRI in the 2000 presidential elections. I argue that the lack of a transparent media, the history of repression and student protests in Mexico, and the direct attacks on the credibility of the students after the May 2012 protest radicalized this group of students who were never politically engaged before. Explaining the participation of a sector of the population that does not traditionally protest the status quo through such a massive movement like #YoSoy132 provides an understanding of Mexico’s present future. If Mexican youth can unite across class and socioeconomic boundaries to wield such power and influence with just a Twitter hashtag, what might this mean in the battle against the drug cartels that are tearing the country apart?

Panel 3: Land
Integration, Sustainability and Latin America’s Eco-economic Realities

Katie Gray, Perplexities of Brazil’s World Cup 2014 Host City Selections: The Dream of National Integration. As the world looks on to Brazil with expectations of a lively and exotic 2014 World Cup, many analysts are studying the investments to infrastructure and urban development. Among the dozen host cities are not only the nation’s capital, Brasília,
the industrial center, São Paulo, tourist destinations, such as Rio de Janeiro and various northeastern coastal cities, but two locations in the extreme interior: Manaus and Cuiaba. My paper explores the rationale for including these two distant, less developed, interior cities. I argue that the Brazilian government has strategically chosen its host cities based not only on the level of development or capabilities of hosting a global event, but also on their significance to the formation of a national identity and showing an integrated nation, not only to the world but also to itself. I examine the politics relative to continuous nationalist integration initiatives, lingering from the days of the last military regime, which implemented many programs and investments in the interior in an attempt to reach inward and take advantage of all of its territory and unite its peoples. Furthermore I look at historic efforts toward nationalism and integration, as the state worked to create a national identity based on diversity and unity together at once. My research suggests a government eager to show the world, which is finally astutely observing this rising economic power, that Brazil is a diverse nation, with much to offer.

**Benjamin, Lowy, Bananapocalypse: Cavendish Extinctions, Fair Trade and the Future of the Banana in Central America.** Over the last sixty years, the global market for export bananas has relied on the monoculture production of a single banana strain, to maximize profits and keep consumer prices as low as possible. This system of development has come at a high cost, leading to continual environmental degradation and countless issues with regards to human rights. Through this paper, I present the complete implementation of a fair trade economic system of production as an alternative to the current market, where attention to both environmental integrity and human rights are placed on the same level as net profits. I argue that through the evolution of several factors, from the growing conscious and awareness of consumers, as well as the imminent extinction of the Cavendish banana, independent and multinational banana producers alike will be encouraged to adopt fair trade policies as models for their business. Given that the costs of maintaining the modern system in the face of the Cavendish extinction are ultimately quite high, I further argue that by utilizing the fair trade market as the basis for the export banana trade producers are buying into a long-term plan of economic stability

**Olivia Pallissard, Green Eggs and Turtles: Costa Rica’s Playa Ostional Sea Turtle Experiment and “Consumptive Conservation.”** Long regarded as a “green republic” with a national conscience concerning conservation, Costa Rica has recently begun a project that critics see as challenging this reputation. With no other means of industry, residents from Playa Ostional in the Nicoya Peninsula are collecting and harvesting threatened Olive Ridley sea turtle eggs by the thousands. The state legalized sea turtle egg harvesting at Playa Ostional as an experiment in sustainable and economic development. This method of conservation incorporating consumption directly opposes the classic model of Costa Rican conservation, which is based on a system of national parks geared towards attracting foreign tourists and is the chief reason for Costa Rica’s internationally recognized green reputation. In this paper I argue that the Ostional Experiment, in its incorporation of consumptive-use practices, that reduce natural resources in order create profits redefines Costa Rican environmentalism in a way that is more is more nationally sustainable because it is based on local needs. My paper looks the susceptibility of Cost Rica’s long-established environmental models to global, economic shifts, to evaluate the significance of the consumptive model. Sustained mostly through foreign tourism, which is dependent on a strong economy, the traditional model of national parks and land preservation can’t be sustained during economic crisis. My analysis of a small-scale Costa Rican experiment that
includes local people and their economic situation in a sustainable development model that speaks to the potential integration of local economies into national conservation.

**Panel 4: Welfare**

**Inside Out: Lessons in Localized Development and Community Participation**

Ribeiro, Caitlin, *Breaking the Cycle: Mitigating Marginality in Brazilian Favelas*. For the past several decades in Brazil, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with a focus on local culture have grown tremendously. Perhaps the most well-known, Grupo Cultural Afro-Reggae currently receives attention from all over the globe. With evidence of more children attending higher levels of education, it appears these NGOs are succeeding. Yet with no ties to one another and different cultural focuses, comes the question as to why and what are their mechanisms of success. Therefore I propose that it is the attention of and integration into the public sphere, either through the NGO performances or media focus on a local celebrity associated with the programs, which has been decreasing marginality between the *favela* dwellers and the rest of society. The success of these programs and why they flourished are important both for the people they are affecting currently and for other individuals worldwide. Education is the key to ending the cycle of poverty and programs exist globally, which aim to make higher education accessible. Models which work in one country, state, or even city are difficult to translate to other cultures because of the differences. In Brazil, low-income community programs, which are vastly different, all have exposure to the public sphere as their key to success. Utilizing this key factor to create programs based on public exposure and local culture could be used as a model all over Brazil, Latin America, and other third-world countries. Additionally, a brief comparison with a local organization, *The Roots of Music*, which uses this same model as the cultural NGOs in Brazil, demonstrates the possibility of use in low income areas in developed and developing countries.

Kristina Crouch, *The Silent Voice: The Importance of Local Input in Nicaraguan Housing Development Projects post Hurricane Mitch*. In the fall of 1998 Hurricane Mitch left thousands of Nicaraguans without homes or basic, life-sustaining resources and illustrated that many Nicaraguans resided in environmentally unstable areas susceptible to natural disasters. In order to meet the need for housing reconstruction in the aftermath of the hurricane, international aid organizations agreed to spearhead the effort. Historically Nicaragua has been economically unstable and due to the risks they would be absorbing, the aid organizations convened the Stockholm Conference in order to set in place guidelines for the housing development projects and rules for how Nicaragua would take the opportunity to develop a more stable and thriving living environment for its people. Under the Stockholm agreements, various organizations were able to design their own projects and eventually construct villages and communities to help relieve the housing shortage created by Hurricane Mitch. This paper will compare housing development projects and analyze which elements lead to successful projects and those that steer a project towards failure. Through my analysis of three case studies, I found that there was a correlation between the influence from the “Nicaraguan voice” in the planning phase of a housing development project and the success of the mission. With further investigation I have found that the element that leads to a successful community is a cultural one because without the presence of native Nicaraguans or a Nicaraguan organization the construction projects did not account for certain traditions that were embedded in the Nicaraguan cultural.
Jennifer Triplett, *Pots, Potatoes, and Progress for Women: Rethinking Feminism in Post-Crisis Latin America.* As a survival strategy to weather the drastic convulsions of Peru’s economy in the 1980s, poor women in metropolitan Lima—disproportionately affected by the economic crises and subsequent neoliberal intervention measures—banded together and pooled their resources creating *comedores populares* to benefit their communities. In these communal kitchens, women toiled over steaming stoves, developed organizational and managerial skills, and created social networks of support and encouragement. Although traditional, Western-inspired feminists perceive these *comedores* as unhelpful or even detrimental to the feminist cause, I argue that they are actually spaces of female emancipation, a point of view supported by evaluating the kitchens’ activities through a local perspective of feminism emerging from within Peru. This paper examines the continuation of the *comedores* after the economic crises and reforms in relation to the non-economic needs they fulfill, particularly with respect to female empowerment. I argue that, despite seeming to reinforce traditional gender roles (utilizing skills like cooking and general caretaking), the work of women who participate in the *comedores* has positively impacted attitudes and behaviors concerning gender equality in Latin America. I examine management handbooks, news articles, and YouTube videos from the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s to trace the development of these kitchens as spaces of female empowerment. Ultimately, this case study of gender and labor metropolitan Lima illustrates the importance of assessing the women’s movement in Latin America through the lens of the women spearheading the efforts and according to their own definitions of feminist empowerment, emancipation, and equality.

**Panel 5: Identity**

**Queer and Present Dangers:**

**Race, Sexuality and the Politics of Recognition in Cuba and Brazil**

Ailene Orr, *Racial Quotas or Racist Quotas? Civil Society Responds to Affirmative Action in Brazil.* On August 29th, 2012, Brazil’s president, Dilma Rousseff, signed a controversial law mandating that federal universities reserve half of their admission spots for students educated in the public school system. According to this legislation, 50% of quota spots are dedicated to low-income students while spots reserved for specific races will be proportional to the racial makeup of the state where the university is located. While proponents of quota programs see this as an important step toward addressing racial inequality, opponents hold that race-based quotas force Brazilians to identify according to a black-white dichotomy, pitting Brazilians against each other and inspiring discrimination. While one might expect people of color to support this legislation and people of privilege not to, the response is not black and white. This paper assesses the reaction of civil society to the recent affirmative action legislation, to explore the complex relationship between the racial identity of a group and their position on the affirmative action issue. I argue that due to the history and discourse around racial mixing and the legacy of racial democracy, race-based quotas are more controversial and many groups choose to focus on class-based affirmative action instead. My paper examines the rhetoric and platforms of eight groups that address affirmative action programs. My work suggests that although conversation about race has become more prevalent, strategies intended to address racial inequalities are still controversial.
Rosanna Wyatt, Resistance Under Siege: Implications of the Marketing of Regla de Ocha. With the rise of the tourist economy in post-Soviet Cuba, the Afrocuban religion Regla de Ocha (commonly known as Santeria) was catapulted to international fame. Once a marginal, secretive, and highly suppressed religion, Ocha has become not only a symbol of the nation, but a product for consumption on the global market. The use of representations of Afrocuban culture for nationalist purposes is nothing new in Cuba. Nor is the exchange of money for services in the context of religious practice foreign to Ocha practitioners. What is new, however, is the marketing of the raw form of the religion to the dominant consumer class in exchange for unprecedented profits. This paper examines the shift from the marketing of a secularized representation of the Ocha religion in the form of folklore to the current marketing of religious practice itself, which I argue threatens to weaken the religion's ability to provide service to the Afrocuban community. The Afrocuban community was disproportionately affected, financially and otherwise, by the economic hardships following the fall of the Soviet Union. Ocha has long been a space of empowerment for the Afrocuban community, providing not only solutions for day-to-day problems but also a sense of personal agency for a historically oppressed people. I explore how the rise of the foreign specter is compromising Ocha's ability to invert mainstream societal constructs, now mimicking dominant power dynamics within a previously resistant space. My research suggests that this troubling tendency has the potential to weaken the religion, and take away from the Afrocuban community a much-needed way to cope with continuing marginalization, oppression, and exploitation.

Madeline White, Binders full of Women: Cuba’s Mujeres Magazine and Alternative Sexualities and Lifestyles. The summer of 2011 was a momentous year for the LGBT community in Cuba, as the capitol city of Havana witnessed the island’s first ever Gay Pride March, as well as the first “gay” wedding between a man and a transgender woman. Given the Revolution's reputation for gender equality, these milestones do not seem very surprising. Indeed, the official women's magazine of the Revolutionary government, Mujeres, does address such modern gender issues as sexual health, divorce, and sexual violence. Yet, flipping through the 2011 issues of the official women’s magazine of the Revolutionary government, Mujeres, one would have no idea that these “revolutionary” events occurred. In addition, despite paying lip service to some alternative identities, the reader would have no idea of the prominence of non-heterosexual and non-monogamous women in contemporary Cuban society. Through an examination of the journal's articles on female sexuality, I argue that, by failing to discuss the realities of all Cuban women, Mujeres magazine acts as an extension of the Revolutionary government, which holds that women should be wives, mothers, and activists, responsible for the maintenance of the nuclear family. It constructs an image of women with alternative sexual identities and lifestyles as aberrations to, rather than full members of, society. In my paper, I have examined articles in Mujeres concerning LGBT-identified women, single mothers, and single women in order to show the government’s opinion of these sexualities and lifestyles. Using forms of self-representation such as interviews and blogs, I then compare these government representations to the diverse voices of the very group of women who are occluded from the magazine, including the blog of the aforementioned newlyweds. My research suggests that Mujeres' narrow construction stands in stark contrast to the reality that these women are not only present, but active in contemporary Cuban society.

Matthew Cranney, International Cannibalism and the National Exotic in the Age of the Internet: The Music of Bonde do Rolê. [No abstract submitted]
**Stephanie Gaspar, Psychoanalysis in Argentina: A Government Strategy to Prevent Neurosis after an Unstable History.** Although the sexually-based theories of psychoanalysis originally encountered criticism in a predominantly conservative and Catholic Argentina at its arrival in the beginning of the twentieth century, Freud’s concepts have since become commonplace in the daily lives of Argentines. It is estimated that Buenos Aires contains more psychoanalysts per capita than anywhere else in the world, with a rate of 350 inhabitants per psychoanalyst. In this paper, I propose that the Argentine government accepts the use of psychoanalysis because Argentine history has produced a society susceptible to neurosis. I examine Argentina’s unique history of immigration, military dictatorships, and economic crisis to demonstrate how an unstable past involving state-induced trauma compels the government to protect its citizens’ mental health through providing therapy and other programs. High levels of inequality, unemployment, and poverty directly correlate to psychological disorders so Argentine officials feel obligated to provide services to prevent such mental conditions. Given the prominence of psychoanalysis in Argentina’s recent history of mental health treatment, the Argentine state has embraced psychoanalysis as a primary method for mental health care. Through providing mental health services, current government officials are also assuming the responsibility of their predecessors for the detrimental actions the state agents executed upon society in the past. By law, ten percent of Argentina’s total health budget must go toward mental health. In order to address government attempts at curbing the emotional distress of many citizens, I review and analyze the Argentine Ministry of Health’s documents, programs, and laws regarding mental health. I also look at how a general population, misinformed about mental illness, has contributed to the unusual reception and reverence of psychoanalysis compared to neighboring countries with similar pasts. My research suggests that, without some kind of treatment, mental health problems at the individual level and societal level would be inevitable.

**Robyn Smith, Searching for the Meaning of Truth: An Evaluation of the Brazilian National Truth Commission.** The Inter American Court for Human Rights’ 2010 ruling that Brazil must take responsibility for the 1965-1984 military dictatorship meant that Brazil would be reminded of a moment in history that many Brazilians had chosen to forget. The international community all but forced Brazil to open their archives to the people and, following a similar format to what occurred in South Africa, instate a National Truth Commission. The National Truth Commission holds a two pronged objective to discover the truth of the military dictatorship’s blatant violation of human rights and closure to those affected by these crimes. The continued existence, however, of a 1979 amnesty law to protect both the right and the left who committed human rights violations during the dictatorship continues to prevent any sort of criminal charges and has delayed reconciliation. Nearly thirty years after the military dictatorship ended, Brazil has begun to address, on a civil front, the human rights violations that occurred but there is much to critique involving the National Truth Commission due to its secrecy and lack of retribution. In my paper I argue that if the Truth Commission continues to operate from a manipulated truth, one that looks predominantly at the right rather than the perspective of the leftist resistance or the victims, it will be unable to achieve reconciliation because its interpretation of truth is too narrow. This conclusion is supported by comparing the
Brazilian National Truth Commission, which allows for confidential confession and focuses only on hearing the confessions of the right, to a theory of a system of retributions and to other international truth commissions that choose to take a broader perspective on truth. I aim to outline how the Brazilian National Truth Commission defines truth and what one can expect this definition of truth to obtain towards reconciliation.

Elizabeth Bobo, Fighting Today’s Problems with Yesterday’s Tactics: (The Absence of) Police Reform in Post-Dictatorship Argentina. In the forty years since the end of Argentina’s violent military dictatorship (1976-1983), law enforcement bodies have experienced drastic change from virtually unchecked reign in carrying out orders under the military, to a significant reduction in power and influence. Argentine Penal Codes up until the mid-1990’s allowed police to legally detain individuals on the basis of ‘suspicion’ and subsequently hold them for up to 30 days. In the context of the military dictatorship, this was one of the most humane of the infractions committed by police forces, which included electric shock torture, imprisonment for months at a time, and unjust murder of innocent citizens. It would make sense that the military and police forces would have gone through major cleanup and reform to root out these inhumane practices. However, even with the transition to democracy in 1983, reverberations of these cruel practices can still be seen. This paper examines the role the police have been given in the context of the creation of a witness protection program for military trials of human rights violations under the dictatorship. I argue that a fundamental absence of change in policy and practice has inhibited witness protection. I look at the literature and official documents on police reform and examine recent threats to security of witnesses in different contexts to support my argument that the lack of effective reform has enabled the continuance of police abuses. Through research of witness intimidation and disappearance in the military trials, I contend that this lack of change in policy and practice has facilitated abuses in other areas of law enforcement as well. This paper elicits the question of whether or not a country can claim reconciliation and move on from its past violent governments if true reform has not been enacted and enforced.

William Donaldson, Gangbangers and Politicians: Mano Dura’s Impact on Salvadoran Politics. According to a UN development report, El Salvador is one of the most dangerous countries in the Western Hemisphere as of 2011 when the homicide rate was 71 per 100,000 people (a rate fifteen times that of the United States). The Salvadoran government responded to this violence by implementing mano dura (‘iron fist’), a set of zero-tolerance laws designed to crack down on maras or street gangs. This policy allows police to detain suspected gang members for reasons such as sporting tattoos or wearing baggy pants. Since its inception, mano dura has failed to lower violent crime rates or to break the power of the gangs. Despite its shortcomings, politicians on both the Right and the Left in El Salvador have continued to support the policy. How do we explain the continuation of this failed, controversial policy? My paper examines how mano dura began under the rightist ARENA governments of the 2000s and has remained in place through the election of the leftist FMLN government in 2009. I argue that support for mano dura is a product of electoral politics in El Salvador as politicians competing for political office use the policy in order to win over their constituents and elements within their own political parties. My research shows that the Salvadoran public has been unnerved by the wave of violent crime that has swept the country and demands action against the maras from the government. The pressure from the public on politicians to adopt a tough-on-crime approach towards gangs is supplemented by pressure from within their own political parties as business interests in ARENA see the policy as beneficial not only for winning elections but also for preserving
foreign investment while the FMLN sees mano dura as a way to prove their moderate political stance to the public and to the United States

Participant Biographies

Elizabeth Bobo hails from small-town Arkansas, but when asked, just might tell you she was meant to be a porteña. A senior majoring in Spanish and Latin American Studies and minoring in Sociology, Elizabeth has studied and volunteered throughout Latin America, most recently for the Spring 2012 semester in Buenos Aires, Argentina. In Argentina, her interest was sparked on human rights in the region through an internship with an NGO focused on fighting against slave labor and human trafficking in Buenos Aires, and subsequent research on the topic through her study abroad program. She plans to apply for an AmeriCorps program focusing on human rights and community outreach in Puerto Rico immediately after graduating, and ultimately wants to work in international law within the U.S. or, hopefully, south of the border.

Kristina Ann Crouch is a senior from New Orleans, LA, with a dual degree in Latin American Studies and Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and a pre-medicine concentration. Her interest in Latin American Studies stems from community service trips and mission trips to Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Mexico she took in high school. After her freshman year at Tulane, Kristina did a summer in Valparaiso, Chile through the Stone Center. It was after this trip that she decided to pursue a second degree in Latin American Studies instead of a degree in Spanish. The following summer she studied in Innsbruck, Austria through the UNO International Summer School. She plans to get her masters in Public Health or Ecology and Evolutionary Biology before attending medical school. Eventually she hopes to coordinate medical mission trips through Latin America.

William Donaldson is a senior Latin American Studies and Political Science major. William is originally from Lynchburg, Virginia but over the past four years has come to see New Orleans as a second home. He saw Latin American Studies as the perfect way to combine his love of history and current events with his study of Spanish that began in elementary school. Before attending Tulane, William had spent a couple of weeks in Peru which cemented his love for travel and exploration in Latin America. He was not able to visit Latin America again, however, until spending a semester abroad in the beautiful port city of Valparaiso in Chile where he was able to attend classes at PUCV in the midst of the “Chilean Winter” student strikes and protests. William hopes to carry his knowledge of Latin America with him into a potential career in a federal law enforcement agency after graduation.

Bianca Falcon is a senior from Los Angeles, California double majoring in Latin American Studies and Political Science. Since her freshman year, Bianca pursued her interests in public policy and the Spanish language through her research primarily focusing on democratic political party leaders. Serving as a delegate in the Model Organization of American States representing Venezuela, Haiti and Panama, Bianca cultivated a passion for international diplomacy. This passion was further explored during her time abroad in Buenos Aires, Argentina studying at the Universidad de Buenos Aires. Additionally, she spent her undergraduate years serving the Latino community in New Orleans tutoring English as a Second Language students at Delgado Community College and coordinating
voter registration drives while interning with Puentes New Orleans, Incorporated “Vota y Cuenta” campaign. Following graduation, Bianca plans to continue to serve the Latino community both domestically and internationally.

**Stephanie Gaspar** is a Maryland native who came to New Orleans for the nice weather, the food, and Tulane’s Latin American Studies program. She has a double major in Latin American Studies and Spanish with a minor in Business. Stephanie’s interest in Latin America first sprouted when she began taking Spanish in seventh grade. She fulfilled her desire to explore the culture when she studied abroad in Buenos Aires during a semester abroad. Here, she improved her Spanish skills by living with a host family and taking classes with Argentine students. She also thought of her paper topic in Argentina while speaking with her host mother, a psychoanalyst who believed everyone should be in therapy. When Stephanie is not doing work for her Latin American capstone, she enjoys traveling, playing tennis, cooking, sewing, and playing with her puppy, Sophie. She would like to thank Jimmy, Edie, and her classmates for guiding and advising her on her paper.

**Katie Gray** is a senior at Tulane, triple major in Latin American Studies, International Relations, and Spanish/Portuguese. Her language studies began first in high school with the study of the French language and European culture, but in college she chose to focus on Spanish. A midshipman in the Navy ROTC, she was offered a place in a cultural studies program, requiring a major in a region and a minor in a language, and she chose Latin America. After leaving the military program, she had already become absorbed in the study of the region and continued to explore the complexities of political relations among Latin American nations as well as with countries outside the region, especially the world powers. After adding the study of Portuguese as well, she was able to study abroad in Argentina and then Brazil, which led her to focus research on the South American continent.

**Samuel Karel** is a senior Latin American Studies major and Spanish minor. Born and raised in St. Paul, Minnesota, traveling and working throughout Latin America inspired the decision to pursue this field. Studying abroad in Valparaiso, Chile shaped his perceptions of the world outside the United States, especially as it concerns Latin America. His passion for the people and the culture will hopefully lead him into a career and life in South America.

**Ben Lowy** is a 22 year-old Senior at Tulane from Mill Valley, CA. Currently, he is finishing up a Bachelors of Arts in both Environmental Studies and Latin American Studies. Inspiration for this paper drew from his interest in historical relationship of New Orleans and the banana trade of Latin America, as well as his past experiences working on an olive oil ranch. When not writing papers on bananas, he is likely to be found growing them in his backyard. Similarly, he has been told he has monkey-like traits.

**Noah Montague** is a senior from Myrtle Beach, South Carolina majoring in Latin American Studies, Economics and International Development. Noah first became interested in Latin America in high school after taking a course in World History. At Tulane, he has had the opportunity to study abroad three times, for a semester in Havana Cuba, and two summer programs through the Stone Center in Valparaiso, Chile and once more in Havana. His research interests in the region include the rise of the new left in Latin America and the role it has had on changing the nature of both democracy and development within the Western Hemisphere and international hemispheric organizations. In his senior year, Noah is writing an honors thesis on the relationship between Che Guevara’s New Man and the male homosexual in revolutionary Cuba. After Tulane, Noah would like to spend one to two years
working with an NGO in Latin America followed by graduate school, concentrating in either Latin American Studies or Political Science.

**Ailene Orr** is a senior from Beverly, Massachusetts pursuing a double major in Spanish/Portuguese and Latin American Studies. She has studied Spanish since middle school and fell in love with Latin America when she first traveled to an orphanage in Honduras at age 12. She has worked with the immigrant community in New Orleans teaching English as a Second Language since her freshman year at Tulane, and is currently teaching a class in New Orleans East. While studying abroad in the Dominican Republic during the fall semester of her junior year, she also had the opportunity to teach English to fifth and six graders at a rural school. After graduation she plans to continue teaching and hopefully spend a year in Honduras in the near future.

**Olivia Pallissard** is a senior from Phoenix, Arizona, majoring in Latin American Studies and Environmental Studies. She spent the last semester studying Tropical Biology in Costa Rica, and completing field biology research. Spending countless hours in the rainforest and working with poison dart frogs reinforced and fostered her interest and appreciation of tropical ecology and environmental policy. After graduation she hopes to find work at a non-profit geared towards conservation or environmental education, with long-term goals to teach science or help to implement environmental education programs.

**Sean Pluta** is a senior quadruple major in Latin American Studies, Economics, International Development and International Relations. Sean’s interests are centered around Latin American economic development, specifically related modern Paraguayan affairs and burgeoning energy sectors. Informally, Mr. Pluta has also spent time learning about disaster management in coastal cities, specifically relating to hurricane preparedness. In addition to studying in New Orleans, Sean has also studied in Valparaiso, Chile and Copenhagen, Denmark. Sean is a proud member of Tulane Quiz Bowl and is an avid flag football player. He was born and raised in Denver, Colorado, to Paul and Patricia Pluta and he enjoys badminton.

**Adam Ratzlaff** is a senior triple major in International Relations, Economics, and Latin American Studies. Raised in Las Vegas, New Mexico, Ratzlaff took a year off before coming to Tulane, as a Rotary Exchange Student in Minas Gerais, Brazil, where his interest in Latin American and international politics matured. Last spring Ratzlaff was a member of Tulane’s Haitian Delegation to the Washington Model OAS where he presented a resolution on agricultural youth development. Since May of 2012, he has been working as a research assistant for Professor Nora Lustig in Tulane’s Economics department on issues relating to poverty and inequality in Latin America. In the future, Ratzlaff hopes to serve in the US Foreign Service with a focus on Latin America.

**Caitlin Ribeiro**, a senior from Midland, Georgia, is majoring in Latin American Studies and Portuguese with a Brazilian Studies minor. Always interested in other cultures, Caitlin saw the study of Brazil as a way to connect with her Portuguese-speaking relatives. As a freshman, she began volunteering with *The Roots of Music*, a non-profit organization which teaches young children music, especially the music of New Orleans to inspire academic success. Her love for New Orleans and for the children in the program has aided her in becoming a head academic tutor. Inspired by the visit of Anderson Sá, one of the founders of *Grupo Cultural Afro-Reggae*, Caitlin worked with not for profit groups in Salvador da Bahia, Brazil. It was during this year abroad that she became amazed at the similarities
between New Orleans and Salvador. Her dream job would pay her to travel the world and have homes in Salvador and New Orleans.

**Alexa Schwartz** is a senior majoring in Latin American Studies, Anthropology, and Spanish, with a minor in Business. She first fell in love with Latin America after her family moved to Mexico City in 2005, and she considers herself more chilanga than gringa. She took classes at La Católica and the UDP during her semester abroad in Santiago, Chile, while also conducting detailed investigations into Chilean vineyards and the nightlife in Bellavista. During her time at Tulane, she has served as the Chair of Administration for TULASO (Tulane Undergraduate Latin American Studies Organization) and worked as a Housing Program Administrative Intern for Puentes New Orleans, Inc. Based off of her experience with Puentes, she plans to write her honors thesis on the Latino immigrant labor population and the impact of Latino community organizations in post-Katrina New Orleans. Thanks for coming to the conference!

**Robyn Smith** is a double major in Latin American Studies and Political Science with a minor in Portuguese. She has spent the past two summers in São Paulo, Brazil honing her Portuguese skills and studying the culture of transitional justice there. Robyn contributes to a blog entitled transitionaljusticeinbrazil.com for those interested in learning more on the subject.

Born and raised outside of Jackson, MS, **Jennifer Triplett** is a senior majoring in Latin American Studies, International Development, and Classical Studies. Since her summer trip to Chile in 2010 through the Stone Center, Jennifer has been eager to learn more about the politics, economics, and social aspects of the region. She also studied this past summer in Cuba to gain even greater perspective on the region and will travel to Chile after her December graduation to teach English in their public schools. Ultimately, Jennifer hopes to continue studying the Latin American region in a graduate program with an emphasis on development that can also be applied to work in the United States. A huge fan of cats, films, and cycling, Jennifer will likely be happy anywhere as long as she is able to continue studying and learning.

This past summer **Madeline White** traveled to Cuba and fell in love Havana, the Spanish-speaking, communist version of New Orleans. She is conducting her undergraduate research a year early because she plans to return to the island the fall of her senior year, which can’t come soon enough. Madeline is a proud queer feminist pursuing a double major in Gender and Sexuality Studies and Latin American studies at Tulane who wants to thank her sisters, family, and cats for putting up with her rants about how beautiful the first “gay” Cuban wedding was.

**Rosanna Wyatt** came to Tulane after a gap year during which, among other things, she spent three months in Central America. After completing one year at Tulante, she departed for Havana, Cuba, where she spent the first semester of her sophomore year studying at the University of Havana. During her time there she became interested in the Afro Cuban religion **Regla de Ocha (Santería)**. In the summer of 2012 Rosanna had the opportunity to return to Havana, where she spent time learning about and immersing herself in the religion. Raised on Hip Hop music and culture, and an R&B singer herself, Rosanna has a special connection to African diasporic cultures, and especially their musics. She is pleased to be able to bring her interests together in the culmination of her studies of Latin America and is excited to present a topic that is near and dear to her heart.