

The Social Impact of the Dynamics Between PRONASOL and NGOs in Mexico

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Amber Barnes

The 1988 presidential election marked several disruptions in the traditional one-party rule climate of Mexican politics. The Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) candidate Carlos Salinas de Gortari won the election by a very close margin, in fact, by the slimmest margin in PRI history, in a national vote which was cloaked with accusations of fraud. Popular movements across regional and sectoral affiliations for the first time departed from their historical non-electoral stance and stood as a united front in support of the Partido de la Revolucion Democratica (PRD) candidate Cuauhtemoc Cardenas. These two occurrences were unique and significant events in Mexican political history.

But whether the election was won by fraudulent means or not, the PRI candidate did assume office, and largely in response to his near loss, Salinas created a social program Programa Nacional Solidaridad (PRONASOL) which was designed to win back the constituencies alienated by his predecessor's Neoliberal reforms by targeting the sectors most in need of state support and by including popular movements in the design and administration of PRONASOL projects. However, considering the political context both recent and historical in Mexico, could popular movements trust that poverty alleviation and social development were the primary goals of Salinas' program or should they view these concessions as the traditional co-optive behavior of the PRI?

This paper will identify the primary causes of the initial political upheaval. It will then discuss the goals, structure, and political consequences of PRONASOL particularly with respect to the dispersion of popular support for the PRD. It will then try to answer the above question with two case studies. The first will document the Comité de Defensa Popular (CDP) and their choice to work with the Salinas administration and the second will follow the Asamblea de Barrios who refused to negotiate with the government and instead remained strictly supportive of the PRD. The author's evaluation will seek to determine whose strategy worked best for the goals of the respective organization and the welfare of their constituencies.

Pylos

Michael Boler

In the year 425 BC the Athenian general Demosthenes received permission to fortify a site on the Peloponnesian coast. He picked the ancient site of Pylos for two reasons. In the first place, the site at Pylos was naturally defended and could be made a stronghold with little preparation. Secondly, Pylos was the home of the Messenians before they were subjugated by Sparta, and could be used as base of operations for raids on Spartan territory and serve as a refuge for escaped helots. As part of their preparations for storming Pylos, the Spartans sent four hundred and twenty Spartiates to the adjacent island of Sphacteria to prevent an Athenian landing. Yet after the defeat of the Spartan fleet at the hands of the Athenians, these four hundred and twenty men remained trapped on the island. It is at this point that the Spartans travel to Athens to sue for peace. Why did the Sparta need these men back so badly? Thucydides tells us that many of these men were from the first families in Sparta, hence those in power at Sparta would have had a personal interest in their safe return. However, this alone is not enough to account for Sparta's humiliating sue for peace. What must be looked at is the internal political activity of Sparta at this time. It will be seen that political power in Sparta was shared by those for and against the war with Athens. It is only through an examination of these parties in Sparta that a more accurate understanding of Sparta's sue for peace can be gained.

Poetry Across the Disciplines

Sarah Gajkowski
Janet Lowery, English



Sarah Gajkowski

"Medea".

I will be giving a brief introduction to explain what my thesis is. It is a book-length manuscript of my poetry entitled, "Poetry Across the Disciplines". I will be giving a twelve-minute reading from my creative manuscript. I will read three poems from each chapter. From "Science as Metaphor", I will be reading: "Sheets of Sleep", "Our Compounds Were Once Marigolds," and "Windchill." From the chapter "Cultural Anthropology", I will be reading: "The Boy", "Widow (with four children)", and "Oplatky." From the chapter "Theology": I will be reading: "Aqua-vitae", "Lomg Ride Home", and "Commemorative". From the chapter "Classics", I will be reading "Demeter", "Danae", and

Existence and Judgment: Actions and Consequences in Selected Works of Walt Whitman and Oscar Wilde

Erica Garcia
Kerry MacArthur, English



Erica Garcia

Two anglophonic societies, the United States and England, once conjoined but headed in two separate directions, oversaw great literary changes in the nineteenth century. American society was in the midst of establishing its identity to the world and to its own people while British society was experimenting with an already established identity. Walt Whitman, an American poet, and Oscar Wilde, a British satirist, are two important figures representative of these two estranged societies. Whitman emerged as the ideal American writer and radically defined what American identity would become through his poem, "Song of Myself" in *Leaves of Grass*. He challenged the American valuing of western conformity and proposed the universal consequences of mankind's actions in a world where all interconnect.

Oscar Wilde became an experimental writer of wit in late Victorian England and dared to mock a society that sought to find new values for an upcoming era. In various works, such as *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, "House of Judgment," and "The Ballad of Reading Gaol," Oscar Wilde challenged the Victorian British concept of man's existence and the consequences of his actions. While both lived in times slightly apart from each other, both represented radical movements averse to what one considered the normal, acceptable literary traditions of the time. Simultaneously, they drew upon their own literary influences and everyday experiences in a world struggling for order and control. Their significance becomes more evident in the advent of twentieth century literary boundaries or lack thereof and the application of their social theories into even the most contemporary American and British literature.

Houston; The Southern Hub City Of The North American Free Trade Agreement

Adam B. Gibson

Linda Pett-Conklin, International Studies



Adam B. Gibson

The formation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994 has had a significant impact on the economies of Canada, Mexico and the United States. This regional coalition is significant because it unites the first world and the third world into a free trade area. Additionally, this agreement saved the Mexican Peso from total collapse in 1994 by providing the strength in production and export markets to the United States and Canada, coupled with IMF relief funds, that have kept Mexico's economy on a strong rise.

Through the examination of primary and secondary sources I will attempt to arrive at a conclusion of the position of Houston as the southern hub city of NAFTA resulting from the increased development of infrastructure and industry. This will include a study of the political economy in Mexico, U.S.-Mexico relations, especially in terms of immigration, the role of municipal governance in international trade and the initiatives of various Houston organizations in response to and anticipation of the increased trade flows resulting from NAFTA.

In order to understand the implications of NAFTA on the economies of its members, one must examine the economic situation preceding entrance into the agreement. It is important to examine the Mexican economic situation prior to January 1994, as well as the immigration issue, which has plagued the U.S.-Mexico relationship for many years.

I will examine the role of municipalities in the increasingly integrated global marketplace. I will end by relating this role to initiatives of Houston organizations, especially the City of Houston, the Houston Airport System, the Port of Houston Authority, and the Houston office of the Texas Highways Department, have taken to ensure adequate development of infrastructure to position Houston as the southern hub city of NAFTA.

Y2K: Marketing the Millennium Bug

Samantha Dawn Han

Lynn Godwin, Marketing





Samantha Dawn Han

When memory in computers was scarce and expensive, programmers took shortcuts whenever possible to save space. Instead of using a four-digit code for year dates, a two-digit entry was used. The practice continued long after the need for saving space was eliminated. In the mid 1990s people began to realize that computers and microchips may not be able to distinguish between the years 1900 and 2000, hence creating the "Y2K Bug."

Nations, corporations, and individuals spent billions of dollars repairing and preparing for Y2K. Large corporations and small businesses also sold billions of dollars in emergency products by marketing to consumers' anxiety over any potential crisis that the computer bug would cause. It would seem that the Y2K Bug was good for retailers, but businesses that thrive on holiday and New Year's Eve activity took a big economic hit. Attendance at parties, bars and restaurants was low, as were reservations at hotels and resorts. Some were afraid disaster would strike, some feared over zealous party goers getting behind the wheel, and some couldn't afford the over-inflated prices establishments were charging for "the biggest party of the millennium."

The bug never bit, at least in the doomsday fashion people imagined. Some believe it was because precautions were taken to be safe rather than sorry, some think it was all marketing hype. In my presentation I will examine the success, or failure, of "marketing the millennium bug."

Superweeds?: Costs of Transgenic Resistance

Christina Joy

Don Frohlich, Biology



Christina Joy

Transgenic plants, or plants that have genes from other organisms inserted into their genomes, in and of themselves, are not likely to be toxic or promote disease. Rather, concerns about these genetically engineered crop plants center on two ecological risks: those of the engineered plants themselves and those associated with the movement of transgenes into other plants. The risks from the engineered plants themselves are that the newly acquired traits might enable them to either become agricultural weed or to move out of the field and damage unmanaged ecosystems. The second category of risks involves the acquisition of transgenes by wild relatives via spontaneous crop-wild hybridization. In either case, the

modification results in a "superweed" that is not only expensive to control, but also impossible to eradicate. The formation of such resistant weeds would not only negate the original intent of the transgenic crop, but also greatly complicate the original weed problem.

Scientists have established that gene transfer does occur from genetically engineered plants to weedy relatives, and more importantly, that these acquired transgenes are transmitted to the next generation. Resistance to herbicides and pests are two popular traits for genetic engineering. The procurement of such traits by agricultural weeds is often beneficial. However, the possible costs that could affect the persistence of this trait when herbicides and pests are not present have not been studied extensively. This project attempts to evaluate the relationship among resistance traits, fitness, and population size in hopes to assess the costs of transgenic resistance.

A Practical Approach to Alternative Assessment

Virginia D. Poole

Teri Marshall, Education



Virginia D. Poole

Current trends in the educational profession have stressed the importance of Alternative Assessment, or the use of quality student-centered techniques that supplement and/or replace traditional testing practices. Since the 1970's, volumes of literature regarding this subject have been produced. Alternative Assessment has therefore become a "buzz" phrase for many classroom teachers: educational theorists and policy makers debate it, classroom teachers struggle to get a grasp of the lingo. Fashionably tossed around at professional development seminars, the theory is watered down and frequently never fully explained. As a result, classroom teachers fall into three distinct categories: those who glean what they can and partially implement it, those whose efforts at implementation fail miserably because no further guidance was provided, and those who completely ignore the idea because it is "too much work" and silently hope it will follow in the footsteps of open concept schooling. "A Practical Approach to Alternative Assessment" seeks to clarify this developing theory by first presenting a brief history of traditional grading practices and the motives behind them. The development of the alternative assessment theory is then discussed, stressing the importance of evaluating students according to their true ability and level of subject mastery. Ideas and guidelines pertaining to this issue are thoroughly explored and critiqued. Much of the extant work regarding alternative assessment demands change at the administrative level, leaving classroom teachers without guidance on theory implementation. As such, "A Practical Approach" provides educators with guidelines, assessment ideas, and other suggestions that can be easily adapted on an individual classroom

basis in accordance with Federal and State regulations. It is my intent to clarify and simplify the overwhelming presence of Alternative Assessment for the dedicated education professional.