

Toward A Model of Democratic Stability: Political Culture in Central America

MITCHELL A. SELIGSON
University of Pittsburgh

At a recent conference on democratization, one of the Latin Americanists present was overheard saying, "been there, done that." Such comments reflect the views of many Latin Americanists, who, having experienced prior waves of democratization, are perhaps justifiably skeptical about the durability of the current wave. Rather than speaking of long-term trends, we are used to looking at waves of democratization followed by waves of authoritarianism. Latin American democracies grew in number in the early 1940s, declined toward the end of World War II, grew again in the early 1960s and declined thereafter, only to rise again in the 1980s and 1990s.¹ A broader, world-wide view of cycles has been provided by Huntington, who has characterized the present upsurge as "democracy's third wave."² An even longer-term view is found in the recent work of John Markoff.³

In light of this rather dismal historical record, perhaps the central question that students of democratization ought to be asking today is, what are the prospects for the durability of the current cycle? This question is especially pertinent since breakdowns and near breakdowns of democracy have become regular occurrences almost since the beginning of the current wave.

Prior Research

As far as I am aware, the most extensive study to date attempting to predict the durability of democracy has been conducted by Adam Przeworski and his colleagues, who employed data on 135 countries from 1950 to 1990.⁴ Their main finding emphasizes the role of economics; in countries with a 1985 per capita GNP of more than \$6,000, democracies do not break down. In poorer

countries, economics is also important; when the economies are growing and income is being distributed more equitably, democracy can survive.

The Przeworski et al. study, comprehensive and informative though it is, limits itself to macro-level economic and institutional data. Since the publication of Lipset's early seminal, it has been clear that macro-level variables such as GNP, literacy, and regime type all play very important roles in creating the necessary conditions for the emergence and survival of democracy.⁵ Yet, Lipset also clearly recognized that cultural variables, especially legitimacy, can be critical for the survival of democratic regimes once they are established. As he has stated in his more recent work on the subject: "Political stability in democratic systems cannot rely on force. The alternative to force is legitimacy...."⁶ The data in the Przeworski study, however, do not allow us to measure the degree to which the population perceives the political system as legitimate, nor does it allow us to measure other attitudinal variables that might impact the stability of democracy. The exclusion, therefore, of micro-level information, especially political culture, in effect has left the equations underspecified.⁷

It is not possible, of course, to incorporate systematic political culture data for 135 nations, since no such data set currently exists. Until recently, survey data traditionally available to social scientists have come largely from Western Europe and North America, producing a sample highly skewed towards advanced industrial nations. The recent rapid expansion of the number of democratic polities, however, has made it possible to collect public opinion data for a far broader and more diverse sample of nations. Thus, while it still is not possible to match the breadth of the Przeworski study of the impact of economic development on democracy at the micro level, we now have sufficient data to enable us to begin the task of incorporating political culture into the mix. The expansion of the Eurobarometer into Latin America offers one such important new source, as does the University of Pittsburgh Latin American Public Opinion Project.⁸

Cultural theory, for many years relegated to the back burner in the political science kitchen, has become, according to Eckstein, "the single most important item now on the agenda of political science."⁹ According to Reisenger's extensive review of the political culture literature, "A successful resuscitation of political culture should be a tremendous boon to those seeking to understand the collapse of authoritarian regimes in recent years and the prospects for successful consolidation of democracy."¹⁰ Huntington's own most recent statement concentrates most of its attention on exploring the strengths and limitations of culture as an explanation for democracy.¹¹ An extensive body of cross-national evidence has been presented in a recent volume on the subject edited by Diamond,¹² and a comprehensive review of

the major findings is found in a paper published by Dalton.¹³ Even those committed to a rational choice perspective, which seemingly minimizes or even excludes the role of political culture, have recently made a very strong case for its importance in understanding politics.¹⁴

Limitations of Prior Research

Unfortunately, much of the increasing volume of contemporary research on political culture suffers from two serious limitations. First, even though, as this paper has argued, one of the most important questions facing researchers of democracy is its *stability*, many researchers have ignored this vital question. Those who argue for a cultural explanation of democracy often forget that it becomes a moot point that citizens might prefer democracy over authoritarianism when their democracy has already broken down.¹⁵ The breakdown of the state in Somalia and the emergence of ubiquitous clan warfare there, along with the brutal civil warfare in the former Yugoslavia, are cases that bring home the vital importance of system stability. It is not surprising, therefore, that one exception to the general neglect of the stability question in studies of political culture was a survey conducted by Finifter in the waning days of the Soviet Union, a state whose stability was very much in question at the very time the survey was being conducted and subsequently ceased to exist.¹⁶ That research has been followed up by a more recent study of the now former USSR by Gibson, who questions whether democratic values there are "a mile wide but an inch deep."¹⁷ Unfortunately, despite these exceptions, the prevailing trend is to focus on democracy to the exclusion of stability.

In this paper I hope to remedy the neglect of the question of political stability by developing a theory of the political culture of democracy that explicitly incorporates measurement of attitudes of legitimacy of the political system, a variable long thought to impact directly on stability. Basically, the argument is that if citizens do not believe their political system is legitimate, its stability will be very much in question.

A second significant shortcoming of much of the political culture research is that it tends to focus on variables far removed from the core values of democracy. It may be that aptitudes such as inter-personal trust and life satisfaction, attitudes that political scientists have been measuring since the appearance of the *Civic Culture*, ultimately will be found to have links to more explicitly democratic values, but this should not dissuade us from measuring more directly democratic values themselves. No conclusive empirical evidence has yet been presented that demonstrates that individuals who trust their neighbors and who are satisfied with life would necessarily

support democracy. Perhaps the most extensive effort to make this very argument are the studies of Ronald Inglehart, who has conducted cross-national studies of democracy, focusing on the variables of interpersonal trust, life satisfaction and opposition to revolutionary change.¹⁸ However, there are a number of important critiques of the methodology and causal implications of Inglehart's approach.¹⁹ With respect to Central America, Edward Muller and I have demonstrated that the three Inglehart variables that are supposed to form a syndrome of attitudes called the "civic culture" have no significant inter-item correlations in 12 out of 18 cases, and of the six coefficients that are significant, five are in the wrong direction.²⁰ In this paper I argue that if one wants to look at the micro-foundations of stable democracy, one should look first to values which have a more direct linkage to democratic stability, not their remote antecedents. This paper, therefore, looks directly at political tolerance, suggested by many researchers as perhaps the most important component of democratic beliefs, and system support, as attitudes most directly linked to political stability. The paper utilizes a rich micro-level data base made possible by the University of Pittsburgh Latin American Public Opinion Project.²¹ In this paper I intend to mine that data to present evidence of the utility of a micro-level model on the factors that help promote stable democracy.

Legitimacy and Political Tolerance: Key Factors in the Stability of Democracy-Legitimacy

According to Lipset's classical work, systems that are legitimate survive even in the face of difficult times. In Central America, by the mid 1980s all six countries were regularly holding free and fair elections.²² The survival of these democracies, each of which are facing difficult economic times, depends upon continued popular support. One need only think of the ballot box ouster in 1990 of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua to see how critical such support can be. In that case, the inability of the system to cope effectively with the severe economic crises and the protracted "Contra War," caused voters to turn against the system.²³

Given the historical importance of the concept of legitimacy, one would have thought that social scientists had long ago developed reliable and valid means to measure it. Until recently, however, measurement of legitimacy has been hampered by widespread reliance on the Trust in Government scale devised by the University of Michigan.²⁴ Studies in many parts of the world have used that scale, taking for granted its reliability and validity. The empirical evidence, however, did not support that conclusion. Perhaps the clearest indication of the limitations of the scale is in the United States trust in

government; as measured by the scale, it began to fall in the Vietnam war period and continued on a downward spiral through Watergate. Yet, even though trust in government as measured by the scale was rapidly declining, there were virtually no public manifestations that suggested that the U.S. system of government was in jeopardy of collapse. The problem with the scale, it has turned out, is that it relied far too heavily on a measurement of dissatisfaction with the performance of incumbents rather than of generalized dissatisfaction with the system of government. Thus, many U.S. citizens may have opposed the War in Vietnam or been appalled by Nixon's behavior in Watergate, but no mass movement arose to overthrow the political system. The Trust in Government scale turned out not to be a valid measure of political legitimacy. Moreover, its reliability was found to be far below the norms we utilize in social science. The development of the Political-Support Alienation Scale, now tested in studies of Germany, Israel, the United States, Mexico, Costa Rica, Peru and elsewhere, has provided a valid and reliable analytical tool for measuring legitimacy.²⁵ The construction of the scale was based upon a distinction made by Easton, relying upon Parsons, of defining legitimacy in terms of system support (i.e., diffuse support) vs. specific support (i.e., support for incumbents).²⁶

Five items were included in the scale as utilized in Central America.²⁷ Each item utilized a seven-point response format, ranging from "not at all" to "a great deal." The questions were as follows:

1. To what extent do you believe that the courts in Guatemala [substitute appropriate country] guarantee a fair trial?
2. To what extent do you have respect for the political institutions of Guatemala [substitute appropriate country]?
3. To what extent do you think that the basic rights of citizens are well protected by the Guatemalan [substitute appropriate country] political system?
4. To what extent do you feel proud to live under the political system of Guatemala [substitute appropriate country]?
5. To what extent do you feel that one ought to support the political system of Guatemala [substitute appropriate country]?

In the study reported on in this paper, these items were asked of all respondents. Non-response to the items was very low, averaging less than three percent in each country. The distribution of responses and reliability of the index are presented below.

Political Tolerance

By political tolerance, I am referring to respect by citizens for the political rights of others, especially with those with whom they may disagree. Since Stouffer conducted his studies in the early 1950s, scholars have wondered if political tolerance really matters in the building and maintenance of democratic regimes. After all, Stouffer found that in the United States, a quintessential example of democratic governance, large majorities of citizens displayed intolerance toward the civil liberties of unpopular groups such as Communists and Nazis.²⁸ If U.S. citizens were intolerant, what could one expect from populations with long histories of authoritarian rule? In order to explain the persistence of democracy in the context of intolerant mass publics, the "elite theory of democracy" emerged, in which it was presumed it must be the elites in a democracy who "carry the flag" and insure democratic governance.²⁹ In more recent research, Gibson has concluded that both mass and elite tolerance have an impact on tolerant and intolerant public policies made in the U.S. Gibson concludes his study of the passage of laws restricting civil liberties by stating that,

...the willingness of the mass public to accept repressive policies was no doubt important. Thus, the policy-making process need not be seen as a "demand-input" process with all its untenable assumptions but rather can be seen as one in which the preferences of the mass public —perhaps even the political culture of the state— set the broad parameters of public policy. In this sense, then, mass political tolerance "matters" for public policy.³⁰

The conclusion that public tolerance or intolerance establishes a "culture of the state" in which public policy is formulated has important implications for the question I am attempting to answer here, namely, the importance of public attitudes for the construction and maintenance of democratic regimes. Gibson's more recent research bears directly on this question. In a 1992 article he established that, "those who perceive constraints on their freedom live in communities characterized by higher levels of political intolerance."³¹ Conversely, those who perceive themselves as living in free societies are themselves more tolerant. In the context of newly democratizing societies, the implications of such findings are obvious. One would anticipate that the limited freedom that characterizes many newly democratizing nations would be associated with greater political intolerance at the level of the individual, that would in turn create a "political culture" of intolerance. Since it has been

well established that public opinion has important impacts on public policy, such a culture of intolerance could well constrain the deepening of democracy in Latin America, whereas a culture of tolerance could promote a greater level of democracy.³²

The research noted above encourages us to add political tolerance to system support as a second factor related to the prospects for the stability of democracy. Before presenting a model that relates tolerance, system support and democratic stability, we need to first examine the methodology to be used for the measurement of tolerance.

Political tolerance has been measured in many studies by determining how willing individuals are to grant civil liberties to specific groups. In some cases, such as the Stouffer studies, the groups have been chosen by the investigator. In others, lists of groups are presented, and the respondent selects his/her "least liked group."³³ It now appears, however, that both methods produce highly similar results.³⁴ In the Central American study, we measured tolerance by focusing on four of the most basic civil liberties: the right to vote, demonstrate, run for office and the right to free speech. We utilized a 10-point response format, that ranged from strongly approve to strongly disapprove, and asked:

There are people who only say bad things about the Guatemalan [substitute appropriate country] form of government. How strongly would you approve or disapprove of the right of these people to:

- 1) Vote?
- 2) Carry out peaceful demonstrations with the purpose of expressing their point of view?
- 3) Run for office?
- 4) Make a speech on T.V.?

As in the case of system support, these items were asked to all of the respondents in the study.

Theoretical Interrelationship of System Support and Tolerance

How do system support and tolerance relate, and what is the potential impact of this relationship on democratic stability?³⁵ It is easiest to answer these questions by creating a simple two-by-two table, dichotomizing system support and tolerance into "high" and "low." Table 1 represents, for this dichotomous situation, all of the theoretically possible combinations of system support and tolerance.

Table 1. Theoretical Relationship Between Tolerance and System Support in Institutionally Democratic Polities

SYSTEM SUPPORT	TOLERANCE	
	High	Low
High	Stable Democracy	Authoritarian Stability
Low	Unstable Democracy	Democracy at Risk

Let us review each cell, one-by-one. Systems that are populated by individuals who have high system support and high political tolerance are those the model would predict would be democratic and stable. This prediction is based on the simple logic that moderately high system support is needed in non-coercive environments for the system to be stable, and tolerance is needed for the system to be able to guarantee civil liberties (especially to minorities) and thus remain democratic. Emerging democracies with this combination of attitudes are likely to experience a deepening of democracy and might eventually end up as one of Dahl's polyarchies.³⁶

When system support remains high, but tolerance is low, then the system should remain stable (because of the high support), but democratic rule is in jeopardy. Ruling majorities might not accept the political rights of minorities, an all-too-common occurrence throughout the world. Such systems would tend to move toward what we might call "oligarchical rule," in which democratic rights would be restricted.

Countries in which system support is low (the bottom two cells in Table 1) may be directly linked to unstable situations. Instability, however, does not necessarily translate into the ultimate reduction of civil liberties, since such instability could serve to force the system to deepen its democracy, especially when values tend toward political tolerance. That is, minorities might press for greater political rights, and in so doing destabilize the system while possibly bringing about greater democracy. In countries in which system support is low and tolerance is high, it is difficult to predict if the instability will result in greater democratization or a protracted period of instability characterized by considerable violence. That is, such countries may be moving toward the upper-left cell, stable democracy, or they may be moving toward breakdown. On the other hand, in situations of low support and low tolerance, democracy is clearly at risk and democratic breakdown seems to be the most likely ultimate outcome.

It is important to keep in mind two caveats that apply to this scheme. First, note that the relationships discussed here only apply to systems that are already institutionally democratic. That is, they are systems in which, at a minimum, competitive, free, fair and regular elections are held and

widespread participation is allowed. These same attitudes in authoritarian systems would have entirely different implications. For example, low system support and high tolerance in non-democratic systems might well produce the breakdown of an authoritarian regime and its replacement by a democracy. Second, these variables explain only the micro-factors that might make democratic stability possible, and they are meant to supplement the macro-factors already described by Przeworski and his colleagues. What is being assumed here is that over the long run, attitudes of the mass public make a difference in regime type. Attitudes and system type may, of course, remain incongruent for many years. Indeed, as John Booth and I have argued for the case of Nicaragua, that is what may well have occurred. But the Nicaraguan case we studied was one in which the system was authoritarian and repression had long been used to maintain an authoritarian regime, perhaps in spite of the tolerant attitudes of the citizens.³⁷

Data

For the baseline data for this study, a total of 4,180 interviews were conducted in 1990-92, distributed among the five Central American countries and Panama.³⁸ That data set has been supplemented with additional interviews in El Salvador and Nicaragua in 1995, and Peru and Paraguay in 1996. Additional data collected in Peru, Bolivia and Nicaragua in 1997-98 will be reported on in subsequent publications. The baseline data are urban, whereas later surveys are all national in scope.³⁹ The sample sizes varied for each country (Guatemala, 904; El Salvador, 910; Honduras, 566; Nicaragua, 704; Costa Rica, 597; Panama, 500). These differences are the product of differences in the resources available to the study team in each country.⁴⁰

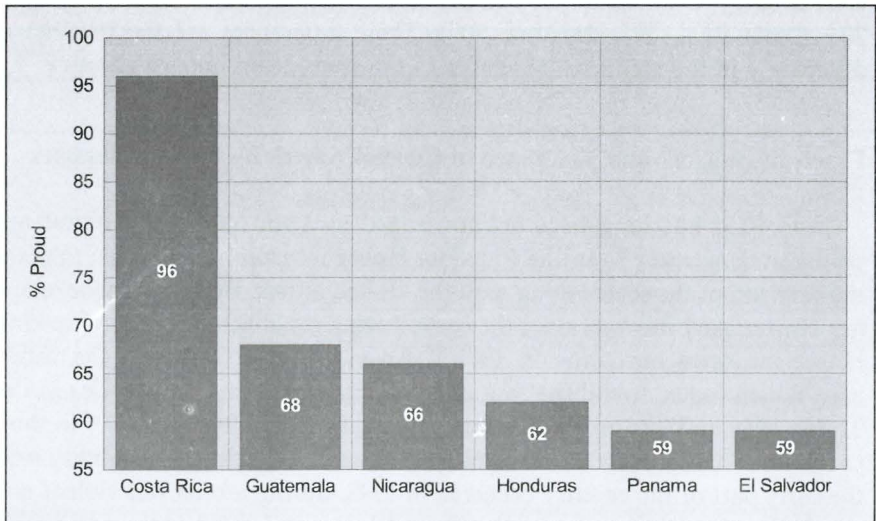
Levels of Support and Tolerance in Central America - System Support

Costa Rica has long been acknowledged as Latin America's oldest and strongest democracy.⁴¹ In the Freedom House measure, Costa Rica ranks at the very top of the scale, along with the United States, Britain, France, etc. It has been ranked this way since the earliest regular publication of the Freedom House measures beginning in 1978.⁴² An even earlier measure, the widely used Bollen Index, found that out of a possible 100 points, Costa Rica scored 91.3 in 1960 and 90.1 in 1965, whereas the U.S. scored 94.6 and 92.4 in those two years.⁴³ Costa Rica's only significant instance of political instability since the early part of the century occurred in 1948, during a brief but violent civil war.⁴⁴ For all of these reasons, the Costa Rican case is used as the one against

which comparisons will be made with the remaining cases in Central America. If Costa Rican survey data do not suggest the presence of an attitudinal basis for a far more stable democracy than in any of the other Central American countries, all recent newcomers to the democracy feast, then we cannot have any confidence in the theory. On the other hand, the use of Costa Rica rather than European or North American cases makes it possible to control for a wide range of other factors, including level of economic development, historical traditions, colonial heritage, religion, etc., that might seriously distort the comparisons.

Before displaying the results of the overall scale of system support, it is informative to look at the item that measures pride in one's political system, a fundamental measure of political legitimacy. The results shown in Figure 1 strongly support the argument that the attitudes of the Costa Rican public mirror the long tradition of political stability found there.⁴⁵ In Costa Rica, 96 percent of the respondents reported that they were proud of their political system. No other country in Central America approximates the high level of pride in the system found in Costa Rica. Moreover, these results are entirely consistent with prior studies of system support in Costa Rica.⁴⁶ National samples in that country that include both urban and rural respondents reveal that this finding is not merely an artifact of the urban nature of the sample; rural Costa Ricans express even higher levels of support on these items.⁴⁷

**System Support in Central America:
Pride in One's Political System**



Turning now to the overall picture of system support, for the six countries a scale utilizing all five questionnaire items was calculated.⁴⁸ The five-item support scale shown in Figure 2 presents an overall picture of support for the region. Once again, Costa Rica stands out from the other countries, with by far the highest level of system support. On a 0-100 basis, Costa Rica achieves a level of support of 74, whereas the other countries are in the 50's, and two, El Salvador and Honduras, are below the mid-point of the scale.

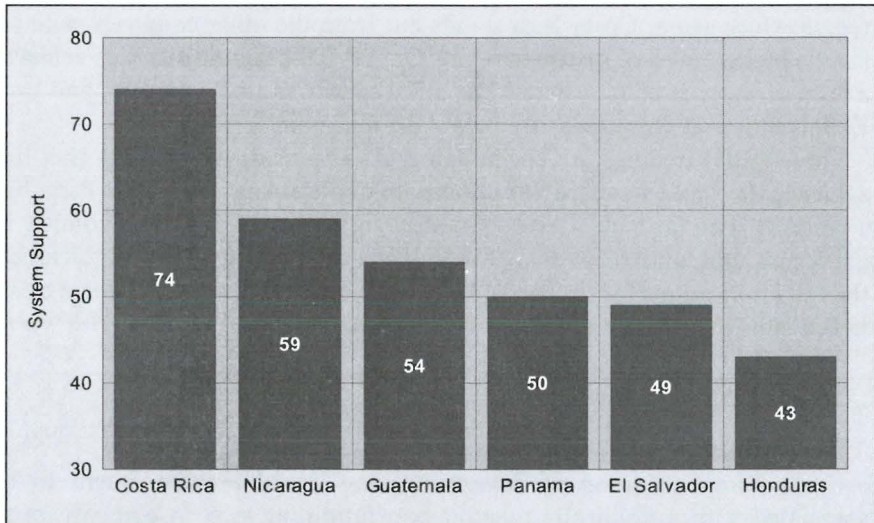
These initial findings are encouraging. As expected, the country that has achieved the "gold standard" of stability in Central America, Costa Rica, has a citizenry with far higher levels of system support than any other country in the region. But, until these data are combined with data on political tolerance, the full implications for the model being proposed here will not become clear. Let us now look at the results on political tolerance.

Tolerance

Costa Rica's tradition of democracy, one would assume, ought to be associated with a politically tolerant population, at least in comparison to other Central American countries. In fact, this is not what emerges from the data, as is shown in Figure 2. Rather than being the most tolerant population in Central America, Costa Ricans fall somewhere in the middle of the group, with Honduras and Panama notably higher. Only in these two countries do solid majorities support each of the four civil liberties included in the series. At the other extreme is Guatemala, with only one-fifth of the respondents supporting the right to run for office, and only slightly more than one quarter supporting the right to free speech. In no case does a majority of the Guatemalan sample support any of the basic civil liberties examined here.

How can these findings be explained? Why are Costa Ricans not more tolerant than they are? To find out, I conducted a series of focus groups in Costa Rica and quickly found the nearly universal response, given to me by citizens of all walks of life. When I asked why they were not willing to grant civil liberties to those who "only say bad things about the Costa Rican system of government," they told me that they feared that if they extended a wide range of civil liberties to those critics, they might be jeopardizing their own civil liberties in the future. Their concern was very concrete; Costa Rica has been firmly democratic for nearly 50 years, and for most of this century non-repressive, civil governments have ruled. In contrast, for most of the century its neighbors in Central America have been ruled by highly repressive dictatorships of the right, while in the 1980s it confronted an authoritarian left-wing regime in Nicaragua, its nearest neighbor to the North. The civil wars of the 1980s resulted in massive immigration of refugees from

System Support in Central America: 5-item Index



Nicaragua, and to a lesser extent El Salvador and Guatemala, and Costa Ricans told me that they feared what they presume are the anti-democratic values of those immigrants and their potential pernicious impact on Costa Rican democracy.

The importance of these counter-intuitive findings needs to be stressed. High system support does not necessarily mean strong support for civil liberties. Indeed, if system support reaches jingoistic levels, as one assumes it did among German Nazis during the Hitler years, then tolerance for civil liberties would be expected to virtually disappear. To take the opposite case, as John Booth and I have reported, political minorities might assume a highly tolerant position in order to hope to insure their own right to speak out.⁴⁹ Thus, there may be some kind of a trade-off between system support and tolerance. This is all the more reason why we need to examine the *joint* effect of both legitimacy and tolerance, as proposed in the model presented above. It is to that task that this paper now turns.

The Connection Between System Support and Tolerance

It is now time to put together the two variables that have been the focus of this study by examining their joint distribution. To do this, both variables are

dichotomized into "high" and "low."⁵⁰ The results for Costa Rica alone are presented in Table 2 below, with all six countries being presented in Table 3.

Table 2. Empirical Relationship Between Tolerance and System Support in Costa Rica

SYSTEM SUPPORT	TOLERANCE	
	High	Low
High	Stable Democracy 52%	Authoritarian Stability 41%
Low	Unstable Democracy 3%	Democracy at Risk 4%

An examination of Table 2 makes it very clear why, from the perspective of the political culture literature, Costa Rica has been so stable. All but 7 percent of the urban population is in the "high" support zone. Moreover, the stable democracy cell contains the largest proportion of respondents and the majority of the entire sample. Yet, over two-fifths of the respondents are in the authoritarian stability, or restricted democracy cell, based on their low levels of tolerance; not surprising, given the modest levels of political tolerance reported on above. But, before commenting further on these findings, we should compare the Costa Rican case to the other five countries in the region. This is done in Table 3, in which the critical cells of "stable democracy" and "democracy at risk" have been highlighted.

Table 3. Joint Distribution of System Support and Tolerance in Central America

Country	Stable Democracy	Unstable Democracy	Authoritarian Stability	Democracy at Risk
Costa Rica	52%	3%	41%	4%
Panama	37%	36%	16%	12%
Nicaragua	38%	18%	32%	12%
El Salvador	23%	23%	31%	24%
Guatemala	18%	15%	39%	29%

Percents do not always total 100 owing to rounding. Source: University of Pittsburgh Latin America Public Opinion Project.

The Costa Rican case stands apart from the others, with its high proportion of citizens in the stable democracy cell. In sharp contrast, less

than one-quarter of urban Salvadorans and less than one-fifth of Guatemalans possessed the combination of attitudes needed to sustain stable democracy. More troubling for these two countries is that they also had the largest proportion of any of the six countries in the democracy at risk cell. Further, the largest concentrations of their populations were found in the authoritarian stability cell. Of the six countries, from the perspective of 1991, Guatemala and El Salvador would seem to have the dimmest prospects for maintenance of stable democracy. These findings coincide with most expert opinion on Central America, which has long viewed the decades of guerrilla warfare and ethnic violence in Guatemala and the problems of overpopulation, land distribution and military power in El Salvador as significant barriers to stable democracy. It may be no coincidence, then, that Guatemala, the country with the most restricted mass support for democracy, was the only country of the six in the 1990s that has thus far undergone an executive-coup that attempted, but eventually failed, to impose an authoritarian system, by eliminating the legislative and judicial branches.

Honduras and Panama had somewhat similar profiles. The great bulk of their populations were concentrated in the two democracy cells, with Panama having a slightly larger proportion in the stable democracy cell, and Honduras a larger proportion in the unstable democracy cell. The model would predict that neither country is likely to end up with an oligarchical system, but the low levels of system support in Honduras may drive it towards breakdown or toward further democratization.

Nicaragua was unique among these six cases. The largest proportion of its population is in the stable democracy cell, yet this amounts to only somewhat more than one-third of the citizens. Like Costa Rica, its second largest concentration is in the authoritarian stability cell. Comparatively low proportions of the population are in the unstable cells (unstable democracy and democracy at risk). This distribution may well reflect the fact that in 1991 Nicaraguans had had their revolution and were seeking stability, democratic or otherwise.

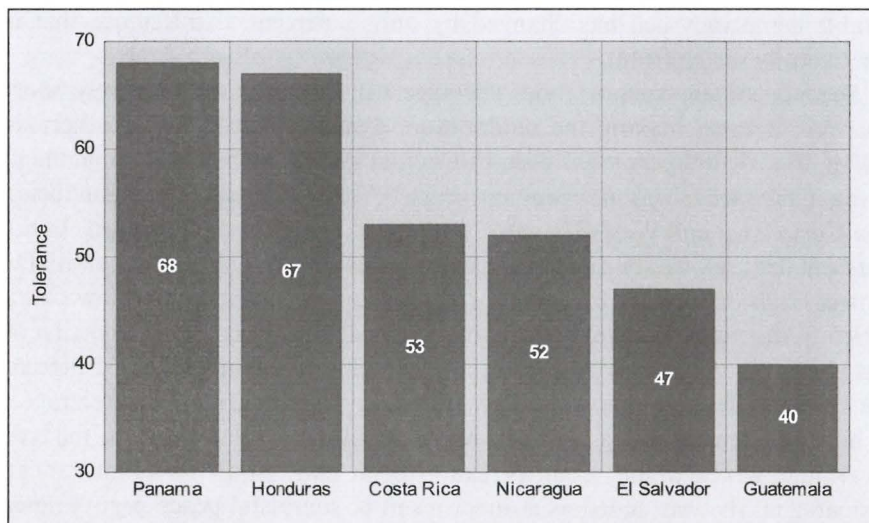
Expansion of the Model to Other Countries

These projections have been made based on the theoretical impact of the relationship between system support and political tolerance. There is no way of knowing at this juncture if these predictions will be fulfilled. Obviously, numerous factors, especially the domestic factors noted by Przeworski and his colleagues, as well as external influences, will strongly influence the long-term deepening, erosion or stagnation of democracy in each Central American

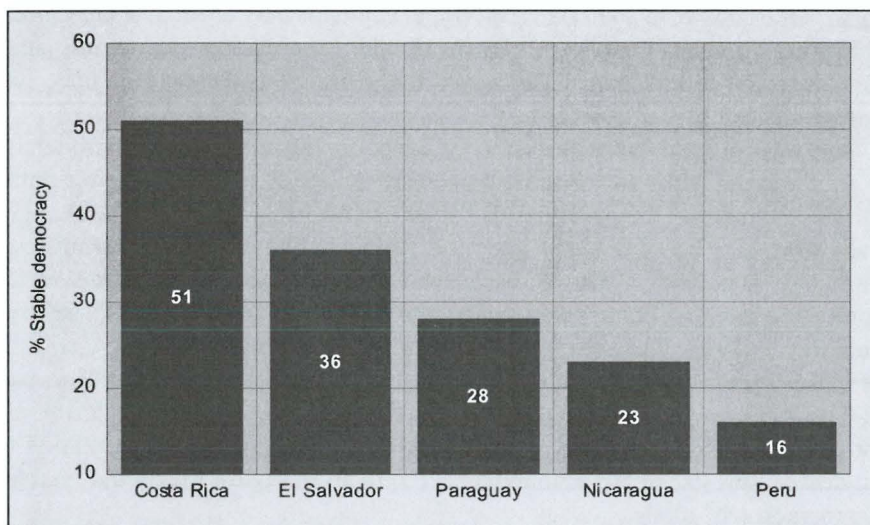
country. Moreover, the impact of public preferences on regime type remains an area of much speculation. Attitudes conducive of stable democracy provide no guarantees, just as economic conditions provide no guarantees. India, for example, in 1995 had a GNP per capita of only \$350, and therefore, according to the Przeworski model, should have had a democratic life expectancy of fewer than 8 years, yet India has been democratic since its independence.

One way to help increase our confidence in the utility of the model is expand it across time and space. I do so here by briefly presenting newer data for three countries, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Nicaragua, so that change over time can be examined, and also by including additional countries, Paraguay and Peru.⁵¹ Figure 3 shows the results for surveys that were conducted in Costa Rica, El Salvador and Nicaragua in 1995 and Paraguay and Peru in 1996. These surveys are all national in scope, with the exception of Costa Rica, which continues to be urban. The samples are larger than we had in the early 1990s, with 1,409 interviews in El Salvador, 1,200 in Nicaragua, 1,450 in Paraguay, and 1,510 in Peru. Only Costa Rica retains a modest sample size of 505 respondents. The focus in Figure 1 is on the "stable democracy cell" alone.

Political Tolerance in Central America: Four-item ZScale



Support for Stable Democracy, 1995-96: Five Latin American Countries



We can draw a number of noteworthy conclusions from this figure. First, Costa Rica clearly retains its position as the one country with the combination of attitudes most likely to support the continuation of stable democracy. System support remains high in Costa Rica, and tolerance moderate. Indeed, over the five-year period between the two surveys, the stable democracy cell has changed by only 1 percent, a difference that is statistically insignificant.

Second, system support and tolerance can change over relatively short periods of time, making the model more dynamic than it might otherwise seem. In earlier papers it has been shown that system support can remain high even in the face of serious economic crisis.⁵² Yet, that research was conducted on Costa Rica and West Germany, both cases of high system support. In the present data set, we see dynamic changes under way among countries with far lower levels of support. El Salvador, for example, a country far below Costa Rica in the model presented here, has markedly increased the proportion of its citizens in the stable democracy cell, from 23 percent in 1991 to 32 percent in 1995, a difference almost entirely a function of increased levels of tolerance. This improvement might well be a reflection of the manner in which the civil war that wracked that country came to an end. In El Salvador, unlike Nicaragua, the war ended as a direct result of successful peace negotiations. In those negotiations, the two sides agreed on the basic "rules of the game,"

including a dramatically reduced role for the military, the establishment of a civilian police force, the legalization of the FMLN (the party representing the guerrilla forces of the civil war), and the widespread dissemination of an extensive report on responsibilities for major war-time atrocities by the "Truth Commission." Democratic rule seems to be in the process of deepening in El Salvador, as witnessed the acceptance by the military and the rightist ruling party of the results of the most recent election held there, conducted in 1997, after this survey was completed. In that election the FMLN won 27 seats in the national legislature, compared to 28 for the ruling rightist party, ARENA, and in addition won mayoral/town council elections in some 50 municipalities representing over half of the national population.

In striking contrast to El Salvador are the survey results from Nicaragua. There, while tolerance remained basically unchanged, support for stable democracy shrank from 38 percent in 1991 to 23 percent in 1995, largely as a result of a major downturn in system support. The Nicaraguan "Contra War" came to an end as a result of the 1990 elections, in which the revolutionary Sandinista Party was turned out of office by an opposition coalition. The elections did bring an end to most hostilities, although armed bands have committed sporadic acts of violence. The elections did not resolve, however, major institutional questions, such as the issue of civilian supremacy over the Sandinista-led military, and the even more complex issue of property ownership rights emerging from the claims and counter-claims of those who had their property confiscated by Somoza or expropriated under the Sandinistas. A further factor depressing Nicaraguan system support in the 1995 survey was the inability of the economy to recover from its steep slide. Beginning in the late 1970s with the insurrection that eventually ousted the Somoza dictatorship, the economy began to decline, and by 1994 had sunk to the level of 1920.⁵³ Nicaraguans justifiably questioned the capacity of their institutions to manage the economy, and thus it is not surprising that system support was so low by 1995. Since that survey was conducted, however, the economy has begun to recover and elections that were widely regarded as free and fair have been held, so future surveys might show a recovery of system support and a possible increase in the stable democracy cell.

Paraguay's experience with democracy is very recent, and, as noted above, a military coup attempt has already come close to extinguishing democracy there. It is not surprising that the stable democracy cell only comprises a little over one-quarter of the population. In Peru the picture is even more grim. There democracy was abolished by the Fujimori executive coup. It was restored in the 1995 elections that reopened the legislature and the judiciary, but strong executive control has seriously limited the autonomy of those two

bodies. In Peru, therefore, we find the lowest proportion of the population, 16 percent, in the stable democracy cell.

There is no room in this article to discuss the cases of Paraguay and Peru in any detail, or to examine the other cells in the model, especially the democracy at risk cell. Suffice it to say, there are few surprises; Peru, which has the smallest proportion of its population in the stable democracy cell, has the largest proportion of any of the five countries studied here, 32 percent, in the "democracy at risk" cell. Other countries are now being incorporated into the data base and will be reported upon in subsequent publications.

Conclusions

This paper limits its argument to political culture's impact on predicting democratic stability, and suggests that some systems have a far greater chance of survival than others. Macro-level factors are, of course, very important and need to be factored in. In a prior paper I did precisely that, and concluded that in terms of economic and social development, by the late 1970s the region had surpassed the minimum necessary conditions to allow democracy to emerge.⁵⁴ Yet, it was at that very moment that revolution and civil war engulfed the region. Something was clearly absent from the equation, and political culture may have been the missing independent variable. Predicting democratic stability may be an even greater challenge than predicting the initiation of democracy. Przeworski and his colleagues have shown that once democracy is established, the level of economic development has a great deal to do with its ability to survive. Central America's economies, by 1995, were in the range that Przeworski's model predicts would last an average of 33 years, with the exception of Costa Rica and Panama, countries that had almost achieved the level at which breakdown is not predicted to occur.⁵⁵ The political culture data presented in this paper can help refine those predictions, suggesting that although Costa Rica and Panama have virtually identical per capita income levels, their political cultures vary widely. Three times as many Panamanians compared to Costa Ricans in 1991 fell into the "democracy at risk" cell of the model, whereas the proportion of Costa Ricans in the "stable democracy cell" was notably higher than in Panama. Based on GNP alone, therefore, Panama's democracy should last as long as Costa Rica's; when political culture data are factored in, however, the two countries diverge, and conform much more closely to conventional wisdom differentiating them. Few analysts would categorize Panama's newly established democracy, installed only recently as a direct result of a U.S. invasion, as being as resilient as Costa Rica's.⁵⁶

Unfortunately, we know very little about how public attitudes influence

regime type in general and political stability in particular. It is possible that there is some form of reciprocal influence.⁵⁷ An extreme anti-cultural position would be to argue that mass attitudes play no role in supporting or weakening democracy, a position that does not seem plausible unless one believes that political action takes place in the absence of any prior beliefs about politics.

All of those qualifications notwithstanding, the micro-level evidence presented suggests that there is some real utility to the model presented here. Costa Rica possesses a combination of political support and political tolerance that augurs well for continued democratic stability. At the other extreme lies Guatemala. In the early 1990s fewer than one-fifth of its urban population had attitudes supportive of stable democracy, whereas 68 percent had attitudes that would favor either oligarchy or democratic breakdown. These results come as no surprise. Guatemala is, in many respects, two countries, Indian and Ladino. The views expressed in this survey, which overwhelmingly reflect those of the Ladino population, reveal a widespread and deep distrust of democracy.⁵⁸ More recent survey data collected in Guatemala in 1995 and 1997, not reported on here, broaden the picture to include the indigenous population. In 1997 Guatemala celebrated the signing of its peace accords with the guerrillas. The accords provide numerous opportunities for the advancement of the indigenous population, especially in the area of the protection of their legal rights. Moreover, for the first time, military officers are being tried and convicted for crimes against civilians.

The remaining countries in the region appear to be much more fluid. Attitudes in Nicaragua initially favored democracy, but the more recent data presented here show steep declines in system support.⁵⁹ Honduras, which has not suffered the violent upheavals of its neighbors, has a high level of political tolerance combined with low system support. This makes for a large proportion of the population in the unstable democracy cell, one conducive to both democratic and violent political participation. Panama, too, has a mix of attitudes similar to those found in Honduras. El Salvador, for its part, initially saw its population greatly fragmented among the four cells, but the more recent survey data show promising change in a positive direction. Beyond Central America, the limited data presented here for Paraguay and, especially, Peru suggest that democracy has a tenuous hold on those two countries.

The increasing availability of survey research data world-wide urges us to carefully examine political culture as a factor that may help us understand the prospects for democratic stability. This paper has suggested, however, that researchers must be very careful in their selection of attitudes to be studied, and that those such as legitimacy and political tolerance are especially important ones to consider.

NOTES

1. A detailed study of these waves can be found in Mikael Boström, "Political Waves in Latin America, 1940-1988," *Ibero-Americana, Nordic Journal of Latin American Studies*, 19, no. 1 (1989): 3-19.
2. Samuel P. Huntington, "Democracy's Third Wave," *Journal of Democracy*, 2 (Spring 1991): 12; and Huntington, "Religion and the Third Wave," *The National Interest*, 24 (Summer 1991): 29-42. A fuller treatment is found in Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991). In a note in another, earlier paper (Samuel P. Huntington, "Will More Countries Become Democratic?", *Political Science Quarterly*, 99, [Summer 1984]: 217), Huntington refers to four phases of democratic development. Those four included both the ebb and flow phases. In the 1984 article, phase one lasted from early nineteenth century until 1920. Phase two was the reversal phase, from the '20s until the end of World War II. Phase three includes the period right after the War up through the early 1950s. The final phase began in the 1950s and ran through the 1980s. In the two papers cited in this note, phase two is dropped, and replaced with a wave that runs from the end of World War II up through around 1965. The current wave (the "Third Wave") began in 1974 and is still continuing.
3. John Markoff, *The Great Wave of Democracy in Historical Perspective*, Cornell Studies in International Affairs, Western Societies Papers, vol. 34 (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University, 1995).
4. Adam Przeworski, José Antonio Cheibub, Michael Alvarez and Fernando Limongi, "What Makes Democracies Endure." *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 7, no. 1, January, 1996, pp. 39-55. A much longer-term study, which looks at democracy more broadly, is Tatu Vanhanen, *Prospects for Democracy: A Study of 172 Countries* (London: Routledge, 1997). The Przeworski study, however, has the advantage of focusing on the contemporary period.
5. Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man: The Social Basis of Politics* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981, expanded ed., originally published 1961).
6. Seymour Martin Lipset, "The Social Requisites of Democracy Revisited," *American Sociological Review*, 59, February, 1994, pp. 1-22. See also, Seymour Martin Lipset, Kyoung-Ryung Seong and John Charles Torres, "A comparative analysis of the social requisites of democracy," *International Social Science Journal*, 136, May, 1993, pp. 155-175.
7. In a later study, Przeworski and his colleagues attempted to examine the impact of culture on democracy. Unfortunately, their test was limited to categorizing countries as "Protestant," "Catholic" or "Muslim." While this would seem to fit Max Weber's initial exploration of the importance of religion on system type (Weber, of course, was looking at the impact of religion on the rise of capitalism rather than the rise of democracy), the three-category distinction is far too crude. On the one hand, it treats all countries as if they were monolithically of a single religion, thus ignoring important sub-national variation. On the other hand, it assumes that each of these great religions adheres to identical belief systems across all countries in which they are located. Any observer of the varying forms of Muslim beliefs would know that Sunni Muslims profess a very different set of beliefs than do Shiite Muslims. The same can be said for varieties of Protestantism. Finally, the level of adherence to the tenets of the majoritarian religion varies enormously within nations; in Latin America, for example, a heavily Catholic area, not all Catholics are practicing. For all of these reasons, the evidence offered in the Przeworski study is of little or no utility in examining the impact of culture on democracy. For details, see Adam Przeworski, José Antonio Cheibub and Fernando Limongi, "Culture and Democracy," in *World Culture Report, 1998: Culture, Creativity and Markets*, ed. UNESCO, 125-46 (Paris: UNESCO, 1998). Adam Przeworski, José Antonio Cheibub, Michael Alvarez and Fernando Limongi, "What Makes Democracies Endure." *Journal of Democracy*, 7, no. 1, January, 1996, pp. 39-55; and Adam Przeworski,

José Antonio Cheibub, Michael E. Alvarez and Fernando Limongi, *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

8. For the Latinbarometer data see Marta Lagos, "Latin America's Smiling Mask," *Journal of Democracy*, 8, no. 3, July, 1997, pp. 125-138. Some of the data for The University of Pittsburgh project is described in this article.
9. Harry Eckstein, "A Culturalist Theory of Political Change," *American Political Science Review*, 82 (September 1988): 789-804. It is to be noted that in his most recent work on this subject, Eckstein rejects survey research as a means of tapping political culture. He does so for various reasons, including the high cost of surveys (not nearly so serious a problem in the Third World as it is in industrialized nations), the problem of access to respondents in foreign countries owing to legal and other restrictions, the problem of the validity of the replies and the problem of "objective behavior and subjective dispositions." See Harry Eckstein, *Regarding Politics: Essays on Political Theory, Stability, and Change* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992: 291). One widely cited critique of the political culture literature that is partly responsible for its initial demise is that of Brian Barry, *Sociology, Economics and Democracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).
10. William M. Reisinger, "Political Culture as Concept and Theory: Remaining Tasks for the Renaissance." Paper delivered to the Midwest Political Science Association Meeting, April, 1993, Chicago.
11. Huntington, "Democracy's Third Wave," pp. 22-30. Huntington concludes that economic development is far more important than culture, and points to the contradictions in the arguments that suggest that Confucianism and Islam present obstacles to democratization.
12. Larry Diamond, (ed.), *Political Culture and Democracy in Developing Countries* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993).
13. Russell J. Dalton, "Comparative Politics: A Micro-Behavioral Perspective," in Robert Goodin and Hans-Dieter Klingemann (eds.), *The New Handbook of Political Science* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).
14. See the symposium, "Culture and Rational Choice," in *APSA-CP* (Newsletter of the APSA Organized Section in Comparative Politics), volume 8, no. 2, Summer, 1997, pp. 5-21. See especially the papers by Robert H. Bates and George Tsebelis.
15. See Jeffrey W. Hahn, "Continuity and Change in Russian Political Culture," *British Journal of Political Science*, 21 (October 1991): 393-421. See also, James L. Gibson, Raymond M. Duch and Kent L. Tedin, "Democratic Values and the transformation of the Soviet Union," *Journal of Politics*, 54 (May 1992): 329-371.
16. Ada W. Finifter and Ellen Mickiewicz, "Redefining the Political System of the USSR: Mass Support for Political Change," *American Political Science Review*, 86 (December 1992): 857-874.
17. James L. Gibson, "A Mile Wide But an Inch Deep(?): The Structure of Democratic Commitments in the Former USSR," *American Journal of Political Science*, 40, no. 2, May, 1996, pp. 396-420.
18. Ronald Inglehart, "The Renaissance of Political Culture," *American Political Science Review*, 82 (December 1988): 1203-1230; and Inglehart, *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Societies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990). See also chapter 6 in Ronald Inglehart, *Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic and Political Change in 43 Societies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997).
19. Harold D. Clarke and Nitish Dutt, "Measuring Value Change in Western Industrialized Societies: The Impact of Unemployment," *American Political Science Review*, 85 (September 1991): 905-922; Edward N. Muller and Mitchell A. Seligson, "Civic Culture and Democracy: The Question of the Causal Relationships," *American Political Science Review*, 88 (September 1994): 635-654; and James A. Davis, review of Paul R. Abramson and Ronald Inglehart,

- Value Change in Global Perspective*, in *Public Opinion Quarterly*, vol. 60, Summer, 1996, pp. 322-331.
20. Mitchell A. Seligson and Edward N. Muller, "Political Culture in Comparative Perspective: Evidence from Latin America." Paper delivered to the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, September, 1992.
 21. The participants in the initial field work in Central America included Annabelle Conroy, Ricardo Córdova, Orlando Pérez, Andrew Stein and the author of this article.
 22. Participation by leftist parties was highly restricted in El Salvador and Guatemala up until the signing of the peace accords in those countries.
 23. See Vanessa Castro and Gary Prevost, *The 1990 Elections in Nicaragua and their Aftermath* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1992). Since the ouster of the Sandinistas involved a dramatic shift in the entire system of government, from socialist to capitalist, from Soviet/Cuba alignment to realignment with the U.S., it is appropriate to think of this election as having changed the system rather than merely the personnel of government.
 24. For one review, see Arthur H. Miller, "Political Issues and Trust in Government," *American Political Science Review*, 68 (September 1974): 951-972.
 25. For a review of the evidence on the validity and reliability of the Trust in Government Scale versus the Political Support-Alienation Scale, see Mitchell A. Seligson, "On the Measurement of Diffuse Support: Some Evidence from Mexico," *Social Indicators Research*, 12 (January 1983): 1-24, and Edward N. Muller, Thomas O. Jukam and Mitchell A. Seligson, "Diffuse Political Support and Antisystem Political Behavior: A Comparative Analysis," *American Journal of Political Science*, 26 (May 1982): 240-264.
 26. David Easton, "A Re-assessment of the Concept of Political Support," *British Journal of Political Science*, 5 (October 1975): 435-457; Talcott Parsons, "Some Highlights of the General Theory of Action," in R. Young, (ed.), *Approaches to the Study of Politics* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press).
 27. A sixth item, measuring representation, was deleted because in some prior administrations it produced somewhat lower reliability coefficients.
 28. Samuel C. Stouffer, *Communism, Conformity and Civil Liberties* (New York: Doubleday, 1955). The Stouffer study was followed by the classic piece of James W. Prothro and Charles M. Grigg, "Fundamental Principles of Democracy: Bases of Agreement and Disagreement," *Journal of Politics*, 22 (May 1960): 276-294.
 29. For a good summary of elitist theory, see James L. Gibson and Richard D. Bingham, "Skokie, Nazis, and the Elite Theory of Democracy," *Western Political Quarterly*, 37 (March 1984): 32-47. See also, Herbert McClosky and Alida Brill, *Dimensions of Tolerance: What Americans Believe about Civil Liberties* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1983).
 30. James L. Gibson, "Political Intolerance and Political Repression During the McCarthy Red Scare," *American Political Science Review*, 82 (June 1988): 511-529. See especially p. 519. See also Gibson, "The Political Consequences of Political Intolerance: Political Repression During the Viet Nam War Era," *Journal of Politics*, 51 (February 1989): 13-35.
 31. James L. Gibson, "The Political Consequences of Intolerance: Cultural Conformity and Political Freedom," *American Political Science Review*, 86 (June 1992): 349.
 32. See, for example, Robert S. Erikson, Gerald C. Wright, Jr., and John P. McIver, "Political Parties, Public Opinion, and State Policy in the United States," *American Political Science Review*, 83 (September 1989): 729-50.
 33. John L. Sullivan, James E. Pierson, and George E. Marcus, "An Alternative Conceptualization of Political Tolerance: Illusory Increases, 1950s-1970s," *American Political Science Review*, 73 (September 1979): 781-794.
 34. James L. Gibson, "Alternative Measures of Political Tolerance: Must Tolerance Be 'Least-Liked?'," *American Journal of Political Science*, 26 (May 1982): 562-571.
 35. This framework was first presented in Mitchell A. Seligson and Ricardo Córdova Macías, *Perspectivas para una democracia estable en El Salvador* (San Salvador: IDELA, 1992).

36. Robert Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971).
37. Mitchell A. Seligson and John A. Booth, "Political Culture and Regime Type: Evidence from Nicaragua and Costa Rica," *Journal of Politics*, 55 (August 1993): 777-792.
38. The data analyzed here come from the Latin American Public Opinion Project of the University of Pittsburgh. That project, conceived in 1989, was designed to tap the opinion of Central Americans on a variety of issues, including attitudes toward Cuba. The study received funding support from a wide variety of sources: the Andrew Mellon Foundation, the Tinker Foundation, Inc., the Howard Heinz Endowment, the North-South Center, the University of Pittsburgh Central Research Small Grant Fund and the Instituto de Estudios Latinoamericanos (IDELA). The collaborating institutions in Central America were: Guatemala - Asociación de Investigación y Estudios Sociales (ASIES); El Salvador - the Instituto de Estudios Latinoamericanos (IDELA); Honduras - Centro de Estudio y Promoción del Desarrollo (CEPROD) and the Centro de Documentación de Honduras (CEDOH); Nicaragua - Centro de Estudios Internacionales (CEI), and the Escuela de Sociología, Universidad Centroamericana (UCA); Costa Rica - Escuela de Estadística, Universidad de Costa Rica; Panama Centro de Estudios Latinoamericanos "Justo Arosemena" (CELA). Collaborating doctoral students in Political Science at the University of Pittsburgh were Ricardo Córdova (El Salvador), Annabelle Conroy (Honduras), Orlando Pérez (Panama), and Andrew Stein (Nicaragua). Collaborating faculty were John Booth, University of North Texas (Nicaragua and Guatemala), and Jon Hurwitz, University of Pittsburgh (Costa Rica).
39. The sample is of a multi-stage stratified design. The first level of stratification was the most obvious; we divided the entire population to be studied into the six nations of the region. Hence, each country represents a stratum in the design. Within each country, the urban area was defined. We sought to narrow our definition of urban to include the areas of major population agglomeration. In Guatemala, this meant Guatemala City, as well as eleven other cities, including Escuintla, Quezaltenango and Chimaltenango. In El Salvador, it meant greater metropolitan San Salvador, including the city of San Salvador (divided into 14 zones) and the eight surrounding municipios: Soyapango, Cuscatancingo, Ciudad Delgado, Mejicanos, Nueva San Salvador, San Marcos, Ilopango, and Antiguo Cuscatlán. In Honduras, it meant the nation's two large metropolitan areas, Tegucigalpa (the capital) and San Pedro Sula. In Nicaragua, this definition included Managua (the capital) and the regional cities of León, Granada, and Masaya. In Costa Rica, the sample covered the greater metropolitan region, incorporating San José (the nation's capital) and the provincial capitals of the *meseta central* — Cartago, Heredia, and Alajuela. Finally, the Panama sample was confined to the metropolitan Panama City area.
40. Country sample designs were of area probability design. In each country, the most recent population census data were used to stratify the urban areas into lower, middle and upper socio-economic status (SES). The sample size assigned to each stratum was based upon these SES estimates. Within each stratum, census maps were used to select, at random, an appropriate number of political subdivisions (e.g., districts) and, within each subdivision, the census maps were used to select an appropriate number of segments from which to draw the interviews.
41. See Mitchell A. Seligson, "Costa Rica and Jamaica." In Myron Weiner and Ergun Ozbudun, (eds.), *Competitive Elections in Developing Countries* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1987).
42. Raymond Duncan Gastil, "The Comparative Survey of Freedom: Experiences and Suggestions," in Alex Inkeles, (ed.), *On Measuring Democracy: Its Consequences and Concomitant* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers), 1991, p. 39.
43. Kenneth A. Bollen, "Political Democracy: Conceptual and Measurement Traps," in Alex

- Inkeles, (ed.), *On Measuring Democracy: Its Consequences and Concomitant* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1991), pp. 3-20.
44. The literature on the Civil War is extensive, but for a good treatment in English see John Patrick Bell, *Crisis in Costa Rica: The 1948 Revolution* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971).
 45. In order to facilitate interpretation of the results, this chart shows the 1-7 scale dichotomized into low and high pride.
 46. Mitchell A. Seligson and Miguel Gómez B., "Ordinary Elections in Extraordinary Times: The Political Economy of Voting in Costa Rica." In John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson, (eds.), *Elections and Democracy in Central America* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1989); Mitchell A. Seligson and Edward N. Muller, "Democratic Stability and Economic Crisis: Costa Rica, 1978-1983," *International Studies Quarterly*, 31 (September 1987): 301-326.
 47. This statement is based upon a 1987 national probability sample conducted by the author and Miguel Gómez. Rural support on these items is 93-94%.
 48. The five items were summed, and 5 points were subtracted from the total so that the minimal value would be 0. The total was then divided by the total maximum score ($5 \times 7 = 35 - 5 = 30$) and multiplied by 100 to provide a scale that ranged from a minimum of 0 to a maximum of 100. In order to demonstrate that these five items are indeed closely related to each other and can be used to form a reliable scale, a reliability analysis was run on the five items for each of the six countries. The coefficients that emerge are far higher than they are for the "Trust in Government" measure, whose Alpha in the U.S. and Central America does not rise above .5. The Alphas for this data set are: Costa Rica, .74; El Salvador, .77; Guatemala, .76; Honduras, .89; Nicaragua, .70; Panama, .83.
 49. Seligson and Booth, *op. cit.*
 50. Since both variables ranged from 0 to 100, dichotomization was done by dividing the scale into two components, "low" (0-49) and "high" (50-100).
 51. For the Nicaragua data, whose collection was supported by the Ebert Foundation of Germany, see Mitchell A. Seligson and Ricardo Córdova Macías, "Nicaragua 1991-1995: Una Cultura Política en Transición." In *Cultura Política y Transición Democrática en Nicaragua*, edited by Ricardo Córdova Macías and Gunther Maihold (Managua, Nicaragua: Fundación Ebert, Fundación Guillermo Ungo, Instituto de Estudios Nicaragüenses y Centro de Análisis Socio-Cultura, 1996). For the El Salvador data see, Seligson and Córdova, *De la guerra a la paz: una cultura política en transición* (San Salvador: Fundación, IDELA y la Universidad de Pittsburgh, 1995). The Paraguayan data were collected by CIRD Paraguay-Kansas, and the Peruvian data by Apoyo, S.A.
 52. See Steve Finkel, Edward Muller and Mitchell A. Seligson, "Economic Crisis, Incumbent Performance and Regime Support: A Comparison of Longitudinal Data from West Germany and Costa Rica," *British Journal of Political Science*, 19 (July 1989) and Mitchell A. Seligson and Edward N. Muller, "Democratic Stability and Economic Crisis: Costa Rica 1978-1983," *International Studies Quarterly* (September 1987).
 53. For details on the GNP per capita of Central America, 1920-1994, see Mitchell A. Seligson, Juliana Martínez and Juan Diego Trejos, *Reducción de la Pobreza en Costa Rica: El Impacto de las Políticas Públicas* (San José, Costa Rica and Quito, Ecuador: Serie Divulgación Económica No. 51, Instituto de Investigaciones en Ciencias Económicas, Universidad de Costa Rica, 1996).
 54. For a cross-national look at the causes and impacts of economic inequality, see Mitchell A. Seligson and John Passé-Smith, (eds.), *Development and Underdevelopment: The Political Economy of Global Inequality* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998).
 55. Przeworski's (*op. cit.*, p. 41) prediction uses PPP estimates of GNP. Democracies in the range of \$2,000- \$4,000 on average last 33 years, and those between \$4,000 and \$6,000 last 100 years. According to the recent World Bank figures, the PPP GNPs for 1995 are: Honduras,

\$1,900; Nicaragua, \$2,000; El Salvador, \$2,610; Guatemala, \$3,340; Costa Rica, \$5,850; Panama, \$5,980. Przeworski includes other factors, such as institutional arrangements, but argues (p. 49) that, "Our central finding is the importance of economic factors in sustaining democracies."

56. See Orlando Pérez, "Elections Under Crisis: Background to Panama in the 1980s," in Mitchell A. Seligson and John A. Booth (eds.), *Elections and Democracy in Central America, Revisited* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1995).
57. Muller and Seligson, *op. cit.*
58. For a comparison of Indigenous versus ladino attitudes toward democracy, see Mitchell A. Seligson, Joel Jutkowitz, Dinhora Azpuru, and Max Lucas, *La Cultura Democrática de Los Guatemaltecos: Resumen* (Guatemala City: ASEIS, 1995) and Malcolm B. Young, Mitchell A. Seligson, and Joel Jutkowitz, *Guatemalan Values and the Prospects for Democratic Development: Second Report* (Arlington, VA: Development Associates, Inc., 1996).
59. See Mitchell A. Seligson and Ricardo Córdova Macías, "Nicaragua 1991-1995: Una Cultura Política en Transición." In *Cultura Política y Transición Democrática en Nicaragua*, edited by Ricardo Córdova Macías and Gunther Maihold, (Managua, Nicaragua: Fundación Ebert, Fundación Guillermo Ungo, Instituto de Estudios Nicaragüenses y Centro de Análisis Socio-Cultura, 1996).