

ABSTRACTS

The other face of modernity and globalization: the formation of peripheral risk societies. Sketches for relocating politics

Fernando Robles

This article begins by examining the theme of the collapse the rationality of social action and the disappearance of "the society", as contextual references for the emergence of risk societies. It then offers a typology for "residual risk societies" and examines the role of science and politics in such societies. In a third section, the author discusses the multiplication and diversity of global and local threats from the perspective of peripheral risk societies. The author asks: What happens when the central logic of capitalist modernization, rational action adjusted to objectives no longer functions? When the rationality which underpins growth and development is exhausted? Could it be that during the last three decades we have failed to perceive the emergence of a new type of society, that which Ulrich Beck and others have called the "risk society"?

Key Words: Risk Society, Collateral Effects, Globalization, Individualization, Politics.

The Role of the State, the Free Market and National Sovereignty

Belkis C. Castillo de Galarraga

This article tries to pinpoint the major difficulties which the State confronts when exercising its functions of direction and control in a globalized world. On the basis of the Latin American experience, the following questions are posed: 1) Is it the market or the State which can resolve current economic and social problems? And 2) Are the Latin American States in condition to exercise an effective sovereignty and regulate the market in order to resolve their economic and social problems?.

Key Words: Role of the State, Role of the Market, State Model, National Sovereignty, Globalization.

The Psycho-Social Impact of Work Retirement in the Last Phase of the Family: Analyzed From the Perspective of Social Policy

Mario Hernán Quiroz Neira

The psycho-social impact of work retirement, in terms both of the individual and the family, is examined on the basis of the social policies implemented in Chile. What is becoming clear is that the last phase of the individual and family cycle is becoming longer and that this is the result of two factors: firstly, the prolongation of life expectation; and, secondly, work retirement at an increasingly early age. In consequence, the last phase of the life cycle has become the most prolonged of all and this is having an important psycho-social impact in terms of individual experience and that of the family.

Key Words: Work, Retirement, Family, Psycho-Social Impact, Aging, Social Policy.

Studying 'Poverties' amongst Venezuelan Youth: An Alternative Methodology

Patricia Yáñez

This article describes and analyzes the 'poverties' of Venezuelan youth, identifying the relationship between needs and the available mechanisms for satisfying them. The quantity and quality of the latter are examined with a view to detecting insufficiencies and potentialities.

Key Words: Development, Human Needs, Poverty, Satisfaction.

A Proposal for Creating a Synthetic Poverty Index

Maura Vásquez, Alberto Camardiel, Guillermo Ramírez

This article proposes a methodology for the creation of a Synthetic Poverty Index which could be used in a single, comprehensive system for selecting those who qualify for social programs. The information used is taken from the Survey of Homes realized periodically by the Central Office for Statistics and Informatics. The central element in the proposed methodology is an Optimum Qualitative Evaluation of a determined variety of variables linked to life conditions in the homes covered by the Surveys. The proposed index is the main component of a series of seven (7) partial indexes, each of which is, in turn, the main component of another group of variables defined in terms of one or another of the different dimensions of poverty. Each index measures the relative poverty on a scale from 1 to 100.

Key Words: Poverty, Synthetic Index, Social Programs, Beneficiary, Survey of Homes, Optimum Qualitative Evaluation, Analysis of Main Components.

The Resolution on Employment Statistics in the Informal Sector. Gross Domestic Product and the Informal Sector.

Lourdes Urdaneta de Ferrán

Recent economic tendencies in the world economy have led to a massive displacement of labor into the informal sector and induced the UN and the ILO to offer a new version of the National Accounts System which incorporated the concept of 'informal sector' and indications on the techniques for calculating its dimensions. Nevertheless, the conceptual delimitation of the sector continues to provoke controversy. For instance, there is no clear consensus as to whether it ought to refer exclusively to the self-employed or if it also includes the small and medium-sized enterprises. In any event, measurements can be offered on the basis of the work force incorporated or the contribution to GNP. In the latter case, it is particularly difficult to calculate because one needs information on production, added value and mixed incomes generated by the productive unit and this information is difficult to come by. Nevertheless, this article proposes a methodology designed to permit approximations and offers the result of its application to Venezuela.

Key Words: Informal Sector, Small and Medium Enterprises, National accounts.

Measuring Social Phenomenon: Proposals for a Global Participation Index

Cora Elisa Urrea Ana María Rotino Thaís Ledezma

Statistical measurement of social phenomenon is complicated. Nevertheless, this article proposes a methodology designed to measure a social phenomenon which proves particularly elusive: social participation and community participation. On the basis of a previous investigation of different forms of participation in Venezuela, the authors present their proposals for a Global Participation Index which incorporates two more partial indexes: social participation and community participation.

Key Words: Participation, Social Participation, Community Participation, Social Indexes.

Successful Community Organization: the example of 'Las Casitas de Las Vegas'.

Sandra Calzadilla, Rotsen Price, Amaylín Riveros y Cristina

This article analyzes aspects of community organization in a Caracas slum area. With the active participation of members of the community, the initial research sought to reconstruct the history of the area and of its different organizations, of which three were selected for their evident contribution to the improvement of the community's living conditions. An analysis of these experiences permits the authors identify characteristics which apparently favor successful community organization: they were groups already consolidated and not improvised, distinctive in terms of their geographical insertion, identified with the history of their Parish, generally composed of house owners, identified with other popular struggles, with very little influence of the traditional parties and with effective leadership.

Key Words: Community Organization, Participation, Leadership.

Personal Insecurity and Human Rights in the Central University of Venezuela.

Cristina Mateo, María Josefina Ferrer

This article offers some of the results of the survey on personal insecurity realized in the Central University in mid-1998. The survey is part of a more general project on Personal Security in the Central University of Venezuela, organized by the Institute of Penal and Criminological Studies of the Law Faculty which expects to lay the basis for policy recommendations designed to overcome the problem. The authors offer information on perceptions related to personal security, measures adopted by the members of the community for their personal protection, the threats, measures adopted by the authorities and concludes with recommendations to improve the situation.

Key Words: Personal Insecurity, Human Rights, Security Policy.

Oil Income and the Fate of the Agricultural Sector in Venezuela

Ana Rodríguez

This article updates and develops a theme originally presented by Celio Orta in 1974. It examines the impact of the oil rent on the agricultural sector between 1960 and 1997, using product-input and econometric models. The basic varia-

bles analyzed are taxable rent in the oil sector and consumption expenditure in agriculture.

Key Words: Agriculture, Econometrics, Parameter Estimates, Econometric Models.