

Foreword

In this issue of the Florida Atlantic Comparative Studies Journal, the editorial staff provided a forum for scholarship on the cultural and social changes which have had a strong influence in shaping contemporary Latin American and Caribbean society and identity. With contributions from different disciplines, this issue brings forth analysis and original scholarship with regard to a wide range of Latin American and Caribbean themes including skilled migration flows, hybridity in colonial literature and discourse, tourism certification, reproductive patterns, female narration and a commentary on interviews with key Latin American intellectuals.

The editorial staff was intrigued by the contributions on social transformations occurring in Latin America and the Caribbean. Johnson's piece on the "Brain Drain" phenomenon in the Caribbean sheds new light on the debate on the migration of highly skilled Caribbean individuals to higher income nations. Moreover, while highlighting the role of Hispanic groups in American fertility patterns, Nehring and Alvarado discuss the nexus between changing cultural norms in Latin American intimacy and reproduction and their impact on future fertility levels of Hispanic groups in the U.S. The editorial team was also pleased to incorporate Lepree's analysis and criticism of the certification process of Costa Rica's tourism industry and his efforts to underscore the challenges implicated in making it truly a sustainable industry.

Within the realm of cultural studies, Fernández del Páramo uses Robert Scholes' theory on "fictional modes" to emphasize the hybrid nature of *Los Infortunios de Alonso Ramirez*, considered by many to be one of the first examples of a Latin American proto-novel. Still within the field of cultural studies, Anderson's contribution examines Moutoussamy's text *Aurore* as an ambivalent space of mediation between politics and theory, one which incorporates a strategy of "splitting," where two contradictory and independent attitudes occupy the same place. This strategy is then compared to the notion of Créolité, which conversely, promotes the adoption of a hybridized identity for all Caribbeans. The editorial staff of FACS also sought to acknowledge the rising importance of gender issues and female narration in Latin America. In particular, Smith argues that the female narration in Isabel Allende's *The House of Spirits* represents a symbol of the triumph of women's narration and their revision of patriarchal and authoritarian history.

Lastly, this issue also includes Luis Alvarado's commentary on his interviews with prominent intellectuals like Julio Scherer, Paul Krugman, Mario Vargas Llosa and Rigoberta Menchú. With their work, these personalities have undoubtedly left their mark in shaping the course of Latin American and Caribbean history.

In particular, the contents in this issue of FACS accentuate the intersection between Latin American and Caribbean culture and society as evermore vital to promote intellectual discussion, research, and teaching on the region's people, culture, history, politics and social change.