

“Traditional” reproduction continues to lose ground

Juan José Barrientos *

According to statistics published by the United Nations last year, cloning continues to gain ground at the expense of natural or “traditional” reproduction—not only in the most technologically advanced countries but also among the wealthier classes in other parts of the world.

Of every ten people questioned in a survey carried out a few years ago in the United States, five stated their attachment to traditional procreation, three were undecided and only two preferred what is considered the latest thing in the propagation of the species. Nevertheless, recent surveys show that cloning is becoming increasingly accepted.

While “traditional” reproduction is based on an embryo that develops from a fertilized ovum, cloning uses various techniques to convert any one of an individual’s cells into an embryo.

Once in the womb, embryos produced by cloning develop in the same way as those produced by the fertilization of ova. Since it is virtually impossible to distinguish

between clones and “traditionally”-conceived children, clones do not tend to suffer discrimination.

Initially, clones were rejected, particularly on the theoretical level, since genetically speaking they are genuine reproductions or copies, while “traditionally”-conceived children are always new individuals whose genetic potential is different from their parents’.

Some groups, such as orthodox Catholics, continue to hold that “normal” children are the product of the love between two people who seek to go beyond themselves through procreation, while clones are born of the egotism of one individual who seeks to repeat him- or herself. However, a number of theologians have come out in favor of cloning as a form of self-improvement; some go as far as to claim that it is authorized by the Book of Genesis (“Go forth and multiply”).

Cloning was bound to revolutionize customs and mores. To begin with, traditional concepts of paternity and maternity are inappropriate when it comes to relations between a person and his clones. Legislation had to be updated to take into account new types of

kinship and to recognize the rights of the growing clone population.

It has even been necessary to revise notions such as incest, since there were those who fell in love with, or abused, or in any case had sexual relations with their clones (without necessarily engaging in homosexual acts, since twenty years ago it became possible to obtain clones of a different sex from the original cell donors).

Narcissism is also a much broader concept nowadays, given clones’ tendency to form couples (and even more frequently, small groups) with others cloned from the same person, as revealed by the famous Batis Report.

Distinguished clones have made their presence felt in all professions, but their success has been especially noteworthy in the fields of entertainment and sports. This is particularly striking in the case of the extraordinary teams of clones that some countries have sent to the Olympics and other international competitions, and also in the new generations of chorus singers and dancers.

There have also been cases in which gangs of clones have robbed passersby in certain neighborhoods, committed rapes, and even robbed banks, although it turned out that some of these gangs were made up of impostors using make-up or masks.

According to several demographic and sociological studies, the number of births through cloning is steadily on the rise.

Of course, there are some voices of dissent and some cries of alarm. One prominent French politician declared that “humanity has blundered into the cul de sac of cloning, which impedes evolution and stands in the way of the renovation of the human species.”

The same ideological viewpoint was the backdrop to the murder of the Gleich family in Beverly Hills. On the walls of their mansion their murderers inscribed the bloody slogan of the enemies of cloning: “new faces” ❧

* Recipient of the 1985 José Revueltas Literary Essay Prize for the book *Borges y la imaginación* (Borges and the imagination).

FIRST PUBLICATIONS

**EL CENTRO DE INVESTIGACIONES
SOBRE AMERICA DEL NORTE**

CISAN

now has the following books available:

CISAN

**El Tratado de Libre Comercio.
Entre el viejo y el nuevo orden**

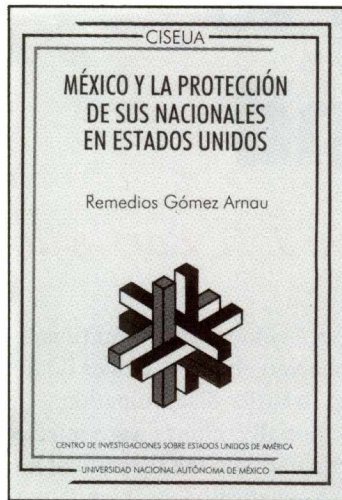
Mónica C. Gambrell y Bárbara Driscoll de Alvarado (eds.), 1992, 283 pp.

This book analyzes the likely impact of NAFTA on: the energy industry, agriculture, geographical regions, in-bond industry; labor rights, immigration to the U.S., social classes; democracy, diplomatic relations; telecommunications and higher education. The NAFTA is considered in light of other trade agreements, U.S. economic requirements and political processes.



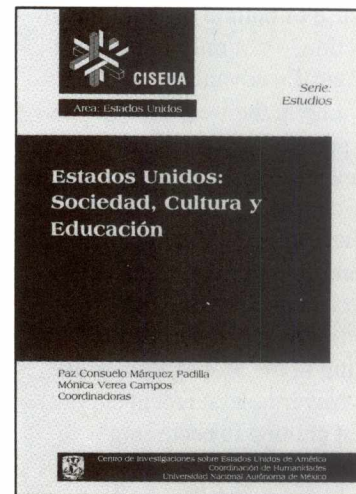
México y la protección de sus nacionales en Estados Unidos

Remedios Gómez Arnau, 1990, 245 pp.
A chronicle of the Mexican government's efforts to protect the rights of Mexican migrant workers in the United States. An impressive study that sheds new light on the issue. Recommended for experts and non-experts in U.S.- Mexican relations and human rights.



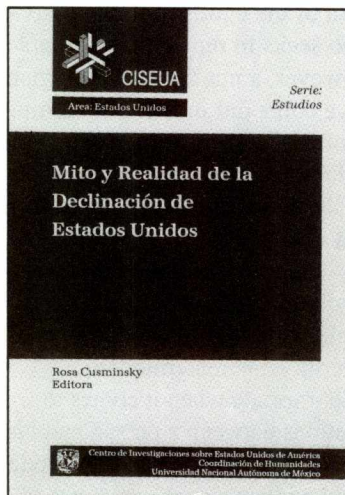
**Estados Unidos:
sociedad, cultura y educación**

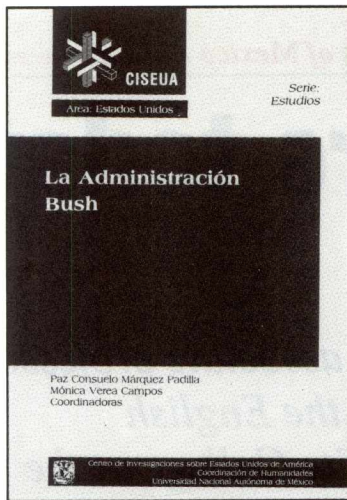
Paz Consuelo Márquez Padilla, Mónica Vereá Campos (coords.), Serie: Estudios, 1991, 177 pp.
Thirteen Mexican and U.S. specialists analyze from different perspectives the socio-cultural components of the U.S. as a rich mosaic of cultures and their main forms of expression, the complex social fabric, and the highly-debated U.S. education system.



Mito y realidad de la declinación de los Estados Unidos

Rosa Cusminsky Mogilner (ed.), Serie: Estudios, 1992, 180 pp.
This book contains the contributions of lecturers from various countries who participated in the seminar "The myth and reality of the decline of the United States of America," on the present academic debate about the crisis of the United States' hegemony.





La Administración Bush

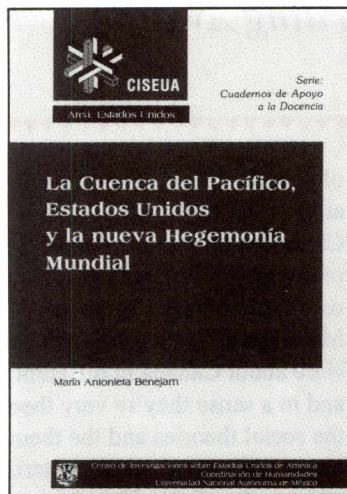
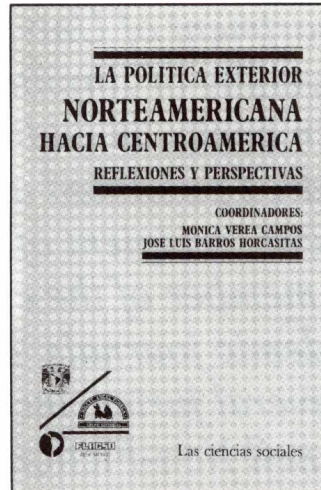
Mónica Vereá Campos, Paz Consuelo Márquez Padilla (coords.), Serie: Estudios, 1991, 210 pp.

Fifteen Mexican and U.S. specialists examine the main events of the first year of the Bush Administration. This includes studies on minorities, arms control, the war on drugs, the economic crisis, foreign policy, and the North American Free Trade Agreement.

La política exterior norteamericana hacia Centroamérica: reflexiones y perspectivas

Mónica Vereá Campos y José Luis Barros Horcasitas, FLACSO, CISEUA-UNAM, Editorial Miguel Ángel Porrúa, Serie: Las Ciencias Sociales, 1991, 442 pp.

This book contains various articles written by North American and Central American specialists, regarding the role of the United States in Central America's recent history.



La Cuenca del Pacífico, Estados Unidos y la nueva hegemonía mundial

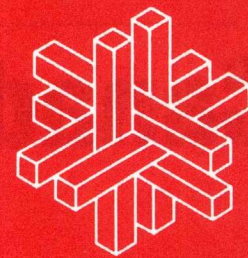
Ma. Antonieta Benejam, Serie: Cuadernos de Apoyo a la Docencia, 1991, 106 pp.

A book on the leading role played by the United States in the geopolitical processes of the Pacific Rim countries, a region of decisive importance to the future World Order.

Implicaciones jurídicas de la apertura comercial

José J. de Olloqui, Serie: Documentos, 1991, 42 pp.

An in-depth analysis of legal issues concerning free trade. Olloqui examines trade and legal developments under President Salinas' administration, within the framework of the Mexican Constitution, trade in Mexico, the internationalization of the financial system and other topics of interest.



For further information contact **CISAN:**
CENTRO DE INVESTIGACIONES SOBRE AMERICA DEL NORTE
 Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
 Torre de Humanidades 2, piso 11
 Ciudad Universitaria
 04510 México, D.F.
 FAX: (011-52-5) 623-0300