

**URBANIZATION, INDIVIDUALISM, AND
SOCIAL CHANGE IN A SMALL COFFEE
FARMING COMMUNITY IN CENTRAL COSTA RICA**

Nick Zupan, Ripon College

Advisor: Daniel Rojas, PhD

The following paper examines the social implications of cultural forces upon Llano Bonito, a small, rural, coffee-farming town in Central Costa Rica. Using qualitative anthropological data collection methods of semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and a focus group, I have compiled data that has allowed me to use Geertz's (1973) methods of thick description data analysis to describe phenomena of: the factors that motivate urbanization, the rise of individualism in a community that used to highly value collectivism, and the causes and effects of diminishing social capital among the residents. The following paper demonstrates how these cultural forces have come to exist and how they are changing the ideals upon which this rural society of Llano Bonito was founded.