Critical Debates

Suspicious Minds: Recent Books on U.S.-Latin American Relations

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Eva Golinger, *The Chávez Code: Cracking U.S. Intervention in Venezuela*. Northampton: Olive Branch Press, 2006. Appendix, notes, glossary, 256 pp.; paperback \$17.95.

Greg Grandin, *Empire's Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism*. New York: Henry Holt, 2006. Notes, index, 304 pp.; hardcover \$25, paperback \$16.

Victor J. Hinojosa, *Domestic Politics and International Narcotics Control: U.S. Relations with Mexico and Colombia, 1989–2000*. New York: Routledge, 2007. Notes, index, 122 pp.; hardcover \$110, e-book \$95.

David Scott Palmer, *U.S. Relations with Latin America During the Clinton Years: Opportunities Lost or Opportunities Squandered?* Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006. Tables, notes, bibliography, index, 139 pp.; paperback \$24.95.

David Sheinin, *Argentina and the United States: An Alliance Contained*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2006. Notes, bibliography, index, 304 pp.; hardcover \$59.95, paperback \$22.95.

If we were to express U.S.-Latin American relations in a few words, we might say that they have been marked by ambiguity. Latin American feelings toward the United States since the early 1900s could be described from the perspective of the influential Latin American philosopher Rodó (1930, 80): “although I don’t love them, I admire them.” From a U.S. viewpoint, ambiguity can be seen in the blend of “good” and aggressive neighborliness. Ambiguity also might arise because both Latin America and Latin Americans are concepts that comprise a myriad of cultures, with a variety of feelings and attitudes toward the United States and its people.

There is no single Latin American policy toward the United States, although there are moments when Latin American states reach consensus regarding common courses of action. There is, however, a U.S. policy toward Latin America. Still, as some of the authors discussed in this essay point out, that policy is often erratic and contradictory, due to a complex policymaking process. As we see it, one of the challenges for research on hemispheric relations is to deal with all these ambiguities.

DEALING WITH EMPIRE

In the study *Empire's Workshop*, Greg Grandin presents the thesis that Latin America was the school where the United States studied how to execute imperial violence in the rest of the world. The current form this is taking is what Grandin calls the "new imperialism"; that is, a "revolutionary" imperialism that emerged in the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, as a package of ideas, tactics, politics, and economics from George W. Bush's global policy. In Grandin's view, the Latin American experiences have been pivotal to pursuing the current "global war against terror," with a more specific focus in the Middle East. As he explains, the newness of this model is not "interventionist military posture, or the belief that America has a special role to play, but rather how tightly these elements are bound to the ambitions of America's domestic ruling conservative coalition" (p. 7).

The study starts with a recounting of historical U.S.-Latin American relations, characterized by the more aggressive military "imperial" tendencies of President Theodore Roosevelt's corollary to the Monroe Doctrine and the "good empire" of Franklin D. Roosevelt's Good Neighbor policies. Yet as Grandin presents it, FDR's approach appears more as a parenthesis in a generally interventionist line of action. However, the analysis of Roosevelt's period brings up an interesting perspective. In Grandin's view, Roosevelt's administration was inspired by Latin American ideas when it turned more favorable toward social and economic rights and absolute sovereignty of individual nations and renounced the right to unilateral intervention. Such principles, Grandin holds, became also the backbone of New Deal Diplomacy, the legal core of the United Nations charter, and interamerican relations. Grandin launches here the thesis that this was a period when "Latin America saved the United States from its worst instincts" (39). Unfortunately, however, Grandin leaves this behind without much further consideration or empirical backup.

The Cold War brought about a return of a more aggressive U.S. line of action in which Latin America "once again became a school where the U.S. studied how to execute imperial violence through proxies" (4). In the name of containing communism, Grandin argues, the United States inaugurated a new pattern of Western Hemisphere (and later on, global) relations with the 1954 CIA-supported coup against the democratically elected government of Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán in Guatemala. Grandin sees this as the first full-scale violation of the hemisphere's non-intervention principle since the establishment of Good Neighbor Policy. John F. Kennedy's administration expressed an intention to return to a nonconfrontational position but, as Grandin states, instead of encouraging those who sought change, Kennedy's "actions empowered those

who opposed it, the most illiberal forces in the hemisphere" (48). It was, however, in Grandin's view, with Lyndon B. Johnson's administration that the United States definitively shifted the balance of its Latin American diplomacy toward *realpolitik*, either organizing or supporting a cycle of coups.

This line of U.S. action suffered a traumatic defeat in Vietnam, leading to a brief intention to return to "good neighborhood" with Jimmy Carter's focus on human rights and democracy. The Vietnam defeat is a key event for Grandin's thesis, since he depicts the "new imperialism" as an attempt to gain back the initiative for a more aggressive conservative international diplomacy. According to Grandin, Henry Kissinger's *realpolitik* as secretary of state during the Richard Nixon administration failed to win hearts and minds, and conservatives temporarily lost the initiative, but they sought a way to come back under a new ideological guise.

It was not until Ronald Reagan's administration that the so-called New Right (which comprised free marketers, nationalists, and Christian organizations) coalesced. Searching for a new "idealism," the New Right chose to take revolution out of the hands of revolutionaries, so that, in Grandin's explanation, conservative cadres could imagine themselves as liberal revolutionaries engaged in a global Christian crusade. As Grandin holds, one of the first targets was Latin American liberation theology, which advocated that to be a good Christian one had to do more than dispense charity; one had to transform the structural causes of poverty and inequality (146). The New Right went on the offensive, arguing that corporate capitalism "mirrors God's presence on earth." As Grandin further explains, while the so-called neocons sold a vision of the United States as a world enforcer of a new theological and liberal moral view, the economic elites pressed for the expansion of defense spending and neoliberalism.

This policy, in Grandin's view, was continued by George H. W. Bush. It was during his administration that the United States invaded Panama in 1989, an action Grandin describes as a step on the road to Baghdad and the first non-Cold War-related conflict. In Grandin's view, Bill Clinton continued in this direction, his policies serving as a bridge between Reagan's "resurgent nationalism" and George W. Bush's "revolutionary imperialism." In Grandin's opinion, free trade became one of the central elements of Clinton's foreign policy by prompting attempts at free trade agreements. Free trade is somehow equated with the concept of globalization, which is described as the centerpiece of Clinton's foreign policy.

It was during George W. Bush's administration, however, that Grandin's post-Cold War new imperialism came about. This time the focus was on the Middle East, making use of the experience from Reagan's Central American rehearsal. Although the Central American

wars and military regimes had ended, themes from the Central American experience were recast in the new setting, where, in Grandin's opinion, the conflict again was expressed in the dichotomy between good and evil, legitimating violence, terror, and torture as counterinsurgency methods (148). Despite the main attention to the Middle East, as Grandin states (211–19), Bush's new imperialism is still very much alive in Latin America. As examples, he points to U.S. support of the 2002 coup attempt against Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez, threatening to cut economic aid if countries refused to ratify the International Criminal Court treaty in 2002, pressures to sign free trade agreements, opposing Evo Morales's political advance in Bolivia, pointing him out as a "potential terrorist," and creating new military bases and airstrips in Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Paraguay.

Grandin's study offers a new perspective on how conservative ideologists turned to a Latin American-produced ideology to find inspiration for their aims. He also presents evidence for ideological links between Reagan's and George W. Bush's constituencies in the pervasive influence of the New Right and its followers. Such links lead Grandin to find elements of continuity between Reagan's line of action in Central America and Bush's Middle East and Latin America policies.

Less convincing is how Grandin equates his new imperialism with U.S. foreign policy. The book treats the administrations of Bush Senior and Clinton superficially, without clearly marking their differences from those of Reagan and George W. Bush. It is true, for example, that Clinton strongly advocated neoliberal policies, but not using "aggressive" intervention. Clinton, moreover (and to some extent his predecessor), was also more committed to multilateralism than is George W. Bush. Grandin overlooks this significant difference.

Grandin's study would benefit from a deeper discussion of why democratic governments in Latin America prevailed and U.S. aggressive military intervention declined. Indeed, the failed coup against Chávez appeared to be an attempt to turn back to an interventionist foreign policy. Regarding Grandin's other examples, the United States also failed to gain support for its approach to a Free Trade Area of the Americas or the supposed intention to prevent Evo Morales from gaining power. Even the old Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega has come back through legitimate democratic elections. It appears that the new imperialism has not been very successful (at least so far) in Latin America. Contrary to Grandin's view, Latin American democratic forces appear to be quite effective in confronting it. Going back to one of the most interesting points in the book, it is worth asking whether or not Latin America is again able to save the United States from itself.

THE CLINTON YEARS

David Scott Palmer's book presents another perspective with the question expressed in the subtitle: were important opportunities for effective intraregional relations lost or squandered? The author begins with a negative assessment of Clinton's record by asking why his administration, in spite of some successes, was generally unable to achieve its foreign policy objectives in Latin America. To answer that question, Palmer applies a "constraints approach," through which he focuses on the limited space policymakers had to carry out those objectives. The limitations lay in elements such as bureaucracies, the interplay of domestic politics, and the role of both domestic nongovernmental and international actors, as well as the impact of unanticipated events.

The book starts with a historical overview of the most significant U.S. policies in Latin America during the Cold War and summarizes the major international and regional changes that helped to open up new possibilities for change. It then turns to the main areas of analysis, where Palmer identifies the push to ratify the North American Free Trade Agreement, the FTAA process, the creation of the Summit of the Americas, U.S. involvement in the Ecuador-Peru border conflict, relations with Cuba, the Haitian crisis, and drug-related problems in the Andean region.

Historically, as Palmer describes it, the United States played a significant role in strengthening the military institutions of most Latin American countries in the 1960s and 1970s. Instead of becoming thus a bulwark of support for democracy, however, most U.S.-trained Latin American militaries subverted it. Yet the security changes brought about by the end of the Cold War, the return of democracy in Latin America, and the economic crisis of the 1980s set the stage for the significant U.S. policy adjustment toward the region during the 1990s. The Panama intervention notwithstanding, it was, in Palmer's opinion, with George H. W. Bush's administration that the United States ended unilateral, military-driven policies and turned to regional and multilateral initiatives to find common ground for definitive settlement of conflicts in Central America. But it was through the trade treaty with Canada and Mexico (NAFTA) that Bush took the most groundbreaking initiative toward Latin America.

Although NAFTA was signed during Bush's term, it was Clinton's administration that had the difficult task of getting it passed in the U.S. Congress. After the three countries reached an agreement on environmental and labor standards (a big hurdle in Congress, particularly among Democrats), the treaty finally passed in November 1993. Palmer contends that without Clinton's leadership and personal involvement, NAFTA would not have been ratified; but that commitment also alienated organized labor, a key Democratic Party constituency. The unwillingness of

many labor locals to engage in their usual get out the vote drives contributed to the Democrats' loss of a congressional majority in the 1994 midterm elections. With Republicans in control of the legislative branch from 1995 on, "the president's ability to pursue his policy priorities on either the domestic or international front was severely tested" (47).

In Palmer's opinion, the project of creating an FTAA never reached a successful outcome like that of NAFTA. This was partly due to Congress's rejection of the fast track approval process. This "casualty" stalled a more aggressive approach to free trade negotiations, be they on the FTAA or with single countries, such as Chile. Nor is Palmer positive about the outcome of Clinton's Haiti policy. Despite promises to end Bush's approach to the Haitian refugee problem (returning them to Haiti or taking them temporarily to the U.S. base at Guantanamo), Clinton ultimately decided to continue it. Still, Clinton redoubled efforts to restore democracy to Haiti, particularly after reports that up to three hundred thousand Haitians were prepared to flee to the United States. Palmer labels the result as disastrous, exemplified by the "humiliating" decision to withdraw the aircraft carrier *Harlan County* and end its mission to support multilateral forces on the island. The failure here is attributed to a major breakup in internal coordination and evaluation among U.S. agencies, such as the CIA, the Department of Defense, and the National Security Council. In addition, Palmer points out that a previous failed U.S. Army Rangers mission to Somalia also constrained Clinton in Haiti (50).

Palmer's list of Clinton's setbacks is even longer; it includes the failed attempt to get Congress to approve the nomination of Dr. Robert Pastor as ambassador to Panama. This is another interesting example of the author's "constraints approach": it shows how the presidency is limited with its candidates at the mercy of (in this case) executive-legislative tensions. This is also true for the "failures" of Clinton's Cuba policy. As Palmer describes it, "U.S. policy toward Cuba is made not in Washington but in Miami" (64). Palmer adds the drug issue to his list, illustrated by the case of Peru, where "offering full cooperation on U.S. counternarcotics policy helped Peru's leaders deflect attention from their progressive perversion of democratic procedures . . . in order to hold on to political power beyond their constitutionally mandated two terms" (65).

Indeed, a variety of constraints limited the ability of the Clinton administration to pursue its objectives in Latin America. Externally, as Palmer also holds, major problems in other parts of the world often took priority over regional issues, and key policymakers lacked interest in or commitment to Latin America. Policymakers responsible for the region often found that they had insufficient support or confidence from their superiors, thereby limiting their ability to operate effectively. Internally, a progressive and cumulative reduction in State Department resources demoralized career professionals and eroded the administration's insti-

tutional capacity to deal effectively with policy issues (93). On balance, although Palmer credits the Clinton administration for policy successes in several areas, he argues that it lost a major opportunity to build a coherent and comprehensive policy toward Latin America. Multiple constraints limited the space available to forge effective policies, and the exercise of decisive leadership was too weak.

This study certainly fills a hole in the literature on U.S. Latin American policies during the Clinton years. It is also a welcome attempt to delve into the complexities of U.S. policymaking. But it is too harsh in its negative assessment of Clinton's Latin American policy. One reason for this could be a lack of historical perspective. For example, it is clear that Clinton failed to go further with the FTAA, but he is not alone. In terms of failure, the same could be said about Haiti and particularly Cuba, which has been an unresolved problem for all administrations since 1959. Going back to trade, the proposal of creating a duty-free area for the Western Hemisphere is as old as panamericanism, dating to 1889. It has always been resisted by several Latin American countries, which, during the Clinton years, achieved unprecedented coordination through regional integration projects, such as Mercosur.

Moreover, one should not underestimate Clinton's support for democratization and "good neighborhood" in the region. The Summits of the Americas, the U.S. role in the Organization of American States, and a new policy toward Central America were all elements that, in our opinion, gave the United States much-needed goodwill across the region, considering its prior involvement in assisting antidemocratic, authoritarian regimes. This probably produced a "soft power" that might have contributed to the acceptance of neoliberal principles despite a deeply rooted Latin American resistance to such ideas. Clinton even managed to have a nonconflictual relationship with the White House's current nightmare, Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez.

THE EYE OF THE TIGER

We find a closer look at the evolution of U.S.-Venezuelan interaction during Chávez's presidency in Eva Golinger's study. The book is dedicated to the "*lindo pueblo venezolano*," and the author does not hide a clear bias for Chávez, expressing sympathy and thankfulness for the "brilliant leader" (xvi). As she points out, between 1998 and 2000 the U.S. had a relatively indifferent policy toward Venezuela. It was not until George W. Bush arrived in the White House in 2001 that relations took a turn for the worse, with a clear turning point after the coup on April 12, 2002. Somewhat reminiscent of Grandin, Golinger's thesis is that Venezuela is the CIA's twenty-first-century experiment. Thanks to the U.S. Freedom of Information Act, she was able to gather information

from entities such as the State Department, the CIA, the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to elaborate her argument.

Golinger's story starts on February 4, 1992, when Lieutenant Colonel Chávez led an attempted coup d'état against the government of Carlos Andrés Pérez. Direct conflict with the United States started during the 1998 presidential campaign, when Chávez, who was invited to be interviewed on a Miami television program, applied to the U.S. embassy in Caracas for a visa to visit the United States. His request was denied on the grounds of "prior terrorist" activity, due to the 1992 coup attempt. The U.S. terrorist label did not prevent Venezuelans from giving him an electoral victory with approximately 60 percent of the vote, defeating Venezuela's traditional parties. The next rift was caused by Chávez's plans to visit Cuba just before an official visit to the United States. According to Golinger, Clinton received Chávez anyway, but through a "back door," in an informal room of the White House (27). Golinger nevertheless characterizes U.S.-Venezuelan relations during the Clinton years as "relatively indifferent."

Things went rapidly downhill after George W. Bush took office, and the Venezuelan government suspended the training of Venezuelan military at the Georgia-based School of the Americas. After the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City, Venezuela was also the first democratic nation to express disagreement with the Bush administration's antiterrorism tactics, arguing that "terror cannot be fought with more terror" (34).

It was at this stage, according to Golinger, that the NED, which had maintained a minimal presence in Venezuela, began investing in the financing of opposition parties, under labels such as "civil society political education and orientation." Much of this financing, together with USAID resources, was channeled through the International Republican Institute (IRI), officially known as the international branch of the Republican Party (37). Nevertheless, although Chávez was not popular in Washington, he certainly was among Venezuelan voters, who continued to endorse him at the polls.

This popular support provoked tension and animosity among Venezuelan elites, but it was not until 2001 that an opposition coalition began solidifying and making its voice heard. One expression of it was the alliance between the Confederación de Trabajadores Venezolanos, with its strong influence in the oil sector, and the Venezuelan chamber of commerce, Fedecámaras. This was an interesting mix, because it is not often that one sees labor, business, political parties, and U.S. interests joining together in Latin America. Anti-Chávez forces continued to grow and, in 2002, three top-ranking military officers publicly threatened a military rebellion. The opposition staged several large protests

demanding Chávez's resignation, and the Catholic Church declared its opposition, refusing to engage in dialogue with the government. According to the information gathered by Golinger, the U.S. government knew of the preparations for a coup and did nothing to dispute the NED financing directed to coup plotters. On the contrary, monies to the opposition were increased as the conspiracy came to a head.

President Chávez fired managers of the state-owned oil company and forced the retirement of others, sparking immediate protest. The CTV, supported by Fedecámaras, called for a general strike; and on April 10, Carlos Ortega and Pedro Carmona, leaders of those respective groups, announced the establishment of a Coordinating Committee for Democracy and Liberty, an organization made up of opposition parties that, Golinger contends, were founded by the NED and the IRI. On April 11, the opposition held one of the largest rallies Venezuela had ever seen. Although there also were progovernment rallies, she argues, the private media only showed images from the opposition demonstration. In Golinger's opinion, the lack of balanced coverage appeared to be part of the plan. President Chávez was finally detained and imprisoned while Pedro Carmona was named interim president later that day.

What Golinger considers the most clear-cut example of U.S. intervention occurred on the morning of April 12, when President Bush's spokesman publicly announced the U.S. government's support for the "Carmona administration" and condemned "ex-president" Chávez for inciting the violence that forced him to resign. According to the author, the United States was "one of the only countries in the world" to recognize Carmona as a legitimate president (75). Furthermore, Golinger holds (although she provides scant evidence) that the United States also pressured other nations in the region to recognize the Carmona government as legitimate. If that was the U.S. intention, the reaction was the reverse: several nations quickly responded by condemning the illegal ouster of President Chávez, and the OAS followed suit. On April 13, while Chávez supporters filled the streets demanding his return to office, loyal Chávez factions in the military forced Carmona and his advisers into detention.

In spite of this major setback, the opposition remained strong, and sought an electoral solution that would appear legitimate in the eyes of the world. Because early elections were unconstitutional, a recall referendum was the only possible way to remove the president prematurely. But this required 20 percent of registered voters' signatures, approximately 2.4 million. Again, as Golinger holds, NED, USAID, and IRI continued to provide funding to the opposition. The referendum was finally held on August 15, 2005, and yielded an approximately 20-point majority for the pro-Chávez side, but the opposition claimed fraud and opened the door for mass protests.

This time, “neutral” external observers, such as the OAS secretary-general, César Gaviria, played a pivotal role. Yet Gaviria, according to Golinger, saw Chávez as an authoritarian and had no intention of certifying the results. On the other hand, the chief envoy of the OAS delegation in Venezuela, the Brazilian ambassador, Walter Moreira, tried to change that position. Along with the Carter Center (another observer), he did not believe in the claims of fraud. After intense discussions, the Carter Center and the OAS announced their certification of the official results. It took the United States another day before it managed to issue a conditional acceptance of the referendum.

Golinger is certainly correct in pointing out that this was a major victory for Chávez and a validation of his government. Once again, if this episode indicated a U.S. intention to revert to the old practice of promoting military coups in Latin America, it failed. Golinger’s description of the interference in Venezuela indeed reminds one of the U.S. anti-Allende and anti-Sandinista activities she cites in her book. But it also differs in significant ways, which she does not discuss. One difference is its failure as such. After nine years, Chávez is still in power, winning all the elections in which he has participated. Antidemocratic methods not only have been rejected in Venezuela but also have found strong opposition across the region. That opposition, furthermore, was strongly expressed in regional organizations and in the OAS (today led by the Chilean socialist Miguel Insulza), where the United States has traditionally had much influence. Moreover, as Golinger herself points out but does not elaborate, even NED-financed U.S. organizations, such as the Carter Foundation, acted against the White House interests.

One should, however, take care not to confuse the validation of Venezuelan democratic institutions with support for Chávez’s fuzzy idea of *Socialismo del Siglo XXI*. Latin American governments and regional entities’ rapid and strong rejection of revived authoritarianism in South America could well turn against Chávez if his rule threatens democratic rights. That might even hold for the “*lindo pueblo de Venezuela*” to whom Golinger “owes” her book, if the “new socialism” implies restrictions of civil rights along the lines of the former *Socialismo del Siglo XX*. Popular reaction toward the failed coup should also be an eye opener for those forces in the United States that would like to turn the clock back to the good old days of the Cold War. Golinger’s book is an important reminder of their existence.

MORE THAN DRUGS

Golinger’s study, like many others, does not take into account the complex ways that U.S. foreign policy is made. Palmer’s work is an attempt in this direction, but a clearer intention to do so is found in Victor J.

Hinojosa's volume. According to Hinojosa, the United States pursued two very different foreign policies with Colombia and Mexico, holding these countries to very different standards. Colombia and Mexico, in turn, responded in different ways. While the former largely accepted pressures without publicly challenging the United States, the latter often rejected U.S. policy preferences. It was, nevertheless, Colombia that was treated more harshly and subjected to the strongest U.S. sanctions.

Hinojosa's time period stretches over a decade (1989–2000), allowing for a comparison of the foreign policies of different U.S., Mexican, and Colombian administrations. His study also sets out to capture the first years of the drug certification process, allowing a preliminary evaluation and examination of how that process has affected U.S. foreign policy.

Beyond the particular analysis of the cases presented in the book, the author has an inclination to discuss broader theoretical issues in relation to how to study the complex interaction between domestic and international levels. Drawing on Robert Putnam's two-level game model, Hinojosa is critical of earlier perspectives, such as that of James N. Rosenau, in which he finds a vague link between levels that results in merely categorizing types of links rather than using them to explain behavior. As Hinojosa sees it, applying Putnam's model of the relationship between international and domestic levels to define the links in the certification process helps to explain cases of "successful" and "failed" cooperation between nations.

With respect to the United States, Hinojosa's "dependent variable" is the degree of autonomy granted to Mexico and Colombia; that is, how much variance from its policy preferences is the United States willing to accept? Or put differently, how much are these countries willing to alter their preferred policies to comply with U.S. interests and demands (7)? The study also presents "independent variables" with which Hinojosa takes up factors such as electoral tests, presidential popularity, executive-legislative relations, and the reputation of presidents.

Regarding the narcotics certification process, the author explains that the U.S. president is required to submit to Congress a list of countries "certified" to be "fully cooperating" with the United States in the combat of drug production and traffic according to the goals of the 1986 UN Protocol on narcotics control. If approved, the country is entitled to different forms of support. The president also presents a list for decertification, which implies that the country faces a loss of 50 percent of U.S. foreign aid in the first year, 100 percent in subsequent years, and automatic U.S. votes against it in multilateral development banks. The president also has the discretion to impose certain types of trade sanctions on decertified countries. Another option is that the president may decertify a country but waive the penalties associated with decertifica-

tion if compelling national interests so dictate. In each case, Congress has 45 days to overturn any certification decision of the president.

As Hinojosa holds, in 1988, President George H. W. Bush began his term stressing the importance of the drug issue, declaring drugs as "public enemy number one." During his administration, Colombia, one of the most important drug producers, was granted significant autonomy. At that time, U.S. behavior toward Colombia appeared to be driven by events in Colombia, principally the assassination of the presidential candidate Luis Carlos Galán in 1989 by narcotics traffickers and the campaign of terror that followed. Colombia received prompt U.S. financial and military support, and Bush announced what would be the beginnings of the Andean Trade Preferences Act, including the abolition of trade duties and assistance to farmers for shifting from coca to licit crops. According to Hinojosa, the government of César Gaviria (1990–94), seeking more autonomy in the face of internal charges that it was ceding sovereignty, made major shifts away from U.S. policy preferences; for example, through the removal of extradition from the Colombian Constitution. In spite of this, the U.S. response was to provide Colombia with more assistance, allowing Gaviria to pursue his policies.

The Mexican president, Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988–94), also received strong support from the Bush administration at first, but relations turned sour during Bush's final year in office. The reasons were the so-called Alvarez Machaín case (in which a Mexican citizen was kidnapped at the request of U.S. agents) and evidence of corruption in Mexico's judicial institutions (28). Yet the two countries continued to work together (29). Neither electoral contests, presidential popularity, nor executive-legislative relations seem to be enough to explain the granting of autonomy and continuity of "good relations" during this period. As the author holds, in Colombia's case, a reason for Colombia's more favorable treatment appears to have been President Gaviria's good reputation in Washington and his intention to fight narcoterrorism. In the Mexican case, it seems to have been related to the importance attributed to the negotiation of NAFTA.

In the first term of the Clinton administration, which overlapped that of Gaviria, relations continued to be cordial; but they turned exceptionally tense during Ernesto Samper's administration (1994–98). Despite productive counternarcotics efforts, Colombia was not granted significant autonomy from U.S. policy preferences on narcotics control matters because of suspicions that Samper had ties to the Cali drug traffickers. In the case of Mexico, on the other hand, the United States was flexible, although the country should have been decertified if the criteria for certification were to be applied equally, and there was pressure from the U.S. Congress on the Clinton administration to do so (75). Contrary to the Colombian case, moreover, Mexican leaders were more con-

strained toward U.S. relations because of deeply rooted popular demands for the defense of sovereignty.

The findings of Hinojosa's work are quite mixed. Some elements point to a significant impact of executive-legislative relations on U.S. Latin American policy, but this finding is far from a general conclusion. U.S. policy toward Colombia suggests that a president facing a hostile legislature may be able to make significant demands in international negotiations, Hinojosa notes; yet the same variables had little impact on U.S. behavior toward Mexico. He points out that "domestic political variables do not have uniform impacts across countries even when the issue is held constant" (103); and indeed, he ends up noting that much narcotics control cooperation is determined by events that are difficult to generalize, such as terrorism, the reputation of presidents, or corruption scandals.

Hinojosa's conclusions reflect the complexity of his findings. Keeping his theoretical concern in mind, however, he is not so clear in pointing out that reality is even more complex than his model. As he recognizes, theory fails to explain U.S. behavior toward Mexico and Colombia. Much of the behavior of all three countries is tied to elements such as the reputation of the Colombian president and domestic terrorism in that country. The complexity of the U.S.-Mexican relationship also suggests important theoretical limitations. Indeed, Hinojosa is correct when he argues that "theory leaves much unexplained" (194). Perhaps for this reason, the findings of the study do not progress very far from the limitations that the author found in prior research. This should not, however, be taken as a problem specifically attributable to this author, but of social science in general.

Hinojosa's study should be regarded as a contribution to revealing the complexities in the U.S. policymaking process. Such complexities, as we see it, can no longer be attributed to domestic explanations or even to a two-level scheme without taking account of the increasing mix of levels in international and transnational relations. In our opinion, globalization has challenged Putnam's perspective through what Rose-nau (2003) calls "framegration," the deterritorialization of national space, organizations, or identity. These elements increasingly condition national policies for the United States and the rest of the world.

One example with a longstanding yet still too little understood influence on bilateral relations is the NAFTA treaty. It differentiates Mexico from the other Latin American countries, because its level of interaction with the United States is transforming Mexico more and more into a domestic variable. But as one can see in the concerns of scholars such as Huntington (2004), it is also transforming the United States. Decisionmaking processes no doubt have grown more complex since Allison's classic work on the Cuban missile crisis (1971).

FRIENDS OR FOES?

Let us now turn from the north toward the far south of America through David Sheinin's book, *Argentina and the United States*. The author's main tenet is that the history of U.S.-Argentine relations, although frequently punctuated by episodic conflict, is one of cooperative interaction based on generally strong and improving commercial and financial ties and strong cultural interaction.

As the author describes it, in the mid-nineteenth century, relations appeared to be infused with Argentine admiration for the United States, and leading Argentine intellectuals were largely inspired by the U.S. development process. Argentine leaders were also positive toward the Monroe Doctrine. Yet when they asked the United States to protect Argentina after the British seized the Falklands/Malvinas Islands in the 1830s, the U.S. response was negative. It was clear, in Sheinin's opinion, that the priority of U.S. policy "was not to go to war with important trade partners (as were Brazil and Britain) but to maintain open trade routes" (15). It was also significantly around trade that rivalry appeared.

Relations turned sour when the U.S. Congress passed the Wool and Woolens Act in 1867, which "halted the rapid growth in wool imports from Argentina and Australia during the Civil War, at a time when the Argentine export economy relied heavily on such exports" (27). In 1889, Argentina, in turn, resisted the U.S. intention to create a customs union for the Americas, during the First Pan American Conference. Moreover, as Sheinin explains, the bilateral agenda was increasingly dominated by a growing suspicion of U.S. imperialism, due to repeated U.S. military interventions in Latin America and the Caribbean. Still, Sheinin holds, the critical positions were not a constant. In 1905, for example, Argentina accepted President Theodore Roosevelt's corollary to the Monroe Doctrine. Argentina even became one of the staunchest supporters of a U.S.-led panamericanism that continued to stress the dismantling of trade barriers.

A new point of conflict emerged when the United States entered World War I and Argentina remained formally neutral. As the author states, President Hipólito Yrigoyen (1916–22 and 1928–30) saw neutrality as a chance to compete with the United States for diplomatic and strategic leadership in Latin America. But increasing U.S. supremacy also implied more involvement in Argentine internal affairs. In 1919, for example, the U.S. and British governments pressured the Argentine government to crack down on leftist strike agitation, which threatened commercial transactions. The British even accused Yrigoyen of having friendships among the communist strike leaders (51). Finally, in 1930, the Argentine military staged the first coup of the century, overthrowing Yrigoyen's second administration. The new government, according to

Sheinin, quickly offered to cooperate enthusiastically with the U.S.-led panamerican program for economic stabilization, reaffirming Argentina's backing for U.S.-led panamericanism (60).

Argentina soon turned back to a more independent line of action, however. The country not only remained neutral during most of World War II but also (a point that Sheinin does not emphasize) outlined industrialization strategies, which implied a departure from free market-oriented policies that the United States encouraged. Nationalist policies continued under President Juan Perón (1946–55 and 1973–74), although Perón, as the author states, actually made a number of overtures to the State Department to improve relations. Yet the U.S. Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA) announced in early 1948 that "European countries could not use funds from the Marshall Plan to buy Argentine exports" (97). As Sheinin contends, together with a growing trade deficit for Argentina, this pushed Perón further to pursue the so-called third position foreign policy, making trade deals with the Soviet bloc. All of this is true, although the author could have taken more account of the importance Perón attributed to regionalization, especially the country's strategic proximity to Brazil (see Methol Ferré and Metalli 2006).

With the 1955 coup, General Pedro Aramburu (1955–58) ended Perón's "third position" and gave Washington staunch support for hemispheric anticommunism. Moreover, subsidies to national industry would be eliminated, and it was assured that Argentina would return to a completely open free enterprise system (113). When a new window for democratic elections was opened, however, Argentines turned to a Perón-backed candidate, the developmentalist Arturo Frondizi (1958–62). His presidency coincided with the Kennedy administration and its support for development thinking, with a positive view of industrialization, regionalization, and state intervention.

According to Sheinin, Frondizi was the first Argentine president to visit Washington, where he enthusiastically endorsed the Alliance for Progress. But his term in government also coincided with the Cuban revolution, which, Sheinin holds, slowly chipped away at U.S.-Argentine relations. For Frondizi the main issue was development, not anticommunism. Although he was forced to break diplomatic relations with Cuba, Argentina abstained from the OAS vote to exclude Cuba from that organization.

In 1962, Frondizi was ousted, and the military imposed a regime headed by the Senate president, José María Guido. Shortly thereafter, according to Sheinin, the OAS passed a resolution backing the U.S. blockade of Cuba, and Argentina contributed a deployment of destroyers. In the author's opinion, the successive coups confirmed the ascendancy of a U.S.-inspired national security doctrine within the Argentine military and a continued economic policy that turned away from developmentalism

(industrialism and nationalism) toward more economic liberalization. Yet economic crisis, lack of political support, and massive protests finally forced the military to accede to open elections. Not surprisingly, when Perón returned to office in 1973 he made an about-face on several foreign policy positions, joining the nonaligned movement, taking up the cause of decolonization, and reviving Frondizi-era developmentalism.

Although the United States understood that Perón and the Peronist trade unions were not communist sympathizers, Sheinin explains, it again backed a coup in 1976. Sheinin, however, is not very clear on the reasons behind U.S. intervention at this moment. One explanation can be found in Moniz Bandeira's 1994 article, where the thesis is that the major problem for the United States was not communism but Latin American nationalism. Going back to Sheinin's story, the new president, General Jorge Rafael Videla (1976–81), promised a return to a more U.S.-friendly line of thinking and a more favorable climate for U.S. investments. Yet according to the author, the cost this time was a brutal repression that received Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's unequivocal support regarding both goals and methods. A brief source of conflict appeared during Jimmy Carter's presidency, when U.S. policymakers and politicians pressed the Argentine military harder on torture and disappearances. But as Sheinin tells it, with the inauguration of Ronald Reagan, relations were described as "excellent in all regards." The United States did not intervene in Argentina's "Dirty War," and Argentina participated in the U.S. counterinsurgency warfare in Central America. This kind of close interaction with the United States probably led the Argentine military to what Sheinin calls the "fatal mistake" of expecting U.S. support against Great Britain after the invasion of the Falkland/Malvinas islands in 1982. As in 1830, the U.S. response was negative.

According to Sheinin's narrative, with the fall of military rule in 1983, the elected government of Raúl Alfonsín (1983–89) set about reversing Argentina's reputation on human rights. Moreover, Alfonsín improved relations with Cuba and countries of the nonaligned movement. Sheinin, however, does not pay much attention to the steps Alfonsín's administration took on the path toward an unprecedented linkage with Brazil. Relations with the United States improved again during Carlos Menem's presidency (1989–95), when Argentina did what Sheinin describes as a "shocking about-turn to align itself as a U.S. ally" (195). Although Menem campaigned as a traditional Peronist, he privatized whatever state enterprises he could and opened the country entirely to foreign direct investments.

Argentina also sent troops in support of the U.S. war effort in the Persian Gulf and supported its Cuban policy. At the same time, according to Sheinin, the downturn in Argentine industrial production meant that Argentina was forced to import huge quantities of capital goods,

resulting in a dramatic increase in the country's trade deficit and unemployment levels. After years of soaring fiscal deficit and foreign debt, a definitive crack came in December 2001, when the United States stopped bailing out the Argentine economy.

In 2003, after a deep political, social, and economic crisis, voters gave a presidential mandate to Néstor Kirchner (2003–7). Kirchner extended the debt repayment moratorium and blamed the International Monetary Fund for pushing Argentines into poverty. He also pushed for stronger economic regional ties, such as Mercosur, and friendly relations with Hugo Chávez. Holding on to his main thesis, however, Sheinin argues that as the history of bilateral conflict has frequently been exaggerated in a larger context of strong bilateral ties, relations are not likely to sour in the coming years.

Looking at Sheinin's historical recounting, one could agree that Argentine-U.S. relations cannot be described as hostile. Yet it is also difficult to see them as friendly. Perhaps a more accurate label, which applies to Argentine foreign policy in general, is erratic. It is equally difficult to understand Argentine foreign policy without a deeper discussion of the role of Brazil, particularly in relation to the deep impact produced by the integration process since Mercosur.

Sheinin's study brings to light an interesting point by examining the role of culture in holding Argentina and the United States together; for example, by 1925, more than 90 percent of the feature films shown in Argentina were U.S.-made. True as this is, the cultural element could be taken beyond Hollywood and patterns of consumption by, for example, explaining further the reason Argentines see themselves as part of the West. Sheinin touches on some of this when he describes Argentina's admiration for the U.S. model during the mid-nineteenth century. Two elements to consider here are Christianity and liberalism. Regarding the first, Grandin's study is a good example of how it is a constant source of ideological legitimacy for both for the right and the left. In relation to the second, Sheinin correctly asserts that in the nineteenth century, individual rights and the idea of progress represented a strong political common ground with the United States. In our view, that is still so, for both Argentina and most of Latin America.

This brings us to Katzenstein and Keohane's useful distinction between "anti-Americanism" and "opposition to U.S. policy" (2007). They also make another useful distinction between opinion, distrust, and bias. Opinion is a milder and more reasoned category of negative assessment; it hardens into distrust and may end up as bias, where negative evaluations of U.S. foreign policy actions are viewed as inherent. Contrary to Sheinin's optimistic view, these scholars hold that in Latin America, distrust and bias have increased rapidly in recent years in the wake of widespread disappointment with the effect of U.S.-supported

neoliberal policies (Katzenstein and Keohane 2007, 276). One could agree that distrust has been an increasing trend, but not only in recent years. It seems that distrust has been on the rise since the nineteenth century. Yet although Grandin or Golinger might go so far as to speak of bias, it still does not seem to be the case, not even in Venezuela.

Ambiguity is probably the most common attitude, which takes us back to Rodó's statement at the beginning of this essay. It might sound hopeful for U.S. policymakers that admiration has managed to survive, albeit with a constantly increasing dose of suspicion. The caveat, in our opinion, is that as long as the United States does not present the contours of a more consistent twenty-first-century good neighbor policy, the path toward bias is more likely to continue.

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