

part, pilloried Americans for fostering Cuba's moral degeneration, as if gambling and other vices were mere imports. The fact that American mobsters controlled most of Havana's gambling establishments during the final years of Batista's dictatorship served the revolutionaries' purposes, according to Sáenz Rovner.

Though detailed and prone to occasional digressions, *The Cuban Connection* is highly readable. The chapters are short, free of jargon, and filled with cinematic episodes. Nevertheless, readers interested in re-tracing the conditions that precipitated shifts from one connection or drug to another may require more assistance than the volume offers. Although Sáenz Rovner includes a useful bullet-point summation of his claims in the introduction, signage can be difficult to spot along the route. References to the historiography are brief, and so are passages addressing the reach and relative transparency of the sources. Cuba specialists and scholars interested in commodity chains, migration, and transnational approaches will welcome this necessary contribution. Students unfamiliar with Cuban history will require guidance.

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GILBERT M. JOSEPH and DANIELA SPENSER: *In From the Cold: Latin America's New Encounter with the Cold War*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008.

Despite the global turn in Cold War scholarship, the dialogue between U.S. diplomatic and Latin American historians has remained limited. With *In From the Cold*, editors Gilbert Joseph and Daniela Spenser have assembled new scholarship that seeks to make that connection. The result is a fine collection that shifts us away from traditional crisis-driven analysis and reveals the agency of Latin Americans in shaping their Cold War. Following an introduction by Joseph and a fascinating essay on truth commissions and Latin American memory by Thomas Blanton, Spenser offers the first case study with her chapter on the impact of the Cuban Missile Crisis. Drawing upon U.S., Soviet, and Cuban documents, she argues that "the Caribbean crisis was a watershed for Soviet policy concerning Latin America" (p. 77). Humiliated by the United States and challenged by the Chinese, Soviet leaders felt compelled to support Cuban efforts to export revolution in order to shore up their revolutionary credibility. At least until Che Guevara's death in 1967, it seems, the Cuban tail often wagged the Soviet dog.

According to Piero Gleijeses, Moscow had even less control over Cuban activities in Africa. Building upon his superb *Conflicting Missions* (2002), Gleijeses emphasizes the unique nature of Cuba's activism. "During the Cold War,"

he notes, “extracontinental military interventions were the preserve of the two superpowers, a few West European countries, and Cuba” (p. 112). The high point came in Angola in October 1975, when Castro sent troops to help repel a South African invasion. Although Washington blamed Moscow, Gleijeses declares this “a sterling example both of Cuba’s independence from the Soviet Union and of Cuban idealism,” particularly Castro’s commitment to “racial justice” (pp. 124-125). He concludes that the Cuban intervention not only prevented Apartheid’s expansion but also “forced Kissinger to turn against the racist white regime in Rhodesia and spurred Jimmy Carter to work tirelessly for majority rule there” (p. 127). Conversely, Ariel Armony explores the Argentine military regime’s efforts to export its “dirty war” of repression to Central America in the late 1970s and early 1980s. “Although much more limited in terms of its reach and resources,” he observes, “the Argentine case represents the anti-Communist counterpart of Cuban activism in the Third World” (p. 137). By building institutional and personal ties to Central America officers, Argentine leaders helped transform local struggles into international Cold War conflicts.

The following three essays focus on Mexico, a nation often neglected in Cold War studies. Seth Fein examines “Project Pedro,” a USIA program that attempted to shape Mexican Cold War opinion between 1957 and 1961. Through covert ownership of Mexican newsreels, the USIA hoped to “produce the Cold War *in Mexico*” (p. 181). But the combination of state regulations and audience resistance limited the newsreels’ Cold War content. Paradoxically, Project Pedro’s “success at entering the Mexican newsreel field as a legitimate product of national communication rendered it an inadequate form of anti-Communist propaganda” (p. 197). In his essay, “Cuba sí, Yanquis no!,” Eric Zolov examines the 1961 sacking of the U.S. Cultural Institute in Morelia, Michoacán, in response to the Bay of Pigs invasion. Through careful institutional analysis, he reveals how local enthusiasm for the Cuban Revolution drew upon radical nationalist currents associated with ex-President Lázaro Cárdenas. This explains why the Mexican government, despite its vocal support of Castro’s revolution, joined with Washington in blaming the Morelia incident on Soviet subversion. “Ultimately,” Zolov concludes, “Mexico and the United States shared a common fear of social unrest and the desire for political stability” (p. 241). Steven Bachelor’s chapter on Mexican autoworkers provides further evidence of this trend. During the 1960s and early 1970s, Mexican officials welcomed the investment of U.S. automakers such as Chrysler. But when modernization stirred movements for social justice, “state and corporate authorities” used violence to “stem the promise unleashed by Americanization” (p. 268).

Stephen Pitti finds similar efforts to repress the Chicano labor movement in the United States. During the pivotal 1960s struggle in the San Joaquín Valley, he

notes, anti-Communist rhetoric “served to legitimize antilabor, and often racist, attempts to block Mexican and Mexican American political advancement” (p. 274). In response, César Chávez’s National Farm Workers Association (NFWA) adopted a strict anti-communist stance. Although this strategy helped the NFWA win the support of Catholic clergymen, it clashed with the radical activism sweeping the Americas in the late 1960s. That radicalism is the subject of Victoria Langland’s “Birth Control Pills and Molotov Cocktails,” which focuses on 1968 Brazil. Analyzing the gendered discourse of social change and repression, Langland finds that “women’s sexuality as a political issue and sexualized views of women political activists merged as one” (p. 310). Especially revealing is her use of advertising images to trace the connection between commercialized tropes of sexual violence and actual torture of suspected female dissidents.

In the final essay, Carlota McAllister explores the complex process of modernization in rural Guatemala. Focusing on the western village of Chupol, she reveals that the post-1954 efforts of the Guatemalan state to draw isolated communities into market relations had unintended consequences. Far from vanquishing local people’s identities, market expansion spurred many to direct opposition, including the espousal of liberation theology and armed struggle. But although McAllister succeeds in connecting revolutionary currents to deeper local histories, she seems to conflate U.S.-sponsored modernization with state violence, noting that “U.S. cold warriors and their Guatemalan friends had another means of ensuring their calculations would prosper when the market failed to do so: genocidal violence” (p. 371).

In sum, the editors have assembled a valuable collection that will prove useful to U.S. diplomatic and Latin American scholars alike. Although Spenser’s critique of the “so-called new Cold War history” as preoccupied with the “bipolar conflict” (p. 381) is debatable, she correctly notes that, “Without the Cold War, Latin America would be a very different place today” (p. 395). By linking the geostrategic aspects of the great power struggle to the cultural and grassroots experience on the ground, *In From the Cold* offers a fresh perspective on Latin America’s Cold War.

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**JULIAN GO:** *American Empire and the Politics of Meaning*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2008.

One of the more powerful justifications for American imperialism has been the idea of the “civilizing mission” in which liberal democratic values are transferred