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Introduction by Anne L. Foster, Indiana State University

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Introduction by Anne L. Foster, Indiana State University

In January 1912, eleven nations as well as several British overseas territories signed the 1912 Hague International Opium Convention, initiating the modern era of global drug control. In this 100th anniversary year it is fitting to explore the intertwined nature of foreign and domestic policy in the area of narcotics control. Even before 1912, officials from the nations interested in reducing the consumption, growth, manufacture, and sale of licit and illicit drugs often defined the problematic aspects of that consumption as stemming from foreign elements or the primitive, uncivilized nature of consumers within a domestic polity. Not surprisingly, confronted with an intractable problem of addiction within their states, officials have wanted to find a simple solution outside their borders. As Dan Weimer's *Seeing Drugs: Modernization, Counterinsurgency, and U.S. Narcotics Control in the Third World, 1969-1976* demonstrates, that desire continued in the United States through at least the 1970s.

Weimer contributes to an increasingly vibrant literature on U.S. foreign relations and modernization by reminding us of the illicit products (here mostly opiate derivatives) which also could provide people and governments with enhanced revenue, but not for the modernization purposes that the United States or local governments may have wanted. Ironically, however, the very efforts to control, then eradicate, these products created different paths to modernization, successful and not, chosen and not. In the 1960s and 1970s, Cold War imperatives made it that much easier for U.S. officials to pursue highly controlling policies outside U.S. borders, linking the threat of drugs to that of disorder and communism, and thereby linking the solution of source control to counterinsurgency. Weimer demonstrates these linkages convincingly, complicating our ideas of what constituted the Cold War, the motivations for the War on Drugs, and the purposes of U.S. modernization efforts in other countries.

Several themes emerge in the reviews. Perhaps the most prominent, mentioned by all, is that Weimer's study highlights some absolutely critical and understudied aspects of U.S. Cold War policy, particularly the ways in which Cold War justifications were used to pursue highly intrusive social and economic policies in other countries,, in this case ranging from crop substitution to counterinsurgency. That observation is surely no surprise, but scholars continue to uncover the breadth and depth of these efforts.

All the commentators note Weimer's attention to linkages among narcotics control, nation building, and modernization, and find his argument about their intertwined nature to be persuasive. Weimer's careful explication of the modernizing effects of both narcotics production and export as well as the interventions of the United States in these areas to control narcotics serves as an important reminder that nation building and modernization are based as much on illicit activities as on licit. This insight lurks behind many studies of periods of nation building in a variety of times and places, but rarely is made explicit. Even in the burgeoning literature on modernization, there has been too little attention to the role of illicit economic activity, efforts to combat it, and the relation of both to the growth of the state and modernization.

Nearly every commentator notes the ambitious nature of Weimer's study, and draws attention to questions raised but not answered. The ubiquity of this comment, usually accompanied by a note that it is not offered as a criticism, demonstrates the importance of the conversation Weimer has begun. The Cold War has ended, but the War on Drugs continues. The War on Drugs also arguably pre-dated its formal declaration. The thread through U.S. foreign and domestic politics, for well over one hundred years, of a consistent message of prohibition of narcotics, of punitive rather than public health solutions, of source control rather than reducing demand, and of willingness to intervene in other countries to prevent narcotics from reaching the United States deserves far more attention from scholars than it has so far received. William McAllister, not surprisingly, draws most attention to the issue of continuity in U.S. drug policy, but Weimer's study suggests we need to explore the broader implications of the consistencies in the U.S. approach.

The reviewers almost all mention as well that Weimer used more theory than one would expect from a work of foreign relations history, drawing on International Relations theory about hegemony as is common in the field, but also utilizing insights from Jacques Derrida, James Scott, and Michel Foucault, among others. Not all commentators find that the particular uses of theory helped Weimer's argument. None dismiss its usefulness outright, however, which perhaps is a change from how such use of theory might have been received even ten years ago.

In one area nearly all of the reviewers were disappointed. As Brad Simpson notes: "Weimer researches deeply but not broadly." The research base is primarily U.S. government documents from the U.S. National Archives and Presidential Libraries, as well as some collections from the United Nations. For a work as concerned as this one is with modernization, nation-building, and how ordinary Thai, Burmese, and Mexicans experienced the War on Drugs, the research is surprisingly focused on high-level government officials and reports. William McAllister notes that the work is not up to recent standards in international history, although it is not clear that Weimer claimed to be doing international history. Weimer's approach and the concern of nearly all commentators that it was perhaps not sufficiently broad in a variety of ways, does raise some questions which I think historians would do well to address more explicitly. Should one do nationally-based foreign relations history anymore? Are there questions, or ways of framing questions, which can be answered from the archives and sources of one country? If not, what does that mean for how we identify ourselves professionally, how we train graduate students, and the expectations of research in an era of limited resources?

Weimer has provided us with some new ways of thinking about the War on Drugs: how it was fought, where it was fought, and the implications of both of those. Perhaps even more importantly, he has prompted each of these readers to ask new questions about the issues he explored. Subsequent works will be indebted to him. *Seeing Drugs* is an important book for all scholars of the Cold War, U.S. foreign relations, and U.S. drug policy.

Participants:

Daniel Weimer is an Associate Professor of History at Wheeling Jesuit University. He received his Ph.D. from Kent State University in 2003. *Seeing Drugs* is his first book. His current project, tentatively titled “Charting Nature, Charting the Global,” explores the intersection of environmental and diplomatic history within international drug control.

Anne L. Foster is associate professor of History at Indiana State University. She is author of *Projections of Power: The United States and Europe in Colonial Southeast Asia, 1919-1941* (Duke, 2010) as well as several articles on comparative opium policies in colonial Southeast Asia. She is currently working on a book titled *The State of Opium: Commodity, Medicine, Revenues, and Morals in Colonial Southeast Asia, 1890-1940*.

James M. Carter received his Ph.D. from the University of Houston in 2004. He is an Associate Professor, specializing on the United States and the World at Drew University and the author of *Inventing Vietnam: The United States and State Building, 1954-1968* (Cambridge University Press, 2008). He is currently working on a project dealing with the nation building and the political economy of U.S. intervention since 1945 and an article on the black market economy in Vietnam during the 1960s.

William B. McAllister received his Ph.D. in Modern European and Diplomatic History from the University of Virginia. He currently serves as Chief of the Special Projects Division at the Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State. McAllister is the author of *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century: An International History* and several articles and book chapters about international drug history. He also compiled and edited the *Global Issues* and *United Nations Affairs* volumes of the *Foreign Relations of the United States* series for the 1973-1976 period. He is currently writing a chapter on drugs in modern world history for the Cambridge World History, and is researching *The Common Heritage of Mankind: The Interdependency Epiphany and the Birth of the Globalized World, 1965-1976* under contract with Oxford University Press.

Suzanna Reiss is an Assistant Professor of U.S. Foreign Relations in the Department of History at the University of Hawai‘i Mānoa. She received her Ph.D. from New York University. She has published a number of articles including “Beyond Supply and Demand: Obama’s Drug Wars in Latin America,” in the *NACLA Report on the Americas* and “Policing Development: Andean Drug Control & the Expansion of US Capitalism,” in the *Social History of Alcohol and Drugs: an Interdisciplinary Journal*. She is currently working on a book manuscript that investigates international drug control as it provides perspective on the material and ideological foundations of twentieth century US imperialism.

Brad Simpson (Ph.D., Northwestern 2003) is assistant professor of history and international affairs at Princeton University and the author of *Economists with Guns: Authoritarian Development and U.S.-Indonesian Relations* (2008, 2010 pb). He is currently working on two book projects, an international history of the idea self-determination, charting its political, cultural and legal descent through post-1945 US foreign relations and

international politics, and another exploring U.S.-Indonesian-international relations during the Suharto era (1966-1998).

Joseph Spillane is an Associate Professor in the Department of History at the University of Florida. He earned his Ph.D. in History from Carnegie Mellon University in 1994. He has published one sole-authored book, *Cocaine: From Medical Marvel to Modern Menace in the United States* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000) and co-edited *Federal Drug Control: The Evolution of Policy and Practice* (Haworth Press, 2004) and *Prison Work: A Tale of Thirty Years in the California Department of Corrections* (Ohio State University Press, 2005). Recent articles include “Keeping the Lid On: A Century of Drug Regulation and Control” in *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*. He is also currently the President of the Alcohol and Drugs History Society, and (with Dr. Trysh Travis) is the co-Managing Editor of *Points: The Blog of the Alcohol and Drugs History Society*.

Review by James M. Carter, Drew University

The “war on drugs,” now more than three decades long and having cost the United States billions of dollars is perhaps as far from an end as was the case when it began in the early 1970s. And for all that has been spent and wasted in its name, the public has either had its attention pulled in other directions or does not have faith that the “war” has produced the desired results. In short, the combined domestic and international campaign against illegal drugs termed the “war on drugs” has yielded neither clear results, nor managed to even remain relevant in the public’s mind. And yet, it persists.

Further, the war on drugs, as the current study points out, has meant ongoing U.S. intervention in the Third World for decades, with important implications for foreign policy. The author suggests this has gone on without sufficient exploration by historians. I would agree and add that this aspect of the war, too, is largely obscure and unknown to the American public. Interestingly, this review coincides with the release of former Panamanian dictator and infamous “drug lord” Manuel Noriega from prison in France to return to Panama and serve out another twenty years. How many Americans remember the U.S. invasion to overthrow him in 1989 and his subsequent trial and conviction on multiple counts of drug trafficking and money laundering, along with his role as a client of the United States and deep ties with the CIA? This is an obvious reminder that the subject here is rich, complex, and in need of exploration.

Weimer is tackling much more than an explanation of the foreign relations aspects of the drug war. This ambitious study sets out to do that, of course. But, it also offers a history of drugs in America, an analysis of the domestic politics of the drug war during the Nixon and Ford administrations, the tactics and strategies pursued in dealing with rampant drug use, the “discourse” that emerged and evolved concerning the drug problems, and an exploration of “American identity,” and of policymakers’ “cultural assumptions.” The author here borrows from Clifford Geertz, Michel Foucault, and Antonio Gramsci, among others, as he crafts this element of his argument. Because the book attempts to deal with so much, I will not attempt to review it in its entirety, but will instead focus on one theme or narrative that runs through it.

At the heart of the study, at least as I read it, are U.S. narcotics control efforts in Thailand, Burma, and Mexico from 1969-1976, and the extent to which those control efforts were influenced by modernization theory and counterinsurgency doctrine (COIN). For the author, there is a critical link between modernization (economic development) and counterinsurgency and the particular domestic reality of these years. As is well known, President Richard Nixon imagined a ‘silent majority’ emerging around issues of ‘law and order.’ Nixon astutely coupled rampant drug use and increased crime, and harnessed them both to a new political strategy that sought to capitalize on a growing disenchantment with pervasive ‘lawlessness.’ Federal Bureau of Investigation crime statistics reflected dramatic increases in violent crime, such as armed robbery, assaults, and murders. But, Nixon saw in these numbers a political opportunity to “hit pornography, dope, [and] bad kids.” Nixon drew the conclusion that “people don’t want to help the working poor, and our mood has to

be harder on this, not softer.” The author argues that Nixon’s “law and order” strategy had inherited from the riots of the earlier decade a particular view of “civil disorder in America’s urban ghettos.” (53-55) Urban police departments borrowed heavily from the FBI and CIA in both equipment and tactics in dealing with riots and other disturbances. What emerged was a reliance on counterinsurgency (mace, tear gas, helicopters, etc.) to re-establish order, followed by economic development to deal with America’s urban disorders. The author argues, “this COIN-inflected law enforcement strategy would be applied to the drug war with the same justification” in the Third World. (56)

Meanwhile, owing at least in part to the “heroin epidemic” among Vietnam veterans, addiction was transformed into a disease with external origins. On one hand, drug addiction led to greater criminal activity as the addict needed quick cash to pay for drugs—studies pointed to addicts who were often jobless and in need of tens of thousands of dollars to maintain the drug habit. On the other hand, the “disease” metaphor, the widely adopted language regarding addiction, and the related search for solutions found the origins of the scourge halfway around the world in Southeast Asia. As Nixon concluded, “this deadly poison is a foreign import.” (74) What followed were campaigns in Thailand, Burma, and Mexico aimed at source control—of eliminating the drugs at the source.

United States “source control” initiatives in the case studies the author analyzes were predicated on COIN to provide enforcement and security, coupled with modernization/economic development strategies to bolster the features of the state that would yield lasting results. As it turned out, Thailand received U.S. drug interdiction policies much as it had U.S. Cold War anti-communist policies. That is, rather than pursuing American objectives, various factions used American aid to bolster their own position, the state furthered its own power and legitimacy, resettlement and other schemes aimed at breaking up and assimilating insurgents actually produced more of them, while drug trafficking networks adapted. Weimer writes that interdiction efforts yielded no more than a 10 to 15 percent success rate. The American efforts in Burma, a more complicated insurgent environment, similarly failed to yield any success. The salient point of this example seems to be that in rejecting alternative approaches such as preemptive buying, the United States continued to place the blame for narcotics squarely on producer states, which meant continuing to view drug addiction at home as a foreign contagion. Finally, in the case of Mexico, which had by the middle 1970s nearly completely taken over the U.S. heroin market, the U.S. experiment with defoliation proved a near total failure. The take-away here is that the efforts reinforced the U.S. source-control strategy and kept the U.S. involved in the Third World in perpetuity through the now-familiar rationalization of drug interdiction.

All told, this is a sorry story for U.S. efforts, at least if judged on the basis of reducing the production of drugs in the examples provided. However, Weimer’s claim is larger than this; the drug war emerged during the years following the disaster that was the Vietnam War, the crumbling of the Cold War consensus, and the numerous revelations regarding America’s role in the world since 1945. In this context, the drug war served a larger purpose. Weimer writes that it “helped Washington calm or sidestep controversy over the policies exposed by the Vietnam War and the Church Committee hearings.” (217) It

provided a sense of purpose and kept all eyes externally focused. Similarly, the author argues, source control measures have consistently prevented a more thorough-going internal examination of the problem of drug use/addiction within the United States.

On this point, Weimer is fairly persuasive. To be clear, I have taken on only one of the numerous threads that run through the book. I will leave to others a more thorough critique of the other themes present. I did, however, find that the discussion of culture and theory laid out in the introduction and the subsequent narrative and the positioning of the topic within cultural/theoretical frameworks seemed forced, added on, and was distracting. The book takes on a great deal, and these ambitions may come at the expense of over-all clarity and focus.

The views expressed here are the author's own and do not necessarily represent those of the U.S. Government or the Department of State.

Did you know the State Department has its own air force? The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) includes an Office of Aviation, often referred to as the Air Wing, that currently deploys over two hundred aircraft in eight countries. Principal Air Wing missions include aerial spraying of herbicides, interdiction of drug trafficking routes, providing command and control for counter-narcotics operations, reconnaissance and surveillance, rapid movement of personnel, cargo, and even emergency medical evacuations. The Air Wing also provides host countries with equipment, technical support, and training for personnel. Moreover, INL does not focus solely on drug trafficking; the bureau combats all manner of international criminal activity including cybercrime, money laundering, smuggling of goods and persons, organized crime syndicates, terrorist groups, and infringement of intellectual property rights. Interestingly, INL focuses much of its effort on promoting “best practice” exemplars in locales perceived to be lacking key elements of modern state functionality; the bureau aims to foster sensibility to human rights issues, instill rule-of-law processes, improve criminal justice systems, advance societal status and vocational opportunities for women, and support development programs (including crop substitution in opium- and coca- growing regions). The Bureau even provides financing for drug abuse treatment centers in foreign countries, some of which provide care for children while their addicted mothers take the cure. And, of course, INL and its Air Wing cooperate with multiple other federal agencies and international partners.¹ How did the United States Government become embroiled in such extensive efforts abroad? How did it become part of a diplomat’s job to get involved in the economic affairs, social structures, and even family life of faraway lands? Daniel Weimer’s *Seeing Drugs* provides important insights into the trajectory of modern (post-1970) international drug policy and also frames those developments in a larger context applicable more generally to the postwar Era of Modernization.

Seeing Drugs draws on a variety of literatures to broaden the contextual and conceptual lenses through which drug control issues can be examined. Weimer constructs a succinct pre-1970 narrative about the drug control regime’s steadfast focus on supply-side regulation. The system’s goal is to reduce the quantity of regulated substances to that necessary for “legitimate” medicinal purposes (as defined by western norms). He includes considerations of race, class, and gender in the formulation of those rules. Moreover, he relates attitudes about drug use to national identity-formation processes, noting the binary us-versus-them thinking that resulted in the “othering” of disfavored groups. In the United States, these “addiction discourses” focused on the need for a sober, punctual, functional labor force to populate the industrial, technocratic, and bureaucratic workplaces that comprise a modern economy. Illegitimate drug use represented a degradation of rationality

¹ <http://www.state.gov/p/inl/index.htm> (accessed December 10, 2011)

and free will, undermining the incentive to achieve unlimited (economic) self-development that drove the system. When coupled with fears about inappropriate use of psychoactive substances by groups outside the mainstream, the desire to order society for efficiency legitimized government intervention into the behavior of individual citizens.

Weimer then traces the linkages between this longstanding drug control logic and key Cold War metaphors. Modernization theory dictated that third world countries must become more developed in order to fend off the attractions of Communism. Counterinsurgency proponents argued that development required stability, and thus the primary emphasis should be suppression of movements that challenged national governmental authority. Disease and contagion metaphors figured prominently in the construction of prescriptions that focused on prophylactic measures. Eradicating illicit drug use at “the source,” defined as the point of agricultural production overseas, prevented the disease of substance abuse from spreading to the domestic American population. “Traditional” societies could be inoculated from the blandishments of Communist propaganda by modernizing their economies and eradicating opponents of centralized national government. Weimer interweaves insights from the works of James Scott, David Campbell, Michel Foucault, and Jacques Derrida to explain the ways in which governments extended their reach by recognizing and regulating behaviors defined as abnormal, creating normative expectations that engender self-discipline, fostering unity at home by “performing” foreign policy initiatives that cemented national identity, and controlling territory through surveillance, mapping, and development programs designed to tie local populations closer to the national polity.² All this identifying, studying, quantifying, and standardizing combined with geopolitical incentives to promote modernization, to oppose communism, and to initiate development schemes. In turn, the longstanding preference for supply control built into the international drug regime dovetailed nicely with this emerging constellation of forces; crop substitution, for example, could replace opium production with agricultural products entering the *licit* global market, therefore advancing the goals of integrated development. This overdetermination of factors produced a powerful amalgam, driving U.S. policy makers to externalize American drug control preferences on an unprecedented scale, but also sublimating those goals to an overriding concern with national security.

In Thailand, American officials supported the Royal Government’s attempts to modernize the hill tribes, thereby enhancing government authority. Bangkok moved to reduce Hmong drug trafficking by bolstering central governmental control, fostering a Thai identity among

² Weimer cites David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992); Jacques Derrida, “The Rhetoric of Drugs” in Elisabeth Weber, ed., *Points...Interviews, 1974-1994* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995); Michel Foucault, *Abnormal: Lectures at the College de France, 1974-1975* (New York: Picador, 1999); Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972); Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1979); James C. Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976); Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

the hill tribes, interdicting trafficking networks, and replacing opium growing with cash crops. Yet the Royal Government decided not to move too quickly; an immediate, full-fledged anti-opium campaign might drive impoverished farmers into the ranks of the Communist rebels. Therefore, a gradual approach that favored change over time prevailed and in so doing, drug suppression took a back seat to law enforcement enhancement and counterinsurgency initiatives that sometimes oppressed indigenous populations. Moreover, remnant Nationalist Chinese paramilitary units on the Thai frontier supported their operations by growing and transporting drugs, but because the Thais and the U.S. benefitted from their continued presence neither government pressed overmuch for immediate suppression. Again, both governments privileged measures to defeat communism over elimination of illicit drug cultivation. By the mid-1970s, opium growers and traffickers adapted to the gradual modernization campaign by a combination of accommodating changes in the local economy, developing more sophisticated drug transport mechanisms, and shifting opium operations to Burma. Over the course of a generation, Thailand's attempts to make the hill tribes more sedentary in order to control them largely succeeded. Some modernization did come to upcountry Thailand, and poppy cultivation receded to a considerable extent. Weimer points out that this process caused a decline in indigenous culture and degraded local environmental knowledge, resulting in social alienation that manifested itself through increased drug addiction in rural areas. In the minds of American officials the Thai experiment nevertheless represented a successful demonstration project that could be replicated elsewhere as long as sufficient "political will" existed in the target country.

The prospects for this modernization-counterinsurgency-anticommunism-drug control agenda appeared less promising in Burma, but American officials proceeded anyway. The fractured nature of the Burmese political landscape, which featured a quasi-federal structure and multiple insurgent groups scattered across the country, created an impasse; the central government did not possess the power to conquer its challengers, and the sundry separatist groups did not have the capacity to wrest independence from Rangoon. The U.S. supported Burmese government stability operations at the expense of more intensive drug control efforts, often resulting in harsh treatment of ethnic minorities. The stalemate produced an offer from the insurgent Shan State Army to sell its opium crop to the United States and to cooperate in suppressing further trafficking in exchange for American intervention to broker autonomous status for the Shans. This interlude enables Weimer to discuss a mid-1970s American domestic debate about a potential alternative path to control that would have decoupled drug policy from modernization, counterinsurgency, and anticommunism. The Shan proposal never had any realistic prospect of acceptance, and the incident illustrated that even critics of U.S. international drug policy remained wedded to the supply control paradigm that defined the "source" of the problem as excess capacity generated in foreign lands.

Weimer's gaze then shifts to mid-1970s Mexico, where the interlocking suite of U.S. Cold War policies again propelled drug control to the forefront, while at the same time subordinating its implementation to anticommunist and stability priorities. In the aftermath of the disastrous 1969 Operation Intercept that featured a unilateral closing of the border in an attempt to staunch the flow of illicit drugs, Washington instigated a

cooperative program to bolster Mexican central authority. American officials judged that Mexican authorities could muster the requisite political will to embark on a substantial drug control initiative, not least because the government desired to eliminate domestic insurgencies. Technological innovations feature prominently in this portion of Weimer's story; satellite imagery provided governments the capacity to "see" in new ways, and for the first time spraying of aerial herbicides played a major role in a drug control campaign. American officials even contemplated the drug-war equivalent of a 1916-style Big Push campaign, proposing massive simultaneous application of herbicides across large swaths of Mexico and Burma. Rangoon vetoed the idea, but the proposal illustrates the extent to which U.S. drug control policy had come to externalize the American addiction problem. The outcome of this episode was much like the earlier Thai and Burmese cases: American funds supported anti-insurgent stability operations that sometimes violated the rights of Mexican citizens. Drug control was pursued sporadically because it served primarily as a vehicle for other priorities. Collateral effects included increased drug addiction in Mexico and burgeoning corruption among government officials. The center of illicit trafficking migrated to safer climes, and Americans continued to consume illegal substances in substantial quantities.

Many elements of Weimer's story predate the 1970s. Drug control has never operated in a vacuum—throughout the twentieth century competing national interests have routinely taken precedence.³ That Cold War priorities trumped implementation of significant, sustained suppression measures should come as no surprise. The notion that "political will" in the target country is the most important factor in determining the success of drug control initiatives dates back to at least 1906. The preemptive purchase of Burmese opium was not unique; debates about "preclusive buying" occurred during World War II, and in 1949 the fledgling Communist Chinese government offered a massive cache of opium captured from the Nationalists. The Cold War overlay was not necessary to reject such proffers because the logic of the supply control paradigm characterized such proposals as examples of moral hazard to be avoided. Weimer also notes with sufficient frequency that the entire drug control regime focused on the supply side of the equation. The demand element, which includes not only treatment for addicts but also early intervention after first use and prevention (or at least delay) of drug experimentation, always received a relative paucity of funding, even in the more enlightened Nixon-Ford-Carter era covered by this book. Finally, Weimer deserves credit for pointing out an irony that was lost on the actors in his story: drug traffickers have long been "modern," fully participating in the world system of economic interchange, and among the most nimble entrepreneurs in history. They respond to changes in market conditions, they mobilize and deploy capital, they enforce contracts, they develop sophisticated transportation and distribution networks, and they re-invest to enhance future revenues. In fact, the institution by governments of rules, taxes, monopolies, and prohibitions creates the conditions under which illegal actors generate profit. A sort of symbiotic relationship exists between rule makers and rule breakers, each responding to imperatives created by the other; both partners are necessary to dance the modern tune.

³ William B. McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century: An International History* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000).

The combination of those longstanding factors with the novel elements Weimer highlights has generated profound results on a worldwide scale. Crop substitution had been discussed previously, and few small-scale experiments had been conducted, but Weimer is right to highlight the precedential effect of the program that was implemented in Thailand. That element of the modern drug control equation has become a staple in subsequent decades. Aerial spraying in Mexico launched another innovation that now comprises a key weapon in the armamentarium of drug-control warriors. As control measures became more invasive, cultivators and traffickers responded with more sophisticated mechanisms for production, transport, marketing, and investment that often featured greater levels of ruthlessness and corruption. Since the early-1970s advent of this steadily heightening worldwide battle, the political, social, and environmental consequences have increased exponentially. The comprehensive crime fighting mission of INL is in large measure a response to the increasing capacity of drug traffickers to branch out into other profitable illicit endeavors. Since the ruling ethos of the modern era remains economic growth enabling the acquisition of material goods, bodily pleasure, and enlightened consciousness, all signs point to a continued contest for the synaptic gateways that condition 'hearts and minds.'

Weimer's analysis runs some risk of too readily accepting the received categories of the drug control and modernization mentalities he seeks to interrogate. Most importantly, authority structures not only make efforts to "see," but they also choose the angle at which to position their gaze. Although Weimer does note at some junctures that the continuum of psychoactive substances includes other categories such as stimulants, depressants, and hallucinogens, his narrative generally falls into the usual conflation of "drugs" with opiates and cocaine. Those preparations are, in one sense, the least "modern" of the substances typically characterized as drugs of abuse (which might explain why they became targets). Another aspect of American modernity is the active promotion of pharmaceutical drugs at home and abroad. At the same time the U.S. government attempted to suppress opium and coca cultivation, federal agencies also touted the advantages of modern drugs for modern problems such as depression and weight gain (often cited as a concern not so much for the health risks but because modern cultural and commercial forces represented overweight bodies as aesthetically displeasing). One must also consider tobacco and alcohol, certainly the most impactful addicting substances in human history, yet not covered by "international drug control" treaties. After the 1964 Surgeon General's report linking smoking to cancer, domestic American sentiment turned against tobacco rather swiftly. Laws to limit points of sale and curtail advertising followed soon after. Yet during that same period the U.S. government also engaged in considerable efforts to sell more tobacco abroad, fully aware that American brands represented the epitome of modernity. The relationship between tobacco, state revenues, and state-encouraged economic growth is illustrated by the fact that the first treaty in a generation to break new ground in drug control, the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, was launched by the World Health Organization rather than by national governments. Per-capita alcohol consumption had recovered to pre-Prohibition levels by the 1970s, not least because many states lowered the drinking age from 21 to 18 as a measure to 'keep kids from using drugs.' The diffusion of alcohol products over the past fifty years presents an impressive model of modern

marketing. Because alcohol and tobacco have long been incorporated into western culture, consumption, and commerce, they represent both the least and most modern of psychoactive substances. States certainly “see” them, but the pharmacological and libidinal realities that constitute their appeal are viewed through a different gaze than that applied to opium and coca. Finally, Weimer uses the term “source control” throughout, but he does not define its meaning. One might assume that this phrase connotes the usual drug regime idea of control *at* the source. However, his own narrative suggests a more grandiose design: control *of* the source. The desire of the modernizing state to regulate, govern, classify, quantify, and incorporate applied not only to territory and commerce, but also to people, behaviors, ideas, attitudes, preferences, and identities. The extent to which this campaign succeeds conditions the very capacity of human beings to formulate the frame of reference through which they encounter the world.

Weimer’s narrative also may be judged by some as not fully incorporating recent methodological trends in international history. The source base is entirely in English and is very Washington-centric. The only non-U.S. sources are two English-language Thai government reports and a few United Nations treaty documents. Weimer utilizes secondary-source anthropological, sociological, and development studies that examine conditions in Thailand, Burma, and Mexico, yet those sources are necessarily mediated by western authors. It is understandable that access to archival sources in Thailand and especially Myanmar cannot be expected, and of course neither traffickers nor peasants leave much behind in the way of written records. Mexico, however, is a different matter. If there are no archival sources available on this topic for the time period, the author should tell us. At the least, an examination of readily-available Mexican press sources would add valuable alternative perspectives to the book’s accounting for the impact of, and reaction to, the export of American drug control policy. Since some of the U.S.-inspired programs overseas were implemented by the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, one might reasonably expect that reports about the projects Weimer discusses might have been generated by that body or the U.N. Commission on Narcotic Drugs or the International Narcotics Control Board. Archives in Ottawa, London, or Paris, or The Hague should have documents available on these topics for this time period. Considering the positions of former colonial powers such as the British, French, and Dutch would reveal whether their long experience governing access to drug supplies in the periphery rendered them skeptical about, or supportive of, the links between drug control and modernization projects espoused by the United States. Additionally, readers are left wondering who was actually making the decisions within the U.S. government. Just because Sheldon Vance simultaneously held the titles of “Senior Adviser to the Secretary of State on International Narcotics Matters” and “Executive Director of the Cabinet Committee on International Narcotics Control” and “Chairman of the International Narcotics Control Working Group” does not mean that he wielded decisive influence, even within the State Department. White House attention to the issue appears sporadic at best. The demise of the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs in favor of the Drug Enforcement Administration in the middle the period Weimer examines leads to questions about how much those agencies directed the trajectory of events. The extent of congressional leadership in defining the issue and directing policy is unclear. Weimer’s account leaves some doubt about who, if anyone, was running the show in Washington.

This year marks the centennial of formal international drug control. Since the promulgation of the 1912 International Opium Convention a remarkable story of regulation and resistance has transpired. Commentators have often acknowledged the seemingly intractable nature of the problem, and many have proffered ‘solutions,’ most of which do not account for the multiplicity of forces at work. Few have analyzed the panoply of factors in play with sufficient scope to illuminate what drives the process of mediating human access to psychoactive substances. Daniel Weimer’s *Seeing Drugs* provides a valuable contribution to our understanding of this most complicated phenomenon.

Daniel Weimer's book is an ambitious reframing of the animating principles of the U.S. government's 'war on drugs.' Focused on the first half of the 1970s, Weimer convincingly demonstrates that the domestic drug war famously launched by President Nixon was, as he puts it, "an enduring act of American foreign policy" (1). While efforts at drug control date back to the beginning of the twentieth century—as the book thoroughly documents in the first chapter—a combination of emergent cultural understandings about drugs combined with national security concerns rooted in Cold War politics meant that by the 1970s a new discourse of drug control reconfigured the cultural foundations for 'seeing drugs' in new ways, with profound implications for drug policy right up to the present day. At the heart of this analysis is attentiveness to the ways in which the paired ideologies of modernization and counterinsurgency (COIN) recapitulated and transformed enduring characteristics of U.S. drug control policy *as* foreign policy, particularly the notion that the drug threat emanates from outside the nation and should be dealt with through supply-side control initiatives.

There is much that is original and innovative about this text. Perhaps most striking is the geographic scope of the project that begins with a history of drug use and cultural beliefs in the United States up to the 1970s and then moves to U.S. drug policy initiatives in Thailand, Burma, and Mexico. One thread that ties these disparate sites together is the notion that efforts at drug control have functioned historically as tools for advancing the effective hegemony of the state and consolidating national identity. Weimer demonstrates that U.S. proponents of harsh drug control legislation, from the time of the Harrison Narcotics Act in 1914 through the passage of the Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1970, exploited nativist sentiment, rendering the drug threat profoundly external, foreign and 'other' to the nation. Public perception was shaped by the presumption that the threat drugs posed to society came from their abuse by people of Chinese, Mexican, or African-American descent. The fact that discrimination based on race and nationality has been central to the history of drug control is not particularly revelatory. However, Weimer's orientation toward drug control as a form of nation building maps out a new framework and vocabulary for considering nativism and drug control. Weimer's account integrates the domestic and foreign as part of a single history where drug control functioned as a tool for delineating the borders of belonging both within the nation and in parts of the world where the United States sought to exert its influence.

Officials' use of drug policy in the service of nation building meant a mix of productive and repressive approaches. On the one hand, addiction could be overcome by cultivating modernity, through experimental rehabilitation programs at home and development programs abroad. On the other hand, the U.S. government often embraced coercive measures to effect such transformations. Weimer explains the logic underlying such visions: "The addict continued to be seen as a foil to the modern, rational, self-directing and productive individual" (31) and hence stood in the way of social progress. While there was a new willingness to experiment with drug maintenance programs under the Nixon administration, this was paired with an emphasis on drugs as a criminal problem in dire

need of aggressive acts of law and order to protect the nation's security. By the 1970s government officials across the political spectrum embraced this war on drugs and also, Weimer argues, modernization and counterinsurgency theory as its guiding tactical principles. Local police embraced COIN techniques brought back from Vietnam to combat black militancy and urban civil disorder, and the concept of 'law and order' as the precursor to modernization and development was re-exported through the U.S. drug war overseas. "Nixon attached the drug issue to larger social, cultural, and political movements that he viewed with suspicion and disdain." (50) Similar sentiments, Weimer demonstrates, informed U.S. drug policy toward the Third World. Much like addiction, the people and politics of the Third World were deemed pre-modern, irrational and in need of U.S. guidance. Modernization and COIN theories became both rhetorical justifications and tools of drug policy and foreign policy more generally as policymakers sought to fashion a stable modern American identity in the midst of social and political upheavals that threatened to upend the status quo at home and abroad.

The text is filled with fascinating details and anecdotes that through their accumulation reveal some of the absurdities at the heart of U.S. drug policy. Weimer is particularly interested in the way the state's power operates in part through rendering its boundaries and citizens visible to it—indeed he argues that officials considered this visible modernity the basis for most effectively controlling the nation's resources and population. One such example was the U.S. government's first extensive use of urinalysis screening that it deployed in response to a much-trumpeted epidemic of drug addiction among U.S. soldiers in Vietnam. GIs were screened before returning to the U.S. and placed in a rehabilitation program if their urinalysis came back positive. While the program failed to reduce or ameliorate drug abuse problems in the military, it did succeed in institutionalizing the panoptic power of the state, as Weimer invokes Michel Foucault's concept in his analysis of the military's *Operation Golden Flow*. As soldiers were screened to prevent the foreign disease of heroin addiction from spreading its contagion upon their return to America, there was implicit the possibility of their redemption and reform and a further entrenchment of the idea that the real threat posed by drugs was located outside the nation (or in its visible minorities).

Weimer takes these insights and applies them to case studies of U.S. drug initiatives pursued as part of U.S. foreign policy in Thailand, Burma and Mexico in the 1970s. In each of these settings Weimer describes how U.S. officials saw drug control strictly in terms of regulating the supply of drugs at their agricultural source and simultaneously as a mechanism for helping friendly regimes bolster their power and hegemonic reach. In Thailand U.S. officials cultivated Thai antinarcotics police power through a combination of interdiction campaigns and crop substitution programs targeting in particular the Hmong community in the North of the country that had lived largely independent of the Thai state. Drug control was a mechanism for extending Thai governance into the region as the state, with the assistance of the United States and United Nations, promoted "the rationalization of the land according to the dictates of modern agriculture", meaning primarily the replacement of opium and its cultivation through slash and burn agriculture with large scale agricultural cash crop production (120). Weimer concludes that the operation was successful in extending the influence of the Thai state, raising literacy rates in the region

and improving access to health care, but also describes “unintended consequences” including “increased heroin addiction among members of the hill tribes and a decline in indigenous culture” (125).

In Burma a slightly different calculus factored into U.S. drug foreign policy, which nevertheless continued to rely on a mixture of modernization and COIN theory for guidance. It is this case study that seems to demonstrate most clearly one of Weimer’s central contentions, namely that in Cold War hot spots, America’s foreign drug policy subordinated “drug control to national security goals” (140). When the ethnic Shan, known to be involved in the illicit narcotic trade and eager to assert their national autonomy in a region the Burmese state feared was vulnerable to Communist domination, approached U.S. officials with an offer to sell their opium to the U.S. government it might have been a dream come true for U.S. drug policy efforts geared toward source control: quite literally the possibility of buying the illicit out of the market. However, the U.S. commitment to its Cold War ally, the anti-communist military government in Rangoon, assumed priority and concern for the national security of the Burmese state led to the rejection of the Shan offer. Weimer narrates this decision as a “lost opportunity” for supply reduction at the source due to Cold War political priorities (160).

As the illicit opium trade moved in response to police crackdowns on the trade originating in Southeast Asia, U.S. officials set their sights on their southern border. In Mexico U.S. officials pursued “supply reduction in its strictest sense”, unlike in Thailand where farmers were encouraged to substitute agricultural crops for the opium producing poppy plants, in Mexico destruction of plants through herbicide and defoliation campaigns meant destruction, rather than alternative development, characterized drug foreign policy (172). Weimer explains the fusing of a U.S. supply-side drug control orientation to the power ambitions of the Mexican state: “For Washington, herbicides represented a most potent form of source control, while for Mexico, aerial herbicide spraying and related antidrug operations represented a mix of drug control, internal security, exercise of state power, and international image building” (181). This conclusion I think perhaps frames U.S. interests too narrowly, but one important lesson from this case study is that in Mexico COIN theory definitively trumped modernization schemes as antidrug programs became a mechanism for extending the reach of the Mexican state and consolidating U.S.-Mexican relations through police support and training in the interests of promoting internal security and stability. In each context U.S. officials argued that modernization could be brought about through drug control, even as this relied heavily on bolstering the policing powers of the state and its capacity to delineate the borders between licit and illicit.

Weimer’s book is an interesting and important contribution to the fields of both drug policy history and U.S. foreign relations. It puts into dialogue paradigms of drug control, Cold War counterinsurgency, and modernization in an original and provocative intervention. I am convinced of the utility of Weimer’s conceptual approach, even though as with any innovation, at times the work raises as many intriguing questions as it answers. One central question that is implicit in Weimer’s resort to notions like “unintended consequences” and “lost opportunities” is why officials remained committed to an antidrug foreign policy at all? As Weimer documents in each of these foreign contexts such policies fuelled rather

than reduced the illicit drug traffic and fostered internal instability, all dramatic failures given the U.S. government's stated goals. The 'modern' farming schemes in Northern Thailand led to soil erosion, human dislocation and an increased incidence of drug addiction and similar failures were evident in Burma where Weimer concludes "the United States achieved very limited progress in its drug war, and Rangoon experienced no immediate expansion of its ability to assert hegemony in the Shan state" (170). The lack of success in Mexico is in the news every day. One possible explanation is that the so-called drug war has never been about reducing drugs, but rather about controlling their circulation. I would suggest that the U.S. did not subordinate antinarcotics efforts to concerns for national security, but that on the contrary the two have neatly worked together to advance American strategic interests that have had very little if anything to do with concern over actual drug consumption. Weimer rightly argues that government officials' discourse about the professed goals of antidrug policies provide important insight onto the drug war as a malleable metaphor and symbol connecting foreign and domestic policy priorities. However there is a danger of taking the discourse at face value and not interrogating the very real nation-building and hegemony-extending influence that prosecuting a war on drugs, especially if it is perpetually unsuccessful war, has afforded the U.S. state.

Review by Brad Simpson, Princeton University

In June 2011 the Global Commission on Drug Policy, whose members include former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, former Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo, former Colombian President, César Gaviria and others, issued a stinging report concluding that the “global war on drugs has failed, with devastating consequences for individuals and societies around the world.¹ The Commission was especially critical of U.S. drug control policy, which for more than three decades has focused excessively – and unsuccessfully - on punitive approaches rather than emphasizing social development, public health and human rights-centered responses.

As Dan Weimer’s *Seeing Drugs: Modernization, Counterinsurgency, and U.S. Narcotics Control in the Third World, 1969-1976* reminds us, these policies have deep roots stretching back nearly a century and changing them will involve much more than a recognition of past failures. Weimer’s goal is to examine “the systems of thought that shaped U.S. global narcotics control during a particularly formative period of the drug war,” focusing on Thailand, Burma, and Mexico as exemplars of the three different approaches to “source control” which he argues came to define the limits of U.S. policy in the 1970s (2). According to Weimer, the directionality of U.S. counter-narcotics policy was partly an expression of American culture, reflecting a deeply felt need to define domestic social problems as the product of foreign contagion. The substance of U.S. policy bore the stamps of counterinsurgency and modernization theory, which shaped both policymakers’ understanding of the global narcotics trade as a ‘third world’ pathology and the measures they advocated to counter it.

This book makes a significant contribution to a small but growing historical literature on U.S. drug policy pioneered by scholars such as Thomas Walker, Alfred McCoy, Anne Foster and Jeremy Kuzmarov.² It is especially valuable for the comparative frame in which Weimer casts his argument. But by over-theorizing his narrative and attempting to jam it into too many interpretive boxes, Weimer detracts from the important implications of his own work.

Weimer’s book begins with a useful overview of the place of narcotics, alcohol and other drugs in twentieth century American culture, evolving discourses surrounding addiction, and the development of domestic and foreign drug control policies. The most important features of these were the gradual domestic criminalization of addiction and the global

¹ *War on Drugs: Report of the Global Commission on Drug Policy* (New York, June 2011).

² William O. Walker, *Opium and Foreign Policy: The Anglo-American Search for Order in Asia, 1912-1954* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991); Alfred McCoy, *The Politics of Heroin: CIA Complicity in the Global Drug Trade* (New York: Lawrence Hill Books, 1991); Anne L. Foster, *Projections of Power: The United States and Europe in Colonial Southeast Asia, 1919-1941* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2010); Jeremy Kuzmarov, *The Myth of the Addicted Army: Vietnam and the Modern War on Drugs* (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009).

emphasis on source control. Each shared an underlying logic that framed narcotics and addiction as an imported problem. “The history of American drug control,” he writes, “has been ‘other’ directed, domestically and abroad” (48).

From there he provides a series of case studies focused on Thailand, Burma, and Mexico from the 1950s through the 1970s, each exploring a different approach to ‘source control’: Crop substitution, counterinsurgency, the proposed preemptive purchase of opium, and eradication. Each country, while facing the challenge of curbing narcotics production and trafficking, also faced armed insurgencies and restive peasant or *campesino* movements, dragging counter-narcotics strategy into a thicket of Cold War considerations.

U.S. military and police training, counter-narcotics and development initiatives, and support for authoritarian rule in Asia and Latin America reflect older imperial concerns and assumptions, stretching back at least to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and ascending to dominance in the long 1960s. This confluence had a decisive impact on U.S. counter-narcotics strategy, which often became a function of Cold War politics. Weimer argues that U.S. officials viewed the drug challenge in Thailand, Burma, and Mexico through Cold War-tinted lenses, and developed approaches to source control broadly congruent with contemporary, overlapping discourses of modernization and counterinsurgency. In Burma, for example, where the U.S. and UN twice considered preemptive purchases of heroin as a short-term step on the road to crop-substitution, Nixon and Ford Administration officials balked at taking steps which might strengthen local Shan insurgents or the Burmese Communist Party (151).

The variety of approaches employed emphasized security as a precondition of economic development in rural areas, which would in turn reduce the appeal of drug-related cash crops. This usually involved, at a minimum, creating counterinsurgency-oriented paramilitary forces whose counter-narcotics activities easily slid into counter-guerrilla operations. U.S. policymakers insisted that Burma’s insurgencies had to be quelled before its leaders could expect progress in source control (163.) One of Weimer’s chief, and most persuasive conclusions is that the infusion of Cold War concerns fed the militarization of U.S. counter-narcotics strategies and those of its allies or targeted clients.

Although Thailand, Burma, and Mexico faced qualitatively and quantitatively different challenges from narcotics and trafficking, according to Weimer, each government viewed U.S. counter-narcotics assistance as a means of asserting greater control over ungoverned peoples and places. This goal was important enough that they were willing to tolerate the sometimes intrusive demands of successive U.S. administrations in the hopes of utilizing assistance for their own, sometimes cross-cutting purposes. Counter-narcotics aid and strategy, then, served as a tool of state-building. In Thailand, such tactics included the expansion of civilian policing and police training, as well as rural electrification and road construction, alongside crop substitution programs (91-93).

Of the strategies U.S. officials supported in Thailand, Burma and Mexico, Weimer argues that crop substitution and other programs with a community development orientation ultimately proved more successful at reducing drug cultivation (112-113, 119). Such

programs however, required significantly more time than did more coercive alternatives, as well as a degree of accommodation to local cultures and knowledge that authoritarian states were unlikely to embrace, since their developmental agendas often pointed in the opposite direction.

Mexico, he suggests serves as a cautionary tale regarding the more coercive solutions – such as crop eradication combined with counterinsurgency – employed by the late 1970s. U.S.-backed defoliation programs in Mexico were “not a long-range solution,” he writes, they because failed to address either the socioeconomic plight of *campesinos* or the systemic corruption of the Mexican government (202-203). Though the environmental and human rights impact of defoliation programs have not gone unnoticed, they have been decisively downplayed in favor of discourses of state security (185, 212). Although Weimer does not state so directly, it is possible to trace a line of march from the militarization of counter-narcotics policy in Mexico in the 1960s and 1970s and the current catastrophe facing the country in 2011.

Historians of narcotics and counter-narcotics have embraced theoretical descriptions of their topic, a global commodity chain operating in the shadows of the world economy, changing the ways states interact with citizens at the most intimate of levels, and engaged in by non-state actors with many of the trappings of states. Weimer’s account, however, takes theory too seriously, never missing an opportunity to introduce readers to a new theoretical construct (he seems particularly enamored of James Scott, but liberally invokes Michel Foucault, Antonio Gramsci, Robert Cox and others). The result is a theoretical mishmash that muddies the waters of Weimer’s own argument.

Two examples will suffice. Throughout the book Weimer describes development and modernization as coherent, consistent doctrines and bodies of thought. A generation of scholarship on both, however, has demonstrated that this is far from the case (218-220).³ He discusses modernization as ideology, as a goal, as a process, and as development practice, implicitly assuming that these are the same, yet by the late 1960s modernization as a way of ‘seeing’ the so-called Third World and framing policy options was coming under sustained attack. This failure to unpack the meanings ascribed to modernization (and modernity more broadly) becomes problematic when, for example, Weimer cites a USAID report on Thailand which describes “ethnic minorities admiration of modernity” (93) and desire for economic development, without questioning how Hmong tribesmen understood either concept.

More problematic is Weimer’s use of hegemony, which he derives from the Canadian IR theorist Robert Cox and Gramsci, rather than from Immanuel Wallerstein and world systems theory. (79) The problem here is not the use of hegemony per se, but rather the

³ Michael E. Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution* (Cornell University Press, 2011); David C. Engerman et al., *Staging Growth: Modernization, Development, and the Global Cold War* (Univ of Massachusetts Pr, 2003); Bradley Simpson, *Economists with Guns: Authoritarian Development and U.S.-Indonesian Relations, 1960-1968* (Stanford University Press, 2008).

continual slippage in meaning and invocation: at various points Weimer refers to hegemony as a goal, a process, a policy, and a description of U.S. power in the international system, without precisely defining what these mean in particular contexts. Thus, “antinarcotics assistance entailed U.S. entry into the hegemony process at work in Thailand (137);” elsewhere source control policies “illustrate the process of U.S. hegemony in the realm of international drug control (79).”

Weimer researches deeply but not broadly. He largely confines his archival work to the Nixon and Ford libraries and counterpart files at the National Archives. He makes good use of files from the UN Fund for Drug Abuse Control concerning Thailand, but does little to place these materials in their broader context. This is a missed opportunity. Weimer places strong emphasis on U.S. influence over international institutions such as the United Nations as an expression of American hegemony. A more in depth analysis of UN drug policy would enable fuller consideration of the question of UN autonomy (or lack thereof) in shaping global drug policy, the role of nations such as France with significant connections to drug producing states, and the role of drug producing states themselves and their allies, who in the 1970s were coming to play a dominant role inside many UN committees.

Weimer’s book might also have benefitted from more explicit comparative analysis with Europe and other countries involved in international drug policy. We learn little here about their goals and understanding of counter-narcotics policy, their role in international institutions, and their own efforts to pursue source control (or demand control) domestically or in former colonies. My hunch is that such a broader comparative analysis would show U.S. power to be much more limited and contested than a bilateral analysis suggests. Finally, *Seeing Drugs* might have done more to show the bleeding and migration of counterinsurgency strategies and punitive tactics abroad into the so-called War on Drugs to home, where the militarization and criminalization of drug policy in the 1970s led to vast expansion of prison populations, Rockefeller drug laws, paramilitary swat teams and the like. Weimer’s cautionary tale is, in this reading, one part of a larger story of the broader militarization of American society, one whose trajectory, deflected by the attacks of September 11, 2001 and the so-called War on Terror, has continued to unfold in foreseeable, and troubling ways.

I spend some of my time as a co-Managing Editor of *Points: The Blog of the Alcohol and Drugs History Society*. Even before the release date of Daniel Weimer's *Seeing Drugs: Modernization, Counterinsurgency, and U.S. Narcotics Control in the Third World, 1969-1976*, I was eager to see if the author would contribute some short reflections on the new book (which he did).¹ Of the eighteen books that have appeared in the "Author Interview" feature this year, *Seeing Drugs* is the *only* one that deals at all directly with foreign policy—reflecting the field more generally, most of our featured authors examine national, domestic histories of drugs and drink. Within the too-small universe of work on drugs and foreign relations, it should be stipulated that *Seeing Drugs* stands out as among the most thoroughly researched, richly detailed, and analytically interesting works to date.

One truism of research on alcohol and drugs policy is that failing policies tend to generate more scholarly attention (just consider the enormous and still-growing literature on alcohol prohibition). The maintenance of failed policies in the face of empirical evidence of that failure draws still more attention, as one might gather from the vast literature on the United States' domestic drug war. While Weimer rightly doesn't feel the need to fully make the case for failure—he observes that the point "needs no reiteration," (215)—he clearly interprets U.S. efforts to win the drug war through source control as belonging to that special category of failing policy that somehow maintains itself for decades. From the vantage point of my own fields of inquiry—drug policy and policy history more generally—it is Weimer's attempt to explain the maintenance of source control in the face of failure that is the most interesting aspect of the work. It seems to me that Weimer comes up with two distinct answers to the "why" question, both interesting in their own right, but resting somewhat uneasily alongside to one another.

Weimer's first answer is rooted in the notion that policies directed against drugs and drug users are devices generally helpful in the maintenance of a dominant national identity and culture. That's a notion not unfamiliar to historians of drugs and alcohol, though Weimer is also explicit in connecting his work to the "cultural turn in U.S. foreign relations" (231). If foreign policy is "the cultural process of discursive differentiation among a self and others," Weimer believes that drugs are a particularly powerful marker of both difference and threat (67). Drugs are bad, and Weimer tells us that their badness is rooted in their anti-modern character. They threaten with their essential foreignness, and their capacity to induce states of irrationality, enslave and subjugate, and undermine productivity. But is this a *singular* culture of perceived badness? Most of the time, *Seeing Drugs* suggests that it is, taking what could be seen as a fairly reductionist view of United States' culture. On the other hand, Weimer at times does acknowledge fissures within policy and scientific communities over the meaning and drugs and addiction. We see hints of the divide, for example, between an emerging neuroscience of addiction, fueled by brain imaging

¹ "The Points Interview, Daniel Weimer," *Points: The Blog of the Alcohol and Drugs History Society*, June 29, 2011, <http://pointsadhsblog.wordpress.com/2011/06/29/the-points-interview-dan-weimer/>.

technology and a commitment to visualizing an ontologically definite addiction within the body, and epidemiological research propelled by an abiding interest in the social and cultural contexts of drug use. Weimer's argument is at its best when he acknowledges these divides, and takes the time to make the case that they can still all fit within a cultural 'big tent' (my phrase, not his).

But if Weimer has successfully delineated a particular cultural orientation, however capacious it needs to be to account for variance, the question remains: how do we integrate the culture we're documenting into the world of particular policy choices? Source control is only one of an array of policy options in waging war on drugs. The United States' policy options include: mass arrest and imprisonment, mandatory treatment, quarantine, public health interventions, drug maintenance, border control and interdiction—all of which could reflect (and have reflected) some of the very same cultural frames that Weimer describes here. Why bother with source control at all? Left only to a cultural explanation, we end up with little more than the suggestion that the cultural framing of drugs encouraged "emotional evaluations" of the subject, which misled state officials into believing that source control was actually a rational way of attacking the drug problem (67). In other words, source control efforts are not rooted in rational policy judgments, but instead in "emotional judgments weighted by notions of foreign danger and threats to national identity" (83).

That's an interesting and challenging thesis, but one which rests a bit uneasily alongside the second of Weimer's two explanations for the persistence of source control efforts: that the drug war has become a convenient device by which the United States has been able to justify the continued projection of its own power and interests around the globe. In a way, Weimer is offering a foreign relations version of Jonathan Simon's account of domestic policy in *Governing Through Crime: How the War on Crime Transformed American Democracy and Created a Culture of Fear*.² Simon argues that much of America's civil and political order has been restructured around the problems of drugs and crime, noting:

When we govern through crime, we make crime and the forms of knowledge historically associated with it—criminal law, popular crime narrative, and criminology—available outside their limited subject domains as powerful tools with which to interpret and frame all sorts of social action as a problem for governance.³

It isn't hard to see this at work when Weimer describes the manner in which the State Department's International Narcotics Control Program (INC), the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and the Foreign Assistance Acts (FAA) seamlessly took over some of the foreign police training functions from the Office of Public Safety (OPS). When Congress

² Jonathan Simon, *Governing Through Crime: How the War on Crime Transformed American Democracy and Created a Culture of Fear* (New York: 2007).

³ *Ibid.*, 17.

helped shutter the OPS in the mid-1970s, over objections to its role in aiding repression abroad, Weimer astutely observes that the INC, DEA, and FAA “filled much of the void it left” (204). The implications are more directly stated in the conclusion: “If anti-Communism no longer afforded Washington free action in the Third World, the need for drug control...provided a more publicly palatable justification for such intervention” (216-217). The transition was easy enough, for as Weimer demonstrates in exhaustive detail, the tools of counterinsurgency and modernization were readily applied to the tactical project of source control.

In the end, Weimer’s cultural argument comes down to a particular vision of American modernity, while his policy argument rests on an extension of the more mundane project of modernization. *Seeing Drugs* makes a powerful case for both; if there are any moments of weakness to this project, they occur at those points where the work struggles to fully integrate these two arguments into a single explanatory framework.

As a final observation, *Seeing Drugs* introduces more research threads than it can possibly follow in a single book. That is not a criticism. Quite the opposite; Weimer’s impressive study should serve as an important platform for an extension of some of these lines of inquiry. One is the process of learning and response between drug traffickers and the states that try and control them, or what Michael Kenney has termed “competitive adaptation.”⁴ Drug war combatants exist in a dynamic relationship, and Weimer shows us how traffickers in Thailand and Mexico effectively thwarted the ambitions of American policymakers by modifying their practices. A second line of inquiry that could build upon *Seeing Drugs* has to do with studying anti-drug culture and politics in producer countries. Weimer’s account is fairly U.S.-centric, and he generally treats the drug war as an export:

...like anti-Communism or modernization, the U.S.-led global drug-control endeavor...was presented to the Mexicans, as well as to other drug-war aid recipients like Thailand, as a First World project that developing nations could engage in to improve not only their own countries but ultimately the world (187-188).

But one could easily use *Seeing Drugs* as a starting point for de-centering our study of the global war on drugs. To the extent I have any ability to predict a future for the field of alcohol and drugs history, I very much suspect that we’ll soon see more studies that build upon Paul Gootenberg’s useful observation, in *Andean Cocaine*, that “new drug regimes were not simply imposed from abroad, even in the context of uneven or dependent dimensions of global power.”⁵

⁴Michael Kenney, *From Pablo to Osama: Trafficking and Terrorist Networks, Government Bureaucracies, and Competitive Adaptation* (University Park, PA: 2007).

⁵ Paul Gootenberg, *Andean Cocaine: The Making of a Global Drug* (Chapel Hill: 2008), 9.

Author's Response by Daniel Weimer, Wheeling Jesuit University

First off I'd like to thank Tom Maddux for organizing the roundtable, Anne Foster for writing the introduction, Diane Labrosse for editing the reviews, and to the reviewers—James M. Carter, William B. McAllister, Suzanna Reiss, Brad Simpson, and Joseph Spillane—for taking the time to offer their valuable insights and criticisms. I am truly grateful to have this opportunity to discuss my work—its merits and shortcomings—with this accomplished group of historians.

Fittingly, I received the reviews while in Mérida, Mexico, the city where, in March 2007, U.S. President George W. Bush and Mexican President Felipe Calderón held talks concerning antidrug measures in Mexico and Central America. The resulting Mérida Initiative—a now \$1.6 billion counterdrug program—aims to supply Mexico with a variety of antidrug training and equipment in order to assist that nation (and others in Central America) with what journalist Ioan Gillo termed “Mexico’s criminal insurgency.”¹

Though I was visiting Mérida as part of a student trip and not to research the drug wars, I was daily reminded—through quick glances at newspapers—of the ongoing violence related to drug trafficking in Mexico. As one reviewer noted, in *Seeing Drugs* I aimed to illuminate the roots of the United States’ current drug wars in Mexico and elsewhere. That a number of the reviewers reference recent incidents in global drug trafficking, such as the release and re-imprisonment of Manuel Noriega, coincides with one of my intentions for writing the book. Because drug control is a topic of continuing significance, I wanted to consider drug control as a topic in and of itself within U.S. foreign relations history. Though I necessarily connect drug control with broader themes in U.S. history during the twentieth century and the 1970s more specifically—such as the Cold War and modernization—I also wanted to highlight the lack of attention to the topic by foreign relations scholars, particularly since archival materials from the 1970s are more available. Since U.S. international drug control predated the Cold War and has outlasted it, I intended to examine it not just as an adjunct and/or a compliment to other foreign policy priorities, such as anticommunism in the 1970s, but as a longer thread in U.S. foreign relations history. Moreover, I hoped to make a contribution to the fields of diplomatic and “drug” history. Thankfully the five reviewers are experts in either or both fields and I am appreciative of their mostly positive reviews. My response to their thoughts will address each reviewer in turn.

James Carter concurs that the drug war, particularly as a feature of U.S.-Third World relations, requires more inquiry. Regarding the particulars of my study, Carter states that because *Seeing Drugs* covers many topics he has focused on a few. He seems to agree with my arguments that modernization theory and counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine shaped drug control policy abroad and domestically in the United States, and that modernization and COIN-inflected drug control policies in Thailand, Burma, and Mexico served to enhance

¹ Ioan Grillo, *El Narco: Inside Mexico's Criminal Insurgency* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2011).

the state power of Bangkok, Rangoon, and Mexico City as each government faced a variety of anti-state actors. Carter also agrees with my argument that the United States' emphasis on source control during this period of increased drug use in the United States and amped up foreign drug control has "prevented a more thorough-going internal examination of the problem of drug use/addiction within the United States." Carter's main criticisms center on the theoretical framework in which I cast the events recounted in *Seeing Drugs*. He found this aspect of my study "forced, added on, and . . . distracting." Since he did not expand on his criticisms I cannot address the specifics of his critique—I can only surmise that he believes my theoretical discussions are not necessary to support my arguments. I would have liked more of an explanation for his misgivings, and likewise, since he has written on U.S. modernization and development efforts in Vietnam, I would have liked to have read more of his thoughts on how modernization figured into U.S. drug policy in the events I discussed.

William McAllister offers a more extensive and fine-grained review. Speaking to the ever-expanding nature of the U.S. drug war, he informs us not only of the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs' (INL) "Air Wing," but of the wide array of activities the INL is engaged in across the globe. The same is true of the Drug Enforcement Administration, which now operates in sixty-three countries and constitutes a global intelligence network.² In many ways, the list of INL activities McAllister cites indicates not just the broad range of criminal endeavors related to drug trafficking, but of the wide scope of global crime *in toto*.³ Similarly, the INL's expansive mission illustrates the fact that drugs (historically and today) cut across many aspects of the human experience; and that fact is what makes "drug history" on a domestic and global level such a fascinating topic. Speaking to this issue, McAllister asks, "How did it become part of a diplomat's job to get involved in the economic affairs, social structures, and even family life of faraway lands" when it comes to drug control?

For the most part McAllister is supportive of how *Seeing Drugs* details the array of factors that have shaped the drug war, particularly during the formative period of the 1970s. His review provides cogent summaries of each chapter—casting my arguments in language that I often found illuminating. For instance, his characterization of the U.S. drug control mission as "this modernization-counterinsurgency-anticommunist-drug control agenda" humorously (I think) encapsulates my argument while reinforcing my contention that international drug control performed many functions for the parties involved. I was glad to see that McAllister, as someone who is quite familiar with the history of international drug

² "Cables Portray Expanded Reach of Drug Agency," *New York Times*, 25 December 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/26/world/26wikidrugs.html?ref=drugenforcementadministration> (accessed February 8, 2012)

³ Nils Gilman, Jesse Goldhammer, and Steven Weber, eds., *Deviant Globalization: Black Market Economy in the 21st Century* (New York: Continuum, 2011), and Juan Carlos Garzón, *Mafia & Co.: The Criminal Networks in Mexico, Brazil, and Colombia*, trans. Kathy Ogle, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, at <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/Mafia%20and%20Company.pdf> (accessed February 8, 2012).

control, agreed with my argument that the policies pursued in Thailand, Burma, and Mexico had precedent-setting effects. But McAllister does raise legitimate criticisms about my study—some that I anticipated and others that I had not.

Seeing Drugs analyzes “the systems of thought that shaped U.S. global narcotics control” (2) during the 1970s—i.e. how officials “saw” drugs—but McAllister rightfully notes that “authority structures not only make efforts to ‘see,’ they also choose the angle at which to position their gaze.” He expands on this by asking that I more deeply define and interrogate the meanings of “drugs” and “modernity” and the interplay between the two. I concede that I did rely upon an implicit definition of “drugs” in my book as illicit psychoactive substances—namely narcotics (opium, morphine, and heroin). Hence, the term “narcotics” in the book’s title and my explanation of heroin as the most targeted drug during the time period I covered (184, 275 n.14). Furthermore, I do discuss addiction as “modern” affliction: one discovered and defined by medical professionals as an ailment specific to the modern industrial age of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries (28-31). But McAllister pushes this interplay between drugs, addiction, and modernity further by explaining, more than I do, that the promotion of pharmaceuticals was touted by industry and government as a beneficial feature of American modernity and that the fine and often fuzzy line between legitimate and illegitimate drugs (such as alcohol and opium) and their objective and subjective effects complicates how specific drugs can be labeled as modern or not.⁴

Along the same lines, McAllister comments on my failure to fully define “source control.” Again, I relied upon the common notion of stopping or diminishing the production of drug crops at their source of production. But he offers, and I thank him for this, a more precise understanding, one that is in line with the overall thesis of *Seeing Drugs*. For him, “control of the source” rather than “source control” more fully encompasses “this modernization-counterinsurgency-anticommunist-drug control agenda” that I narrate. His notion that the “desire of the modernizing state to regulate, govern, classify, quantify, and incorporate applied not only to territory and commerce, but also to people, behaviors, ideas, attitudes, preferences, and identities. The extent to which this campaign succeeds conditions the very capacity of human beings to formulate the frame of reference through which they encounter the world.” I quote these statements not just because they are insightful, but because they illustrate that drug control (broadly conceived) entails the transformation of subjectivities, which reinforces my contention that drugs are a rich field of study.

In addition to these criticisms, McAllister comments on my source base. Specifically, he asserts that my sources are too U.S.-centric given my topic. He mistakenly states that my only “non-U.S. sources are two English language Thai government reports and a few United Nations treaty documents.” For my examination of crop substitution programs in Thailand

⁴ On the schizophrenic relationship between Americans, psychoactive substances (legal and illicit), global capitalism, and “limbic” capitalism see: Richard DeGrandpre, *The Cult of Pharmacology: How America Became the World’s Most Troubled Drug Culture* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2006) and David T. Courtwright, *Forces of Habit: Drugs and the Making of the Modern World* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2001).

I did use a series of UN “Progress Reports” from 1972 to 1976 and a “Terminal Report” from the 1980s—but his critique of my source base still stands. McAllister concedes that Thai and Burmese archives are out of reach, but asserts that Mexican sources—archival and press accounts—would, if available, contribute to our understanding of this phase of the drug war. On this matter, I will plead ignorance regarding Mexican archival sources and, though no doubt they would enhance my study, I, for now, will leave it to others to consult Mexican press accounts. The same is true of the UN archives McAllister lists as possible sources of useful information. His suggestion that I should have considered the perspectives of the former colonial powers regarding drug control and development measures in Southeast Asia is one that I had not entertained, but whose utility I wholly agree is worth investigating and is a gap in the scope of my account. Given this, I would further ask: would such accounts change the way we understand the trajectory of U.S. and international drug control?

McAllister’s final criticism—that the chain of decision-making is uncertain in my account—I believe arises from the fractured nature of drug policy planning and implementation during the Nixon and Ford administrations. While McAllister remarks that White House attention to drug control seemed sporadic, my reading of events indicates that the White House was central to policy decisions throughout. Rather than providing a detailed flow chart of drug policy, I will direct readers to David Musto’s *The Quest for Drug Control*, which is particularly good at elucidating the many individuals and entities involved in international and domestic drug control as well as inter-agency conflicts (most severely between DEA and Customs) and administrative turnover.⁵ As for Congress’ role in the direction of drug policy, while the White House retained the primary role, Congress generally urged stricter international drug control measures—as I discuss in the book—and acted more as a prod to the executive branch in keeping drug control on the White House’s foreign policy radar.

Suzanna Reiss’ evaluation of *Seeing Drugs* highlights two themes. One, that I was fairly successful in integrating “the domestic and the foreign as part of a single history.” The second regards the notion of drug control as a form of nation-building. While I did not set out to study modernization and counterinsurgency, their prevalence in drug policy formulation and implementation—coupled with the Cold War setting of drug cultivating and trafficking regions in the Third World—led me to consider how drug control policy constitutes a form of nation-building. McAllister’s recounting of the INL’s activities offers a portrait of how nation-building is apparent in present day U.S. drug policy, but my research led me to conclude that nation-building was a feature of the modern drug war from the time of its (re)creation during Nixon’s first term. Though modernization and COIN theory shaped drug control during the 1970s, its nation-building function could be a result of broader Cold War concerns—that is, drug policy just served as an adjunct to anticommunist goals. However, because the drug war, as it was reinvigorated under Nixon and his successors, came at a time of intense criticism and discrediting of modernization

⁵ David F. Musto, M.D. and Pamela Korsmeyer, *The Quest for Drug Control: Politics and Federal Policy in a Period of Increasing Substance Abuse, 1963-1981* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2002).

theory, and because the drug war, with its nation-building characteristics, has persisted since the waning of the Cold War, I concluded that drug control policy during the 1970s constituted the beginnings of another form of nation building, a form that would ultimately (as in Afghanistan or Mexico today) be independent of Cold War concerns. This notion emerged most clearly in Mexico in the 1970s, where even though Mexico City faced a variety of anti-state actors, the most serious internal security threat came from traffickers disconnected from leftist politics (225). In short, the application of modernization theory and COIN to non-Cold War contexts is one of the significant developments of the 1970s drug war.

However, as Reiss and other reviewers have noted, U.S. international drug control was firmly enmeshed within the global Cold War, and drug policy could not be separated from anticommunism, a phenomenon that each of my case studies explains. Thus, as Reiss remarks, U.S. drug control ultimately served to enhance “the policing powers of the state”⁶ and at times anticommunism would supersede what could be construed as source control imperatives—such as the case of the United States rejecting the pre-emptive purchase offers in Burma. But Reiss raises a few questions about the way I sketch out drug control within overall U.S. national security goals. She asserts that pitting drug control imperatives against anticommunist goals may not be the best way to view U.S. drug policy. She suggests “that the U.S. did not subordinate antinarcotics efforts to concerns for national security, but that on the contrary the two have worked neatly together to advance American strategic interests that have had very little to do with concern over actual drug consumption.” I agree and I do acknowledge this. For instance, concerning U.S. policy in Burma I explain how drug control and anticommunist goals dovetailed (163). Similarly, in my conclusion I write that “if . . . Washington’s drug war intersected with local dirty wars, then it is important to realize that U.S. drug policy, often in congruence with anti-Communist imperatives, strengthened authoritarian governments in the Third World.” At the end of her review, though, Reiss asks that I push my analysis of drug control discourse further to consider “the very real nation-building and hegemony-extending influence that prosecuting a war on drugs, especially if it is perpetually unsuccessful war, has afforded the U.S. state.” With this comment, Reiss raises an issue that I had not fully considered and one that is worth pursuing. I will return to this issue at the end of my response to all of the reviewers.

Like Reiss, Brad Simpson comments that one of my study’s merits is its explanation of how Cold War politics fed the militarization of the drug war and that modernization and counterinsurgency discourses conditioned drug control policy to emphasize state security. Simpson also finds merit in my comparative framework. But he presents a series of critiques of my analysis. For one, he singles out my use of theory as overdrawn and ultimately convoluting. Similarly, he criticizes my understanding of modernization theory as too rigid and simplistic and asserts that I needed to more fully define what I mean with

⁶ See Jeremy Kuzmarov, “Modernizing Repression: Police Training, Political Violence, and Nation-Building in the ‘American Century,’” *Diplomatic History* 33 (April 2009): 220-21, as well as Reiss’ own work, “Policing Development: Andean Drug Control & the Expansion of US Capitalism,” *Social History of Alcohol and Drugs* 23 (Spring 2009): 128-50.

the terms “modernization,” “development,” and “modernity.” Lastly, he raises questions about the scope of my research.

Regarding his comments about my overall use of theory, instead of reiterating what I’ve presented in the book, I will direct interested readers to text. In response to Simpson’s charge that I treat modernization simplistically and that I do not acknowledge or address the fissures among modernization theorist or development practice, I will say that I used “modernization” and “development” interchangeably at points in the text for stylistic reasons (230 n.9)—a decision that may have lent more confusion than clarity. Yet my reading of the literature on modernization—in particular discussions of modernization’s supposed demise in the late 1960s and 1970s—in fact prompted me to underscore the importance of drug policy to the overall history of modernization. That is, with the intense criticisms aimed at modernization and development during the time period I study I was struck by the prominence of modernization discourse used by a range of American officials and their counterparts in the UN, as well as Thailand. Thus, in my effort to show how modernization lived on in international drug policy I focused on how officials continued to utilize modernization discourse within their analyses of drug cultivation and trafficking. At face value, the language of modernization emanating from officials in the White House, the State Department, UN, as well as Congress was often “coherent” and “consistent.” However, Simpson’s charge that I did not “unpack” the meanings of modernization is an overstatement. I will admit that I did not place modernization-informed drug policy within the debates and critiques over modernization during the late 1960s and 1970s, but that was not a main concern—instead I aimed to demonstrate that modernization still informed an important part of U.S. foreign policy during a time of its alleged discrediting and that the literature on modernization has thus far ignored international drug control.

Moreover, at various points in my narrative I do acknowledge and explain that modernization is not a coherent system of thought. For example, in my introduction I clearly state that by the time of the launching of the drug war, modernization was drawing criticisms from across the political spectrum. Likewise, in the same paragraph I state that modernization thinking evolved during the 1960s and that “modernization and . . . counterinsurgency are flexible and dynamic theories” (5). I discuss the evolution of the concept of modernity (as a societal state of being) within the United States (31, 54). I position the crop-substitution programs in Thailand within the broader framework of the Green Revolution and its emphasis on rural poverty (120-23, 125) and the relevance of the Green Revolution to the herbicide program in Mexico, as well as Mexico’s post-war efforts at development (195-98, 205-6). Though my sources did not give much indication of drug cultivators’ understanding of modernity, I did comment on the issue at some points in the text. Regarding the Hmong, I remark that “Lost in all of this official Western analysis of the hill tribes through the lens of modernization theory is the unavoidable fact that opium producers such as the Hmong were already ‘modern’ in that they were firmly connected to the global cash nexus”(128). I follow up on this point in two footnotes in which I mention that the hill tribes’ positive reception to development, according to UN documents, may be more “performance” than reality and that the opium economy afforded some hill tribes a form of modernity unacknowledged by Western and Thai officials (264 n.16, 266 n.41). Similarly, within Mexico, drug trafficking offered a development path to cultivators that

was unconnected to Mexican government programs (198). Certainly, as Simpson mentioned, more needs to be done in examining how the targets of modernization policies understood development practices⁷, but to state that I ignore the issue is incorrect.

Simpson also found my use of hegemony problematic. Specifically, he states that I do not clearly define the meaning of the concept within specific scenarios. I employed Gramsci's concept of hegemony because his understanding of hegemony as a process and the outcome of that process (goal) best applied to the national contexts (Thailand, Burma, Mexico) in which I examined the struggle over the meaning of drugs, and the efforts of national governments to attain and maintain legitimacy. Within a national setting I do not see an understanding of hegemony as a process and the outcome of that process as necessarily problematic. Likewise, within an international context, to explain the United States' successful promotion of source control as illustrating the process of hegemony, and to characterize the outcome of that process as the international community's reliance on source control, is also consistent with the concept of hegemony as I present it. But I will concede that I could have offered a more in-depth explanation of the multiple ways in which hegemony is understood.

If hegemony entails the process of contesting power and legitimacy, Simpson usefully asks that I draw more attention to if and how European and drug-producing states accepted or contested the U.S. emphasis on source control, particularly within the UN. I addressed this issue in my response to McAllister. Simpson's critique further surmises that such a wider comparative framework would demonstrate more the bounds of U.S. power, but I believe I am careful to show the limits of U.S. power in the realm of drug control. Likewise a larger comparative framework—though needed—was beyond the intentions of my study and I do not believe that such an analysis would invalidate my main arguments. Lastly, Simpson suggests that I draw out more the domestic effects for the United States of a militarized drug war. Again, this is a fair suggestion and though I do note some of these issues at points in my book (55, 227), further study is warranted. In all, however, these criticisms indicate that the topics of U.S. and international drug control have not received the attention they deserve and that the avenues for further research are many.

Joseph Spillane's review ends with just this point—that *Seeing Drugs* presents as many questions as it attempts to answer. Spillane's reading of my study maintains that I present two arguments to answer the question of why the United States has pursued a failed source control policy for (at least) the past four decades. One he identifies as a cultural argument, the other entails the consideration and projection of official state interests across the globe. Though he mainly agrees with the validity of each of these arguments, he questions how well they work together. That is, the cultural argument I present about the significance of drugs as a foreign contagion and danger fueling source control, Spillane sees as an

⁷ One recent work that offers a social history of development within the framework of modernization and drug control is Kyle Evered, "'Poppies are Democracy!' A Critical Geopolitics of Opium Eradication and Reintroduction in Turkey," *Geographical Review* 101 (July 2011): 299-315.

irrational, emotionally-driven response, while my second argument details how source control policies are congruent with U.S. Cold War and security concerns in the Third World.

Though I did not conceive of my study as Spillane does (hence his review, like the others, offered me a fresh take on my work), I did attempt to reconcile the foreign and domestic determinants of foreign policy and connect the field of drug history with diplomatic history. One issue that united these thematic and disciplinary topics was modernity. On the domestic front, addiction, as a distinct malady, arose as the United States entered its period of industrial modernity at the turn of the twentieth century. Since then, I argue, addiction has been viewed as negating the benefits a modern society offers the individual. I also saw a correspondence between how addicts were characterized and the language modernization theorists used to describe “traditional” peoples and societies. Furthermore, as I’ve stated earlier, modernization and modernity were a connecting thread between drugs and addiction domestically and within foreign relations because the discourse of modernization strongly shaped U.S. drug control abroad. Therefore, in these ways and others that I present throughout the book, the concepts modernity and modernization were one way that I attempted to resolve what Spillane views as the rational and irrational responses to the threat of addiction.

But Spillane’s questions regarding the possible friction between cultural and state-interest explanations for drug control again raises an issue that Reiss also addressed —how should we understand drug control policy, particularly if it is a perpetual failure? Rather than reiterate what I’ve already stated here and in my book, I will turn again to the history of modernization. Like source control, the history of modernization theory (with attendant development practices and policies) is one of repeated failure, yet many of its central notions survive and persist. I suggest that like the history of modernization, source control, and the policies that it inspired, were not wholly cynical covers for more base extensions of state interests, but also included sincere altruistic intentions. Thus, source control cannot be reduced to serving one purpose. Indeed, as we know, no policy is ever pure in the sense that it can only foster one goal. Containment, to take one well-known example, took a variety of forms and entailed a whole slew of purposes. Source control should be seen similarly. At times it was subordinated to other interests (as in the cases of drug control in Southeast Asia during the 1950s and 1960s that William O. Walker III, Alfred W. McCoy, and Jeremy Kuzmarov have detailed),⁸ but those instances are not totalizing. To acknowledge that drug control merged with security issues or domestic politics, for instance, does not mean that source control is only a handy “cover” or cipher for other objectives. Moreover, as I’ve tried to show, source control is not just a set of policy options, but also a narrative device that officials have used to frame and grapple with a complex

⁸ William O. Walker, III, *Opium and Foreign Policy: The Anglo-American Search for Order in Asia, 1912-1945* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1991); Alfred W. McCoy, *The Politics of Heroin: CIA Complicity in the Global Drug Trade* (New York: Lawrence Hill Books, 1991); Jeremy Kuzmarov, *The Myth of the Addicted Army: Vietnam and the Modern War on Drugs* (Boston: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 2009).

issue. The story of source control attempts to reduce a host of socio-economic and political complexities into a technical exercise, where the invocation of “models” of success (ex. crop substitution in Thailand, or more recently Plan Colombia⁹) affords the concerned parties the opportunity to sidestep a true, and no doubt discomfiting, engagement with the “drug problem.”

In conclusion, this roundtable demonstrates that we have only begun to unravel and explore the multifaceted character of drug control. As Brad Simpson reminds us, there is a generation of scholarship devoted to examining the complexities of modernization’s history. No such amount of historical literature exists regarding U.S. drug control in the international arena. I hope that *Seeing Drugs* contributes to an ongoing discussion of U.S. and international drug control by foreign relations historians.

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⁹ Kevin Young, “Two, Three, Many Colombias” (Washington, DC: Foreign Policy in Focus, December 29, 2010) at http://www.fpif.org/articles/two_three_many_colombias (accessed February 8, 2012); Paul Gootenberg, “Blowback: The Mexican Drug Crisis,” *NACLA Report on the Americas* 43 (November/December 2010), 11-12.