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Introduction by Dustin Walcher

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Introduction by Dustin Walcher, Southern Oregon University

In recent years, scholarship at the intersection of international history and the history of human rights has proliferated. The program of the 2013 meeting of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAHR) featured thirteen references to “human rights”: three times as part of panel titles and on ten occasions within individual paper titles. SHAHR awarded Sarah Snyder’s book, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War: A Transnational History of the Helsinki Network*, its 2012 Bernath book prize.¹ For an emerging generation of historians, the category of human rights has surfaced as a critical area of analysis.

To this fast-developing subfield Jessica Stites Mor contributes an important new anthology. The volume’s contributors collectively argue “that the reemerging left and new social movements that characterize the post-Cold War period were not primarily the result of the heavy involvement in local affairs of transnational nongovernmental organizations but, rather, emerged from strategic engagement of the left with transnational solidarity activism” (5). Throughout the individual essays, the authors emphasize local agency. As Joe Renouard observes, they “provide scholars with models for doing international history and for ‘internationalizing’ their domestic subjects.” Social actors – individuals working at the local, community level – emerge as the central subjects of analysis. Consequently, this anthology exemplifies Cold War history written from the bottom up.

As expected in light of the paradigm shift the contributors consciously promote, the reviewers raise a number of questions. However, in general they find great value in the collection. Renouard calls it “a fine volume that raises many questions for further exploration.” While he finds that “[t]he book’s subject matter is a tad arcane for most undergraduate courses ... it will be of interest to academics and graduate students working in post-1945 Latin American social and political history, human rights, U.S.-Latin American relations, and perhaps also Latin American sociology and political science.” Michael Schmidli agrees that the book “has much to offer Latin Americanists and historians of U.S. foreign relations.” Alexander Poster finds it to be an “ambitious book” that “is exceptionally valuable to the historical community.” In short, Stites Mor has produced an anthology with the potential to advance a number of distinct but interrelated scholarly conversations.

The contributors to this roundtable examine *Human Rights and Transnational Solidarity in Latin America* on two interrelated levels. First, they comment on the volume as a whole, analyzing in particular its contributions to the evolving subfield of inter-American history. Second, they review in some detail the anthology’s individual chapters, with reference to the ways in which they contribute to the book’s larger themes. The roundtable contributors’ cumulative analysis makes clear that the anthology serves as an exceptional

¹ Sarah Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War: A Transnational History of the Helsinki Network* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

vehicle for exploring critical conceptual and methodological questions for those writing histories of inter-American relations.

Perhaps the most important methodological question centers on the level of analysis. Most foreign relations historians focus the majority of their attention on elites in government, and, often, business. Like international historiography more generally, inter-Americanists have paid the most attention to the behavior and activities of states. States have been, and remain, central actors; their privileged place in the historiography is certainly reasoned. Nonetheless, Stites Mor and her contributors argue that Latin American social actors exerted their agency in meaningful ways. While not denying vast asymmetries in power and influence – between the United States and Latin American states, and between elite and non-elite individuals – they argue that by broadening the field’s collective range of vision, additional nuance and complexity appears.

In light of the localized level of analysis, and an existing historiography emphasizing the significance of elite institutional actors, Poster in particular would like to have seen the contributors draw connections between grassroots human rights and solidarity activism on the one hand, and larger national and supranational structures on the other. In particular he highlights the role of the United Nations. “Although Stites Mor’s thesis emphasizes that transnational solidarity activism was more important than the involvement of transnational governmental organizations, these two variables did not exist independently of one another, and the interaction between the two is important,” he explains. If it could be demonstrated that social actors influenced policymakers at the state or supranational level in meaningful ways, their significance would be further emphasized.

Another framing question centers on what Schmidli identifies as “difficult definitional questions.” In particular, he questions how the authors define ‘solidarity.’ He asks “can the state be an agent of solidarity,” and wonders “if Mexican students’ solidarity with youth protest overseas ‘largely existed at the rhetorical level,’ as [author Sara Katherine] Sanders admits, were they actually participating in a form of transnational solidarity? Should such ‘solidarity’ be considered an international or transnational movement? Was it even a movement?” Similarly, Schmidli questions whether ordinary Latin Americans who did nothing more than write letters to Governor Nelson Rockefeller following a goodwill trip through the region can be usefully identified as contributing any kind of solidarity activism. He observes that “[t]he letter writers did not self-identify as part of an international or transnational campaign, network, or movement; nor did they exhibit traits indicative of solidarity campaigns.”

One of the central challenges inherent in analyzing grassroots social actors is that of measuring their efficacy. Poster finds that “[m]ost of the authors have difficulty quantifying how the movements they studied altered the global, or even the local, discourse.” Were the groups and individuals analyzed significant? Did they make a difference? How do we know? As Poster observes, “[t]hese problems ... are characteristic of ‘ground-up’ histories that look at watershed moments of subaltern resistance, where the actors may not have had a statistician present to record figures for future historians.” While “sympathetic to this problem,” and although Poster holds that “the authors’ stories deserve to be told with

or without quantifying evidence, he argues that the ‘how much’ question still remains and must be noted.”

Finally, the collection points toward avenues for new scholarship. Renouard observes that “[i]t is almost impossible to conceive of a collection on modern Latin American history, transnational solidarity, and human rights that omits the Salvador Allende/Pinochet story.” Indeed, Stites Mor includes two chapters on that subject. While acknowledging the significance of the Allende/Pinochet episode, Renouard calls “for more work on some lesser-explored stories, such as opposition to the longstanding dictatorship of Paraguay’s Alfredo Stroessner, opposition to the regime of Bolivia’s Hugo Banzer Suárez, Mexican human rights violations before and after Tlatelolco, and transnational activism during South America’s democratic transitions and Central America’s civil wars.”

Ultimately, Stites Mor and her fellow contributors illustrate the advantages of cross-pollination between historians of Latin America and those of foreign relations. The chapters in *Human Rights and Transnational Solidarity in Latin America* approach issues from a local level, but engage questions of international significance. While they are increasingly engaging with social actors, most foreign-relations historians have yet to elevate them to the central place that the contributors to this anthology do. This roundtable demonstrates the salutary nature of ongoing dialog over the critical issues of methodology, definition, and scope.

Participants

Dustin Walcher is an Associate Professor at Southern Oregon University who analyzes international political economy, social unrest, and political violence. He is revising a manuscript that examines the link between the failure of U.S.-led economic initiatives and the rise of social revolution in Argentina between the 1950s and 1960s.

Alison Bruey is an Associate Professor of History at the University of North Florida. She received her Ph.D. from Yale University. She is coauthor of the book *Tortura en poblaciones del Gran Santiago, 1973–1990* and author of articles on Cold War-era neoliberalism, repression, and popular protest. Her current projects include a book on human rights, neoliberalism, and grassroots activism in Chile and a study of political violence and social movements in late-twentieth-century Latin America.

Margaret Power is a Professor of History at the Illinois Institute of Technology. She is the author of *Right-Wing Women in Chile: Feminine Power and the Struggle against Allende* and coeditor of *Right-Wing Women around the World* and *New Perspectives on the Transitional Right*, in addition to numerous articles. She was a participant in the Chilean solidarity movement in the 1970s and continued her activism in the following decades around Puerto Rico. She is currently working on a project about the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party and a book on Norvelt, a New Deal community in southwest Pennsylvania, named for EleaNOR RooseVELT.

Jessica Stites Mor is an Assistant Professor of History at the University of British Columbia, Okanagan. She was a research affiliate of the Instituto de Historia “Emilio Ravignani” of the Universidad de Buenos Aires from 2002 to 2007 and received her Ph.D. from Yale University in 2008. She is coeditor with Claudia Feld of *El pasado que miramos: Memoria e imagen ante la historia reciente* and author of *Transition Cinema: Political Filmmaking and the Argentine Left since 1968*. She has also published on the subject of feminist and women's filmmaking and is currently engaged in a new study of the cultural politics of solidarity movements in postwar Argentina.

Molly Todd is the author of *Beyond Displacement: Campesinos, Refugees, and Collective Action in the Salvadoran Civil War*. She holds a Ph.D. in history from the University of Wisconsin–Madison and teaches at Montana State University. She is now working on a book-length study of U.S.-Central American solidarity.

Joe Renouard (Ph.D., Emory University) is Assistant Professor of History at The Citadel in Charleston, South Carolina. He has published essays and book chapters in the areas of human rights, American foreign relations, the Cold War, transatlantic relations, and United States history. His most recently completed book manuscript explores human rights in American foreign policy from 1967 to 1991. At present, he is researching and writing a manuscript on the Genocide Convention.

William Michael Schmidli is an Assistant Professor of History at Bucknell University. He completed a Ph.D. in the Department of History at Cornell University in February 2010. He specializes in the history of United States foreign relations, the Cold War, modern Latin America, and human rights. He has published articles in *Diplomatic History*, *Cold War History*, and *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, and his first book, *The Fate of Freedom Elsewhere: Human Rights and U.S. Cold War Policy toward Argentina* was published by Cornell University Press in 2013.

Alexander Poster works for the Office of the Historian in the Department of State. He completed his Ph.D. in history at The Ohio State University in 2010. Prior to graduation, he studied as a predoctoral fellow at Yale and taught at Muskingum University and Capital University. He specializes in diplomatic history, Latin American history, the history of the Caribbean, and the history of international disaster relief. His article “The Gentle War: Famine Relief, Politics, and Privatization in Ethiopia, 1983–1986” was published in *Diplomatic History* in April 2012.

Human Rights and Transnational Solidarity in Cold War Latin America, edited by Jessica Stites Mor, is an ambitious book. In her introduction, Stites Mor argues that “the re-emerging left and new social movements that characterized the post-Cold War period were not primarily the result of heavy involvement in local affairs by transnational governmental organizations, but, rather, emerged from strategic engagement of the left with transnational solidarity activism.” (5) In short, Stites Mor seeks to combine Gayatri Spivak’s focus on the subaltern with Saskia Sassen’s emphasis on the global community, all the while incorporating the ideas of Jurgen Habermas and Richard Rorty (all of these scholars are mentioned in the introduction).² What results is a surprisingly powerful synthesis of the field at present. The glue holding this fusion together is the discourse of human rights, which, by nature, engages with subaltern studies, transnational structures, and critical theory. To make her argument, Stites Mor has selected eight articles and one personal essay that describe patterns of transnational solidarity in 1960s and 1970s Latin America, a time of violence and instability for the region.

Some of the articles are very well-written. Alison Bruey’s “Transnational Concepts, Local Contexts: Solidarity at the Grassroots in Pinochet’s Chile and Brenda Elsey’s “As the World Is My Witness’: Transnational Chilean Solidarity and Popular Culture” both discuss solidarity activism in Pinochet’s Chile, and the two pieces are excellent companions. Bruey demonstrates that the Catholic Church served as a hub of opposition to Pinochet’s dictatorship, and skillfully reveals the links between leftist organization and Catholic social doctrine in Chile. She stresses that this tradition continued in spite of Pinochet’s repressive government and that Church officials worked with activists to support human rights organizations. Thus, the ties between a transnational movement (Catholicism), a transnational idea (human rights), and grassroots activists were numerous and robust – in Bruey’s own words, “This theoretical and theological orientation counteracted to a certain extent the atmosphere of atomization, fear, and enmity that permeated society after the coup, and it provided a framework for the construction of a broad-based, pluralistic movement for change.” (135) Elsey’s piece reveals that the Catholic Church was not the only foundation for anti-Pinochet solidarity movements. Her article demonstrates how gender and global popular culture provided avenues for dissent and resistance under a brutal dictatorship. Elsey stresses that the 1974 World Cup, held in West Germany, was a transnational moment that provided Chilean actors a global stage upon which to spotlight the human rights atrocities under Augusto Pinochet, free from oppression at home. She also offers a compelling argument for the importance of women in anti-authoritarian

¹ The views expressed here are Alexander Poster’s and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of State or the U.S. government

² See Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason* (New York: Routledge, 1999); Sassen *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); Habermas “The Postnational Constellation and the Future of Democracy,” *The Postnational Constellation: Political Essays*, ed. Jurgen Habermas (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001); Rorty, *Achieving Our Country: Leftist Thought in Twentieth Century America*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998.

movements, stating, “Women’s organizations broadened the discourse of human rights through their attention to rape, domestic violence, and poverty. Furthermore, women activists called the public’s attention to the dictatorship’s widespread use of rape and sexual assault to terrorize prisoners.” (187) Elsey explains that *arpilleras*, tapestries crafted by women “involved with the Catholic Church’s Vicariate of Solidarity” (187) became global symbols of resistance to Pinochet’s rule. Of course, Pinochet’s regime fought back by attempting to co-opt such symbols, a process that Elsey carefully documents as well. Her assertion that the Pinochet government used the Miss Universe pageant as a font from which to redefine Chilean femininity is particularly interesting. Through the contributions of Bruey and Elsey, solidarity in 1970s Chile is better understood.

Sara Katherine Sanders’s “The Mexican Student Movement of 1968: National Protest Movements in International and Transnational Contexts” is an investigation of the 1968 student protests in Mexico City which reveals that the Mexican student movement had both national and transnational influences. While students voiced their grievances in the discourse of Mexican national history, “invoking heroes such as ‘Hidalgo, Morelos, Juarez, Villa, Zapata, and many more,’” (81) they also looked abroad for inspiration. Images of Che Guevara appeared in demonstrations, and students organized protests at embassies around the world to publicize better the civil problems in Mexico. Sanders argues that student activists were aware of their place in history, talked about “The Global Student Conflict” (85) that they were a part of, and found friends and allies in Latin America, Europe, and the United States. The fact that Mexico City was host to the 1968 Olympics further exemplified the global nature of the students’ thinking. Sanders’s research is particularly important in light of the transnational solidarity movements that later emerged in Mexico, after the 1985 earthquake and the 1994 implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

The final piece in Stites Mor’s volume is an essay by James N. Green, a socialist who participated in the gay liberation movement in 1970s Brazil. While the inclusion of a personal narrative in an academic collection of articles is unorthodox, I think the piece fits well in the collection. Green’s account of his experiences provides a fascinating look at the evolution of a transnational solidarity movement, and reflects on the challenges that such movements face. Green, who moved to Brazil during the 1970s, attempted “to merge sexual and political identities” through his activism. (239) He celebrated some early successes, such as his participation the formation of SOMOS: Grupo de Afirmacao Homossexual, a left-leaning gay rights organization that, at its peak, attracted more than one hundred members to its gatherings, including representatives from other nations. Green’s triumph, however, was short-lived; a leading figure in the Brazilian gay rights movement, Joao Silverio Trevisan, eschewed political leftism for a more libertarian perspective, and many lesbians left SOMOS, citing the sexism of the male members. In short, while Green emphasizes that transnational solidarity is important, he also stresses that it is not easy; the internal divisions within the gay community in Brazil were too much to overcome.

While Stites Mor’s collection of essays is good, it is not perfect. Most of the authors have difficulty quantifying how the movements they studied altered the global, or even the local,

discourse. The Catholic Church indeed served as a base for anti-Pinochet organization, but how successful was it? How much support did the display of *arpilleras* raise? Was the presence of several hundred foreign protesters in Mexico City, a city of many millions, significant? These problems, however, are characteristic of ‘ground-up’ histories that look at watershed moments of subaltern resistance, where the actors may not have had a statistician present to record figures for future historians. I am sympathetic to this problem, and while I feel that the authors’ stories deserve to be told with or without quantifying evidence, the ‘how much’ question still remains and must be noted. At the risk of missing the point, it is also worth mentioning that very few of the authors (excepting Molly Todd’s “The Politics of Refuge: Salvadoran Refugees and International Aid in Honduras” and Margaret Power’s “The Puerto Rican Nationalist Party, Transnational Latin American Solidarity, and the United States During the Cold War”) make frequent mention of one of the largest international organizations focused on human rights: the United Nations (UN). Although Stites Mor’s thesis emphasizes that transnational solidarity activism was more important than the involvement of transnational governmental organizations, these two variables did not exist independently of one another, and the interaction between the two is important. A look at the United Nations would not necessarily undermine the thesis (or even the focus) of this book; if one could demonstrate that transnational activists were successful in steering the UN toward a decision, for instance, it would make for a stronger argument.

Regardless of these criticisms, Stites Mor’s volume is exceptionally valuable to the historical community. The collection demonstrates that the discourse of human rights became exceptionally powerful during the late Cold War. The book also is an example of how the topic of human rights serves as locus where several key subfields of history intersect. The emphasis on transnational solidarity gives a voice to actors who might be overlooked by traditional diplomatic historians, and the authors do an excellent job of incorporating themes such as gender and sexuality into the study of international history. Lastly, the inclusion of Green’s essay allows Stites Mor to explore both the upper and lower bounds of transnational solidarity, a nuance that shows sophistication of argument. This collection is an example of well-researched international history and could be a valuable component of a graduate-level discussion on the topic.

Review by Joe Renouard, The Citadel

Jessica Stites Mor's new edited collection sits at the confluence of several scholarly streams. At its most basic level, it addresses issues that are unique to modern Latin America, but it also fits firmly within the scholarship on human rights, the Cold War, transnational activism, the Global South, solidarity-building, and U.S.-Latin America relations. This breadth reflects recent developments in international history. For many years now, Cold War history (as reflected in the offerings of the *Journal of Cold War Studies*) has gone far beyond the Moscow-Washington superpower struggle. Indeed, if it is now something of a cliché to say that scholars have decentered and expanded the field to encompass once-neglected locales and methodologies, it is only because the statement is true. At the same time, historians have also carved out a productive niche in the broad subject area of human rights, which was once the exclusive province of political scientists, international law experts, and philosophers. In the last two decades, we have seen an impressive outpouring of literature on Cold War-era human rights and authoritarianism in Latin America.¹ Much work published in English has emphasized U.S. domination, neo-imperial dependency, or U.S.-backed resistance to troublesome, left-of-center reformism and populism.² Several such North/South perspectives combine human rights history with analysis of security policies.³ Meanwhile, social scientists and historians have explored the establishment of transnational advocacy networks and the power of international norms.⁴

¹ See, for example, Sonia Cardenas, *Human Rights in Latin America: A Politics of Terror and Hope* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); Jeffrey Davis, *Seeking Human Rights Justice in Latin America: Truth, Extra-Territorial Courts, and the Process of Justice* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Thomas C. Wright, *State Terrorism in Latin America: Chile, Argentina, and Human Rights* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007); Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Horacio Verbitsky, *Confessions of an Argentine Dirty Warrior: A Firsthand Account of Atrocity* (New York: New Press, 2005); Pamela Constable, *A Nation of Enemies: Chile under Pinochet* (New York: WW Norton, 1991); Marguerite Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

² These include Stephen Schlesinger and Stephen Kinzer, *Bitter Fruit: The Story of the American Coup in Guatemala*, Revised Ed. (Cambridge: David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, 2005; 1st Ed. 1982); Walter Lafeber, *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America*, 2nd ed. (New York: WW Norton, 1993); Lars Schoultz, *Beneath the United States: A History of U.S. Policy toward Latin America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998); Greg Grandin, *Empire's Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism* (New York: Holt and Co., 2007).

³ Lars Schoultz, *Human Rights and United States Policy toward Latin America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); Stephen G. Rabe, *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); J. Patrice McSherry, *Predatory States: Operation Condor and Covert War in Latin America* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005); John Dinges, *The Condor Years: How Pinochet and His Allies Brought Terrorism to Three Continents* (New York: New Press, 2004); Kathryn Sikkink, *Mixed Signals: U.S. Human Rights Policy and Latin America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).

⁴ Among the most prominent are Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998); and Thomas Risse, Stephen C. Ropp, and Kathryn Sikkink, *The Persistent Power of Human Rights: From Commitment to Compliance* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

To the extent that such a broad collection can be said to offer a common argument, Stites Mor's volume privileges bottom-up models of movement politics, activism, and historical change. As she states in her introduction, this book addresses the sources of political communities' unity; more specifically, it asks how solidarity movements contribute to more democratic forms of political community (4). The volume aims to help establish a theoretical framework for the study of transnational solidarity in Latin America, as well as offer some insights into broader human rights and citizenship claims in the Global South. In general, the essays suggest that scholars must work harder to position the locus of organization and change at the local level, as opposed to top-down approaches that emphasize the work of hierarchical, transnational NGOs. As Stites Mor writes, "This volume asks of the historiography of the period that it not overlook the key contributions of social actors"—e.g., community organizers, party members, priests, students, refugees—"to the growth of new visions of political community and human rights in participatory democracy" (5). These chapters demonstrate that "social actors rooted in specific networks and communities on the ground shaped Cold War struggles into languages of anticolonialism, socioeconomic rights, and identity that transformed political subjecthood and built a kind of alternative transnational solidarity from below—by and for the socially excluded and activists leaders within the Global South" (5).

By and large, this is a fine volume. The book's subject matter is a tad arcane for most undergraduate courses, but it will be of interest to academics and graduate students working in post-1945 Latin American social and political history, human rights, U.S.-Latin America relations, and perhaps also Latin American sociology and political science. These essays also provide scholars with models for doing international history and for 'internationalizing' their domestic subjects. Given its emphasis on social actors, the volume does somewhat less for our understanding of human rights politics and diplomacy. But all in all, it accomplishes the main goal that Stites Mor establishes in her introduction: it answers some important questions and poses new ones for further research. Taken as a whole, the essays imply that although diplomacy and international activism matter, effective human rights advocacy is best understood in the local and regional context. This is a position with which I generally concur.

The book's nine chapters are arranged into three thematic parts that are also loosely chronological. Part One, titled "Critical Precursors to Transnational Solidarity," explores some antecedents of the human rights movement. As we would expect, some of these chapters do more to illuminate transnational matters, while others say more about human rights activism and solidarity-building. Margaret Power's chapter on Puerto Rican nationalism and anticolonialism is interesting for addressing an oft-ignored subject.⁵ She does a fine job of showing that mid-twentieth-century Puerto Rican nationalists reached out to others in the hemisphere and defined themselves as members of the "Latin American family" with a shared history of Spanish colonial origins, independence struggles, and U.S.

⁵ Margaret Power, "The Puerto Rican Nationalist Party, Transnational Latin American Solidarity, and the United States during the Cold War," 21-47.

domination. Power demonstrates that many Latin Americans expressed solidarity with the independence movement and anger at the imprisonment of nationalists. Most interesting are Power's sojourns into Cuban solidarity with Puerto Rico in the 1950s and hemispheric efforts to free Puerto Rican prisoners.

However, I suspect that Puerto Rican nationalism is understudied because it was not very popular among Puerto Ricans themselves. Power gives the impression that the United States government crushed popular nationalism in the island, but the evidence suggests that full national independence was not widely sought, either at the time of the 1952 constitutional referendum or in the twenty-first century (29). Power could also more clearly define the contested term "political prisoner." She writes that many Latin Americans expressed sympathy and political support for "the political prisoners jailed by the United States for resisting Puerto Rico's subordinate status" (25). But many were jailed not because they were patriotic prisoners of conscience, but because they used violence against the state, both in San Juan and Washington. The attention to prisoners raises a conceptual question for scholars and activists alike: When do another nation's rebels and dissidents become international heroes? This question complicated global affairs in later decades alongside the increased prominence of dissidents like Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, Václav Havel, and Nelson Mandela, all of whom were considered 'dangerous' by their own governments. Power could also analyze the motives behind Latin Americans' pro-Puerto Rican (and anti-*yanqui*) solidarity. Some of this was based on the belief that Puerto Ricans were, indeed, oppressed colonial subjects under the American thumb. But much of it surely also grew from an opportunistic desire to weaken the United States, especially after the Cuban revolution.

Ernesto Capello explores New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller's 1969 tour of Latin America and its aftermath within the context of the neglected history of American goodwill tours.⁶ He begins by laying out an interesting summary of these trips, which included Walt Disney's wartime sojourn to South America and Vice-President Richard Nixon's infamous 1958 'stoning' in Caracas. Nixon visited several countries in order to reinforce American support for democratic rule, but the official pleasantries were overshadowed by violent protests. The story is familiar to students of U.S.-Latin America relations, but Capello does a nice job of placing the demonstrations into a contemporary context, and he shows that the violence did have an effect on Washington policymakers' views of Latin America (53). Capello then uses Latin American citizens' letters to Rockefeller to demonstrate the existence of a "pliable center" that supported neither the pro-capitalist elite nor the anti-Rockefeller activists who menaced the governor's entourage in several countries (68). The letters give us a nuanced view of Latin American perceptions of Rockefeller, American political power, and transnational capitalism. In situating these letters within a "patronage petition" tradition that dates back to the colonial era, Capello argues that Rockefeller and President Nixon missed an opportunity to engage this pliable center, and instead chose a more traditional defense of oligarchic control and military strength (51, 63).

⁶ Ernesto Capello, "Latin America Encounters Nelson Rockefeller: Imagining the *Gringo Patrón* in 1969," 48-73.

At the end of this chapter, I found myself wanting to know more about this “pliable center” of moderate opinion. The letters are a fine data set, but given their limited context, they can tell us only so much about hemispheric opinions on economic development, political evolution, and North/South relations. As Capello expands this work into a full-length book manuscript, he might consider examining contemporary Latin American reportage from journals of the left, right, and center, or including elites’ private reactions to American overtures. These sources could strengthen his claim that portrayals of public opinion have thus far fit too strictly into a Cold War binary.

In some ways, Sara Katherine Sanders’s internationalizing of the 1968 Mexican student movement is the most satisfying chapter of the entire volume.⁷ Much has been written in recent years about ‘global ‘68’—its causes, its consequences, its transnational aspects, and the possibility that this was a Rosetta Stone-moment for international activism.⁸ But the scholarship has tended to follow a transatlantic axis stretching from Chicago to Prague, and these models that focus on the U.S. and Europe do not necessarily fit other regions. In Sanders’s account, Mexican students saw themselves as part of a global dissident community, but they were motivated by domestic concerns and they utilized motifs and rhetoric that were familiar above all to a domestic audience. The students did have some commonalities with their counterparts in Europe and North America. The ‘Mexican miracle’ of post-1930s economic growth had seen an expansion of the middle class and university enrollments. As elsewhere, the educated youth of Mexico were a mixed blessing in that they enhanced their nation’s intellectual capital but also imbibed counterhegemonic messages from their university studies. But in fact, Mexico’s 1968 seems not to have been all that transnational after all. The protestors claimed rhetorical connections to movements elsewhere, but otherwise there was little in the way of transnational organizing or activism. As Sanders writes, “While Sixty-Eight was certainly a global moment, in many ways it was an intensely national moment” (93). This chapter, then, is less about Latin American solidarity than it is about the international aspects of Mexico’s 1968, especially the presence of thousands of athletes and journalists attending the Olympics.

Sanders’s retelling of Mexico’s 1968 is intriguing for what it tells us about Mexico rather than what it tells us about transnational solidarity. Indeed, I am struck by the lack of Latin American solidarity in this story. Mexican students joined with *campesinos* and workers to tackle distinctly Mexican concerns, and they expressed their displeasure with their nation’s elites and with multinational (mostly American) capital. As Sanders writes, to the extent

⁷ Sara Katherine Sanders, “The Mexican Student Movement of 1968: National Protest Movements in International and Transnational Contexts,” 74-98.

⁸ Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Détente* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003); Martin Klimke and Joachim Scharloth, *1968 in Europe: A History of Protest and Activism, 1956-1977* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008); Klimke, *The Other Alliance: Student Protest in West Germany & the United States in the Global Sixties* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); Carole Fink, Philipp Gassert, and Detlef Junker, eds., *1968: The World Transformed* (Washington: German Historical Institute, 1998).

that some students saw domestic problems as having any external causes, they pointed to “a global system in which economic elites and politicians in Mexico and the United States colluded to maintain power” (86). More to the point about the tragic denouement of the student movement—the October 2 massacre of over four-hundred people at Tlatelolco—this was perpetrated and covered up by the state security forces. In retrospect, it is possible that this was among the last of the truly domestic social movements of the emerging human rights era.⁹ But I find Sanders’s story to be more valuable as confirmation that modern rights/reform/identity movements have been predominantly local in origin and domestic in scope. The actors who have mattered the most, whether the cause was in Mexico or elsewhere, have almost invariably been locals.

Part Two of the volume, titled “Solidarity in Action,” examines the ways in which the transnational and the everyday shaped common understandings of solidarity. Russell Cobb assesses the literary boom of the 1960s and 70s that brought to world attention writers such as Gabriel García Márquez, Mario Vargas Llosa, and Carlos Fuentes.¹⁰ This boom took place alongside, and in conversation with, the rise of an alternative national model in Fidel Castro’s Cuba. Cobb’s well-written study involves little discussion of human rights ideas, except to the extent that writers were (and always are) seeking a platform for free expression. His assessment of the boom and its political implications is solid. Many Latin American writers were repulsed by American cultural and political strictures, yet many writers of the left found that the revolutionary government of Cuba was even more heavy-handed in its control of cultural texts and images. (As Castro had declared in 1961, “Within the Revolution, everything; against the Revolution, nothing.”)¹¹ Pablo Neruda learned that old habits and hatreds died hard, as his left-wing compatriots ostracized him for accepting an invitation from the New York-based PEN Club in 1966. At the same time, the onetime CIA-funded writers’ coalition known as the Congress for Cultural Freedom tempered its earlier, anticommunist goals to include a wider array of liberal voices. As the sixties progressed, writes Cobb, the rigid anticommunism of the earlier era “gave way to a liberalized attitude that was as much a product of the worldwide success of Latin American literature as it was an ideological change of heart” (111). Cobb’s story gives us some insights into the control of culture—a tale that is more often told about contemporary Eastern Europe than it is about the Global South. As Cobb shows, even while cosmopolitan writers like Fuentes and Emir Rodríguez Monegal claimed to be working outside of the political realm, they could not ignore global ideological divides. These writers, Cobb tells us, “constituted a rebirth of ‘rooted cosmopolitanism’ in Cold War Latin America.” They

⁹ On this point, see Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders*, ix.

¹⁰ Russell Cobb, “Cosmopolitans and Revolutionaries: Competing Visions of Transnationalism during the Boom in Latin America,” 101-119.

¹¹ In Castro’s words, “*Esto significa que dentro de la Revolución, todo; contra la Revolución, nada. . . . Creo que esto es bien claro. ¿Cuáles son los derechos de los escritores y de los artistas revolucionarios o no revolucionarios? Dentro de la Revolución, todo; contra la Revolución, ningún derecho.*” Fidel Castro Ruz, “Palabras a los Intelectuales,” June 1961, Ministerio de Cultura de la República de Cuba, <http://www.min.cult.cu/loader.php?sec=historia&cont=palabrasalosintelectuales>, accessed 29 January 2014.

could not be “pure” cosmopolitans, “but neither did they fit within the nationalist discourse of the Cuban Revolution” (111.).

Another standout is Christine Hatzky’s exploration of Cuba-Angola ties and post-revolutionary Cuba’s concept of ‘internationalist solidarity.’¹² This is a particularly instructive chapter because Cuba was arguably the most internationalist state in Latin America due to its revolutionary ideologies, its tradition of armed rebellions, and the spirit of idealistic volunteerism crystallized in Che Guevara’s maxim, “The impossible is realistic” (147). More significant for Hatzky’s purposes, Angola was not just a place of Marxist and anticolonial struggle, but also a site of Cuban nation-building. Hatzky goes beyond the somewhat better-known (though still murky) story of Cuban military involvement and focuses instead on Cuban civil cooperation efforts.

Hatzky’s is perhaps the most thoroughly researched chapter in this collection. She carried out an impressive amount of work in Cuba, Angola, Portugal, and the United States, including nearly 150 interviews with Cuban and Angolan witnesses. Among her discoveries, she found that Cuban leaders were initially reluctant to commence a nation-building project following the Marxist Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola’s (MPLA) successful military conquest of Luanda. She also learned that Angola secretly paid Havana for the work of thousands of Cuban volunteers. As for the volunteers’ motives, although the official line out of Havana emphasized South-South, anticolonial, and Marxist solidarity, in reality the volunteers were inspired by everything from humanitarianism to just plain curiosity. Nearly all of Hatzky’s Cuban informants discredited their government’s claim that Cubans and Angolans comprised a single ‘Latin American-African nation,’ and they noted to the contrary that their exposure to Angola’s underdeveloped society gave them a greater appreciation for Cuba’s own advances (163-165). This chapter points to the need for further studies of nation-building, an endeavor that seems to sire far more failures than successes. Alongside well-known U.S. efforts in places like South Korea, South Vietnam, and Iraq, there is still much to learn about Cuba’s undertakings in Angola, Ethiopia, and Nicaragua. This chapter also illustrates the need for more inside accounts of Cuban internationalism. Hatzky joins the likes of Piero Gleijeses and other non-Americans who have been able to explore some of these sources in Cuba.¹³ Hopefully, researchers can continue to find creative ways of doing so.

The volume includes two chapters on Augusto Pinochet’s Chile. The first, from Alison J. Bruey, is arguably the essay in this book that most energetically explores the concept of

¹² Christine Hatzky, “Cuba’s Concept of ‘Internationalist Solidarity:’ Political Discourse, South-South Cooperation with Angola, and the Molding of Transnational Identities,” 143-174.

¹³ See, for example, Piero Gleijeses’s two important works, *Visions of Freedom: Havana, Washington, Pretoria, and the Struggle for Southern Africa, 1976-1991* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013) and *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959-1976* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

solidarity-building, though it does not delve too deeply into the transnational.¹⁴ Her account of the ties between the Chilean left and the Chilean Catholic Church is a decidedly domestic one. Bruey offers a sophisticated description of the left's and the Church's affinities for one another from the nineteenth century onward. (This tale has grown even more interesting in light of the accession of Pope Francis, who seems to have absorbed much of the tradition of *Rerum Novarum* and perhaps even some elements of Liberation Theology.) As Bruey demonstrates, because Pinochet had persecuted the left and had relegated the poor of Chile's *poblaciones* to sub-citizen status, the solidarity concept created a space for the left in social organizations that were nominally built upon religious foundations. Bruey also describes the growing currency of the word *solidaridad*, which in the mid 1970s became the hallmark term of grass-roots organizations. The older, paternalistic model of Christian charity gave way to the fraternal, collective goals of solidarity with the poor and persecuted. This is a very strong chapter, though I did find myself wondering whether there was really as much amity between these two camps as Bruey suggests. Future research could more fully explore the points of fracture that no doubt existed between these two tenuously connected communities.

The second chapter on Chile, by Brenda Elsey, examines the role of popular culture in the larger story of transnational, anti-Pinochet solidarity.¹⁵ Elsey examines what she calls "emblematic moments" in the relationship between popular culture and the transnational solidarity movement, including the 1974 World Cup in West Germany and the 1987 Miss Universe pageant (178-179). Elsey's chapter adds a useful model for analyzing culture in an international context. Perhaps the most compelling discussion here concerns the World Cup. Whether or not international sports should be politicized is open to debate. But the amount of attention shed on Chile during the tournament raises the question of why so many other authoritarian nations avoided scrutiny. That is to say, in using international sport as a platform for human rights attention, activists may find themselves in the difficult position of having to explain why one case is worthy of attention—say, Chile under Pinochet, or South Africa under apartheid—while so many others are not.

The inclusion of two chapters on Chile underscores another important point. It is almost impossible to conceive of a collection on modern Latin American history, transnational solidarity, and human rights that omits the Salvador Allende/Pinochet story. It is simply too important to ignore. But while I acknowledge the regional and global significance of Chile's many tribulations, it is also possible that scholars' and students' views of hemispheric history—to say nothing of human rights and Cold War history—have been skewed somewhat by Chile's prominence. (The same could perhaps be said of Argentina's Dirty War and the *Madres de Plaza de Mayo*.) This is not a commentary on the essays by Bruey and Elsey, both of which are fine pieces of scholarship. It is, rather, a call for more

¹⁴ Alison J. Bruey, "Transnational Concepts, Local Contexts: Solidarity at the Grassroots in Pinochet's Chile," 120-142.

¹⁵ Brenda Elsey, "'As the World is My Witness': Transnational Chilean Solidarity and Popular Culture," 177-208.

work on some lesser-explored stories, such as opposition to the longstanding dictatorship of Paraguay's Alfredo Stroessner, opposition to the regime of Bolivia's Hugo Banzer Suárez, Mexican human rights violations before and after Tlatelolco, and transnational activism during South America's democratic transitions and Central America's civil wars.

On this last point, Molly Todd's study of Salvadoran refugees in Honduras adds a much-needed Central American dimension to this volume.¹⁶ Rather than portraying refugees as unfortunate byproducts of more "important" stories such as civil wars or natural disasters, Todd highlights the Salvadoran *campesinos'* accounts of their own refugee experiences. This subject is salient because El Salvador's civil strife forced as much as twenty percent of the nation's population to flee (one of the largest relative population displacements in recent world history). Todd does a fine job of demonstrating that refugee status was a double-edged sword. It qualified a person for some international protection, but it also meant the loss of one's home, identity, livelihood, and civil and political rights. In the case of the Honduran refugee camps near the border, it also meant vulnerability to predatory security officers. Todd shows that the refugees worked hard to control their own circumstances in the camps and that visiting NGOs and journalists linked them to the outside world.

All in all, this is a fine volume that raises many questions for further exploration. With respect to the larger issue of the local versus the international/transnational, there is no doubt that human rights and humanitarianism are more salient in global affairs than ever. But recent world history also suggests that troubled societies must ultimately look inward to find lasting solutions to their problems. On this point, the Chilean militant Gladys Díaz has left us a fitting epitaph. As she said upon her release from Pinochet's political prisons in 1976, "International solidarity is very important to the resistance. Liberation, however, is the task of the people themselves. Once in a while one thinks that international solidarity alone might liberate our people. This is not correct. It could bring about the destabilization of the junta, but only the power of the people and its organizations can make the final overthrow possible" (126-127).

¹⁶ Molly Todd, "The Politics of Refuge: Salvadoran Refugees and International Aid in Honduras," 209-236.

The recent turn by diplomatic historians toward international history, with its emphasis on multi-archival, multilingual research, has resulted in pioneering scholarship positioning the United States within a broad global framework. Likewise, drawing from cultural and social history, diplomatic historians are integrating categories of analysis such as race, gender, imperialism, and ideology into studies of U.S. foreign relations, as well as the significance of non-state actors. These developments are especially evident in the growing body of transnational scholarship generated by U.S. foreign relations historians, and, in particular, rising interest in the recent history of human rights. In this context, combined with efforts to heed historian Gilbert Joseph's call for a "more vital cross-fertilization" between U.S. foreign relations historians and Latin Americanists, Jessica Stites Mor's edited volume, *Human Rights and Transnational Solidarity in Cold War Latin America* will be of significant interest to historians of U.S. foreign relations.¹

In the introduction, Stites Mor argues that the collection makes two key contributions to the existing scholarship. First, the book identifies the importance of Latin Americans operating at the local level in shaping transnational solidarity campaigns. These "social actors rooted in specific networks and communities" Stites Mor contends, "shaped Cold War struggles into languages of anticolonialism, socioeconomic rights, and identity that transformed political subjecthood and built a kind of alternative transnational solidarity from below—by and for the socially excluded and activist leaders within the global South" (5). Shifting the focus away from North-South transnational networks—which merely provided "external validation" for local solidarity campaigns—the volume's contributors, Stites Mor contends, illuminate South-South networks and, more broadly, "engage the problem and the promise of the transnational as a means of constructing more useful or alternative political unities to the nation-state" (4).

Second, Stites Mor sees the essays in *Human Rights and Transnational Solidarity in Cold War Latin America* as offering an important reinterpretation of the Latin American left and its relationship to human rights consciousness. Stites Mor argues that with its emphasis on Latin American actors, the volume illuminates how human rights were primarily understood in local contexts rooted in distinct struggles for political and socioeconomic justice rather than universal notions of rights or Western democratic ideas. In turn, these local understandings of rights-based activism had important long-term consequences. "The left and new social movements that characterized the post-Cold War period," Stites Mor contends, "were not primarily the result of the heavy involvement in local affairs of transnational nongovernmental organizations but, rather, emerged from strategic engagement of the left with transnational solidarity activism" (5).

¹ Gilbert M. Joseph, "What We Know Now and Should Know: Bringing Latin America More Meaningfully Into Cold War Studies," in *In From the Cold: Latin America's New Encounter With the Cold War* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 8.

The volume's nine essays engage these issues in diverse ways and with varying effectiveness. Three of the strongest contributions demonstrate both the utility of transnational history and the importance of solidarity campaigns in Latin America during the late Cold War era. Illuminating the role of the Chilean Catholic Church and popular-sector grassroots organizations in mobilizing opposition to the Pinochet regime, Alison J. Bruey argues that Chilean solidarity "coexisted and intersected with but did not originate primarily in internationalist solidarity movements or the left, the sectors that have received the most attention in studies of Latin American solidarity during this period" (121)². Identifying points of convergence that allowed seemingly incompatible leftist and Catholic organizations to make common cause against the dictatorship, Bruey convincingly concludes that "only by considering the local alongside the international can we reach a fuller understanding of transnational concepts such as 'solidarity' and the movements associated with them" (137). In a useful comparison, Brenda Elsey focuses on the intersection of popular culture and the Chilean solidarity movement.³ Using Chilean sports, *arpilleras* (appliquéd tapestries created by women involved in the solidarity movement), and the Miss Universe competition as case studies, Elsey persuasively argues that cultural symbols were fiercely contested in Chile during the dictatorship, as both solidarity activists and the Pinochet regime sought to use popular culture to shape domestic and foreign perceptions of the Chilean political situation.

Similarly, Mary Todd's essay analyzing Salvadoran political refugees in Honduras from the late 1970s to 1990s adeptly blends local-level activism into an international and transnational context.⁴ At the international level, Todd argues that Honduran government and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees officials attempted to depoliticize the refugees fleeing political violence in El Salvador by placing them in "closed camps," and restricting their movement and access to resources. At the local level, however, the refugees refused to accept being defined purely as "victims," a label that "rendered them not only beyond the state and beyond politics but also out of time" (215). Analyzing the refugees' mobilization, including efforts to obtain self-government in the camps, form alliances with international organizations participating in a transnational solidarity network focused on El Salvador, and organize a return journey to their homeland, Todd deftly integrates state- and non-state actors operating in a complex political environment.

Although there is much to praise in this collection of essays, it also raises important questions for historians of foreign relations. In an essay examining Latin American support for Puerto Rican independence from the 1920s to the 1970s, for example, Margaret Power analyzes petitions, letters, and demonstrations by activists and solidarity committees from

² Bruey, "Transnational Concepts, Local Contexts: Solidarity at the Grassroots in Pinochet's Chile".

³ Elsey, "'As the World Is My Witness': Transnational Chilean Solidarity and Popular Culture".

⁴ Todd, "The Politics of Refuge: Salvadoran Refugees and International Aid in Honduras".

nations throughout the region.⁵ On one hand, Power's article succeeds in illuminating the transnational solidarity campaign focused on Puerto Rico, and convincingly argues that pressure from across the continent led U.S. policymakers to release pro-independence Nationalist Party political prisoners. The Puerto Rican solidarity campaign, Power argues, revealed that "the United States did not reign supreme; across the Americas, voices of solidarity spoke out against U.S. colonialism" (40). On the other hand, Power's focus on solidarity activists' successes runs the risk of minimizing the broader contours of U.S.-Puerto Rican relations. Arguably, such victories paled in comparison to U.S. policymakers' success in the late 1940s and 1950s in maintaining political control of Puerto Rico while simultaneously positioning the United States as the defender of the free world in the global Cold War. Does the essay, in other words, go too far in decentering the United States, and, in its emphasis on Latin American transnational solidarity, minimize U.S. power?

A related question informs Christine Hatzky's essay on Cuban political and military intervention in Angola in support of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola: can the state be an agent of solidarity?⁶ Focusing on the deployment and impact of thousands of Cuban teachers to Angolan schools in the late 1970s and 1980s, Hatzky argues that Fidel Castro enjoined the Cuban people to embrace internationalist solidarity with post-colonial Angola. At the same time, the deployment of teachers, Hatzky contends, "was also a social experiment, an attempt to build a political and pedagogical elite of youth cadres who would be expected to prove their revolutionary commitment on an internationalist mission abroad and, if necessary, to substitute 'pencils for weapons'" (161).

Hatzky's research reveals that very few Cubans participants in the Angola program accepted Castro's definition of Cuba as a "Latin American-African nation" (163). With very little pre-departure knowledge of Angola, and guided by personal motivations to join the program, the Cuban participants "undermined both the political aims and the interpretive authority of their government" (165). Nonetheless, Hatzky contends that many participants did return to Cuba with a strong sense of solidarity with Angola and support for social improvement programs abroad. As a result, although her essay succeeds in illuminating the importance of the Cuban state in shaping domestic perceptions of Cuba's role in the international arena, Hatzky could go further in exploring the relationship between Cuban *international* solidarity and the *transnational* focus of this volume as a whole.

If Hatzky pushes us to recognize the role of the state in relation to international solidarity, essays by Sara Katherine Sanders, Russell Cobb, and Ernesto Capello shift the focus to non-state actors and transnationalism.⁷ Assessing youth culture and protest in 1968 Mexico,

⁵ Power, "The Puerto Rican Nationalist Party, Transnational Latin American Solidarity, and the United States during the Cold War".

⁶ Hatzky, "Cuba's Concept of 'Internationalist Solidarity': Political Discourse, South-South Cooperation with Angola, and the Molding of Transnational Identities".

⁷ Sanders, "The Mexican Student Movement of 1968: National Protest Movements in International and Transnational Contexts"; Cobb, "Cosmopolitans and Revolutionaries: Competing Visions of

Sanders argues that Mexican students saw themselves as part of an “international community of youthful protestors” (84). Looking abroad facilitated a sense of solidarity that “provided a powerful tool of legitimization through which students in Mexico justified their demands for justice by pointing to similar rhetoric in Paris, Prague, and elsewhere and left a powerful legacy for greater transnational solidarity” (92). For his part, Cobb focuses on Latin American writers, and argues that through involvement in events such as the annual PEN Club Conference, individuals such as Pablo Neruda and Carlos Fuentes created “a transnational demilitarized zone for literature” that represented a “victory for cosmopolitanism” (113).

In their respective essays, Sanders and Cobb push us to recognize the importance of the flow of information across national borders in relation to solidarity movements. Yet the ephemeral nature of the transnational networks identified in the essays also raises difficult definitional questions. For example, if Mexican students’ solidarity with youth protest overseas “largely existed at the rhetorical level,” as Sanders admits, were they actually participating in a form of transnational solidarity (88)? Should such “solidarity” be considered an international or transnational movement? Was it even a movement?

A deeper problem runs through Ernesto Capello’s essay analyzing ordinary Latin Americans’ letters to New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller during and after his 1969 presidential mission to the region. These letters reveal that “a transnational imaginary captivated a significant portion of the population,” Capello argues, in which “... a pliable center engaged the journey by situating itself at a transcendent hemispheric nexus, in the process imagining an America of hemispheric solidarity and possibility” (51). Written by Latin Americans who were “left of the state and to the right of the street,” the letters range from opinions on politics to requests for financial assistance (68). As such, Capello continues, they reveal an engagement in local and hemispheric affairs by a “paradoxical amalgamation of social actors” that “cuts across the grain of the social or cultural categories that are typically employed” (68).

The letters informing Capello’s analysis certainly have much to offer historians of Cold-War Latin America. Yet the inclusion of this essay in *Human Rights and Transnational Solidarity in Cold War Latin America* raises more questions than answers. The letter writers did not self-identify as part of an international or transnational campaign, network, or movement; nor did they exhibit traits indicative of solidarity campaigns. As such, while Capello’s identification of this “pliable center” is intriguing, he runs the risk of expanding the definition of these already broad terms to the point that they lose meaning.

Taken as a whole, *Human Rights and Transnational Solidarity in Cold War Latin America* has much to offer Latin Americanists and historians of U.S. foreign relations. Stites Mor is to be commended for compiling a body of essays that advance our understanding of the the nature of solidarity campaigns in Cold War Latin America and raise important questions

Transnationalism during the Boom in the Americas”; Capello, “Latin America Encounters Nelson Rockefeller: Imagining the *Gringo Patrón* in 1969”.

that will no doubt prove methodologically useful for scholars engaged in transnational research.

Author's Response by Alison Bruey, Margaret Power, Jessica Stites Mor, and Molly Todd

We would like to begin by thanking the editors of H-Diplo for organizing this roundtable on *Human Rights and Transnational Solidarity in Cold War Latin America*. The three reviews were each exceptionally engaged and insightful, and we appreciate the thoughtful consideration, not to mention praise, of the work that this volume represents.

The essays in this volume take on a difficult subject, one that demands a paradigm shift not only in perspective, but also in methodological approaches to thinking about the Cold War and human rights. As the introduction asserts, it considers the question of solidarity not as simply a social movement, a campaign, or a political institution, but as an ethical value, one that emerged across the Latin American left during the twentieth century. Contending with other ethical principles, such as justice, equality, truth and reconciliation, and even with human rights, solidarity often joined leftists and other social actors that rarely came together politically otherwise. As an organizing principle, founded very much in collectivism, solidarity was expressed in multiple ways as Latin Americans advocated for change in response to Cold War violence. The researchers included in this volume each speak, with their individual contributions, to the multiplicity of ways in which solidarity came to be a force of mobilization for both formal and informal political organizing.

The decision to publish this work in the Critical Human Rights series with the University of Wisconsin Press speaks to the way in which the authors hoped to situate the work within a wider scholarly conversation with diplomatic historians, international relations scholars, and political theorists interested in reconsidering the history of human rights politics during the Cold War. We are delighted to hear through these reviews that the questions we have posed are of interest to these fields. The suggestion in the reviews that more work should be done to expand the understanding transnational solidarity and its relationship to human rights is quite encouraging. We also welcome the challenges presented by the reviewers, in that they open avenues of conversation about quantitative and qualitative approaches to data, about what solidarity research can do to help our understanding of human rights politics and democracy, and, perhaps most importantly, about how ethical values and reasoning take place in the construction of political community.

Alexander Poster asks us to quantify the impact of transnational solidarity formations, to assess whether they were successful in achieving their stated objectives. Although the authors in *Human Rights and Transnational Solidarity* understand the desire – and, sometimes, the need – for ‘hard numbers,’ we, in different ways in our own research, have each argued that in fact historical contingency often did not depend on anything more than a critical mass, a key periodical, a handful of leaders, or one small but high-profile community initiative. What interested us most was whether transnational solidarity affected the way communities and groups behaved politically. Through the use of qualitative

methods, we move behind and beyond the statistics, and open doors to understanding what quantitative data cannot. In Chile, for example, this research helps to explain the role that solidarity played in maintaining ongoing opposition to the Pinochet regime, both within Chile and internationally. These movements greatly contributed to the electoral defeat of the military regime in the 1988 plebiscite. Equally, Cuban solidarity with the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) helped those forces defeat the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) and South Africa. And it was Latin American solidarity with Nationalist Party figure Oscar Collazo and the cause of Puerto Rican independence that convinced the United States State Department and President Harry S. Truman that the execution of Collazo would damage Washington's relations with the region.

There are also very practical reasons why the authors in this volume opt for qualitative methods. Key among these reasons is the fact that when data does exist – and often it does not in these contexts of war and violence – it is at best fraught, and at worst controlled by repressive states. By way of example, Poster asks how successful, in quantitative terms, the Catholic Church was in serving as a base for anti-Pinochet organization. Reliable statistics about anti-regime organization in Santiago's *poblaciones*, or shantytowns, are not available. Moreover, the regime manipulated quantitative data on several fronts, from the number of people it detained and killed, to the consumer price index and, some argue, even the census. Sometimes the lesson statistics teach is that they can be created, not just interpreted, to suit particular agendas; in other words, quantitative data is also qualitative and must be analyzed accordingly. Furthermore, if we look to the left for numbers we confront the primary methodological challenge of researching underground organizations; they were clandestine. Their survival depended upon secrecy, among many other things. The Catholic Church produced data related to the many organizations it sheltered, what services it offered, and how many people were served. These numbers do not reveal how many of these organizations or the people in them engaged in anti-regime activism—a wise omission under the circumstances—and we cannot assume *a priori* that all did. However, Ana María Hoyl records for the years of dictatorship a partial list of at least 591 cases of direct, state persecution of Church organizations, affiliated individuals, and chapels, many located in or otherwise involved with Chile's popular sectors.¹ What this data reveal is that notable and *measurable* levels of enmity existed between the regime and the church, allowing scholars to establish that the Catholic Church was a, if not the, principal refuge for anti-regime organization within Chile during the 1970s and early 1980s. This process, based as it was in cultural contexts, is difficult to quantify, but it is not ambiguous.

Poster also asks about the role of international institutions, in particular the United Nations (UN), and the interactions these institutions had with grassroots

¹ Ana María Hoyl, *Por la vida* (Santiago: CESOC, 2003), 226-96.

organizations. This is an important question and one that has been the subject of much recent scholarly debate, including that of historians. Given the volume's efforts to contribute to 'decentering' the historical narrative of the Cold War and its concomitant arguments about the significance of grassroots actors in specific local and historical contexts, it should be no surprise that massive international organizations like the UN remain back stage. Even so, several authors in this collection do offer key insights to this realm. While some leftists, particularly political prisoners and asylum seekers, viewed the UN as a lifeline and a source of potential assistance, many grassroots groups saw organizations like the UN as an extension of the neo-imperialist ambitions of the United States and Europe. Such a concern is particularly salient in the case of the Salvadoran refugees.² Refugee committees frequently critiqued individual representatives of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), as well as the institution, for what they considered contradictory – even hypocritical – behavior. The UNHCR's mandate demanded apolitical attention to refugees, yet the institution's representatives engaged with government officials, including those from the United States, while they snubbed the refugees' own elected leaders. Moreover, petitions sent to request that UN officials investigate human rights abuses in various countries were often met with serious limitations in light of the relative power of the United States and its allies within that organization.

However, Salvadoran refugees in Honduras certainly understood and took advantage of the material benefits associated with their status as UN-recognized refugees. Put another way, they often circumscribed their actions in order to minimize the risk of losing those benefits. At the same time, when refugees and other grassroots groups engaged international organizations – protesting outside headquarters or sending petitions, for example – it was typically in the hopes of attracting attention from the international press. In light of dissimilar goals and distrust, it should come as no surprise that this volume's authors found very little evidence that grassroots organizations hoped to coordinate activities with the UN or other mass international organizations beyond the symbolic, solicitous, or strategic. Indeed, they often challenged the primacy of human rights within the missions of international agencies, emphasizing instead socioeconomic reform as a foundation for authentic political change. This finding speaks to the challenge raised by Joe Renouard about how the subject of transnational solidarity can inform understandings of human rights politics on the ground in Latin America. Frequently, solidarity presented a separate space in which to organize and think about political mobilization, one that sometimes provided contrast with and confronted extant human rights, development, and democracy models.

To further respond to Renouard's critique, we argue that this volume does speak to diplomacy and international approaches to human rights politics. The various

² See also Molly Todd, *Beyond Displacement: Campesinos, Refugees, and Citizen Action in the Salvadoran Civil War* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2010).

contributions to the volume examine issues such as the influence of diplomacy on global sporting events, the role of refugee camps in international conflict, and Castro's diplomatic international relations with Africa.³ But beyond this, we offer for consideration an intimate familiarity with contested arenas of power, spaces of political identity construction, and of informal institutions of political unity. Ernesto Capello's 'pliable center' presents a body politic that realizes the potential of transnational activism, and in the process learns how to make requests of an international community even prior to organizing a formal movement. Molly Todd and Alison Bruey lay bare consciousness-raising taking place in clandestinity prior to the solidification of a formal political apparatus, while Brenda Elsey and Russell Cobb examine formal cultural structures as they became politicized by Cold War politics and emergent solidarities. Sara Sanders reflects on the place of the national in creating a base for Latin American transnational organizing, and James Green offers an account of intimate relationships and key conflicts within the gay rights movement in Brazil. These case studies reveal the groundwork of mobilization and the testing grounds of political thought, which is where these authors have looked to understand the epistemological origins of human rights and transnational solidarity ethics. William Michael Schmidli's review furthers this point, asking of Capello's and Sanders's pieces to clarify both what solidarity meant in context and whether it was always transnational. We hope that this volume does broaden the scope of studies of solidarity beyond the political campaign to consider these key aspects of solidarity politics, particularly in asking *how* and *why* they become transnational.

Schmidli raises another key point, which is whether shifting our research paradigm somehow minimizes the power of the United States. Here we would caution that, as Green's piece illustrates very clearly, the United States did not operate in a monolithic and singular way in human rights politics in Latin America during the Cold War. Indeed, a range of U.S. elected officials, most notably Senator Edward Kennedy and Congressman Michael Harrington, along with others, not only denounced the violation of human rights by the U.S. government in Latin America, but actively campaigned to welcome refugees from the military dictatorships into the country. As Jim Green, Vania Markarian, and Margaret Power have shown, a broad swathe of the U.S. public mobilized in defense of human rights in Latin America and built broad and effective campaigns in the process.⁴ Indeed, various leftist organizations in Central and South America distinguished between the U.S. 'gobierno' and the U.S. 'pueblo.' The former – militaristic, with selfish imperial designs, represented by the likes of President Ronald Reagan and Ambassador John

³ See Christine Hatzky, *Cubans in Angola: South-South Cooperation And Transfer Of Knowledge (1976-1991)* (Forthcoming, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press).

⁴ James N. Green, *We Cannot Remain Silent: Opposition to the Brazilian Military Dictatorship in the United States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010); Vania Markarian, *Left in Transformation: Uruguayan Exiles and the Latin American Human Rights Network, 1967-1984* (New York: Routledge, 2005); Margaret Power, "The U.S. Movement in Solidarity with Chile in the 1970s," *Latin American Perspectives*, 36.6 (2009): 46-66.

Negroponte, ran roughshod over rights, as in the Iran Contra Affair. The latter, people morally troubled by the contradictions between rhetoric and action, shared a dedication to solidary, human rights, and socioeconomic justice.

We encourage future research into ‘which United States’ was active in various ways and places during the Cold War. And in fact, new scholarship has begun to focus attention on this question.⁵ As the introduction to the volume states, the United States was clearly at the center of many conflicts, the formidable common enemy of anti-imperialists and leftists of many stripes. However, it was not always the grand narrative of U.S. hegemony that motivated political interactions. The United States was not at the center of the daily lives of people living in urban shantytowns organizing for survival, nor was it at the center of gay rights activism in Rio de Janeiro. It was, however, too close for comfort for those involved in many of these struggles, particularly the Puerto Rican political prisoners in Puerto Rico or Atlanta, and those who sought refuge from violent, U.S.-backed governments in Central America and elsewhere.

To the point, Renaud questions whether or not Puerto Rican prisoners qualified as political asylum seekers, as such, since they used violence against the state. The label political prisoner does, indeed, raise conceptual issues, since it reflects and defines both the political context in which one becomes a prisoner and the political position one holds in relation to that struggle. Although Amnesty International defines political prisoners as prisoners of conscience, many of the human rights and solidarity movements within Latin America did not, since a number of prisoners engaged in armed struggle in pursuit of political goals. And, once again, it was local Latin American solidarity movements, human rights and leftist organizations, along with the political prisoners, that advanced this understanding. Solidarity and human rights movements outside the region largely took their cues from local activists and accepted their definitions of political prisoners.

The example of how we understand the category of political prisoner during the Cold War offers, we hope, one example of several contributions this volume makes. While not denying the hegemonic power of the United States over the region, the book shifts the focus from Washington to Latin America. In doing so, it tells the stories of actors that have been largely overlooked or insufficiently understood. The volume seeks to understand how these otherwise marginalized historical figures viewed themselves and their interactions with the United States, and insists that they be considered on their own terms. It shows that the all-too-frequently ignored victims or targets of Cold War violence were, in fact, key actors in the political

⁵ Ashley Black, “Of Soldiers and Saints: Gender Constructs, the Puerto Rican Independence Movement, and the Fight against Conscription, 1964-1970,” *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, 76.1 (2014); Frances Peace Sullivan, “For the Liberty of the Nine Boys in Scottsboro, and against Yankee Imperialist Domination in Latin America’: Cuba’s Scottsboro Defence Campaign,” *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, 76.1 (2014).

encounters that made up the period. Although these battles occurred more or less far away from the United States, they nevertheless engaged with, confronted, and, in some cases, successfully challenged the policies of the U.S. government and its allies. In the process, they frequently reshaped understandings of trans-border political responsibility and meaningful change. By foregrounding their stories, this volume not only brings to light important and relatively unknown political processes, but it also redefines the role that bottom-up transnational solidarities played in shaping the contours of the Cold War.

It is our collective hope that the dialogue initiated by this roundtable will further our critical understandings of human rights and will encourage scholars to take up the challenge of advancing our understandings of transnational political unities across the Global South.

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