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Introduction by Thomas A. Schwartz

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Introduction by Thomas A. Schwartz, Vanderbilt University

It is with some melancholy that I write this introduction. This is not a reference to Sarah Snyder's outstanding new contribution to the history of human rights in American diplomacy. I was privileged to be one of the reviewers of the original manuscript for Columbia University Press, and I consider it an impressive and persuasive work of scholarship, adding considerably to our knowledge of the ways in which human rights became a significant issue in American foreign policy before the presidency of Jimmy Carter. My sadness comes from observing our current President praising some of the worst violators of human rights, North Korea's Kim Jong Un and Russia's Vladimir Putin, while denouncing countries that respect those principles, like the members of NATO and the European Union. Historians know that nostalgia is a dangerous temptation, but sometimes it is a welcome relief from the current headlines.

From Selma to Moscow is something of a prequel for Snyder, building off her award-winning *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War: A Transnational History of the Helsinki Network* (2011), a book that highlighted the multilateral dimensions of the Helsinki Agreement of 1975 and its transformative contribution to the end of the Cold War in Europe. Her new book is a careful examination of the development of human rights as an issue in American foreign policy from the early 1960s through the election of Jimmy Carter. In exploring this era, which Snyder calls the 'long 1960s,' she uses a series of case studies—the Soviet Union, Southern Rhodesia, Greece, South Korea, and Chile—to demonstrate how social movements and transnational connections stimulated activism on human rights. This activism ultimately led to the establishment of institutions to monitor human rights abuses and legislation that made human rights a priority in American foreign policy.

The four reviewers in this roundtable largely share my enthusiasm for Snyder's book, referring to her "cogent" arguments, "meticulous research," and the "impressive job" she has done in "interweaving the multiplicity of activist voices." Lauren Turek notes that Snyder's book adds "tremendously" to our understanding of the human rights movement. Christian Peterson, who is probably the most critical of Snyder's approach, also praises her for illuminating how "elite actors" more than grassroots activists played the important role during this period in placing human rights on the national agenda. Representative Donald Fraser (D-MN) emerges as the one of the key 'political entrepreneurs' who played a central role in the Congressional activism on human rights. Snyder's work also contributes to our historical understanding of Congress's role in American foreign policy, a subject that rarely receives the attention it deserves.¹

The reviewers also praise Snyder's book for its incisive look at the connection between domestic politics and foreign policy, what Steven Jensen terms "the political imaginaries that shaped political action." Although Turek thinks that Snyder's proposed link between civil and human rights activists is a "bit faint," there is little question of a connection. *From Selma to Moscow* strongly suggests that when President Johnson declared in 1966 that "we will not live by a double standard, professing abroad what we do not practice at home or venerating at home what we ignore abroad" (52), this was not just throwaway political rhetoric. The domestic

¹ I am somewhat biased on this point, as my friend, Robert Johnson, has been a pioneer in this field. Robert Johnson, *Congress and the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

transformations of American society in the 1960s clearly influenced the goals and priorities of American foreign policy, particularly in the case of human rights.

The reviewers do raise some questions about the book. Jensen argues that Snyder does not sufficiently address the multilateral dimensions of this issue, and questions why the United Nations is missing from Snyder's story. Given Snyder's first book, this is a somewhat ironic, but the connections between the United Nations and American activism on civil rights have certainly drawn attention in recent years.² Peterson raises a question about the Snyder book that goes well beyond its historical treatment of the issue of human rights, to question whether "the promotion of human rights cannot transform the world by itself." He notes that a focus on human rights left the movement "hamstrung" on the issue of economic inequality. The Soviet Union raised a similar point when the United States first began campaigning for human rights during the Cold War. At that time, the Soviet criticism of human rights had Marxist roots, with the argument that America's bourgeois insistence on human rights did not correspond to the importance of social and economic rights that communist states provided. In today's world, authoritarians thrive by promoting themselves as the answer to the economic insecurity that the global recession of 2008-2009 created. Simon Hall raises a question at the end of his review of just how fundamental and long term a "transformation" has occurred in American foreign policy as a result of the focus on human rights. Certainly, the absence of that subject from recent international summits brings home the weight of this objection.

None of these criticisms, however, should detract from the importance of Sarah Snyder's book. She has made a significant contribution to the history of American foreign relations, and provided an insightful example of the manner in which citizen activism has served to affect international relations and the making of American foreign policy.

Participants:

Sarah B. Snyder teaches at American University's School of International Service. She is the author of *From Selma to Moscow: How Human Rights Activists Transformed U.S. Foreign Policy* (Columbia University Press, 2018) and *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War: A Transnational History of the Helsinki Network*, (Cambridge University Press, 2011). *The CSCE and the End of the Cold War: Diplomacy, Societies and Human Rights, 1972-1990*, co-edited with Nicolas Badalassi, is forthcoming from Berghahn Books this year.

Thomas A. Schwartz is a Professor of History and Political Science at Vanderbilt University. Most recently he is the co-editor with Matthias Schulz, *The Strained Alliance: US-European Relations in the 1970s* (Cambridge University Press, 2009). He is currently finishing a study of former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger entitled *Henry Kissinger and American Power*.

Simon Hall is Professor of Modern History at the University of Leeds. He earned his Ph.D. at the University of Cambridge and, in 2002, was a Fox International Fellow at Yale University. His most recent book is *1956: The World in Revolt* (London: Faber and Faber; New York: Pegasus Books, 2016).

² Most notably in Carol E. Anderson, *Eyes Off the Prize: The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944-1955* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Steven L.B. Jensen is a Senior Researcher at The Danish Institute for Human Rights and holds a Ph.D. in History from the University of Copenhagen. He has published the book *The Making of International Human Rights. The 1960s, Decolonization and the Reconstruction of Global Values* (Cambridge University Press 2016) which was awarded the *2017 Human Rights Best Book Award* from the International Studies Association and the *Chadwick Alger Prize for Best Book on International Organization*. His other publications include “From the normative to the transnational: methods in the study of human rights history” (with Roland Burke) published in *Research Methods in Human Rights. A Handbook* (Edward Elgar 2017). He is currently working on a project on social and economic rights after 1945.

Christian Philip Peterson is a Professor of History at Ferris State University in Big Rapids, Michigan. He has written articles for publications such as *Diplomatic History* and *The Journal of Cold War Studies* (forthcoming). He has also authored two books: *Ronald Reagan and Antinuclear Movements in the United States and Western Europe* (2003) and *Globalizing Human Rights: Private Citizens, the Soviet Union, and the West* (2011). His co-edited volume *The Routledge History of World Peace since 1750* will appear in August 2018. He is currently working with Polish Foreign Minister Jacek Czaputowicz on a book tentatively titled *Changing the World From Below: The Transnational Struggle for Peace, Human Rights, and a People's Détente*.

Lauren Turek is an assistant professor of history at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas, where she teaches courses on modern United States history, U.S. foreign relations, and public history. She earned her Ph.D. in history from the University of Virginia. Her research centers on transnational religious networks and the influence of non-state religious actors on international politics, U.S. foreign policy, and domestic political culture. Turek's articles on religion in American politics and foreign policy have appeared in *Diplomatic History*, the *Journal of American Studies*, and *Religions* and her book project, *To Bring the Good News to All Nations: Evangelicals, Human Rights, and U.S. Foreign Relations*, is under contract with Cornell University Press.

Review by Simon Hall, University of Leeds

Jimmy Carter's election in 1976 was, according to many historians, the pivotal moment when both the American public, and policymakers in Washington, embraced the cause of human rights.¹ Not so, argues Sarah B. Snyder, in her important new book, *From Selma to Moscow*. Using in-depth explorations of the U.S. response to human rights abuses in the Soviet Union (especially the difficulties facing Jewish citizens who wished to emigrate); Rhodesian leader Ian Smith's unilateral declaration of independence in November 1965; the 1967 seizure of power by the Greek colonels; growing authoritarianism in South Korea under Park Chung Hee; and General Augusto Pinochet's 1973 coup d'état in Chile, she argues that "transnational connections and social movements" (1) during the 'long 1960s' "ushered in the institutionalization of human rights in U.S. foreign policy and the expansion of human rights activism in the United States during the late 1970s, 1980s, and beyond" (2).

The notion of the 'long 1960s' has become increasingly fashionable among historians (full disclosure: I am a fashionista).² But those writing about this decade, whether in its long or short manifestations, have tended to place student radicals, civil rights protesters, and proponents of various forms of identity politics centre stage.³ Snyder's activists, though, are cut from somewhat different—and usually more expensive—cloth. At the heart of her short, punchy narrative, are lawyers, religious leaders, former Peace Corps volunteers, Non-governmental organization (NGO) officials, and college professors with impeccable transnational connections. The latter mobilised to particularly good effect when the Greek socialist Andreas Papandreou, who had taught economics for many years at the University of Minnesota, was arrested by the military junta. Their flurry of representations to the White House prompted President Johnson to quip about an unprecedented outbreak of unity among the nation's economists; meanwhile he let it be known that he had "told those Greek bastards to lay off that son-of-a-bitch—whoever he is" (68). In their efforts to raise the importance of human rights, Snyder's elite, middle-class activists were joined by low-level diplomats (State Department officials based in-country had an enthusiasm for raising human rights concerns that was not always reciprocated by their

¹ See, for instance, Douglas Brinkley, 'The Rising Stock of Jimmy Carter: The 'Hands-on' Legacy of Our Thirty-Ninth President' (Bernath Lecture), *Diplomatic History* 20:4 (Fall 1996): 505–530; John Dumbrell, *The Carter Presidency: A Re-Evaluation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995); David M. Schmitz and Vanessa Walker, 'Jimmy Carter and the Foreign Policy of Human Rights: The Development of Cold War Foreign Policy', *Diplomatic History* 28:1 (January 2004): 113–143; and Robert A. Strong, *Working in the World: Jimmy Carter and the Making of American Foreign Policy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000).

² For an overview of recent Sixties historiography see Simon Hall, 'Framing the American 1960s: A Historiographical Review', *European Journal of American Culture* 31:1 (April 2012): 5–23. On the 'long 1960s' see especially Arthur Marwick, 'The Cultural Revolution of the Long Sixties: Voices of Reaction, Protest, and Permeation', *The International History Review* 27:4 (2005): 780–806; Stephen Tuck, 'Reconsidering the 1970s: The 1960s to a Disco Beat?' and Simon Hall, 'Protest Movements in the 1970s: The Long 1960s', *Journal of Contemporary History* 43:4 (October 2008): 655–672.

³ See, for instance, Martin Halliwell and Nick Witham, eds., *Reframing 1968: American Politics, Protest and Identity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018) and Gerd-Rainer Horn, *The Spirit of '68: Rebellion in Western Europe and North America, 1956–1976* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

superiors back in Washington) and members of Congress. It is 1960s activism, but not as we knew it—and all the more refreshing for that.

As Snyder demonstrates, throughout the period bookended by the inaugurations of John F. Kennedy and Jimmy Carter, the record of the U.S. government in the face of various human rights crises was mixed, at best. To its credit, the Johnson administration refused to recognise Ian Smith's rogue regime in Rhodesia, recalled the American consul in Salisbury, and froze loans and credit. As well as being genuinely concerned about human rights, Washington was also keen, in the words of Deputy National Security Adviser Robert Komer, to "stay on the right side of all the Afro-Asians." As Komer explained, "Vietnam, South Asia, or Berlin are far away, but these African issues are seen by Africans as an intimate part of their own struggle for independence..." (50). Senior figures in Washington were also highly conscious of the connections between the struggle for civil rights at home, and questions of democracy and human rights abroad. Speaking in May 1966, President Johnson declared that "we will not live by a double standard, professing abroad what we do not practice at home or venerating at home what we ignore abroad" (52).

There was, though, another reason behind the Johnson administration's response: the hope that, by taking a strong stance over Rhodesia, where U.S. interests were relatively limited, it might relieve some of the pressure to act more firmly with apartheid South Africa—a key Cold War ally, and one that enjoyed strong economic links to the United States. When human rights concerns had to compete with significant U.S. economic, strategic, security, or diplomatic interests—whether in the Soviet Union, Greece, or South Korea—there was only ever going to be one outcome.

In *From Selma to Moscow* Snyder returns, repeatedly, to a few key themes. The importance of domestic political concerns in the shaping of U.S. foreign policy is, for instance, never very far away. Senator George McGovern's presidential campaign attacks on Richard Nixon for having "never spoken out" on the tribulations of Soviet Jews prompted the president to raise public concerns about the onerous 'exit tax' that would-be emigres had to pay with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko in October 1972, shortly before the election. And, while the Johnson administration had viewed its stance on Rhodesia as—necessarily—congruent with its support for civil rights at home, the Nixon administration's decision to ease restrictions on the basis that "the United States could exert more influence through closer relations" was, it seems, a corollary to its 'southern strategy' of placating white voters at home. Snyder also leaves her readers (or this one, at any rate) with the distinct impression that the U.S. government was typically more concerned about public relations than with tackling the underlying human rights issues at hand. Even as the Nixon administration's policy towards Rhodesia softened, for instance, National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger insisted that "There has not been, nor is any consideration being given, to a relaxation of U.S. support for UN resolutions prohibiting Rhodesian imports" (54). And, in the aftermath of the Chilean military coup that overthrew the democratically elected government of Salvador Allende, U.S. officials spent little time worrying about whether or not they should support the new military junta. When agreeing to send riot control equipment and ammunition General Pinochet's way, though, they were all too aware of the need to accommodate the request as discreetly as possible.

Snyder argues persuasively that, for the most part, the White House remained steadfast in the face of growing pressure from elected representatives, NGOs, officials, and activists, to be more responsive to human rights concerns. One of the chief roadblocks to change was Kissinger. A long-time advocate of *realpolitik*, who consistently rebuffed efforts to envelop human rights concerns into foreign policy, Kissinger repeatedly admonished diplomats and officials to "cut out the political science lectures" (116). In Kissinger's view the

U.S. was either “involved because we have American foreign-policy interests or we shouldn’t be involved at all.” In January 1974, at a time when Korean students faced mass arrests, torture, and even murder at the hands of the American-backed government, Kissinger opined that, “I don’t think it is worth our investment to democratize Korea” (101). A year earlier, he had told President Nixon that “The emigration of Jews from the Soviet Union is not an objective of American foreign policy. Why, if they put Jews into gas chambers in the Soviet Union it is not an American concern” (32). In our own times, when so many geopolitical certainties are being upended on a seemingly daily basis, I found it oddly reassuring that Kissinger’s reputation as the Bond villain of twentieth-century American statecraft survived Snyder’s forensic analysis with barely a scratch.⁴ One of her more intriguing findings, though, is that he was consistently challenged over his approach to human rights by some of his closest advisors—including Philip Habib, Assistant Secretary for East Asian Affairs, and NSC staffer Winston Lord.

Frustrated by White House intransigence, activist members of Congress who wanted a more moral foreign policy, and who elevated cultural and economic approaches above what they viewed as a crude reliance on military solutions, sought both to highlight their disagreements with the executive branch and to insist on a change in policy. To begin with, they concentrated their efforts on trying to restrict foreign aid to particular countries, but increasingly came to push for wider measures to ensure that human rights received a higher billing. One of the heroes of this story is Donald Fraser, the Minnesotan Democrat who chaired the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movements. Fraser, who believed that the U.S. government had been far too willing to cosy up to authoritarian regimes in the cause of containing international Communism, worked tirelessly to cut off foreign aid from governments that violated human rights, including the junta in Athens and the Park regime in South Korea. In 1973, though, he changed tack, holding a series of prominent hearings on human rights before issuing a report, *Human Rights in the World Community: A Call for U.S. Leadership*. It urged the State Department to “treat human rights factors as a regular part of U.S. foreign policy decision-making” (153) and called for human rights to be granted a higher priority. To help achieve this, the authors recommended a number of administrative changes, including the creation of an Office for Human Rights within the Bureau of International Organization Affairs. Under pressure, the State Department (now headed by Kissinger) did change: James M. Wilson, Jr. was appointed coordinator for humanitarian affairs (later assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs) in April 1975; even the new Secretary of State felt compelled to address the topic. Speaking at the *Pacem in Terris* conference in October 1973, Kissinger declared that “we shall never condone the suppression of fundamental liberties. We shall urge humane principles and use our influence to promote justice.” “But,” he added, “the issue comes down to the limits of such efforts” (155).

The mid-1970s also saw a newly assertive Congress pass specific measures, including the International Security Assistance and Arms Export Control Act of 1976, which prevented security assistance from being granted to countries that consistently engaged in serious human rights abuses and required the State Department to compile reports on each country in receipt of such support. Meanwhile the so-called Harkin Amendment (passed in 1975 thanks to the efforts of Iowa’s Tom Harkin) prevented Washington from providing economic assistance to governments engaging in gross human rights violations, unless it could be shown that such aid would directly benefit the poor and needy. All of this, Snyder argues, amounted to “a significant moment in U.S. foreign-policy formation” (166).

⁴ Christopher Hitchens, *The Trial of Henry Kissinger* (New York: Verso Books, 2001).

The question remains, though: did it? By ending *From Selma to Moscow* during the dying days of Gerald Ford's presidency, we never get to see how—or whether—the administrative changes within the State Department and the measures passed by Congress actually made a meaningful difference in the years that followed. Reflecting on the low priority afforded to human rights during the so-called War on Terror, Synder concedes that *From Selma to Moscow* is “an instructive rather than triumphal tale” (172). But one is left wondering whether the ‘transformation’ that Snyder has argued for was, instead, an all-too-brief aberration.

Review by Steven L.B. Jensen, The Danish Institute for Human Rights

U.S. human rights historiography is a strange creature. Despite a significant expansion in recent years, it is still marked by some significant blind spots. One of these is linked to chronology. The 1940s, 1970s, and also now the 1980s are indeed well-covered but the time period from around 1955 to the late 1960s has essentially been ignored. This is worth noting not least because the 1960s was a vital decade for the emergence of international human rights politics, diplomacy, and law and the system associated with this. One other blind spot is the United Nations and the accompanying multilateral diplomacy situated there. While the United Nations is featured in U.S. human rights literature in regards to the early years—especially around the San Francisco Conference and the UN Charter to the adoption of the Universal Declaration in 1948—it evaporates with the above-mentioned gap in literature that starts around 1955.¹ The United Nations never really reappears in the historiography on human rights and the U.S.² Instead it is dominated by histories of presidential administrations and especially their relations with Congress or U.S. bilateral relations with violating states.³

One of the virtues of Sarah B. Snyder's fine new book is that she addresses the chronological blind spot. She focuses on the period from 1961 to 1977 (what she calls 'the long 1960s') as the defining period which enables us to understand how human rights made their way into U.S. foreign policy. This is an important intervention in several ways. First, it counters the 'breakthrough' thesis that for some time dominated the new human rights historiography with the 1970s in focus.⁴ Refreshingly, Snyder focuses on the slow, incremental process of how human rights made its way into U.S. foreign policy. This approach imbibes a greater sense of historicity and thus allows the reader to better understand the slow processes of change in foreign policy-making and the shift in balance between interests and values that began to materialize during this time period.

The book is structured around bilateral relations and how the U.S. handled human rights crisis situations in the Soviet Union, Rhodesia, Greece, South Korea and Chile with the South Korea chapter emerging as particularly illuminating. Snyder's analysis shows that the main political contestations over human rights were those between the White House and high-level decision-making versus Congressional politicians, Non-

¹ Mary Ann Glendon, *A World Made New. Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (New York: Random House, 2005); Carol Anderson, *Eyes off the Prize. The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944-1955* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2003); Elizabeth Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World. America's Vision for Human Rights* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); Glenn Mitoma, *Human Rights and the Negotiation of American Power* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

² One exception being H. Timothy Lovelace Jr. "Making the World in Atlanta's Image: The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, Morris Abram and the Legislative History of the United Nations Race Convention," *Law and History Review* 32:2 (2014): 385-429.

³ See, for example, Joe Renouard, *Human Rights in American Foreign Policy. From the 1960s to the Soviet Collapse* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016). This book aims to cover 1967 to 1991 but with relatively little on the late 1960s.

⁴ Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia. Human Rights in History* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010); Jan Eckel and Samuel Moyn, *The Breakthrough. Human Rights in the 1970s* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014).

governmental organizations (NGOs) or State Department officials. Snyder features Secretary of State Henry Kissinger especially well here in his frequent clashes with advisors in his own department to keep human rights out of U.S. foreign relations.

Although this aspect is well-known, Snyder's contribution captures the tension and the shifting dynamics between quiet diplomacy and public diplomacy in U.S. foreign policy practice during 'the long 1960s.' As various administrations were challenged on human rights by a variety of activist individuals and organizations, the State Department argued for the use of quiet diplomacy where human rights matters in this process rather deliberately seemed to fall silent. This behavior was criticized by activists—and increasingly also by State Department officials—and led to more outspoken challenges to U.S. diplomatic practice. Here Snyder could have been more explicit on the changing dynamics between quiet and public diplomacy because this represented a larger shift that had longstanding implications for human rights (while not being exclusive to them). Between the 1960s and the 1970s, foreign policy moved much more into the public domain for a variety of reasons and in ways the political establishment could not so easily control. As the public dimension brought the debate on American values closer to the forefront, this changed the practice of diplomacy. This was an opportunity for those actors pushing for a greater role for human rights in foreign policy but it was also, Snyder shows, an opportunity they had, at least in small ways, helped to foster.

The absence of the United Nations (UN) in Snyder's book is noticeable not least because Snyder writes in the introduction that "an analysis of the reasons that prompted greater attention to human rights during the long 1960s must include the role of the UN, which was dramatically transformed in the wake of decolonization" (6). The UN, however, is mentioned only in passing throughout and is never integral to the overall analysis. Much later in her conclusion she presents an acute and interesting observation when she writes that the "shift in focus, away from the UN in New York toward the federal government in Washington, is the second novel and significant characteristic of human rights activism during the long 1960s" (169). Snyder does not explain why this happened or the dynamics behind this shift.

Multilateral diplomacy is thereby not really captured. This is an unfortunate omission because the unpacking of United Nations human rights diplomacy does illuminate interesting aspects of American politics. The United States was certainly not a driving force in this field of multilateral human rights diplomacy but its reactive role as a superpower and its efforts to catch up with global developments in international law and politics pushed forward by decolonization should be 'required viewing' as part of the story of U.S. foreign policy engagement on human rights.

During the 1960s, the United States' interventions in the human rights debates at the UN often took the form of a piece of story-telling about the nature of American history and politics to present the U.S. in a better and more hopeful light than what Jim Crow and the violent curtailment of the civil rights movement symbolized. This approach did yield some beneficial effects as the story-telling gained credibility when backed by the passing of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and 1965 Voting Rights Act. This meant that the U.S. was viewed more positively by many and this helped to further energize international human rights diplomacy in the mid-1960s. This was a far cry from 1951, when the U.S. had tried to close down the different human rights bodies at the UN which would have reshaped the new international organization in the process. The failure of

this attempt opened the door for the domestic and much more public reckoning with the UN and international human rights known as the Bricker Amendment process.⁵

During the 1950s and 1960s, the United States began to use the UN as a forum to act out a more progressive version of itself that domestic politics did not (yet) allow. One example was when the Eisenhower administration post-Little Rock placed the relatively prominent anti-discrimination lawyer-legislator Caroline Simon, a Republican from New York, as an expert at the UN Commission on Human Rights. She addressed non-discrimination in new ways that lifted this debate into territory where much more precise definitions of discrimination were put forward in an international setting. Morris Abram, the US member of the Commission during an important part of the 1960s, was highly active in positioning the United States in new ways in its evolving international human rights diplomacy. In the 1970s, when Congressman Donald Fraser was pushing for the U.S. to address “gross human rights violations” around the world, he specifically drew on UN-agreed terminology introduced in 1967 when the investigative mechanism called UN Special Procedures was first established. The point is that the U.S./United Nations nexus is of greater historical significance in explaining the transformation of U.S. foreign policy on human rights than Snyder’s book allows. This imbalance between the bilateral and multilateral dimensions is the missing element in her interesting and meticulously researched book.

Snyder’s evocative book title, *From Selma to Moscow*, originates from a slogan on a banner at a March 1965 rally for Soviet Jewry that took place in Philadelphia. As Snyder explains, the slogan drew connections between those “engaged in activism on behalf of civil rights and on behalf of human rights” (9). But this is more than an evocative quote. It actually contains a research question in itself that deserves to be further explored. It is a question that points towards a closer dynamic between domestic politics and foreign policy-making (with the multilateral diplomatic setting as a facilitating factor herein) and the political imaginaries that shaped political action. The book title could inspire us to ask the following: How broadly should we conceive of the actors behind the transformation bringing human rights into U.S. foreign policy? To what extent did the changes in U.S. domestic politics in the 1960s that were being pushed by the civil rights movement enable human rights—in the aftermath—to be integrated into U.S. foreign policy? What broader social forces and historical connections should we focus on to adequately capture this story? By repositioning the chronology underpinning this story, Sarah Snyder’s book has guided us to ask these questions with a greater sense of urgency.

⁵ Steven L.B. Jensen, *The Making of International Human Rights. The 1960s, Decolonization and the Reconstruction of Global Values* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); Jensen, “‘The Stain of our Original Sin’: Social Rights, Discrimination and the Contested Mandate of the United Nations, 1950-1960”, forthcoming article.

Review by Christian Philip Peterson, Ferris State University

During the past twenty years, numerous scholars have addressed the questions of when and for what purposes human beings have embraced the cause of human rights promotion.¹ A number of these accounts have examined the role that human rights have played in the conduct of U.S. foreign policy.² This scholarship remains as relevant as ever given the growing concerns about the efficacy of the entire human rights promotion project and the global health of democratic government.³ In his recent op-ed in the *New York Times*, the historian Samuel Moyn goes so far as to argue that the contemporary human rights movement has failed. Instead of focusing on publicizing specific abuses, activists need to spend more time combatting income inequality to reduce the appeal of the radical populist ideas that have proven so hostile to respect for basic human rights in recent times.⁴

¹ For example, see Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2010); Jan Eckel and Samuel Moyn, eds., *The Breakthrough: Human Rights in the 1970s* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014); Akira Iriye, Petra Goedde, eds., *The Human Rights Revolution: An International History* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, ed., *Human Rights in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Mark Mazower, "The Strange Triumph of Human Rights, 1933-1950," *The Historical Journal* 47:2 (2004): 379-398; Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History*. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008); Kenneth Cmiel, "The Recent History of Human Rights," *The American Historical Review* 109:1 (2004): 117-135; Kathryn Sikkink, *Evidence for Hope: Making Human Rights Work in the 21st Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017); and Steven L.B. Jensen, *The Making of International Human Rights. The 1960s, Decolonization and the Reconstruction of Global Values* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017). For works that primarily focus on U.S. human rights promotion, see Daniel Sargent, "Oasis in the Desert? America's Human Rights Rediscovery," in Jan Eckel and Samuel Moyn, eds., *The Breakthrough*. Kenneth Cmiel, "The Emergence of Human Rights Politics in the United States," *The Journal of American History* 86:3 (1999): 1231-1250; Barbara Keys, *Reclaiming American Virtue: The Human Rights Revolution of the 1970s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014); Elizabeth Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World: America's Vision for Human Rights* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); and Mark Philip Bradley, *The Word Reimagined: Americans and Human Rights in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

² To cite a few examples, see Joe Renouard, *Human Rights in American Foreign Policy: From the 1960s to the Soviet Collapse* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016); Sarah B. Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Christian Philip Peterson, *Globalizing Human Rights: Private Citizens, the Soviet Union, and the West* (New York: Routledge, 2011); and William Michael Schmidli, *The Fate of Freedom Elsewhere: Human Rights and US Cold War Policy Toward Argentina* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2017).

³ For a thought-provoking critique of human rights promotion, see Samuel Moyn, *Not Enough: Human Rights in an Unequal World* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2018). See also Sarah Margon, "Giving Up on the High Ground," *Foreign Affairs* 97 (March/April 2018): 39-47 and Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die* (Crown: New York, 2018). The May/June 2018 issue of *Foreign Affairs* is entitled "Is Democracy Dying: A Global Report."

⁴ Samuel Moyn, "How the Human Rights Movement Failed," *New York Times*, 23 April 2018, accessed 21 May 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/23/opinion/human-rights-movement-failed.html>.

The debates about the origins and impact of human rights promotion show few signs of abating.⁵ In her new book *From Selma to Moscow*, Sarah B. Snyder utilizes case studies and a cogent analysis of U.S. Congressional activism to explain how and why Americans embraced the cause of human rights during the “long 1960s.” Drawing on her extensive archival research, she adds important dimensions to the story of how human rights became institutionalized in the conduct of U.S. foreign policy. Although her book deserves a wide audience, one could quibble with how Snyder uses the idea of the ‘long 1960s’ to periodize the rise of U.S. human rights activism; one can also question her choice of case studies. When viewed through a wider lens, her arguments also reinforce just how much human rights remain “historically contingent and politically contested notions” whose promotion has inherent limitations as a means of making this world a better place for all.⁶

Taking issues with several influential studies, Snyder argues that Americans did not embrace the cause of human rights promotion during the 1970s because of “Jimmy Carter’s 1976 [Presidential election], guilt over the war in Vietnam, or failed political utopias (1).”⁷ Instead, she contends that the “transnational connections and social movements” of the ‘long 1960s’ best explain the rise of the U.S. human rights activism, a time period that she defines “as the years between John F. Kennedy’s inauguration and Jimmy Carter’s in 1977 (2).” To illustrate this argument, she first points out how the actors in her book tended to understand ‘human rights’ as being civil and political as opposed to broader definitions that include economic and social rights—an appropriate observation. She then documents how the growing transnational connections of the ‘long 1960s’ such as working for the Peace Corps led some Americans to take a greater interest in opposing the harsh treatment of people in other countries. After explaining other factors such as the decline of the Cold War ‘consensus’ and the impact of decolonization, she recounts how new and already established Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Freedom House began to see shaping the “behavior of US policymakers” as a more effective way to promote human rights than working through the ineffective United Nations (7).

The rise of U.S. human rights activism also reflected the impact of rights-based activism and the Supreme Court’s ‘rights revolution’ of the 1960s. In contrast to historians like Moyn, Snyder contends that paying

⁵ In her most recent book, Kathryn Sikkink defends the accomplishments of human rights activists and the continued importance of promoting human rights. See *Evidence for Hope*. See also Caroline Bettinger-López, “The Long Arc of Human Rights,” *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 2018): 186-90.

⁶ For a cogent summary of human rights historiography that emphasizes the “historicity” and “contingent” nature of human rights, see Robert Brier, “Beyond the Quest for a ‘Breakthrough’: Reflections on the Recent Historiography on Human Rights,” *European History Yearbook* 2015157 and 164, 23 April 2018, <https://www.degruyter.com/downloadpdf/books/9783110415162/9783110415162-009/9783110415162-009.pdf>. Daniel Sargent makes a similar argument in “Oasis in the Desert?”

⁷ Barbara Keys emphasizes “guilt over the Vietnam War,” whereas Moyn views the rise of human rights as a new “political utopia.” See Keys, *Reclaiming American Virtue* and Moyn, *The Last Utopia*. Mark Philip Bradley uses a sophisticated “contrapuntal” and transnational framework to explain how the idea of human rights became “believable [author’s italics] for American publics” during the 1940s and 1970s. While Bradley utilizes a wide array of visual images and interesting social/cultural history to advance his arguments, he does not spend as much time examining the 1960s and the behavior of the U.S. government as Snyder does. See Bradley, “American Vernaculars,” especially 4-5; and *The World Reimagined*.

attention to ‘elite’ actors like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) executive director Roy Wilkins demonstrates the important role that the U.S. struggle for civil rights played in convincing Americans to promote human rights abroad. As she puts it, the importance that civil rights activists placed on pressuring the federal government to “protect Americans from their violations of their rights” led to a “belief that the United States could play a role in protecting people from violations abroad in” places like Greece and the Soviet Union (9). This argument flows from Snyder’s larger contention, which is accurate in my view, that elite actors rather than participants in mass movements played the largest role in spearheading U.S. human rights activism and making it an important aspect of U.S. foreign policy. In practice, activists, lawyers, and religious leaders became ‘political entrepreneurs’ who used a mixture of reporting, letter writing, demonstrating, and testimony to enlist Congressional support in the promotion of human rights. These efforts bore fruit because other political entrepreneurs like Representative Donald Fraser (D-MN) played a fundamental role in passing laws that increasingly made it difficult for the executive branch to ignore the issue of human rights when conducting foreign policy.

Snyder uses case studies of the Soviet Union, Southern Rhodesia, Greece, South Korea, and Chile to showcase how human rights became institutionalized in the conduct of U.S. foreign policy. She adds important insights to the well-known story of how U.S. NGOs, members of Congress, and other actors pressured the executive branch to do more on behalf of increasing Jewish emigration levels from the Soviet Union, a campaign that she essentially frames as a human rights struggle. As Soviet dissidents and refuseniks challenged Soviet human rights abuses and increasingly recounted them to the larger world, the U.S. civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. referenced the idea of human rights to criticize the mistreatment of Soviet Jews. Americans also attended rallies that linked the causes of civil rights and Soviet Jewry, including one in Philadelphia where a person displayed a sign reading “Selma or Moscow: Human Liberty in Indivisible. End Soviet Anti-Semitism” (28). Members of Congress such as Henry Jackson (D-WA) also challenged the executive branch to address Soviet human rights violations more forthrightly. This pressure resulted in Gerald Ford’s signing of the so-called Jackson-Vanik amendment in 1975—a measure that had the effect of denying the Soviets trade benefits like Most Favored Nation status until they allowed Jewish immigration levels to rise substantially. Snyder deftly captures the ambivalence, and at times hostility, that many executive branch officials expressed toward raising the subject of Soviet human rights violations by citing a conversation between President Richard Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. No doubt reflecting the importance that he placed on improving U.S.-Soviet relations in ways that promoted specific American interests, Kissinger told the President that the United States should refrain more trying to increase Jewish emigration from the USSR even if “they [Soviets] put Jews into gas chambers” (32).

Snyder then examines how Americans challenged human rights abuses in Southern Rhodesia and Greece. In the former chapter, she makes a strong case that a wide variety of private citizens, members of Congress, and lower-level executive branch officials invoked the cause of human rights and the larger U.S. struggle for civil rights to convince the Johnson administration to support some United Nations sanctions against the white minority government of Southern Rhodesia. Her insights about the Johnson administration’s unwillingness to challenge apartheid in South Africa more directly, as well as Congress’s passage of the Byrd amendment, dramatize how the U.S. government’s pursuit of specific interests often trumped the promotion of human rights.

The chapter covering the U.S. reaction to the 1967 coup in Greece reinforces the basic tension between morality and interest. As Snyder documents, executive branch officials proved unable to ignore the successes that NGOs and members of Congress had in publicizing the plight of political prisoners who were well-

known to Americans like the Greek politician Andreas Papandreou and highlighting the Greek junta's frequent use of torture. Despite some lower-level executive branch officials' expressions of concern and calls for liberalization, the Johnson administration hesitated to punish the Greek dictatorship too harshly because of a desire to maintain good relations with a strategically important U.S. ally and preserve NATO unity (73). The resistance of lower-level officials like NSC staffer Winston Lord did not prevent the Nixon administration from doing even less to challenge Greek internal behavior than its predecessor. In fact, President Nixon went so far as to sign a "national security interests" waiver that overrode the House of Representatives' decision to cut off all aid to Greece in 1971 (83).

The chapters covering South Korea and Chile elucidate the different ways that U.S. human rights activism often plays out in practice. Unlike the case of Greece, few NGOs focused on challenging the repressive policies of the South Korean President Park Chung-hee, although many U.S. missionaries living in South Korea worked to draw international attention to the issue (100). Instead, members of Congress and lower-level executive branch officials drove the process of challenging South Korea's human rights violations despite the fact that South Korea was a key U.S. ally. Snyder offers particularly valuable insights about how Philip Habib, who served as the U.S. ambassador to South Korea (1971-1974) and as Assistant Secretary of State for Asian and Pacific Affairs (1974-1976), defended South Koreans who faced governmental repression, including the democracy activist Kim Dae Jung after South Korean agents kidnapped him from a Japanese hotel in 1973. She also captures the internal debates within the executive branch about how the issue of human rights should shape the U.S. relationship with South Korea. As a result of sustained Congressional pressure, the United States drastically cut military aid to South Korea during Gerald Ford's Presidency, which in effect forced executive branch officials to raise the issue of human rights with their South Korean counterparts.

In the case of Chile, a wide array of NGOs, members of Congress, and journalists pressured the Nixon and Ford administrations to challenge the human rights violations of the Pinochet junta after its overthrow of the democratically elected Socialist President Salvador Allende. There was much to criticize. Besides carrying out harsh repression at home, including the murder and torture of some Americans, the Pinochet junta killed the former Allende aide Orlando Letelier by bombing his car in Washington, D.C. (September 1976). Reflecting their personal connections to Chile and familiarity with the nation's democratic past, a wide array of private citizens and members of Congress embraced the goal of disassociating the United States from Pinochet. Numerous Congressional liberals like Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA) also decided to challenge the junta given their growing disillusionment with the Cold War "consensus" and desire to end the executive branch's unquestioning dominance in the conduct of foreign policy. This outpouring of public and Congressional protest played a key role in punishing Chile with passage of the International Security Assistance and Arms Control Act of 1976, which "marked the first time that Congress had ended military assistance to another country [Chile] without exceptions or loopholes (130)." The growth of Congressional and public opposition never forced the Nixon and Ford administrations to abandon the U.S. alliance with Chile. Nevertheless, such pressure created debates that led Nixon and Ford officials to mention the issue of human rights in public speeches and address the subject of internal behavior when meeting with their Chilean counterparts.

The final chapter recounts the pivotal role that the Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movements (SIOM) played in institutionalizing human rights promotion in the conduct of U.S. foreign policy. As head of this committee, Representative Fraser organized "seventy-six hearing on human rights" from 1973 to the fall of 1976 (167). The SIOM also issued reports such as *Human Rights in the World Community: A Call for US Leadership?* (1974). This activism not only helped produce specific pieces of legislation such as the Harkin Amendment that limited assistance and aid to repressive regimes, but also

spurred the U.S. State Department's institutionalization of human rights promotion. More to the point, the State Department created more positions that dealt with human rights issues, culminating in the creation of the Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian affairs in 1977. Following Congressional law, it also began to produce annual, public reports on individual nations' human rights records.

Once again, Snyder's book has much to recommend. She adds important nuances to the larger story of how Congressional and public pressure made the issue of human rights an important part of U.S. foreign policy, especially the role that lower-level executive branch officials played in this development. She also reminds readers that some individuals at least in part embraced human rights for the very practical reasons of increasing the global appeal of the United States and enhancing the effectiveness of American foreign policy (her analysis of Donald Fraser is instructive on this point). She also strengthens her arguments through statistical analyses, showing how references to the terms human rights, dissidents, political prisoners, and torture in the *New York Times* dramatically increased from 1953 to 1976 (4, 23, 70, and 74).

Despite these achievements, *From Selma to Moscow* has some limitations. At the risk of nitpicking, she might have mentioned the Ford administration's role in securing the exchange of the Chilean Communist Luis Corvalan for the Soviet dissident Vladimir Bukovsky, which in effect amounted to the first time that the USSR admitted to having political prisoners. To strengthen her arguments in the Soviet chapter, she might have also mentioned that Jimmy Carter sent a letter to the Soviet General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev during the 1976 Presidential campaign asking Soviet officials to let Jews memorialize the Babi Yar massacre of World War II in public without harassment.⁸

One may also question Snyder's choice of case studies and use of the 'long 1960s' framework. Because of the scholarly contributions that Snyder hopes to make, such potential critiques deserve consideration even if their persuasiveness largely depend on how one conceives of writing of history and the explanatory power of existing works on U.S. human rights promotion. Drawing on the arguments of the historian Simon Hall, she defends her decision to use the concept of a 'long 1960s' rather than the 'long 1970s' because the former stands out as a period of "liberalization mobilization," whereas as the latter "is a turn toward conservatism" (174-175). While a defensible choice, this argument still leaves Snyder open to the critique of succumbing to the "idol of origins" trap. As Robert Brier has written, this trap catches scholars who assume that historical explanation consists of "identifying the origins of a historical phenomenon in order to then record its journey through time." In his view, because the idea of human rights remains historically contingent and contested—a position that Snyder accepts in her conclusion—scholars should spend more time elucidating specific "human rights vernaculars" than establishing the "elusive human rights breakthrough" (172).⁹

In my view, Brier's insights provide important context for understanding the issues that one might have with Snyder's 'long 1960s' framework. She is on solid ground when pointing out the limitations of U.S. human rights promotion after the appearance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 such as its

⁸ For a treatment of these subjects, see Peterson, *Globalizing Human Rights*, 32.

⁹ See Brier, "Beyond the Quest for a 'Breakthrough,'" 155-158. Brier takes the term "vernaculars" from Mark Philip Bradley. See "American Vernaculars: The United States and the Global Human Rights Imagination," *Diplomatic History* 38:1 (2013): 1-21; and Bradley, *The Word Reimagined*.

inherent elitism (3). On the other hand, those who reject the search for foundational human rights moments might respond that any “human rights moment,” whether it be the “long 1960s” or the 1970s, has its “own exigent historical circumstances” that define its “programmatic agenda” and shape its dynamics.¹⁰ Because the present can never be truly divorced from the past, and history so often reflects contingent events, why not just employ the timeframe of 1961-1977 without trying to cram years with so many divergent developments into one cohesive time period? Defenders of the 1970s as the ‘breakthrough’ decade for human rights might point out that Snyder’s case studies mostly describe events that took place during the late 1960s and 1970s. Such a charge opens the book up to the critique that whatever the roots of U.S. human rights activism might be, such activism only began to coalesce fully and shape government policy in meaningful ways during the 1970s.¹¹

Snyder’s choice of case studies also raises some important issues. She deserves praise for offering new details about the role human rights played in the evolution of U.S. policy toward Southern Rhodesia. But where do countries like Nigeria, China, Iran, Cuba, Uganda, Poland, the Philippines, and Estonia (Baltic nation illegally incorporated into the Soviet Union) fit into the larger story of U.S. human rights promotion? Snyder addresses such a critique by making the appropriate point that Americans cared about the human rights violations of some countries more than others---a point that she emphasizes in her analysis of Chile and conclusion (see note 2 of page 174 for a similar point). Nevertheless, because human rights remain “historically contingent and politically contested notions,” why not devote a chapter to further our understanding of why Americans do not appear to have cared as much about repression in nations like China and Iran as they did in Latin America.¹² In what ways, if any, is the inherent selectivity of human rights promotion a flaw in the entire project? What does such a selectivity tell us about Americans?

The ways that Snyder frames the contributions of her study also merit consideration. She deserves credit for not overstating the impact that U.S. human rights promotion had on the behavior of the countries that she analyzes. She is also sensitive to the reality that the conduct of U.S. foreign policy will always involve tradeoffs between protecting national security and moral pursuits (172). At the same time, following in the footsteps of many scholars, Snyder judges the institutionalization of U.S. human rights promotion as a victory for humankind. Such a viewpoint has much to recommend it. The issue of human rights has made American foreign policy more sensitive to the internal behavior of other governments even if the Trump administration seems determined to disassociate the United States from the cause of promoting freedom abroad.¹³ In a

¹⁰ Sargent, “Oasis in the Desert?” 144.

¹¹ For staunch defenses of the 1970s as the “breakthrough decade,” see Samuel Moyn, “Response to the Viewpoint: *Human Rights and History*,” *Past and Present* 233:1 (November 2016): 307-322; and Jan Eckel, “The Rebirth of Politics from the Spirit of Morality: Explaining the Human Rights Revolution of the 1970s,” in Jan Eckel and Samuel Moyn, eds., *The Breakthrough: Human Rights in the 1970s* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 226-260. Joe Reunard sees the 1970s as the crucial decade even if he traces the rise of U.S. governmental human rights activism back to the late 1960s. See *Human Rights in American Foreign Policy*, 8-12 and Chapter 1, especially 26.

¹² Brier, “Beyond the Quest for a ‘Breakthrough’: Reflections on the Recent Historiography on Human Rights,” 157 and 164.

¹³ For a sample of works that sometimes differ on when human rights began to influence U.S. foreign policy and the specific impact of such a development, see Sargent, “Oasis in the Desert? America’s Human Rights Rediscovery”;

broader sense, the international movement for human rights has eased much of individual suffering and made it harder for governments to shield their domestic conduct from public scrutiny; it also played a role in the demise of Communism in Europe and the end of the Cold War.¹⁴

For all the good it has done, the promotion of human rights cannot transform the world by itself. Shaming repressive governments in numerous forums did not prevent the United States from waging costly wars in the Middle East or using ‘enhanced interrogation techniques’ against ‘enemy combatants’ in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. Citing international human rights violations by itself does not offer practical blueprints for solving the humanitarian crisis in Syria or the ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya in Myanmar. The Iraqi government had to use military force to take back territory from the Islamic State (ISIS)—a group that could not have cared less about international human rights norms. The tendencies of activists and governments to prioritize individual freedom have largely left human rights promotion hamstrung in the larger fight against economic inequality, a development that has contributed to the global appeal of authoritarian government, including in the United States and Europe.¹⁵ While many may wish otherwise, no global consensus currently exists on human rights despite the existence of international treaties and declarations. In many parts of the world, especially outside the West, people take the position that universal human rights standards have little relevance for people living in poverty or represent a form of Western universalism that violates important religious, political, and cultural traditions.¹⁶

These realities reinforce the point that human rights remain historically contingent ‘vernaculars’ that people understand and work to implement in different ways. Going forward, historians of international relations should spend less time on periodization debates and focus more on elucidating the complexities of how individuals human rights ‘vernaculars’ have evolved over time; they should also devote more attention to how private citizens and the U.S. government have approached the task of promoting human rights (or not) in countries like Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt, and Uganda. Just as important, they should spend more time connecting human rights issues to other projects like peace promotion, international development,

Keys, *Reclaiming American Virtue*; Jason M. Colby, “‘A Chasm of Values and Outlook’: The Carter Administration’s Human Rights Policy in Guatemala,” *Peace & Change* 35:4 (October 2010): 561-593; David F. Schmitz and Vanessa Walker, “Jimmy Carter and the Foreign Policy of Human Rights: The Development of a Post-Cold War Foreign Policy,” *Diplomatic History* 28:1 (January 2004): 113-143; A. Glenn Mower, *Human Rights and the American Foreign Policy: The Carter and Reagan Experiences* (New York: Praeger, 1987); Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World*; Renouard, *Human Rights in American Foreign Policy*; Cmiel, “The Emergence of Human Rights Politics in the United States.”

¹⁴ For a staunch defense of the efficacy of human rights promotion, albeit with a focus on Latin America, see Sikkink, *Evidence for Hope*. For accounts that explain the role human rights played in shaping the end of the Cold War, see Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War*; and Peterson, *Globalizing Human Rights: Private Citizens, the Soviet Union, and the West* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

¹⁵ For a more thorough treatment of this subject, see Moyn, *Not Enough*.

¹⁶ This assertion deserves more evidence and analysis than this forum allows, but readers can this see reality in the behavior of the Chinese, Iranian, Turkey, Hungarian, Saudi Arabian, Russian, and Indian governments on subjects such as homosexual rights, women’s rights, and dissent. For more on debates about the universality of human rights, see Iriye, Goedde, and Hitchcock, eds., *The Human Rights Revolution*, 11-13.

refugee (i.e., stateless people) relief/resettlement, promoting liberal democracy, and forging humane immigration policies.¹⁷ By pursuing such a research agenda, historians can use their training to help formulate specific, practical plans of action aimed at making this world a more humane and just place.¹⁸ After all, as Samuel Moyn has persuasively argued, “if lectures about moral obligations made an enormous difference, this planet would already look much better” than it currently does.¹⁹

¹⁷ For example, Nicolas Guilhot has written an interesting, if not always persuasive, account of interconnections among the issues of human rights, democracy promotion, and international development. See *The Democracy Makers: Human Rights and International Order* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005). For a work that deals with the issue of stateless people and their rights, see Stephanie DeGooyer et al, eds. *The Right to Have Rights* (London and New York: Verso, 2018).

¹⁸ My upcoming co-edited volume devotes considerable attention to the issue of how historians and social scientists can work together in the most productive ways possible to enhance global peace promotion efforts. See Christian Philip Peterson, William Knoblauch, Michael Loadenthal, eds., *The Routledge History of World Peace* (forthcoming, August 2018)

¹⁹ Moyn, “How the Human Rights Movement Failed.”

Review by Lauren Turek, Trinity University

As a subfield of U.S. foreign relations history, human rights history is flourishing. Recent work from Mark Philip Bradley, Barbara Keys, and many others has broken new ground in how we understand the transnational spread of human rights ideas and language as well as the institutionalization of human rights as a core part of U.S. foreign policy during the twentieth century.¹ These lines of research illuminate the mechanisms by which domestic actors influence national leaders, official policies, and international norms. Indeed, Sarah Snyder's previous book, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War*, uncovered the significant role that human rights Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and activists played in compelling states in the West and the East to address human rights in their policymaking after the signing of the Helsinki Final Act in 1975.²

Snyder's new book, *From Selma to Moscow*, likewise reveals much about the complex interplay between individual activists, NGOs, Congress, the executive departments, and the president in the making of U.S. foreign relations during the 1960s and 1970s. Through a series of chronologically-overlapping case studies, she skillfully traces how human rights concerns materialized among key policy actors and how those actors worked to translate those concerns into meaningful policy, even in the face of consistent opposition from the executive branch. Snyder situates this phenomenon within the broader history of the rights revolution of the 1960s, drawing out connections between civil rights movement personnel and human rights activists, and noting the similar claims these groups of leaders made linking domestic rights with Cold War foreign relations. By examining multiple types of activism and the varied responses that advocacy campaigns generated among policymakers, Snyder makes a compelling argument that a strong desire among Americans for greater morality in foreign policy brought human rights to the fore, despite considerable official resistance.

The core tension of the book emerges in the interactions between human rights activists (whether individuals, NGOs, or members of Congress) and the White House. Snyder highlights this friction in each of her case studies, which examine the U.S. response to abuses in the Soviet Union, Rhodesia, Greece, South Korea, and Chile respectively. Each case study chapter is structured carefully, explaining the nature of the violations each regime committed, the emergence of an informed and active body of protest against these abuses in the United States, and the often disappointing reaction to this activism by the president and his close advisors. In many of these cases, according to Snyder, concerns about regional security and stability in the Cold War context pushed U.S. policymakers to downplay or disregard repression. Greece's membership in NATO and its strategic location on the border of Bulgaria and Albania, for example, made both the Johnson and Nixon administrations wary of pushing the regime too hard on the issue of detaining, torturing, and executing its political prisoners (61). Fear that Chile might experience a left-wing coup if the administration failed to support General Augusto Pinochet made Secretary of State Henry Kissinger an intransigent foe of

¹ Mark Philip Bradley, *The World Reimagined: Americans and Human Rights in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016); Barbara J. Keys, *Reclaiming American Virtue: The Human Rights Revolution of the 1970s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014); Akira Iriye, Petra Goedde, and William I. Hitchcock, eds., *The Human Rights Revolution: An International History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012)

² Sarah B. Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War: A Transnational History of the Helsinki Network* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

congressional efforts to block military aid to the violent, murderous regime throughout the Nixon and Ford administrations. Yet abuses in these and other nations awoke in many Americans the sense that “cold war priorities, which were manifested in support for repressive leaders, were diminishing America’s image abroad and undermining the morality of U.S. foreign policy” (13). Snyder argues that with the “collapse of Cold War consensus, prodded in part by greater congressional activism in foreign affairs” and in part by the social and political changes of the 1960s, nonstate actors were able to exert an increasingly influential presence in policymaking (14).

That presence took multiple forms and involved multiple types of activists. Many of those engaged in protesting the racially discriminatory regime of Ian Smith in Rhodesia were veterans of the civil rights movement in the United States, including luminaries such as A. Philip Randolph, the founder of the African American labor union Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, who saw the struggle as part of the global black freedom movement. Ethnic and religious solidarity groups also proved influential in spurring advocacy for the cause of the Soviet Jewry, victims of the Pinochet regime in Chile, and those facing political and religious repression under President Park Chung Hee in South Korea. Human rights NGOs such as Amnesty International reported extensively on these cases and others, including the repression in Greece, as well. Yet, as Snyder reveals, human rights activism in this period extended far beyond affinity groups and NGOs. Individual members of Congress, the State Department, and the diplomatic corps, academics, and other elites also formed important nodes of human rights activism in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Snyder chronicles the crucial support that academics lent to Greek political prisoner Andreas Papandreou and notes that diplomat Philip Habib emerged as a consistent and strong voice against repression in South Korea under Park. Representative Donald Fraser, Senator Henry “Scoop” Jackson, and other members of Congress who became active on human rights likewise feature prominently in the narrative. Snyder does an impressive job of weaving together the multiplicity of activist voices involved in each case, discussing the variety of tactics each group used—from letter writing and demonstrations to direct conversations with the president and Kissinger to congressional hearings.

This layered approach enables Snyder to confront the challenge of measuring how effective human rights activism was in terms of reducing abuses as well as in shaping U.S. foreign policy. In addition to calls on foreign governments to release individual prisoners or allow emigration, activists sought to compel human rights compliance by cutting off military and economic aid to abusive regimes. Concerned members of Congress worried that “the United States risked tarnishing its international image if it failed to separate itself” from countries that violated human rights (65). Yet activists often met with obstinacy from foreign leaders, who were disinclined to change their repressive tactics and resisted external pressure. Snyder observes that Jewish emigration levels from the Soviet Union actually fell once the Jackson-Vanik Amendment to the Trade Act of 1974 took effect. After Congress slashed aid to countries that violated human rights, Chile and other effected countries declined U.S. aid entirely.

Nevertheless, Snyder makes clear that pressure from the United States did affect the conduct of foreign powers—and that over-caution from the White House and State Department emboldened abuses abroad. Many cases followed a pattern similar to the one Snyder traces in her chapter on the Soviet Union, where “successive presidential administrations...were hesitant to act,” and either ignored the issue of human rights in order “to protect other, more important policy priorities” or pursued quiet diplomacy on human rights issues instead (24). She catalogs a number of missed opportunities where the administration’s hesitancy to act or desire to pursue stability and security might have foreclosed on human rights gains. Additionally, in the case of South Korea, Snyder references a statement from Habib, who believed that U.S. intercession had

prevented the assassination of Kim Dae Jung, whom the Park regime viewed as a threat. She argues that “Habib’s reflections demonstrate again that U.S. officials were aware of the impact that their pressure could have on South Korean repression; left unsaid was that they rarely chose to utilize such leverage.” (96). During the Nixon and Ford administrations, Kissinger made his disdain for human rights activism clear. In these years, the White House sought to restore aid (or fight new congressional efforts to cut aid) to human rights violators, including Rhodesia, South Korea, and Chile. According to Snyder, the signals that Kissinger sent to Pinochet, Park, and other repressive leaders that “they would not face repercussions from the United States” encouraged those leaders to continue to resist calls to reform (143).

As Snyder demonstrates, the congressional response to this executive intransigence, cutting off aid to repressive regimes, ultimately served to institutionalize human rights in foreign policymaking. Furthermore, she makes clear that “although Kissinger asserted that he would not alter U.S. policy due to congressional sentiment, the reality is that it did influence him, or at least his tactical decision-making.” (135). As she illustrates, by 1976, even Kissinger had realized the need to incorporate human rights into his policy statements, if only for optics (39). In chapter six, Snyder marks another turning point—the hearings that the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movements launched in 1973 under the leadership of Fraser, which led to key legislation and some structural changes to the State Department that brought about “the rise of human rights as a priority in U.S. foreign policy.” (148). The legislation, which limited aid to states that violated human rights and created institutions to monitor human rights compliance, “slowly transformed attitudes at the State Department” and contributed to an enduring concern for human rights (167). Snyder concludes that the diverse array of activists involved in this transformation also helped to create the broader transnational network that blossomed into the international human rights movement of the late 1970s.

Snyder’s book thus provides a crucial link between the important work on human rights and American foreign relations in the 1940s and 1950s from scholars such as Elizabeth Borgwardt and Carol Anderson, and recent work on the transnational human rights movement of the 1970s.³ *From Selma to Moscow* uncovers the foundation of this latter human rights movement and expertly weaves together the narratives of a wide range of policy actors. It makes clear that the political activism of the long 1960s provided a language and impetus for pursuing morality in foreign relations, as human rights advocates mounted strong opposition to U.S. support for repressive regimes. That opposition translated into marked changes in the calculus of U.S. foreign policy. In certain case studies, the ‘Selma’ part of the equation—the links between civil and human rights activists promised at the outset—grows a bit faint, though the overlapping and thematic structure of each chapter ensures that the thread of the argument remains strong throughout the book. That aside, this book adds tremendously to our understanding of the human rights movement as well as of the transformation of U.S. foreign policymaking that Congress led in the 1970s.

³ See fn. 1 and Elizabeth Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World: America’s Vision for Human Rights* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007); Carol E. Anderson, *Eyes Off the Prize: The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944-1955* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Author's Response by Sarah B. Snyder, American University

I appreciate Tom Maddux's efforts in organizing this roundtable and am honored that Simon Hall, Steven L. B. Jensen, Christian Philip Peterson, Thomas A. Schwartz, and Lauren Turek have all taken the time to engage with my new book, *From Selma to Moscow: How Human Rights Activists Transformed U.S. Foreign Policy*. Their reviews confirm that I have been largely successful in demonstrating how transnational connections and 1960s-era social movements inspired Americans to become active in opposing human rights abuses in the Soviet Union, Greece, Southern Rhodesia, South Korea, and Chile. Each reviewer, however, points to analysis that could have been developed more fully, institutions or actors they wished had featured more prominently, or ways in which they disagree with my framing of the research.

Turek notes that in certain chapters the links between the civil rights movement in the United States and efforts to address human rights violations internationally "grows a bit faint." The connection between Selma and Moscow, as the title puts it, is clearest in the first two chapters on the Soviet Union and Southern Rhodesia. The title draws upon a banner at a March 1965 rally for Soviet Jewry that read, "Selma or Moscow: Human Liberty is Indivisible. End Soviet Anti-Semitism." The sign highlights the fact that American Jews were active in campaigns for full rights for African Americans and on behalf of Soviet Jewry. I also show how civil rights leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr. lent their support to the movement advocating for Soviet Jews' right to emigrate. In the second chapter, I explain how Americans opposed to racial discrimination, including many active in the civil rights movement, pressed the Johnson administration to take a strong stance against Ian Smith's 1965 Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) and white minority regime. In the subsequent three chapters on Greece, South Korea, and Chile, the role of the civil rights movement does recede. In part this pattern is due to the chronology: as years passed from the drive for and achievements of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act, the connections became less explicit. Similarly, the struggle for African Americans' rights evolved from a campaign for civil and political rights into a drive to fulfill their social and economic rights; this movement overlapped in fewer ways with the efforts of the human rights activists in my account. Yet, in the memories of these activists and in contemporary accounts of their motivations, the context of the fight against segregation in the United States remained prominent, even if it became less visible in their work.

Jensen and I have sought for many years to bring greater attention to human rights activism in the 1960s, not because we were necessarily searching for an "idol of origins," to use Peterson's phrase, but out of a concern that skipping over those years simplified or flattened our understanding of the evolution of human rights internationally. Despite his enthusiasm for my efforts to illuminate this "chronological blind spot," he is disappointed that the United Nations (UN) is not more integral to *From Selma to Moscow*. Frankly, I expected the UN to play a bigger role, in part because some of my earliest research focused on responses to Smith's UDI, and the UN, its members, and the United States ambassador to the United Nations all played critical roles in shaping the international response. I had also anticipated greater significance for the 1968 UN International Year for Human Rights, but as I show in an article in *Diplomatic History*, many Americans were increasingly disillusioned with the UN as an institution that could protect human rights and turned their attention to policymakers in Washington as the actors who could more effectively impact human rights violations overseas.¹ Drawing upon research in UN records in New York and Geneva, State Department

¹ Sarah B. Snyder, "The 1968 International Year for Human Rights: A Missed Opportunity in the United States," *Diplomatic History* 42:5 (2018): 831-858, <https://doi.org/10.1093/dh/dhy008>.

documents, and the personal papers of all U.S. ambassadors to the UN in these years, I found the UN's significance to be uneven. As Jensen highlights in his review, I assert that decolonization and the changing makeup of the UN General Assembly shaped greater international attention to human rights, which heightened Americans' interest as well. But, for a range of reasons, there was limited commentary at the UN regarding human rights violations in the Soviet Union, Greece, and South Korea. Where debates at the UN addressed human rights abuses central to the American actors I studied, such as with Southern Rhodesia and Chile, I included them. And where UN institutions such as the UN Commission on Human Rights' Ad Hoc Working Group shaped American discussions of human rights, as with Chile, I noted them. But, the UN in *From Selma to Moscow* exists more as a forum for debate than an institution advancing a human rights agenda because in the long 1960s, like today, UN politics meant that the human rights records of some states received more attention than others.

Peterson is also concerned with inclusion and exclusion. He asks why I did not address an extensive list of countries that we know had poor human rights records in these years, including Nigeria, China, Iran, Cuba, Uganda, Poland, the Philippines, and Estonia. In my research, I also looked for activism in response to human rights violations in Spain, Taiwan, Indonesia, South Africa, and Uruguay. In the end, I was limited by time, space, and an aim to avoid replicating existing research, but also by a desire to show diversity; in addition to having human rights records of significant interest to Americans in the long 1960s, the five countries analyzed also represent geographic diversity, ideological diversity, and diversity in terms of the types of human rights abuses occurring.

Peterson wishes that I had included a chapter on why human rights violations in countries such as China, Iran, or Cuba received comparatively less attention from Americans in these years. Given my argument that transnational connections sparked much initial human rights activism in these years, perhaps it should not be surprising that, given the lack of American travel to China, the human rights violations taking place there garnered less attention and that the absence of diplomatic or trade relations offered those concerned about the Chinese human rights record fewer ways to signal that displeasure. Nonetheless, as Peterson suggests, why Americans expressed different levels of concern about international violations of human rights presents a rich, future research agenda.

Hall raises a key question: was there really a transformation of U.S. foreign policy as my title suggests or did the legislative and bureaucratic innovations that I analyze only represent "an all-too-brief aberration." I ended *From Selma to Moscow* in the final days of Gerald Ford's presidency because, in my view, a robust body of literature exists showing that human rights was a consequential factor in U.S. foreign policy in the years that followed.² Of course, the prioritization of human rights fluctuated based on personalities and competing

² See, for example, David F. Schmitz and Vanessa Walker, "Jimmy Carter and the Foreign Policy of Human Rights: The Development of a Post-Cold War Foreign Policy," *Diplomatic History* 28:1 (January 2004): 113-143; Barbara J. Keys, *Reclaiming American Virtue: The Human Rights Revolution of the 1970s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014); Sarah B. Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War: A Transnational History of the Helsinki Network* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011); John W. Dietrich, "U.S. Human Rights Policy in the Post-Cold War Era," *Political Science Quarterly* 121:2 (Summer 2006): 269-294; William Michael Schmidli, *The Fate of Freedom Elsewhere: Human Rights and U.S. Cold War Policy Toward Argentina* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013); and Joe Renouard, *Human Rights in American Foreign Policy: From the 1960s to the Soviet Collapse* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016).

goals. President Ronald Reagan, for example, signaled an intention to downgrade human rights, but congressional and public pressure prevented a dramatic shift.³ The institutionalization of human rights in U.S. foreign policy persists today, which is one reason I have argued the Trump administration may not be able to turn away from human rights as meaningfully as it wishes.⁴

Peterson asks about my decision to emphasize the 1960s over the 1970s. As I outline in the introduction, I see the long 1960s as a distinctive period for the United States both domestically and internationally. Internally, those years were characterized by the height of the civil rights movement, other rights-based movements, and the movement to end U.S. involvement in Vietnam. In terms of foreign policy, the long 1960s were marked not only by the war in Vietnam but also increasing challenges to U.S. power in the Third World and efforts to pursue détente with the Soviet Union alongside continuing Cold War competition. My emphasis on the 1960s highlights the significance of the social movements of that era in shaping human rights activism. Furthermore, four of my five geographically-focused chapters begin in the 1960s (the exception is Chile). Finally, conceiving of the project as one centered on the 1970s rather than the 1960s would privilege the outcome of these Americans' activism, whereas I was most interested in their motivations.

Peterson frames his review by asking what human rights activism has achieved internationally, principally in the years after my book ends. As I write in the conclusion, the place of human rights in U.S. foreign policy has remained contested, especially in the years following September 11, 2001 during which the United States abused human rights in many ways.⁵ For this and other reasons scholars of human rights have questioned the project's efficacy. Peterson cites Samuel Moyn's new work, *Not Enough: Human Rights in an Unequal World*; Stephen Hopgood and Eric Posner have also engaged in what Kathryn Sikkink terms human rights "pessimism."⁶ We cannot evaluate the current impact of human rights activism internationally, however, without analyzing earlier periods in which Americans were spurred to care about human rights, mobilized to advocate a new approach to U.S. foreign policy, and achieved meaningful innovations such as annual human rights country reports and legislation limiting assistance to abusive regimes, all in the face of an obstinate administration. It is this scholarly endeavor in which I hope *From Selma to Moscow* succeeds.

³ Sarah B. Snyder, "The Defeat of Ernest Lefever's Nomination: Keeping Human Rights on the United States Foreign Policy Agenda," in *Challenging US Foreign Policy: America and the World in the Long Twentieth Century*, ed. Bevan Sewell and Scott Lucas (New York: Palgrave, 2011).

⁴ Sarah B. Snyder, "Is the Trump Administration Abandoning Human Rights?" *Washington Post*, 2 July 2017.

⁵ Executive Summary, Committee Study of the Central Intelligence Agency's Detention and Interrogation Program, https://fas.org/irp/congress/2014_rpt/ssci-rdi.pdf, accessed 23 July 2018.

⁶ Samuel Moyn, *Not Enough: Human Rights in an Unequal World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018); Stephen Hopgood, *The Endtimes of Human Rights* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013); Eric A. Posner, *The Twilight of Human Rights Law* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); and Kathryn Sikkink, *Evidence for Hope: Making Human Rights in the 21st Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 3.