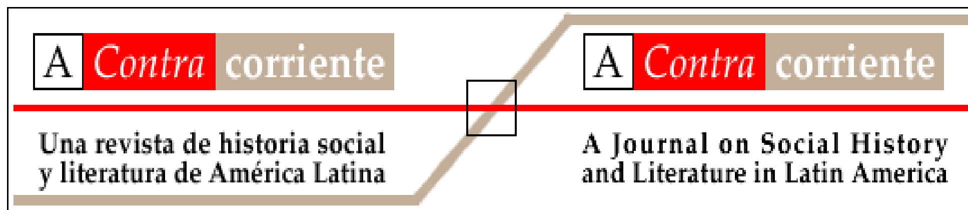

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Review / Reseña

Greg Grandin and Gilbert M. Joseph, eds., *A Century of Revolution. Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Violence During Latin America's Long Cold War*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010.

A Case of Revolutionary Overreach

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Greg Grandin and Gilbert Joseph, authors of valuable innovations in interpretive approaches to modern Latin American history, have come forth with a new edited volume that frames the period between the Mexican Revolution of 1910 and the Central American peace accords of the 1990s as a "century of revolution." Based upon a 2003 Yale University conference, *A Century of Revolution. Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Violence During Latin America's Long Cold War* forms the third volume in an ambitious enterprise of historical reinterpretation now slightly more than a decade old with which Grandin and Joseph have been involved. The two previous

volumes protested Latin America's marginal place in Cold War scholarship and effectively argued two major contentions—the importance of the Cold War for Latin America's internal social, cultural, and political history and the significance of the region (not just Cuba) for the global competition between the superpowers.[1]

Building upon this earlier success concerning the Cold War era, Grandin and Joseph have now stretched their focus more broadly in time, hoping, in Grandin's words, "to provoke historians into thinking about Latin America's 'Century of Revolution' as a distinct historical period" (11) in which it "experienced an epochal cycle of revolutionary upheavals and insurgencies" (1). Historians, Joseph contends, should take a Latin America-wide perspective, concentrating upon developing "broader regional conclusions based on the histories of individual countries that are typically viewed alone" (400). In Grandin's introduction and Joseph's conclusion, the editors emphasize the overlap in time between twentieth-century Latin America's struggles to overcome underdevelopment and the ascendancy of the United States, initially to hemispheric and subsequently to global dominance. They conclude that the Latin American century of revolution unfolded in the setting of what Joseph calls "a long cold war…in which evolving U.S. interests and patterns of international conflict (of which the postwar superpower rivalry constituted only a part) factored into transforming the region's political, social, and cultural life over medium and longer durations" (400, 401). This "long cold war" provided unity to the diverse experiences of Latin American twentieth-century conflicts. Historians, Grandin contends, have remained blind to this "larger historical meaning of twentieth-century Latin American political violence" (11). Without, in the words of Joseph, "a framework for understanding the *grassroots* dynamics and meanings of the Latin American cold war" (400),

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[1] See Daniela Spenser, ed., *Espejos de la guerra fría: México, América Central y el Caribe* (México: Miguel Angel Porrúa/CIESAS/Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, 2004) and Gilbert M. Joseph and Daniela Spenser, eds., *In from the Cold. Latin America's New Encounter with the Cold War* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008). *In from the Cold* received a favorable review in *A Contracorriente* in 2008: Arthur Schmidt, "Defrosting Contemporary Latin American History," *A Contracorriente*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Fall 2008, 347-361.

historians have all too readily succumbed to revisionist dismissals of the significance of Latin American revolutionary processes.

In pursuit of that larger historical meaning of Latin American political violence, Grandin and Joseph have sought inspiration in the work of the European historian Arno J. Mayer. (*A Century of Revolution* concludes with the text of a short interview with Mayer that Grandin conducted in September, 2008).[2] Grandin notes their agreement with Mayer on "the essentially contingent, indeterminate, and decidedly not inevitable nature of politics and history" (14). Following Mayer's emphasis on the interplay of domestic and international factors that have sought the containment of popular political movements, Grandin argues that Latin America's past century must be seen as a series of "sequential attempts to transcend… an unsustainable model of exclusionary nationalism, restricted political institutions, persisting rural clientelism, and dependent, export-based development" that has resisted the democratic "demands of mass politics" (28). Mayer's "socially embedded approach to diverse expressions of political violence" (18) and his definition of "counterrevolution" as "a product and stimulant of instability, cleavages, and disorders" seem particularly useful for understanding twentieth-century Latin America.[3] Since, as Joseph remarks, political violence has emerged from "the very birth pangs of the region's modernity" (397), Mayer's distinctions between reactionaries and conservatives, on the one hand, and counterrevolutionaries on the other, fit Latin America's experience. Grandin and Joseph recognize that both revolutionaries and their counterrevolutionary adversaries have been transformative, modernizing agents employing mass politics for radically different ends in response to the "socioeconomic dislocations, discontents, and cleavages" that have so strongly characterized Latin America over the last century.

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[2] Several of Mayer's works receive explicit mention by the editors and contributors to *A Century of Revolution*, particularly *Dynamics of Counterrevolution in Europe, 1870-1956: An Analytic Framework* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971); *The Persistence of the Old Regime: Europe to the Great War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981); and *The Furies: Violence and Terror in the French and the Russian Revolutions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

[3] Mayer, *Dynamics of Counterrevolution*, 4.

In from the Cold successfully positioned revolutionary-counterrevolutionary conflict as central to Latin America's social, political, and cultural history for the half century after World War II. Has *A Century of Revolution* now credibly done the same for Latin America's twentieth century? Certainly an effort in the present Latin American and global context to establish the social struggles of the twentieth century as hopeful foundational elements for the future can be considered laudable. As Mayer remarks to Grandin, "working through conjunctures is much better than thinking of history as perpetual crisis. It provides more of a sense of alignments and possibilities" (420). Regrettably, however, Grandin and Joseph have overreached. *A Century of Revolution* fails to persuade the reader that a long cold war existed in Latin America from the outbreak of the Mexican Revolution in 1910 onward across the twentieth century. The essays that concern themselves with revolution prior to the 1940s are certainly worth reading in their own right, but they simply do not provide the evidence necessary to sustain this unorthodox and rather perplexing use of the term "Cold War." Of the dozen essays by contributors to *A Century of Revolution*, only four study any episodes prior to the 1940s, while six situate themselves in the Cold War era. Two other essays may be considered outliers that add little value to the volume. Corey Robin, "You Say You Want a Counterrevolution. Well, You Know, We All Want to Change the World," offers a superficial discussion of U.S. conservatism that glibly conflates conservatives and counterrevolutionaries. One of his footnotes mistakenly assumes that Woodrow Wilson rather than William Howard Taft was the U.S. president at the time of Victoriano Huerta's overthrow of Francisco Madero in February 1913. Neil Larsen, "Thoughts on Violence and Modernity in Latin America," abstractly ruminates on the relationship between capitalist modernity and counterrevolutionary violence in Latin America. He employs the ideas of radical German critical theorists to situate Latin America somewhat vaguely within global processes of economic plunder.

The essays situated in episodes prior to World War II do not sustain the volume's central postulate that Latin America's diverse sociopolitical upheavals constitute enough of a unified subject to justify conceptualizing

the entire twentieth century a single historical period defined by revolution and counterrevolution. Unquestionably, it is important for scholars to recover the histories of the multiple expressions of popular resistance and insurgency that challenged repressive forces during the early decades of the century; many of them are scarcely part of the historical record. Nevertheless, it is unwise to conceptualize them as a coherent and defining single entity. In the face of their considerable heterogeneity, Grandin inserts the United States as the necessary historical gluten, arguing that "what most joined Latin America's insurgencies, revolutions, and counterrevolutions into an amalgamated and definable historical event was the shared structural position of subordination of each nation in the region to the United States" (29). Yet none of the contributors to *A Century of Revolution* finds a consistent counterrevolutionary influence to the United States prior to the era of the Cold War.

Thomas Miller Klubock, "Ránquil. Violence and Peasant Politics on Chile's Southern Frontier," ably analyzes a June 1934 revolt by *mestizo* and Mapuche peasants in the southern Chilean province of Lonquimay under the leadership of the Sindicato Agrícola Lonquimay that they had formed six years earlier. Klubock's analysis of the causes of the rebellion focuses upon land theft, abusive labor practices, and unwillingness of the Chilean state under Arturo Alessandri to protect peasants from expropriation and exploitation by landlord interests. Klubock argues that "the Ránquil rebellion and its repression were not atypical and, indeed, provide an important lens on the long-ignored history of peasant politics in Chile's southern frontier," (122) where the violence by local elites and the military shaped the formation of the institution of the hacienda. While the uprising received support from the Chilean Communist Party, Klubock emphasizes that the "rebellion appears to have been a local initiative, shaped by events on the ground, rather than a result of an insurrection planed by the party's national leadership or by the Communist International" (144).

Nowhere does the United States enter into Klubock's narrative, nor is there any suggestion of any spreading of ideas into southern Chile from the *agrarismo* of Mexico, whose early twentieth-century revolution receives the attention of two essays: the late Friedrich Katz, "Violence and

Terror in the Mexican and Russian Revolution," and Jocelyn Olcott, "*Mueras y matanza*. Spectacles of Terror and Violence in Postrevolutionary Mexico." In comparing revolutionary violence in Mexico and the Soviet Union, Katz underscores the notable absence of terror from above during the presidency of Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940) during which the revolutionary state consolidated its power and its reform agenda, one that included land redistribution. He notes how the anti-fascist outlook of the Cárdenas government, the geopolitics of the late 1930s, and the attitudes of Mexican industrialists influenced the United States to refrain from siding with the regime's enemies, even after the 1938 expropriation of U.S. and British petroleum corporations.

Olcott examines the June 29, 1930 killing by local government forces of twenty Communist demonstrators in the economically vital cotton-growing region of the Comarca Lagunera in north central Mexico. A persistent climate of political tension existed in the area between a postrevolutionary state pursuing political order and popular movements insisting upon revolutionary change. Only the previous year, former president Plutarco Elías Calles had come to the region as Minister of War, both to suppress a rebellion by followers of ex-president Alvaro Obregón, victim of a political assassin in 1928, and to take action against the active influence of the Mexican Communist Party among the rural and urban labor forces of the area. Calles, increasingly conservative in outlook and still very much the *jefe máximo* of Mexican politics, remained determined to quash political dissent and to curtail the reform impetus of the Mexican Revolution. Less than a week prior to the demonstration, he had announced that Mexico should abandon land reform, an action that only added to local polarization in the Comarca Lagunera

Olcott contrasts the opposing revolutionary and counterrevolutionary narratives of the event as they unfolded in succeeding years. Political officials and the established press defended the need for order and fixed the blame for the bloodshed upon trouble-making rioters. *El Machete,* the newspaper of the Communist Party, stressed the legitimacy of the reform demands of the demonstrators and the arbitrary repression by government authorities. Over time, the Mexican Communist Party

(PCM) "appropriated this spectacle of repression and persecution as part of Communist lore" (77). Subsequent accounts transformed Martina Deras, a pregnant woman who was one of the activists killed in the demonstration, into "a heroic figure" and a source of symbolic inspiration "as radical women's organizing exploded in the Laguna amid widespread PCM organizing" throughout the 1930s (79-80). Olcott concludes by noting the PCM's continued memorialization of the June 29 massacre during the party's struggle for political legitimacy in the decades of the Cold War.

In both of these discussions of Mexico, obviously the United States exercised potential economic and geopolitical influence, but both Katz and Olcott stress internal factors as the determining elements of revolution and counterrevolution. After the failure of its 1914 and 1916-1917 military interventions in the Mexican Revolution, the United States worked at "containing dissent"—something different from promoting counterrevolution—through a variety of mechanisms by which Mexican governments were, in the phrase of Alan Knight, "subtly massaged and molded."[4] Prior to the second half of the twentieth century, U.S. efforts to thwart political trends in Latin America that it considered undesirable lacked the comprehensive means to render political violence and terror, as Grandin says, "the stuff of everyday existence." The Cold War decades after World War II created the "tape recorders, fingerprint and surveillance equipment, cattle prods, filing cabinets, typewriters, carbon paper, radio and other communications technologies, binoculars, cameras, cars, and helicopters" that formed "an omnipresent counterinsurgent infrastructure" that permitted a sinister "choreography" of all its elements throughout Latin America (2-3). Containing dissent in Latin America in the early decades of the twentieth century was an episodic venture; containing Communism in Latin America in the postwar decades involved the promotion of full-fledged counterrevolution and counterrevolutionary modernization.

Reading Jeffrey L. Gould's essay, "On the Road to 'El Porvenir.' Revolutionary and Counterrevolutionary Violence in El Salvador and

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[4] Alan Knight, "U.S. Imperialism/Hegemony and Latin American Resistance," in *Empire and Dissent. The United States and Latin America*, ed. Fred Rosen (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008), 34-35.

Nicaragua," makes this difference dramatically clear. Gould's examination of the famous January 1932 rebellion and the counterrevolutionary massacre of ten thousand Salvadorans, mostly peasants, carefully dissects the social composition of the insurgent ranks, the massively disproportionate dimensions of counterrevolutionary violence, and the legacies of the memory of 1932.[5] The upheaval showed the presence of Communist organization and the spread of Latin American revolutionary ideas, but the rebels lacked the international infrastructure of insurgency that existed during the Cold War. While the United States could have intervened in the fashion of gunboat diplomacy, it did not have to as old fashioned military and landowner repression rapidly stemmed the insurgency and implanted a powerful mark on the country that would last for decades. Gould follows the conceptual focus on the specific dynamics of revolutionary and counterrevolutionary conflict that both Mayer and the editors advocate, but the two parts of his essay demonstrate the relative international isolation of Salvadoran events in 1932 compared to the internationalized revolutionary-counterrevolutionary dimensions of the Sandinista revolution a generation later during the Cold War. In the regrettably short Nicaraguan portion of his contribution, Gould explores how the features of Cold War counterrevolution undermined the Sandinista revolution, not just through U.S. economic aggression, political pressure, and sponsorship of the *Contra*, but even more deeply, he posits, by poisoning its spirit. Largely through anecdotal evidence, Gould laments the loss of "the revolutionary utopian vision" that failed to gain "a special place in any political agenda" (113). Despite Leninist vanguard pretentions, imperial aggression, and the limits imposed on revolutionary Nicaragua by the world economy, Gould contends that the Sandinista Revolution did not have to be authoritarian. Elements within the Frente Sandinista that offered an alternate more democratic current ultimately gave way in the face of counterrevolutionary military pressures, effectively burying "the

[5] Gould originally wrote the Salvadoran portions of the essay for the 2003 Yale conference and later included them as part of his book with Aldo A. Lauria-Santiago, *To Rise in Darkness. Revolution, Repression, and Memory in El Salvador, 1920-1932* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008).

memory of those scenes and moments that had announced a nonauthoritarian alternative" (114).

Like Gould, a half dozen other essays in the volume suggest that Grandin and Joseph should have focused their conceptual framework on Latin America during the Cold War rather than overinflating it into a "century of revolution." All six situate their episodes within the global character of the Cold War, recognizing the interplay between the domestic and the international, particularly the policies of the United States. They depict the formative influence of revolutionary-counterrevolutionary dynamics and allow considerable room for contingencies as explanatory factors in historical outcomes. While remaining conscious of the generation after World War II as an era of revolutionary pressures throughout Latin America, their analyses ground themselves in the specific social, political, and cultural conditions prevailing in the individual settings under study. In "The Trials. Violence and Justice in the Aftermath of the Cuban Revolution," Michelle Chase interprets the revolutionary trials of early 1959 as an initiative of the new revolutionary government to maintain order, establish its legitimacy, and to respond to a popular sense of honorable justice given "the dishonorable killings of honorable people [that] were at the core of the widespread abhorrence of Batistiano violence" (175). While U.S. political and journalistic objections only strengthened the Castro regime and further impeded any potential reconciliation between the United States and revolutionary Cuba, they did encourage the Cuban government to manage the trials in a politically strategic fashion. "All told," she concludes, "perhaps between three hundred and seven hundred people were executed, a figure which, in retrospect, marks the aftermath of the Cuban Revolution as distinctly less bloody than the other tumultuous regime changes that have punctuated the twentieth century" (186).

Lillian Guerra, "Beyond Paradox. Counterrevolution and the Origins of Political Culture in the Cuban Revolution, 1959-2009," stresses the power of counterrevolution in shaping the character of postrevolutionary Cuban political culture. Since no other recent revolution "has so directly threatened the existing social and political world order" as Cuba's, U.S. policy even after the Cold War has remained "locked in a dead-

end struggle to discredit, isolate, and deliberately impoverish the island society as a means for dislodging its government" (201). This has created a powerful paradox under which "by dint of their very *absence*, the interests of a U.S.-supported counterrevolution remain ominously *present* in Cuban leaders' decision-making" (202), thus defining "the political culture of Cuba after 1959 on both micro and macro levels" and contributing to its "stagnation" since 1959 (204). Guerra's thoughtful essay follows the multiple contradictions that polarized revolutionary and counterrevolutionary narratives have introduced into Cuban life over the last half century, obliging the Cuban people "to recalculate and redefine regularly the nature of their witness under the revolution" (229). Her chapter includes an examination of the often-overlooked "bloody armed conflict between pro-government peasant militias and anticommunist peasant insurgents" in the coffee region of El Escambray, 1961-1965, possibly "Cuba's most significant counterrevolution," one that the government labeled, in a fashion familiar elsewhere in Latin America, as a movement of "bandits" (205). Notwithstanding this episode, Guerra agrees with the other contributors to the volume that Latin American revolutionary violence has usually been less extensive and less indiscriminate than counterrevolutionary violence. She notes that "there is little known evidence that the Cuban government has continually used violence and wide-scale terror as a means for maintaining rule or drowning dissent" (205) compared to U.S.-supported counterrevolutionary regimes in the region.

Looking beyond Cuba, other essays offer case studies of Chile, Guatemala, Peru, and Colombia. Peter Winn's contribution, "The Furies of the Andes. Violence and Terror in the Chilean Revolution and Counterrevolution," offers an extensive, carefully argued examination of how counterrevolution in Chile used the phrase "climate of violence" as a means of delegitimizing the Unidad Popular government of Salvador Allende when in reality the regime refrained from violence, restrained many of its supporters, and confined itself to legal initiatives in promoting revolutionary changes. "Climate of violence" acted as a distorting phrase covering both Allende's refusal to use armed force against peasant and

worker *tomas* of lands and factories as well as the disorder and violence originating from counterrevolutionary activity between the assassination of General René Schneider in October 1970 and the coup of September 1973. The subsequent widespread systematic violence under General Augusto Pinochet and the military played a central part in their efforts to transform Chile through a counterrevolutionary modernization. Echoing Gould's and Guerra's depictions of the dilemmas that Latin American revolutions faced during the Cold War when attempting to defend themselves against the external and internal forces of counterrevolution, Winn concludes that the Chilean revolution "was defeated by a counterrevolution that was willing to lose *its* furies, while revolutionaries restrained their own—although given the 'correlation of forces' the outcome of a more Jacobin or Leninist strategy might have been the same or worse" (271).

Carlota McAllister, "A Headlong Rush into the Future. Violence and Revolution in a Guatemalan Indigenous Village," and Gerardo Rénique, "'People's War,' 'Dirty War.' Cold War Legacy and the End of History in Postwar Peru," concern themselves with the relationships between guerrilla insurgency and indigenous peoples. Based upon fieldwork in the village of Chupol in the majority indigenous department of Quiché, McAllister argues convincingly against the *dos demonios* narrative that frames indigenous people as caught between the two demons of the army and the guerrillas. She depicts the existence of an authentic indigenous radicalism, noting that "since the civil war has ended and the need to conceal subversive pasts has become less pressing, new accounts of the war have begun to reveal the magnitude and diversity of this indigenous leftism, undermining images of Mayans as simple victims of a conflict they didn't understand" (277). She traces the growth of the influence of the Comité de Unidad Campesina and the Ejército Guerrillero de los Pobres in the area of Chupol which "was dubbed the 'Hanoi Guerrilla Zone'" (290), but the EGP in 1981 proved unable to withstand the power of the Guatemalan military in this area. Under counterrevolutionary repression, Chupol "became a killing center, a place where dead bodies and burning fields were always visible" (294). Many residents of the area fled into "the high, cold mountains surrounding their villages, where they spent a year running from the army, sleeping out

of doors under the rain, and eating what little food they could gather in the forest" (294). McAllister finds that a complex memory remains today. "All Chupolenses," she says, "fear the army and blame it for the innumerable atrocities it committed against them to some degree" (296), while many also remain angry at the EGP for its failure to protect them and for the harsh, even violent, punishments meted out by its Political Formation Team. Yet, to McAllister's surprise, many continued to believe in the possibility of victory even after the military's onslaughts, and she finds that nostalgic memories remain of the "generous sociability" of the struggle (301), of "ingenuity and courage in the face of the enemy," and "of intellectual and political exchanges with Ladino guerrilla leaders" (302). Looking to the future, McAllister concludes that "recognizing Guatemala's indigenous revolution as a defeat instead of a nonevent keeps open the temporary and social breach it produced, and from which something unpredictable may yet emerge" (304).

In a more loosely argued essay than McAllister's, Rénique situates the extraordinary violence of both the Peruvian state and the Sendero Luminoso guerrillas in the 1980s and early 1990s in the context of the country's experience of the last half century. He vehemently rejects what he considers the overly prevalent explanations for Sendero violence that concentrate upon ideology and psychology. Instead he contends that massive peasant movements beginning in the late 1950s even before the victory of the Cuban revolution created "a crisis of legitimacy and hegemony that has remained unresolved until this day" (316). He argues that popular rural and urban mobilization encountered repeated repression by the Peruvian armed forces, even during the unusual anti-oligarchic and anti-imperialist military governments from 1968 to 1980. Rénique argues that following the 1979-1980 democratic transition, "the state used fear to normalize and further its own violence against both the armed insurgency and the growing popular resistance and political opposition that emerged in response to President Alberto Fujimori's (1990-2000) neoliberal economic regime and authoritarian policies" (312). Rather than a conventionally polarized situation between revolution and counterrevolution, Peru experienced "a more complex mix in which the

state and its political elites were simultaneously challenged by an electoral Left and popular organizations whose goals and strategies were antagonistic to those espoused by Sendero" (329). Sendero directed its violence both against the state and its popular rivals. Although critical of the report of the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Rénique argues that its chronology indicates that Sendero violence emerged in response to state abuses and "the increasing resistance of popular organizations to Sendero's political and military advances" (330).

Like Rénique, Forest Hylton, "The Cold War That Didn't End. Paramilitary Modernization in Medellín, Colombia," interprets political violence that does not fit into the two-fold extremes of revolution and counterrevolution, but that instead involves multiple actors in both sectors deeply engaged in criminal enterprise. Even more than Peru, Colombia indicates that political violence in twenty-first century Latin America has burst the boundaries of the Cold War framework that Grandin and Joseph have articulated. As two scholars have recently noted, "political scientists and anthropologists alike do not yet have an alternative framework within which to begin a new discussion of Latin American politics in the context of proliferating violence."[6] Nor do historians, but as Hylton's essay shows, the recent history of the Latin American Cold War has much to offer for understanding the origins of present-day criminality and political violence in the region. Hylton focuses on the industrial city of Medellín, home of "the country's largest conglomerates and over seventy foreign enterprises…among them Philip Morris, Kimberly Clark, Levi Strauss, Renault, Toyota, and Mitsubishi" (338). As Medellín's economy diversified from coffee and light manufacturing into what Arnold Bauer has called "global goods," it became the center of a powerful international cocaine trade that by the 1970s and 1980s "was far more dynamic than traditional manufacturing industries…and created more jobs in the licit and well as illicit economy" (347).[7] To protect themselves from kidnappings

[6] Enrique Desmond Arias and Daniel M. Goldstein, "Violent Pluralism. Understanding the New Democracies of Latin America," in *Violent Democracies in Latin America*, ed. Enrique Desmond Arias and Daniel M. Goldstein (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), 4.

[7] See Arnold J. Bauer, *Goods, Power, History. Latin America's Material Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), chapter 7.

engineered by the guerrilla Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, narcobarons such as Pablo Escobar formed their own paramilitary forces and death squads, turning "their hired killers against FARC supporters and other leftists in Medellín itself, plunging the city into a murderous downward spiral" (348). The efforts by a reform wing of the Liberal Party and the administration of Ronald Reagan to extradite Escobar and others to the U.S. accelerated the violence further, making "the city a war zone on par with Beirut" (349).

Over the next two decades, *las violencias* involving U.S. antidrug efforts, urban gangs, leftwing popular militias, rightwing paramilitaries, a new generation of narcos, and the Colombian government of Alvaro Uribe continued the slaughter, eventually bringing about a more stable but highly dubious setting based upon "a dynamic, narcotics-based, finance, insurance, real estate and service-sector economy" and a powerful rightwing alliance of "neoliberal elites, paramilitary death squads, narcotraffickers, and politicians" (360-361).

Three conclusions flow from a critical examination of *A Century of Revolution*. First, Grandin and Joseph need to jettison the notion of a Latin American "long cold war" straddling most of the twentieth century and to return to the authentic Cold War where their ideas have much to offer the burgeoning scholarly attention that the post-World War II decades are receiving. One detects some influence of their work in the new publication of diplomatic historian Stephen G. Rabe, but while his analysis of U.S. Cold War policy toward Latin America is acutely critical, his integration of social historical dimensions into international relations remains slight.[8] Rather than overreaching, Grandin and Joseph need to promote engagement of their ideas with publications that lack the depth of their concepts, such as the somewhat slick and pretentious *Latin America's Cold War* by Hal Brands, a work that combines over-footnoting with frequent superficial arguments.[9]

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[8] Stephen G. Rabe, *The Killing Zone. The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[9] Hal Brands, *Latin America's Cold War* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2010).

Second, Grandin and Joseph very much need to encourage serious integration of economic history into their perspectives on the Latin American Cold War. The study of the Cold War in Latin American life requires a careful examination of the weaknesses in economic policy of revolutionary movements. Ignoring an Achilles heel is dangerous, both in real life and in scholarship, as Stefan DeVylder made clear a generation ago in *Allende's Chile. The Political Economy of the Rise and Fall of the Unidad Popular.*[10] Under the advance of the Cold War and then its end, "the slow and more impersonal processes of U.S. economic and cultural penetration" gained in relative influence, making them a more vital area for historical scholarship.[11] Understanding the interplay between the emergence of economic globalization and its particular local manifestations during the Cold War is vital, something that Hylton's essay underscores. Reflexive passing references to neoliberalism and its presumed connections to inequality are not enough. Inequalities have multiple causes and cannot be explained by quick references to economic policy alone.[12] What is said to be neoliberal is often highly different from place to place and needs to be established in its context.[13] The varied relationships that can exist among economic policies, social conditions, and popular behavior need to be a serious agenda item for research on the revolutionary and counterrevolutionary struggles of the Latin America. As Mayer asks Grandin in their interview, "how could you make sense of Latin America without politics and economics?" (420).

Third, despite the overreaching of the editors in their framing of this collection, *A Century of Revolution* has much of value to offer. It is important to remember the view of historical interpretation espoused by

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[10] Stefan DeVylder, *Allende's Chile. The Political Economy of the Rise and Fall of the Unidad Popular* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

[11] Knight, 44.

[12] Luis Reygadas, "The Construction of Latin American Inequality," in *Indelible Inequalities in Latin America. Insights from History, Politics, and Culture*, ed. Paul Gootenberg and Luis Reygadas (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), 48.

[13] See Joseph Nathan Cohen and Miguel Angel Centeno, "Neoliberalism and Patterns of Economic Performance, 1980-2000," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (July 2006): 32-67.

E.H. Carr, an intellectual influence on Mayer, that any "belief in a hard core of historical facts existing objectively and independently of the interpretation of the historian is a preposterous fallacy."[14] Genuine historical understanding advances not as a neat linear progression, but rather as a sometimes disorderly interplay between necessity and possibility. Grandin and Joseph have recognized the imperative of reinterpreting the deep impact of the Cold War on Latin America in a fashion that can connect that harrowing experience with the sociopolitical struggles of the region's past history and also generate a sense of possibility for greater social justice in the future. Although the conceptual initiative of a unified "century of revolution" and "long cold war" is not fruitful, the connection of Mayer's ideas on world history to Latin America is, particularly in its emphasis on the multiple and contingent ways in which the dynamics between revolution and counterrevolution can take place. The ten essays by Latin Americanists in *A Century of Revolution* bear out the considerable historiographical value of the reinterpretive efforts in which Grandin and Joseph have been engaged for over a decade. Its flaws notwithstanding, *A Century of Revolution* stands as a thoughtful contribution that merits attention.

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[14] Edward Hallett Carr, *What is History?* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961), 10.