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The Western Hemisphere

By Abraham F. Lowenthal

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Exporting Democracy: The United States And Latin America. Edited by Abraham F. Lowenthal. Baltimore (MD): Johns Hopkins, 1991, 422 pp. \$55.00 (paper, 2 vols., \$12.95 each)

This fat volume on an important topic comes from one of the most indefatigable academic entrepreneurs in the field. The chapters range from the very good (Lorenzo Meyer on Mexico; Joseph S. Tulchin and Knut Walter on Nicaragua) to the coyly tendentious (Lawrence Whitehead on "imposing democracy"). Overall the tone is cautious. Lowenthal concludes that "the recurrent effort by the government of the United States to promote democracy in Latin America has rarely been successful."

But there are important lacunae. No overall discussion of Carter administration policy is provided, odd since Carlos Escudé, in his chapter on Argentina, makes the argument that "the Carter administration's loud condemnations of human rights abuses not only came together with considerable U.S. government support but with the most massive influx of private U.S. funds ever received by Argentina." Nor are the antipathetic effects of F.D.R.'s "good neighbor policy" dealt with; a policy of non-intervention, to be sure, but also a policy that allowed Latin American dictatorships to flourish. More editorial discussion of the contradictions among the essays would have been helpful.

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