Human Rights in Latin America

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As with many regions of the world, human rights are an issue of enduring concern for Latin America. The essays and bibliographies in this digest chart the recent history of human rights issues in this region, beginning, in most cases, with the wave of military coups that began in the 1970s, highlighting their lasting effects on the governments, civil societies, and economies of the region today. The cases of Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Peru are given here; the Organization of American States (OAS) is also covered.

In most countries, the military coups that took place removed democratically elected governments, often because of the fear by national and international elites that the elected officials leaned too far to the Left. This was most evident in the military coup in Chile that ousted (and possibly killed) socialist President Allende. Since then, Chile has emerged with a strengthened democracy, as evidenced by two historic moments in recent events: first, Chile has elected President Michelle Bachelet, the first female Latin American head of state elected on her own merits rather than as the successor to a dead or disabled husband (as was the case with Isabella Peron in Argentina). Second, General Pinochet, who ruled Chile from 1973-1990, and was responsible during that time for the torture and killing of thousands of people, was stripped of his parliamentary immunity and put on trial. Although his death on December 10, 2006 prevented the conclusion of the trial, the very fact that the trial had begun (several previous attempts to try Pinochet both abroad and in Chile were abortive) showed a great step forward for Chile.

The effectiveness of current democratic regimes in Latin America varies drastically—not all of the Latin American countries discussed have been successful in their efforts to quell internal violence and human rights violations. Colombia, for example, remains “in a constant state of war,” in the words of the Colombia section’s author. In Guatemala, despite a peace accord in 1996 and the end to civil war that accompanied it, structural violence remains a fact of everyday life for the majority of the population.

Even in countries where the violence has ended, the traumatic experiences of the recent past have led to tense civil-military relationships. In the Honduras section, for example, it is argued that Honduras continues to struggle with an overly influential military relative to the weak civil administration. The result has been continuing denial of responsibility by both the Honduran and U.S. governments for past human rights violations and only tentative steps towards reform in this arena.

However, other Latin American countries have been more successful in their attempts to reconcile tensions between building a democratic state, the continuing presence of the military, and an active civil society. Peru is a good, although little recognized, example of this reconciliation. The Peru section’s bibliography provides a good introduction for those who would like to take a closer look at Peru’s development. With the end of the “truth and reconciliation” process in 2003, Peru has
made considerable progress at moving beyond the previous eras of violence (first of military
dictatorships, then of the corrupt Fujimori regime).

The influence of external actors in Latin America is also an area of considerable interest when
examining human rights issues in the region. The role of the U.S. in particular has been generally
negative. The U.S. is infamous in the region for propping up Right-wing dictators and funding
violent paramilitary groups. Even today, the U.S. continues to fund anti-drug violence in Colombia
that has resulted in massive numbers of internally displaced persons with negligible effects on the
international drug trade. The U.N., in contrast, has been largely beneficial for the region, being
influential in the truth and reconciliation projects of several countries. In El Salvador, for example,
the U.N. was instrumental in brokering formal peace accords, and the transition to democratic
elections.

The Organization of American States (OAS) stands out as an example of a regional organization
with great potential to further democratic consolidation and the respect for human rights in Latin
America. The OAS has been viewed by many in Latin America as being U.S. dominated and largely
ineffective. However, recent developments within the organization have begun to challenge this
perception. For example, in May 2005 the U.S., despite a strong lobbying effort, was unable to get
either of its two preferred candidates elected to head the organization, and a month later the U.S.-
backed plan to “monitor” democracy in the region was also rejected by the OAS. The OAS section,
below, highlights the continuing reforms in the Organization’s structure which will hopefully
strengthen the OAS’ ability to mediate disputes and influence policies in Latin America.

The essays and bibliographies that follow are not intended to comprise an all-inclusive account
of human rights issues in Latin America, but rather are intended to serve as representative
introductions to issues of significance dealt with in the literature. Thus, the entries deal with the
continuing legacies of past human rights violations, as well as a variety of contemporary human
rights challenges.
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Human Rights in Argentina
by Scott Muttersbaugh

The election of populist Juan Peron in 1946 brought expanded economic and social rights to the working class. Consequently his popularity continued to rise, although the armed forces staged a coup in 1955, resulting in Peron’s nearly twenty-year exile. By 1973 Argentina’s economy had fallen apart and the still popular Peronist party gained the support needed for Peron’s return. With terrorism on the rise, the government granted a special executive authority to the military, allowing Peron to imprison people indefinitely without a trial, signaling a change in the government’s priorities towards human rights.

Ever-popular, Juan Peron died in office in 1974, leaving his widow, Isabella Martinez de Peron, as successor. The armed forces overthrew her in 1976, marking the sixth time that the military ended democracy in Argentina since 1930 and another change in the state’s attitude toward human rights. This return to military rule would not be like the others. Citing the need to protect Christian values from the communists and the specter of Peronism, the military junta authorized the armed forces to begin interrogations and arrests in the name of national security. This “National Reorganization Process” evolved into “the Dirty War” as the distinction between armed and unarmed resistance began to blur, skyrocketing the number of human rights abuses. Between 1976 and 1982, more than 15,000 people were “disappeared,” while 5,000 more have been identified as murdered by the state. Human rights groups have estimated more than 30,000 disappeared. Kidnapping, torture, and murder became a constant fear for communists, students, intellectuals, reporters, Jews, and eventually, unarmed citizens. This was a change in Argentines’ attitudes toward the military, which were traditionally quite favorable.

In 1977, the mothers and grandmothers of the disappeared began gathering in the Plaza de Mayo, demanding the whereabouts of their missing children. As the Madres de la Plaza movement gained popularity, the military junta continued to face growing demands for justice and democracy, corruption charges, and the constant economic woes. To create a surge in nationalism, in 1982 the armed forces attempted to seize the Falkland/Malvinas Islands and were soundly defeated by the British. Humiliated and discredited, the junta began preparing for its exit from power, and “the Dirty War” came to a close.

The return to democratic elections and civilian rule brought accountability, justice, and retribution for victims of the “Dirty War.” Raul Alfonsin, publicly elected in 1983, began trying to prosecute high-level military officials and to implement democratic reforms. He drastically cut the military budget, but economic woes forced him to resign, ushering in Carlos Menem. Menem felt that the support of the military would benefit his party as well as the country, and he immediately began pardoning all members of the military junta either already convicted or still indicted. The Supreme Court has since revoked the pardons, paving the way for prosecutions to resume. Nestor Kirchner, elected in 2003, garnered local and international support by firing unpopular officials and revoking amnesty laws for the military. Still dealing with the legacy of the “Dirty War,” many Argentines are as concerned with contemporary crime and police brutality as they are with prosecuting human rights violators from the old regimes.
Civilian Rule in Argentina


Abstract: Presents excerpts from the speech of Fernando de la Rua, president-elect of Argentina. Announcement of implementation of a policy directed at sterile confrontations and political divisions; Preparation for a consolidated institution; Protection of human rights and dignity; Promotion of unity among political parties.


Abstract: Presents highlights of the human rights commemoration in Argentina on March 24, 2004. Statement issued by Argentine President Nestor Kirchner regarding the murder and torture of civilians under the country’s 1976-1983 dictatorship; Attendance of human rights supporters in the event; Participation of labor and grassroots groups.


Abstract: The author reports on Argentine president Nestor Kirchner’s efforts to restore law and order to the country. The Naval Mechanical School, built in French colonial style with tall, shuttered windows, occupies a leafy enclave in the prosperous northern residential districts of Buenos Aires. After the 1976 coup that established the dictatorship of General Jorge Videla and his successors, the school was the chief among several clandestine concentration camps where up to 30,000 people were killed, many after being kidnapped and tortured. To mark the coup’s anniversary, on March 24th this year Mr Kirchner made an emotive speech before a crowd of 10,000. He apologized to the victims of state terrorism and announced the conversion of the school to a Museum of Memory. Human-rights groups are impressed. On taking office, Mr Kirchner immediately set about purging the armed forces. He backed a new law to revoke the pardons granted by Mr Menem to the junta members jailed under his predecessor, Raul Alfonsin, and another that would declare void two laws blocking further trials. Officials argue that concern for human rights is part of a broader agenda. “Today, a politician who wants public support has to adhere to an agenda of the rule of law, fighting corruption, and promoting open government and human rights,” says Roberto Saba of the Association for Civil Rights, a pressure group for reform.


Abstract: This article reports on the annulment of laws related to human rights abuses which occurred prior to the restoration of democracy in Argentina in 1983. The bloodiest military government in recent South American history held power in Argentina from 1976 to 1983. Once democracy was restored in 1983, the cases of human-rights abuses passed to military courts. When these proved reluctant to prosecute, the cases were moved to the civil justice system, which imposed prison sentences on five junta leaders. Trials of lower-ranking officers, however, caused increasing restlessness in the armed forces, and the nervous then-president, Raul Alfonsin, pushed through two laws to halt the proceedings: the punto final, or “full stop” law (1986) and the obediencia debida, or “due obedience” law, which excused soldiers who were obeying orders. The annulment—a victory for President Nestor Kirchner, who had promised to get it—is certainly contentions, because the constitution does not seem to allow it, and the whole debate will almost certainly end up in the Supreme Court. Several military leaders are also under arrest for the theft of the babies of the disappeared, which was excluded from the amnesties. On August 21st the Supreme Court rejected an appeal by General Jorge Videla, who is being tried for the systematic kidnapping and illegal adoption of children. Perhaps most important was the ratification, and insertion into the constitution, of the idea that a statute of limitations cannot be applied to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Abstract: Focuses on the joining of Chile and Argentina in joint military maneuvers. The two countries’ request to the IMF or World Bank to help work out standard accounting procedures for defense spending in the region; the suspicion surrounding Chile’s plan to sign contracts for $1 billion dollars worth of weapons; The tendency of Argentines to mistrust the armed forces.


Abstract: This article reports that Argentine Supreme Court has struck down its amnesty laws. On June 14, 2005, the Argentine Supreme Court struck down the laws of final point and due obedience, which granted amnesty to members of the military dictatorship from prosecution for human rights violations. The Court finds that the statutes violated directly applicable treaties such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as well as customary international law. While the Court acknowledges the U.S. Congress’ constitutional power to grant amnesties, it cites articles from the Inter-American Convention on Forced Disappearance of Persons and the U.N. Convention Against Torture and Other Forms of Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment hold that such amnesty powers are not absolute.


Abstract: The article reports on a decision by Argentina’s Supreme Court that two laws intended to halt prosecution of military officers for their crimes are unconstitutional. The ruling was hailed by human-rights groups. The laws were extracted from a reluctant government by coup threats and barracks rebellions. They violated the Inter-American Convention on Human Rights, to which Argentina is a signatory. The Argentine junta of 1976-83 was the most vicious of its Latin American peers: it murdered at least 8,900 people, and perhaps 30,000. The vast majority of its victims were not directly involved with the guerrillas. The reopening of the cases is unlikely to provoke serious tension with the much-shrunken armed forces. Most of the officers concerned are long-retired. The decision pleased Nestor Kirchner, Argentina’s president, who has championed the cause of the “dirty war” victims.


Abstract: Reports that the transition to democracy is smoothest when military murderers are left unpunished and unpardoned. Respect for the rule of law; Collapse of Argentina’s military dictatorship in 1983; Referendum called for by General Augusto Pinochet of Chile that would confirm him in power.


Abstract: Reports on the efforts of Argentine President Nestor Kirchner to bring to account those responsible for the so-called dirty war of the 1970s and 1980s in which up to 30,000 died, most of them civilians murdered by the armed forces. Kirchner, promises to reform his country’s discredited institutions. He purged dozens of senior officers, many of whom served the dictatorship. Now, Kirchner is set to repeal a decree blocking the extradition of Argentines to face human-rights trials abroad. Instead, he wants the courts to decide each case. Kirchner is also wielding his broom against the Supreme Court. He has secured the resignation of one judge, and wants others to go.

Abstract: This article focuses on efforts to bring corrupt corporate and political figures to justice in the province of Santiago Del Estero in Argentina. Every Friday evening for the past year, a swelling group of protesters has marched the five miles from the town of La Banda to Santiago del Estero, the sleepy capital of one of Argentina’s most backward provinces. Their immediate grievance was the murder of two women, and the apparent involvement in the killings—and subsequent cover-up—of politicians, businessmen and judges. But their crusade is symptomatic of a yearning for political renewal in parts of Argentina’s poorer interior, where local strongmen have traditionally ruled supreme. According to the judge now in charge of the case, Leyla Bshier was killed at an orgiastic party attended by some of the local elite. Her body was then cut up, and parts of it fed to animals at a private zoo belonging to Musa Azar, the province’s former (and still much-feared) security chief. Inspired by the protests, the judge summoned up the courage to order the arrest of Mr Azar(Musa Azar), his wife and son, plus a provincial legislator, several police officers and the judge who originally oversaw the case. And Nestor Kirchner, Argentina’s president, has sent his human-rights secretary, Eduardo Luis Duhalde, to Santiago. He has joined the marches, and has filed charges against Mr Azar for the murder of 28 people who” disappeared” during Argentina’s military dictatorship of 1976-83.


Erik B. Bluemel. 2004. “The Implications of Formulating a Human Right to Water.” Ecology Law Quarterly. 31(4): 957. Abstract: This Comment explores the content, legal forms, and implications of recognizing an international human right to water. The concept of water as a human right developed from the recognition that treating the right to water as an economic good may result in an affordability problem for some communities, depriving them of access to water. To counter these effects, a human right to water is being developed. This human right to water, though not fully defined by existing international law or practice, has been protected as necessary to secure other human rights, such as those to health, well being, and life. Given the structure of international law. State obligations depend upon which human right a right to water is found to support or whether such a human right to water is ultimately found to be a separate and independent human right from other recognized human rights. Whether a human right to water is ultimately established as a right subordinate to other human rights or as an independent human right, recognition of a human right to water will have far-reaching effects. This Comment analyzes legal developments in South Africa, India, and Argentina to illustrate some of the ways in which States have implemented a legal right to water. The Comment then identifies some of the key challenges and development constraints in ensuring a right to safe water within reasonable distance for all persons. These challenges include
modifying riparian and prior-appropriation systems of water rights, defining and limiting impacts upon other legal
doctrines, and making economic adjustments associated with providing water to meet the “basic needs” of all
persons. The Comment concludes that while recognition of a human right to water is necessary, its implementation
is fraught with difficulties.


Abstract: This paper builds on the geographies of commemoration literature extending the scope of inquiry to
consider the scaled performances through which the politics of memory unfold, I focus on an analysis of conflicts
over the creation of memorial landscapes that emerge from the intricate ways in which representations of the past
and the everyday politics of social movements intersect. The paper analyses the competing politics of memory of two
groups of Madres de Plaza de Mayo (mothers of people who 'disappeared' during Argentina's Dirty War). Their
strategies underscore geographic dimensions of the politics of memory as the Madres clash over how to appropriately
place memory in the landscape. While one group emphasizes making visible the events of the past to promote
transmission of memory and to remember those who disappeared, the other group focuses on re-interpreting symbols
about the past in an attempt to encourage future activism. Such conflicting Strategies manifest spatially in a
variety of ways, ranging from the creation of physical markers in the built environment to the performance of
collective rituals that center on activists’ bodies as sites for either commemoration of the past or future activism. The
Madres’ conflicts highlight how different spatialities contribute to validate or condemn competing politics of
commemoration.

Watch.

Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

Describes the troubling history of the Argentine human rights movement. Discusses successes
and failures on the path to democratization for grieving families, religious figures, and civil
libertarians. Relates the give and take relationship between democracy and human rights
implementation and enforcement.

Susana Chiarotti. 2005. “Learning and transforming reality: women from Rosario’s neighborhoods
demand access to public health services free of discrimination.” Intercultural Education. 16(2): 129.

Abstract: This article focuses on the activities of two women’s groups in Argentina: CLADEM and
INSGENAR. CLADEM, which has a much broader presence in Latin America, aims to give a feminist
perspective to the construction of real democracies with social justice, free of discrimination and with full exercise of
human rights. INSGENAR is a local, non-governmental organization based in Rosario in the Province of
Santa Fé, one of the provincial chapters of CLADEM Argentina. We describe the human rights workshops that
have been conducted with women in the past few years and their transformative impact.


Abstract: Presents Argentine Chief of Staff General Ricardo Brinzoni’s views on several military issues and his
meeting with the United States Chief of Staff General Eric Shinseki. Importance of professional military

Abstract: Details a meeting between Adolfo Perez Esquivel, leader of Argentina’s human rights movement Servicio Paz y Justicia, and Pope John Paul II on December 13, 1980 in Rome, Italy. Background on the kidnapping and release of Perez Esquivel by the secret police; Outline of topics discussed in the meeting; Item given by Esquivel to the pope.


Relates progress of human rights groups in regards to agenda setting, promoting citizen rights, especially during arrest, and advocacy's role in checking police action in Chile and Argentina. Attempts to find a balance between citizen rights and prevention and deterrence of crime. Outlines difficulty in abandoning the “Iron Fist” legacy of military rule.


Authors suggest that redemocratization in Latin American is contingent on the political society. Argues that balancing justice and reconciliation of past state-sponsored human rights abuses, as well as involving societies in global economics is necessary. The author takes into account the role of civil society. Discusses the transition to democracy in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, and Uruguay.


Abstract: Describes the effort by Argentine President Nestor Kirchner to put an end to corruption in government. Decision to strip immunity from retired military officers charged with human rights violations; Increased popularity rating.


Abstract: Reports on the work of American forensic anthropologist Clyde Snow in identifying victims of mass murderers in Argentina, Guatemala, El Salvador and other countries. Snow’s use of a computer program for forensic anthropologists; Work with Argentinean medical and anthropology students who volunteered to help him dig up mass graves; Reactions of families when seeing the bones of their loved ones; Exhumation activities; Lessons learned by Snow from his work; Use of bones as evidence in mass murder trials. INSET: Forensic sciences in defense of human rights.


Abstract: Contrasts the strategies, procedures and outcomes of educational reform in Argentina under the military government and the civilian democratic government. Difference in educational governance methods; Strategies for educational reform; Creation of an organization and management structure for educational change.

Abstract: Focuses on the conversion of several facilities which symbolized repression during the military government rule in 1970s and 1980s into human rights monuments in South American nations. Reclamation of a prison in Brazil into a museum; Transformation of a military installation in Argentina into a museum; Information on a solitary statue which served as a visual reminder of the troubled past in Santiago, Chile.


Abstract: Focuses on lessons learned from the territorial dispute between Argentina and Great Britain over Falkland Islands in 1982. Impact of the dispute on the relations of both the U.S. and Britain with Latin America; Doubts on the decision of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to invade and claim Falkland Islands; Victory of the British campaign.


Abstract: Examines the contradictions in civilian policies to secure control over the military in Argentina, Brazil and Chile in the 1990s. Constraints to military professionalism in the 1990s; History of civil-military relations in the three countries; Policy implications.


Abstract: Reports on documents released by the U.S. State Department on August 20, 2002, which reveal stance of Archbishop Pio Laghi, the former papal nuncio to Argentina, on political and social conditions, and human rights in the country during the Argentine war between 1976 and 1983. Number of Argentinians who disappeared during the Argentine war; Conviction expressed by Laghi about the former Argentinians President Jorge Videla and other leaders; Reason for Laghi’s criticism by Argentinians religious groups.


Abstract: Argues that human rights should be central in teaching medicine. Since 1983, Argentina has been living a “democratic” government, but torture is still rampant. Sergio Pesutic, a Chilean psychiatrist, has described the phenomenon of torture and the role of Chilean health professionals, ranging from active complicity to denial of its existence and sometimes to resistance. He concluded that several primary prevention measures should be taken to avoid torture, including the incorporation of human rights teaching into formal and non-formal medical curriculums, the application of codes of medical ethics, and research into the long term effects of torture. The criminal and unethical behavior of doctors involved in or colluding in torture reflects a society’s moral decline.

Abstract: The Argentinean democratization process had a promising beginning. The commission to investigate disappearances (1983–1984) and the military junta's trials (1985) were without precedent in a region devastated by state terrorism. Argentina showed the world it was capable of addressing matters of truth and justice; it became a key global case study for communities dealing with the aftermath of violence, issues of impunity and accountability, or questions of reconciliation and forgiveness. Then, a process of legalization of impunity revealed the civilian government's partial commitment to justice as well as the military's power to set limits. However, in 2004 major events unfolded that might set new historical precedents concerning justice for crimes against humanity. At this historical moment, both local initiatives and the globalization of justice are influencing the possibility of canceling the cycle of impunity. This essay takes us back to a period where prospects for justice were not very promising. In 1998, more than two decades after the coup of 1976, I asked a group of young people, “If you were Minister of Justice, what would you do regarding this past?” The essay explores young Argentineans' opinions about the political and legal system, their feelings of anger and impotence, and what they believe should be done. It evaluates the need for justice and recommendations on whom should be punished, why, and how. The information is helpful to understand how young people view Argentina's past as a background against which current changes are occurring. It also sheds light on how the post-dictatorship generation was conceptualizing justice and the roles they may play to create a culture of accountability and respect for human rights.


Abstract: Focuses on relations between Israel and Latin American countries. Israeli businesses in Latin American countries; Terrorist acts against Jews in Argentina; Military relations between Ecuador and Israel; Historic military cooperation of Israel with Latin America's right-wing dictators; Israeli assistance to those affected by damage caused by Hurricane Mitch in Latin America; Negotiations for a free-trade agreement with Mexico.


Abstract: Reports on the admission of the Argentine government of covering up an investigation into the terrorist attack on the headquarters of the Asociacion Mutual Israelita Argentina in Buenos Aires, during a hearing before the Organization of American States Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). Accusations of the IACHR against the government; Violation of the government against the human rights of the victims of terrorism; Commitment of the government to revise its national security services to prevent terrorist attacks.


Abstract: Focuses on the human rights situation in Argentina. Human rights in the post-dictatorial era; Human rights abuses; Political scenario in Argentina; Human rights trials.

Update from original report in 1987 which examined how a newly democratic Argentina attempted to deal with prior human rights violations. Explains how the democratic government made and lost progress in publicizing human rights violations as well as attempting to justly try and convict perpetrators of the atrocities. The author describes the situation in Argentina as a positive experience for other nations coming to terms with past state-sponsored human rights violations.


Abstract: Reports on Argentinean President Raul Alfonsin’s introduction of legislation that revoked the amnesty the junta had granted itself in its final days in 1988. Initiatives to promote the country’s quest for human rights and justice after eight years of military rule; Trial and conviction of former junta leaders after the passage of the legislation.


Abstract: This article examines the relationship between media and democracy in Argentina. A Tinker/Nave short-term field research grant supported this research project during the summer and fall of 1997. It uses archival sources on media concentration, as well as an ethnographic investigation, to gather information concerning media access by human rights groups. The author argues that media concentration, institutional connections with media, foreign ownership, violence against the press, and neoliberal market restraints limit the quality of Argentina's transitional democracy. These conditions can restrict the discussion of human rights issues and simultaneously limit the re-creation of a severely damaged public sphere. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]


Abstract: Recent judicial reforms after democratic transition have been substantial and relatively successful in Chile, but much less so in Argentina and Brazil. This article traces this variation in outcomes to the legal strategies of the prior authoritarian regimes. The Brazilian military regime of 1964-1985 was gradualist in its approach to the law, and had a high degree of civilian-military consensus in the legal sphere. It was not highly repressive in its deployment of lethal violence, and this combination of factors contributed to a gradualist and consensual transition in which judicial reform was not placed high on the political agenda. The Argentine case of military rule between 1976 and 1983 was almost the opposite. The military side-stepped and even attacked the judiciary, engaging in almost entirely extrajudicial violence. This generated a “backlash” reform movement after the transition to democracy that was mostly retrospective and only partially successful. In Chile, in contrast, the military engineered a radical break with previous legality, engaged in violent repression, but made considerable efforts to reconstruct a judicial order. It was in the aftermath of this situation that reformers were able to push through a prospective and relatively successful judicial reform. This article’s findings suggest that judicial reform may be more likely to succeed where the prior authoritarian regime was both repressive and legalistic, as in Chile,
Poland, and South Africa, than where high degrees of repression were applied largely extrajudicially, as in Argentina, Cambodia, and Guatemala, or where the authoritarian regime was legalistic but not highly repressive, as in Brazil, Mexico, and the Philippines.


Abstract: The emergence of a human rights movement represented a cultural turning point in many Latin American societies. The movement’s struggle acted as a catalyst for political learning, triggering a profound renovation of the region's democratic traditions. The most impressive development has been the emergence of a rights-oriented discourse that reunites two elements that populist forms of self-understanding had kept separate: democracy and the rule of law. Cultural innovation gave birth to a new form of politicization that greatly differs from the movementist and corporatist practices of past populist movements, for the former is guided by a liberal concern: establishing clear institutional boundaries between state and civil society. Through the analysis of a series of citizens’ initiatives and movements, the paper analyzes this new form of politicization and its contribution to the authorization and effectivization of rights as institutions. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]


Abstract: Since 1991, Argentina has had provincial reproductive health laws, a far-reaching national programme and strong public consensus in support of reproductive health policies. Nevertheless, the challenges of strengthening public services, increasing the number of programme sites and resisting conservative attacks remain. This article describes an assessment of the reproductive health programme of the city of Buenos Aires, passed in 2000, whose objectives are to prevent unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases/HIV and to train health personnel. The programme operates in every public hospital and primary health care centre in the city. The assessment was conducted jointly by the Ombudsperson’s Office of Buenos Aires and the Centre for the Study of State and Society (CEDES). Hormonal contraceptives, IUDs and male condoms were mostly available, but emergency contraception, female condoms and other barrier methods were not. Some health professionals and service users were knowledgeable about the new laws and the reproductive rights recognised under the law. Over 90% were satisfied with quality of care in service delivery but many professionals described excessive workloads, deficient infrastructure, and shortages of supplies and staff. Wanting help to obtain a tubal ligation was the most frequent reason for the claims lodged with the Ombudsperson’s Office, followed by HIV, quality of care, and abortion. Information and training for both health care providers and women’s and human rights NGOs was carried out. (English)


The authors give a brief overview of Argentina’s struggles from democracy to military rule and back from 1966-2001. Description of national security and economic concerns as causes and torture, kidnapping, and murder as the results of military rule. Briefly describes the issues in returning to democracy and balancing accountability with moving forward.


Abstract: Examines the role of the truth and reconciliation commissions in healing the society, prosecution of those responsible for crimes, and prevention of further abuses. Findings unveiled by Peru’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission in August 2003; Discussion of the Argentine experience in attaining partial justice; Role of the Chilean commission in revealing the pattern of repression and the deaths that occurred during Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet’s rule; Investigation conducted by the Peruvian commission into the human rights abuses committed under democratically elected governments in the 1980s and 1990s.


Abstract: The Argentine default at the end of 2001 highlighted the ongoing problems plaguing the existing transnational debt architecture, namely the tensions between creditor rights and human rights. While these debates have thrown important light on what needs to be done in terms of improving the transnational debt architecture, few studies have actually attempted to evaluate critically the manner in which transnational debt has been managed since the outset of the Bretton Woods system in 1944. I argue that the postwar informal arrangement governing transnational debt architecture not only helps augment the power of credit to serve as an effective form of social discipline, but that it is also profoundly contradictory. Through an historical survey, spanning the beginning of the Bretton Woods system to the recent Argentine default, I demonstrate that the informal nature of the transnational debt architecture, coupled with the mounting power of global financial capitals over debtor states, has played a major role in bringing about increased levels of volatility and vulnerability in the international credit system.


Author attempts to explain how different methods of accountability may be necessary to bring about justice while trying to maintain peace in Argentina. Because the military junta dictated their own departure as head-of-state, the books suggests that they retain some authority and ability to influence government. Therefore, there must be some balance between prosecution of those responsible for the “Dirty War” as well as some measure of amnesty via confession under the new democracy.


Abstract: This article examines several scandals in 1990s Argentina to discuss the linkages between scandals, media, and citizenship. Suggesting that media publicity is central for scandals to unfold, the article examines a particular arms scandal. An institutional approach that considers the role of different political actors in different scandals shows how and why the media and other institutions contributed to the making and unmaking of
scandals. Although scandals offer opportunities for “doing politics by other means,” not all actors are similarly involved. Scandals that dealt with official corruption mainly featured political elites, whereas scandals that followed revelations about human rights violations showed a different pattern: public outrage and citizens’ mobilization. In a political context of “scandal fatigue,” scandals do not necessarily trigger public action or moral crusades. Only those scandals that directly affected groups of citizens and were not simply causes that were followed by public demonstrations and intense audience attention.


Abstract: This article highlights the dwindling support for the human rights movement in Argentina as of 1993. Between 1976 and the mid-1980s, the level of organized human rights activity was overwhelming. Today, Argentina’s eight nongovernmental human rights organizations (NGO) struggle to survive, their financing drastically cut by the U.S. and European foundations which funded them during the military era. The offices of the various NGO are open only a few hours a day, their staffs struggling to survive—often without the most basic of supplies. This human rights crisis is especially dangerous in the current era of transition. A new democratic government is a delicate creature, easily susceptible to slipping back into oppressive traditions if not watched over carefully. Argentina’s military and police forces are still too dominant and disproportionately powerful for a true constitution-based system. Police violence, arbitrary arrests, imprisonment without trial, and discrimination are common. Lack of funding is not the only problem, however. Most of the organizations are uncertain as to what their role should be in their country’s transition to democracy. In order to rejuvenate themselves, the human rights organizations must raise consciousness about current human rights concerns.

The Dirty War in Argentina


Abstract: This article focuses on efforts to bring corrupt corporate and political figures to justice in the province of Santiago Del Estero in Argentina. Every Friday evening for the past year, a swelling group of protesters has marched the five miles from the town of La Banda to Santiago del Estero, the sleepy capital of one of Argentina’s most backward provinces. Their immediate grievance was the murder of two women, and the apparent involvement in the killings—and subsequent cover-up—of politicians, businessmen and judges. But their crusade is symptomatic of a yearning for political renewal in parts of Argentina’s poorer interior, where local strongmen have traditionally ruled supreme. According to the judge now in charge of the case, Leyla Bshier was killed at an orgiastic party attended by some of the local elite. Her body was then cut up, and parts of it fed to animals at a private zoo belonging to Musa Azar, the province’s former (and still much-feared) security chief. Inspired by the protests, the judge summoned up the courage to order the arrest of Mr. Azar (Musa Azar), his wife and son, plus a provincial legislator, several police officers and the judge who originally oversaw the case. And Nestor Kirchner, Argentina’s president, has sent his human-rights secretary, Eduardo Luis Duhalde, to Santiago. He has joined the marches, and has filed charges against Mr. Azar for the murder of 28 people who “disappeared” during Argentina’s military dictatorship of 1976-83.


Abstract: Reports on the discovery of evidence that Spanish workers who disappeared during the reign of Argentina’s military dictatorship were tortured in a secret detention center at the Ford Motor Co. factory near
Buenos Aires. Argentine subsidiary management's involvement in the detention, torture and execution of the victims; Lawsuit filed by the families of the missing workers.


The author uses over 1,000 interviews to interpret social justice during the period of military rule in Argentina. He suggests that the “Dirty War” was unnecessary, that the guerrillas should have been handled by police, and that Christian and Western ideals helped destroy a once prosperous country. Additionally suggests that subversives were created by the government in order to authorize what would be known as “the Dirty War.”


Abstract: This article argues on archival preservation of primary documentation on human rights abuses in countries of the Southern Cone of Latin America. To make this point, the article examines the state of documentation relating to human rights abuses under military rule in three Southern Cone countries-- Chile (from 1973 to 1990), Argentina (from 1976 to 1983), and Uruguay (from 1973 to 1984); and discusses the political, social, technical, and financial challenges that face advocates of archival preservation. The article is, in part, a result of the author’s visits with each of the Human Rights Nongovernmental Organizations (HRNGOs) discussed in this article, as well as interviews with members of these HRNGOs; scholars; human rights experts; social scientists; lawyers from Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay; and bibliographers and library experts from major research libraries and national library systems. Ultimately, the article is meant to be a call for action in a sphere of activity that is sometimes neglected in human rights discourse.


Abstract: Discusses the evolution of the human rights movement in Argentina. Human rights; Social movements and their effect on the international system; Response of the international human rights groups; Effectiveness of international pressure in promoting human rights; Lessons and limitations of the Argentine experience.


Abstract: The article examines the issue generated by the political sources and implications of measurement through the debate over the number and nature of human rights violations under Argentina’s military dictatorship from 1976 to 1983. Between 1976 and 1983, Argentina was ruled by a succession of military juntas which engaged in gross and systematic human rights violations as part of a policy of state terror designed to intimidate and demobilize Argentine society. Under a bureaucratic authoritarian regime, the military pursued a sweeping political program oriented by structural transformation of the economy and the extension of an anti-insurgency campaign to all areas of political life. Civil and political rights were denied, the Constitution was suspended, Congress was closed, unions were terrorized, and the judiciary was silenced. Human rights reform in Argentina
was spearheaded by a shifting coalition of nine human rights organizations. While some mobilized public support through symbolic protest, others collected information which contributed directly to public policy. Within the developing world, Argentina should present a promising case for the accurate measurement of human rights violations. Argentina is highly urbanized, its citizens are literate and educated, and government records are well-established.


Abstract: Traces the impact of the French Revolutionary War ideology on the Argentine Armed Forces during the war from 1976-1982. Components of the fused French and Argentine ideology; Works on the nature of a revolutionary war; Transfer of torture ideology as a human rights issue.


Abstract: Focuses on the plans of President Jimmy Carter on the expansion of human rights in the U.S. Carter's advancement of the cause of human rights on the American political agenda and in the world community; Termination of the aid to the military junta in Argentina; Administration's failure to elevate human rights concerns in its policy toward Cambodia.


Abstract: The article discusses various events related to torture in the history. The first is a history of the deed, those diverse, many but rather special forms of human violence that are designated as being torture. The second history deals with the oscillation between the extremes of tolerance and prohibition. Since the presumed disappearance after the Enlightenment of judicially approved torture, this has been told as a narrative of successful control. There has to be a third history of torture, the words that justify the deeds. Torture was a prominent feature of the Latin American military dictatorships, notably Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil. But the justificatory language of divine violence, purge, salvation, cleansing and national security, in its fascist, rather than democratic version, needed no fancy legal maneuvers, either at the time or afterwards. The collapse of these regimes and the subsequent 'transitions' to democracy in Latin America, South Africa and the Soviet Empire did not direct much attention to torture as a separate issue. Only in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, the global war against terrorism and the revelations about the abuse of detainees in Guantanamo, did massive public attention turn towards the subject.


Abstract: Presents text samples of documents on human rights abuses in Argentina during the reign of the military in 1976 posted by the U.S. Department of Defense on its Web site.


Takes into account the role of culture, technology, and training in American hegemony's role in state-sponsored terror in Latin America. The editors relate how technologies of violence,
received from the United States, propelled Latin American into new and more extensive human rights atrocities.


Reports on the human rights situation in Argentina as of 1980. Emphasizes abuses, including victim testimony, as well as government refusal to accept responsibility, and reveals that Argentine prisons do not meet international standards. Recommends government action to limit police violence as well as improve conditions of prisons and treatment of prisoners.


Abstract: Focuses on the economic policies of Argentina's military junta. Institutionalized methods by which the junta governs; Ban on the Peronists' return to power; Control of inflation; Rise in interest rates; Improvement of the economic indicators; War against terrorism; United States' concerns for human rights.


The author gives a thorough account of how the social culture in Argentina created civil and political animosity between the masses and the elites, creating a “seedbed of terrorism.” It follows with an historical account of state and guerilla violence; the aims of military in repression and the “Dirty War”; and the continuing difficulty of retribution against the former aggressors.


Abstract: Assesses the narratives that have shaped the history of the military coup in Argentina on March 24, 1975. Characteristics of social memory; Impact of military coups and Peronism on politics; Interpretation of the junta on the 1976 coup; Actions taken by the government to address human rights violations during the coup; Demands of the human rights movement.


Abstract: Reviews two books about military relations of Argentina. 'Through Corridors of Power: Institutions and Civil-Military Relations in Argentina,' by David Pion-Berlin; 'Democracia y Cuestion Militar,' by Ernesto Lopez and David Pion-Berlin.


Abstract: Focuses on Argentina’s military occupation of the bleak South Atlantic archipelago known as the Malvinas or Falkland Islands. Information on the U.S. policy to resolve the conflict between its friendly countries, Great Britain and Argentina; Report that the U.S. may be forced to choose which it value more either the Monroe Doctrine and Inter-American system or the Atlantic alliance; Preparation for the seizure of islands by Argentina President Leopoldo Galtieri; Appeal made by U.S. Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Enrique Ros to activate the protracted sovereignty negotiations; Information that Argentina’s military also seems to have support from Moscow in return to Argentina's refusal to join in the grain embargo against the Soviet Union; Request made by Great Britain for economic sanctions against Argentina.


Abstract: Discusses increasing economic nationalism, militarism, pragmatic attitude toward Cuba, and penchant for direct action by right- and left-wing movements in Latin America. United States President Richard Nixon’s
policy of “Action for Progress for the Americas”; U.S. is trying to sever economic relations with Chile while maintaining diplomatic ties; Argentina’s military dictatorship; Instant coffee dispute in Brazil.


Abstract: Addresses several cases asserting universal jurisdiction to seek the applicability for crimes committed in another jurisdiction, where the accused is present and the victims are not of the pursuing state’s populace. Procedures seeking to bring Chilean dictator General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte to justice for killings, torture, disappearances and genocide during his rule; Case filed in Spain against former Argentine junta members and others with regard to disappeared Spaniards in Argentina; Crimes committed by Honduran military official Billy Joya.


Abstract: Focuses on the legacy of human rights violations, crises committed by security forces in Argentina, Uruguay and Chile under the military rule in the 1990s. Arrest of Chilean General Augusto Pinochet in London, England in October 1998; Background of policy making in the Southern Cone of the Americas; How the political leaderships of countries adopted the idea of national reconciliation.


Madres de la Plaza de Mayo


Abstract: This paper builds on the geographies of commemoration literature extending the scope of inquiry to consider the scaled performances through which the politics of memory unfold. I focus on an analysis of conflicts over the creation of memorial landscapes that emerge from the intricate ways in which representations of the past and the everyday politics of social movements intersect. The paper analyses the competing politics of memory of two groups of Madres de Plaza de Mayo (mothers of people who 'disappeared' during Argentina’s Dirty War). Their strategies underscore geographic dimensions of the politics of memory as the Madres clash over how to appropriately place memory in the landscape. While one group emphasizes making visible the events of the past to promote transmission of memory and to remember those who disappeared, the other group focuses on re-interpreting symbols about the past in an attempt to encourage future activism. Such conflicting strategies manifest spatially in a variety of ways, ranging from the creation of physical markers in the built environment to the performance of collective rituals that centre on activists’ bodies as sites for either commemoration of the past or future activism. The Madres’ conflicts highlight how different spatialities contribute to validate or condemn competing politics of commemoration.


Abstract: This article provides a framework for analysing social movements and explaining how collective action can be sustained through networks. Drawing on current relational views of place and space, I offer a spatialized conception of social networks that critically synthesizes network theory, research on social movements, and the literature on the spatial dimensions of collective action. I examine the historic and contemporary network geographies of a group of human rights activists in Argentina (the Madres de Plaza de Mayo) and explain the duration of their activism over a period of more than two decades with regard to the concept of geographic flexibility. To be specific, first I show how, through the practice of place-based collective rituals, activists have maintained network cohesion and social proximity despite physical distance. Second, I examine how the construction of strategic networks that have operated at a variety of spatial scales has allowed the Madres to access resources that are important for sustaining mobilization strategies. Finally, I discuss how the symbolic depiction of places has been used as a tool to build and sustain network connections among different groups. I conclude by arguing that these three dimensions of the Madres’ activism account for their successful development of geographically flexible networks, and that the concept of geographic flexibility provides a useful template for studies of the duration and continuity of collective action.

Marguerite Guzman Bouvard. 1994. Revolutionizing motherhood: the mothers of the Plaza de Mayo. Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources Inc.

Recounts the creation and transformation of the Madres de Plaza de Mayo, a politically powerless group of working class women that protested the brutal military regime responsible for the disappearances of thousands of Argentines. The book relates how the Mothers became the first powerful human rights activists in Argentina and were instrumental in building the pro-democracy and human rights movements. Additionally discusses the Mothers role in political and civil society following the return to democracy.


Abstract: Discusses the evolution of the human rights movement in Argentina. Human rights; Social movements and their effect on the international system; Response of the international human rights groups; Effectiveness of international pressure in promoting human rights; Lessons and limitations of the Argentine experience.


Abstract: Profiles the late Maria Adela Gard de Antokoletz, cofounder of the Asociacion Madres de Plaza de Mayo, an Argentine human rights group of mothers who fought against junta oppression. Reason for cofounding the human rights group; Contributions to society.


Abstract: Details the organization formed by mothers searching for their missing children in Argentina called Madres de la Plaza de Mayo. Atrocities committed by the military regime from 1976 to 1983; Protests of the group against the military atrocities; Transformation of the mothers' grief to positive action.


Abstract: Focuses on the Million Mom March organized in the U.S. for gun control in the country. Opinion of the National Rifle Association on the gun control movement; Protest of the organization, Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, on the kidnapping and murder of 30,000 citizens at the hands of Argentina's military dictatorship; Views of Maryland Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend on the gun control movement; Opposition of alcohol industry to gun control measure.
Human Rights in Chile
by Stephanie Raessler

Chile might evoke memories of Augusto Pinochet and his brutal reign, though there is more to this country than an oppressive authoritarian regime. A history of politics longer than Pinochet's rule has shaped Chile's current situation. Many issues recur across Chilean history, and continue to influence the present. In particular, Chile's experience in the some key areas deserves special focus:

General Background

Although Chile shares a similar history with other countries of the Southern Cone, it also has proved unique in many aspects of its development, political movements, and social issues.
1973 to 1990), Argentina (from 1976 to 1983), and Uruguay (from 1973 to 1984); and discusses the political, social, technical, and financial challenges that face advocates of archival preservation. The article is, in part, a result of the author’s visits with each of the Human Rights Nongovernmental Organizations (HRNGOs) discussed in this article, as well as interviews with members of these HRNGOs; scholars; human rights experts; social scientists; lawyers from Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay; and bibliographers and library experts from major research libraries and national library systems. Ultimately, the article is meant to be a call for action in a sphere of activity that is sometimes neglected in human rights discourse.


Abstract: The article focuses on the revolutions in Latin America that resulted in the overthrow of governments in Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Panama during World War II. The article discusses the Latin American pattern of revolution; analyzes whether recent outbreaks do in fact conform to or deviate from it; and what the prospects are of continued revolutionary activity in the future. Compared with earlier periods the number of revolutions was relatively small. Since the close of the war, however, the revolutionary tendency has reappeared with such vigor as to suggest that it may no longer be following the usual Latin American pattern. Recent events have excited apprehension in some quarters as to possible revolutionary developments in the entire area. Factors making for a violent change in the status quo exist in many parts of Latin America. Almost everywhere opulent minorities flannt their riches before a melancholy sea of illiterates. The wealthy few, who maintain estates of thousands of hectares, derive lucrative fees and commissions from foreign business firms and drive about in expensive American limousines, have little in common with the miserably underprivileged masses of the people, whose role throughout life is to serve as beasts of burden, shine the shoes of the upper class in the town plaza, or sell lottery tickets. With the possible exception of Argentina, Chile, Mexico and Uruguay, the Latin American countries contain only an infinitesimally small middle class. The social ladder has only two rungs-- the lowest and the highest. The low is very low, and the high is very high. The gap is so wide that those on the lowest rung can almost never reach the one above.


Abstract: Focuses on the legacy of human rights violations, crises committed by security forces in Argentina, Uruguay and Chile under the military rule in the 1990s. Arrest of Chilean General Augusto Pinochet in London, England in October 1998; Background of policy making in the Southern Cone of the Americas; How the political leaderships of countries adopted the idea of national reconciliation.

**Capitalism and Development**

The pursuit of free market policies for nearly three decades has allowed Chile to enjoy a fairly continuous growth record. Though a recent economic downturn has plagued the economy and unemployment remains a problem, signs show that recovery is taking hold, and continued economic
development is likely in the future. As a pioneer in free trade, Chile remains committed to economic growth and the development of trade relations with other states.


Abstract: Discusses the impact of the 1981 Water Code adopted by the Chilean government. Previous praises given for its adoption; Claim that the impact is mainly negative; Principles and objectives of the Water Code; Background information on the implementation of water codes in Chile; Details on the Chilean water market; Lessons to be learnt from the Chilean situation; Conclusions of discussion.


Abstract: Presents information on a study which examined the case of water rights and river basin management in contemporary Chile from 1981-1995. Description of Chile’s 1980 Constitution and new institutional order emphasizing the role of the courts; Information on the neo-liberal water law in 1981; Judicial behavior in water rights law; Reformation of river basin management.


Abstract: Argues that the training and employment policies of Chile’s transition governments since 1990 have failed significantly to promote the development of human resources and occupational citizenship. Identification of structural and political causes; Economic and institutional legacies of the period of dictatorship; Identification of the problem of institutional coordination.


Abstract: This article looks at the interaction between states and labour representation in the surfacing of new economic rights in emergent economies (EEs). Economic liberalisation in the 1980s and 1990s profoundly changed the governance of labour markets in EEs. The division between formal and informal sectors was blurred as employment shifts became more frequent and volatile. A traditional site-based approach to conceptualising employment problems is no longer tenable given this fundamental shift. A clearer conception of the relationship between public policy and labour institutions is needed that proceeds from an understanding of how core (both formal and less formal) institutions are linked, through labour law, welfare schemes and labour relations. In this article we assess the cases of four EEs where economic pressures have been relatively dramatic—Chile, Argentina, Brazil and Korea—and compare their political and institutional outcomes. This approach allows us to categorise the problems of market governance associated with the transition from “traditional” (firm-based) to “new” (labour market or society-centred) rights in terms of alternative employment regimes with distinct implications for economic efficiencies and individual freedom.

Abstract: Focuses on the process of industrialization, social mobility and origin of social classes in Chile. Comparison of American business elites and Chilean industrial managers; Overview of the stages of industrialization in Chile; Mobility patterns of Chile's working class; Process of class formation and its relation with social mobility.


Abstract: Reviews the book 'Political and Social Forces in Chilean Development,' by James Petras.


Abstract: Addresses the issues of property rights in the mining industry in Chile. Problems caused by the reform granted by the Chilean government; Terms of the constitutional mining laws of the country; Effects of the changes in the mining industry on the economy of Chile.

**Democracy and Elections**

Socialist, Marxist, and democratic forces have shaped the Chilean populace for years, leaving ordinary people with a varied yet sophisticated political outlook. Beginning in the 1980's, the Pinochet regime was accompanied by numerous human rights violations and various forms of political repression. After General Pinochet was denied a second term, a transition period began for the Chilean people. Recent events have brought the first female president in Chilean history, and a positive outlook for democracy and free and fair elections.


Abstract: Reviews the book “Student Politics in Chile,” by Frank Bonilla and Myron Glazer.


Abstract: This article evaluates 38 bills seeking to expand women's rights in Chile and finds that the successful ones often originated with the Executive National Women's Ministry (SERNAM), did not threaten existing definitions of gender roles, and did not require economic redistribution. These factors (plus the considerable influence of the Catholic Church) correlate in important ways, and tend to constrain political actors in ways not apparent from an examination of institutional roles or ideological identity alone. In particular, the Chilean left’s strategic response to this complex web of interactions has enabled it to gain greater legislative influence on these issues over time.

Abstract: Examines the democratizing impact of the constitutional reforms in Chile. Origin of the 1980 'Constitution of Liberty'; Restrictions on democratic and human rights; Objections raised by the opposition regarding the constitutional prerogatives of the military; Immutability of the constitution.


Abstract: Characterizes the campaign climate and the victory of Socialist Ricardo Lagos in December 1999 presidential election in Chile. Dominance of the style and theme of rightist Joaquin Lavin in the campaign; Evidence of bipolar presidential electoral division; Support of Lagos for human rights and true democracy; Continuity of the 1988 plebiscite patterns of electoral behavior.


Abstract: Reviews the book “Political Groups in Chile,” by Ben G. Burnett.


Abstract: Recent judicial reforms after democratic transition have been substantial and relatively successful in Chile, but much less so in Argentina and Brazil. This article traces this variation in outcomes to the legal strategies of the prior authoritarian regimes. The Brazilian military regime of 1964-1985 was gradualist in its approach to the law, and had a high degree of civil-military consensus in the legal sphere. It was not highly repressive in its deployment of lethal violence, and this combination of factors contributed to a gradualist and consensual transition in which judicial reform was not placed high on the political agenda. The Argentine case of military rule between 1976 and 1983 was almost the opposite. The military side-stepped and even attacked the judiciary, engaging in almost entirely extrajudicial violence. This generated a “backlash” reform movement after the transition to democracy that was mostly retrospective and only partially successful. In Chile, in contrast, the military engineered a radical break with previous legality, engaged in violent repression, but made considerable efforts to reconstruct a judicial order. It was in the aftermath of this situation that reformers were able to push through a prospective and relatively successful judicial reform. This article’s findings suggest that judicial reform may be more likely to succeed where the prior authoritarian regime was both repressive and legalistic, as in Chile, Poland, and South Africa, than where high degrees of repression were applied largely extrajudicially, as in Argentina, Cambodia, and Guatemala, or where the authoritarian regime was legalistic but not highly repressive, as in Brazil, Mexico, and the Philippines.


Abstract: Focuses on the success of Socialist Ricardo Lagos in 2000 presidential election in Chile. Impact of the television campaign commercials and projected images of Lagos and rightist candidate Joaquin Lavin on the public; Factors that contribute to the victory of Lagos; Advocacy of Lagos for human rights, independent justice and sustainable economic growth.


Abstract: There is abundant comparative evidence that political parties differ substantially in the support they receive from different social classes, whether or not their appeals manifestly have class content. In particular, Socialist and Communist parties, for reasons inherent in their theoretical position and political programmes, have focused their organizational efforts and agitational appeals on urban industrial workers. And, wherever such parties have gained mass followings, their predominant core resides in the working classes. No other party has been as thoroughly and completely the party of the working class as the Communist Party. Chile is the only country in Latin America in which the organized working class in politically and socially significant and is led by Marxist socialists and communists. The socialist movement has had a political base in the working class for many decades, especially among miners, and in the fifties, based on growing working class support, it began to become a serious contender for political power.

Gender and Women

As in many regions and countries around the world, women have struggled for equal rights in Chile for decades. Though these issues affect men as much as women, the fight for equal rights has largely fallen upon women’s shoulders. With the election of the first female president in Chile’s history, the battle seems to be won. However, much work remains, particularly in the more impoverished regions of Chile where women’s rights are largely considered a luxury good. As in many other countries, progress has been made, but true equality still eludes much of the population.


Abstract: This article relates how Oxfam, through its partner ACTIVA, is empowering women at the grassroots in Chile, who had never even heard of the Millennium Development Goals, to monitor the progress of local authorities towards meeting their commitments, and to hold their government accountable to its promises. A manual is used as a tool for working with other groups affected by discrimination and social exclusion, such as young people, indigenous peoples, and minority groups.


This book focuses on the cultural-ideological plans of the military for women, the socio-economic policies of the military government, the women’s movement and women’s organizations in Chile, the women’s movement and the rise of the democratic opposition, and the subject of women, the state and civil society.


Abstract: This article comparatively analyses the cases of Mexico and Chile to understand how women’s movements contest the meaning of citizenship in various national contexts. We also assess the consequences that different movement strategies, such as “autonomy” versus “double militancy,” have for movements’ citizenship goals. To explain the different outcomes in the two cases, we focus on the nature of the democratic transition, the
internal coherence of women’s movements, the nature of alliances with other civil society actors, the ideological orientation of the newly democratized state, the form of women’s agency within the state, and the nature of the neoliberal economic reforms. We argue that a serious problem for women in both Chile and Mexico is the fact that governments themselves are deploying the concept of citizenship as a way to legitimate their social and economic policies. While women’s movements seek to broaden the meaning of citizenship to include social rights, neoliberal governments employ the rhetoric of citizen activism to encourage society to provide its own solutions to economic hardship and poverty. While this trend is occurring in both Chile and Mexico, there are some features of the political opportunity structure in Chile that enable organized women to contest the state’s more narrow vision of democratic citizenship. In Mexico, on the other hand, the neoliberal economic discourse of the current government is matched by a profoundly conservative ideological rhetoric, thereby reducing the political opportunities for women to forward a gender equality agenda.


Abstract: Discusses the case of Chilean women who protested against the military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet from 1973-1989. Popular manifestations by women against the actions of government; Participation of Chilean women in the political development of the country; Testimonies on the political domination and violation of human rights.


Abstract: While the Catholic Church opposes both artificial contraception and abortion, is the latter stressed more vehemently in Latin American countries facing rapid population growth than the former? While 90 per cent of Mexicans say their religion is Catholic, government policy encouraging the use of contraception has been quite successful. In twenty years the average family size in Mexico has fallen from 7 to 2.5. The population growth rate has dropped from 3.5 to 1.88 in 25 years. This article explores changes over time in government family planning policy in the two larger more developed countries of Mexico and Chile and the two smaller less developed countries of Haiti and Guatemala. The article seeks to identify the factors that most influence governmental policy action. Three forces are examined: neo-liberalism, women’s rights groups, and the Catholic Church. To explore the influence of these three forces we employ a comparative case study approach, analyzing statements of Catholic Bishops, news article reports, government statistics and policy statements, and the reports of non-governmental organisations that focus on family planning. We find that neo-liberal forces are most dominant in Mexico and Chile, while the traditional cultural and religious forces of the Church are still very influential in Guatemala and Haiti. Additionally, due to extreme poverty, Haiti remains the most dependent on foreign-aid and outside political pressure to get family planning policies funded. The article demonstrates how governmental policy in the
more developed nations of Chile and Mexico has been primarily influenced by neo-liberal forces in practice, but has attempted to appease both the Catholic Church and women's and human rights groups.


This book examines women's rights, women's activism and the Chilean state, national development, social policy, and the poor, participation and the representation of pobladoras in the state, state goals, national identity, and the Mapuche, and the Vision de Pueblo and the representation of Mapuche women in the state.


Abstract: Focuses on the conditions of charity, rights and entitlement in Chile during the early 20th century and their correlation with gender, labor and welfare. Why not all impoverished Chileans gained equal benefits from government efforts to expand its services and democratize welfare; Gender bias on the distribution of state benefits; Actions taken by the government agency Caja de Seguro Obligatorio in providing social security and health care benefits to laborers.

Human Rights

With a legacy of human rights abuses, Chilean citizens have endured a difficult past. From the era of colonization to “The Disappeared” in the 1980’s, Chile has had a long history of fighting for human rights. As Chileans have only regained their rights of assembly, speech, and association in the last twenty years, the road ahead is long. Though Chile is in the unfortunate position of having to fight the ghosts of past human rights violations along with those that are just emerging, much of the population is committed to progress in this area and will continue to fight for the basic human rights of all Chileans.


Abstract: This paper describes steps taken in order to deal with information regarding human rights abuses in Chile during the Pinochet regime, focusing on the most recent initiative, the Mesa de Dialogo (1999-2001) whose final report was given to president Lagos in January 2001. Two national initiatives, i.e. the establishment and reports of the Comision de Verdad y Reconciliacion (1991) and the following-up of this inquiry by the Corporacion Nacional de Reparacion y Reconciliacion (1996) preceded La Mesa and are discussed in this paper. The paper concludes by suggesting that the Chilean transition to democracy will remain incomplete if the fate of the disappeared is not fully known and legally investigated.


Abstract: Discusses the establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission in Chile in the pursuit of justice for state-sponsored terrorism and human rights violations. Difficulty of reaching a societal consensus about the
past; Negotiated transition; Distinction of reconciliation from justice; Forgiveness and reconciliation as results of the reconstruction of the moral order.


Abstract: The article focuses on the work of a mental health team facing the individual and social consequences of human rights violations by the military government in Chile from 1973 through 1989. The Chilean people democratically elected a new government in 1989. Although this event does not guarantee that democracy now reigns, there can be no doubt that a process of transition to democracy has begun and that absolute military rule has come to an end. Outside of Chile, the military regime was known mainly for its record of human rights violations, as well as for its economic success in comparison to other Latin American countries. These two issues are often discussed separately, or if a connection is made, it is usually in order to suggest that the economic success could at least partially justify the political repression. This paper neither presents a profound political or economic analysis of the dictatorship, nor develops a moral argument about it. The central issue of the paper is the effect of systematic political repression on both the victims and society as a whole.


Abstract: Focuses on a study which examined documentary collections of major human rights non-governmental organizations in Argentina, Chile and Uruguay. Relationship of human abuses and democratization processes in Latin America; Human rights organizations in Argentina; Collections in Uruguay.


Abstract: This article analyzes international instruments on political disappearances. The Nazi regime was probably the first to practice forced disappearances of persons to eliminate its victims without a trace. In the 1960’s, the Guatemalan security forces began to use forced disappearances as part of their counter-insurgency campaign, a tactic replicated in the 1970’s and 1980’s by military regimes throughout Latin America. Now, however, it is governments in Asia, including Iraq and Sri Lanka that hold the record for disappearing their citizens. For the most part, those disappeared have been political opponents and members of grass-roots organizations.Disappearances are perhaps the cruelest form of government abuse, causing agony not only to the detainees but to their relatives as well. Detainees are cut off from the outside world, deprived of any legal protection, and subject to the whim of their captors. Most often they are tortured and then secretly killed. The relatives of detainees, meanwhile, are unable to ascertain their fate-whether and where they are being held, whether they are even dead or alive.


This book focuses on the denial of police violence in Chile, advocacy groups in Argentina, fluctuating influence, the corporate police force in Argentina, the Chilean government’s reactions toward international and local reports, social groups’ responsiveness in Argentina, and corruption.

Abstract: Focuses on the status of human rights in Chile. Significance of improvements and progress of the country’s human rights record; Conditions necessary for lifting the special rapporteur; Assessment of personal freedoms in the country.


Abstract: “Twenty authors analyze factors behind genocidal situations worldwide, with detailed case studies, and an evaluation of attempts to prevent genocide and of the implications for human rights policies, with a particular concern to develop new and practical insights”


Abstract: International pressures on authoritarian regimes to respect human rights are increasingly common yet their impact is relatively unknown and hotly debated. Recent studies suggest that international pressures can have a limited yet important effect when they strengthen and reinforce favorable domestic processes. I identify three domestic conditions conducive to a limited impact - low costs of easing repression; responsive regime factions; and relatively strong societal human rights norms. In a case study of Chile from 1973 to 1980, I find that extensive international pressures and a soft-line faction combined to alter the political strategy of the authoritarian regime in ways not foreseen or intended by international actors. The research suggests that scholars should more carefully consider the normative dimensions of international pressures and their role in undermining the legitimacy of domestic regimes.


Abstract: Focuses on a report by the Committee for Human Rights of the American Anthropological Association (AAA) citing violations of human rights and environmental laws arising from a hydroelectric dam project on the Bio-Bio river in Chile. Recommendations presented by the AAA; Complaints of anthropological consultant Theodore Downing; Why the International Finance Corporation did not release the Downing report to the Pehuenche.


Abstract: Under what conditions will individuals risk their lives to resist repressive states? This question is addressed through comparative analysis of the emergence of human rights organizations under military dictatorships in Chile, Uruguay, and Argentina. While severe state repression is expected to lead to generalized demobilization, these cases reveal that repression may directly stimulate collective action. The potential for sustained collective action in high-risk contexts depends upon the relationship between strategies of repression and the particular configuration of embedded social networks; it is more likely where dense yet diverse interpersonal networks are embedded within broader national and transnational institutional and issue networks.

Abstract: Because we started to work with teachers on human rights education in Latin America in the middle of the 1980s, with dictatorial regimes in power, we understood that our pedagogical approach needed to be a critical one. This transformative process of change has not been easy. Many personal, social, political and cultural challenges have been faced. In this article I mention some of those challenges, especially: (1) the lack of a critical approach; and (2) the cultural “incapacity” to recognize the “other” as a legitimate “other” and to accept the existence of social and cultural diversity. Finally, the article gives theoretical and practical recommendations on how to overcome these two main obstacles.


Abstract: Describes the process of initiating a human rights education project in Chile. Relation between critical relationality and instrumental rationality; Conservation versus change; Problematizing education versus consensus-oriented education; Pragmatic legitimacy versus axiological legitimacy; Separate subject versus integration into the curriculum; Extensive versus intensive treatment.


Abstract: The article examines why human rights trials against military offenders were held in Argentina and not elsewhere. Although nearly all South American countries were afflicted by state repression and terror during the decade of the 1970’s, Argentina remains the only nation that has indicted and prosecuted military officers for their role in repression. The trials of the former members of the military juntas that ruled Argentina between 1976 and 1982 engendered intense curiosity and scrutiny in the international community. Not since the Nuremberg trials of the Nazi criminals of World War II had a trial of this nature anywhere in the world captured so much public attention. Given the extent of the atrocities committed by the previous military government, such proceedings certainly seemed warranted. Yet, despite terrible anguish suffered under repressive military rule, neither Uruguay nor Chile has conducted similar trials. Arguably, all the Southern Cone democratic Presidents who assumed power after the transition were justified in investigating and prosecuting those military officers who had abused their authority by committing human rights crimes while in office. Although the scope and severity of the crimes varied, Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay easily qualified as consistent, gross human rights-offending regimes.


Abstract: Examines human rights violations and the reshaping of collective identities in the Southern Cone of South America, during the breakdown of democracies and during military rule. Ways in which intellectuals and social actors attempted to grapple with their experiences of the military period; Effects of human rights violations to the collective life in Southern Cone societies.


Abstract: The article discusses the foreign policy of the U.S. on human rights. The U.S. has helped encourage attention to human rights. International initiatives are bearing fruit. The Helsinki Final Act of 1975 has surprised signatories by assuming a life of its own, shown in the proliferation of monitoring groups in communist nations and pressure for implementation of the so-called Basket Three on humanitarian measures at the Belgrade
meeting for follow-up on the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Human rights have become a focus in the Organization of American States (OAS), constituting the debate at the 1977 OAS General Assembly and the reason OAS member states voted, 13 to 10, to shift this year’s meeting from Uruguay, a violator of human rights, to the U.S. The United Nations (U.N.) shows promise in the area of human rights. U.S. delegates to the 1978 session of the U.N. Human Rights Commission report continuing movement, away from the selective morality criticized by Senator Moynihan when he was U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., to concern with countries other than Israel, Chile and South Africa. Many West European nations are increasing their attention to human rights. There has been an increase in activity within the U.S. and elsewhere to complement the moves of official international actors. To reinforce or to respond to this range of activity, the administration has tried to institutionalize the process of decision-making on human rights within the U.S. government.

The Pinochet Regime

Much of the recent history of Chile still revolves around the former dictator and his policies. Current events bring many of the human rights abuses back to the forefront of memory for the citizens affected negatively by his regime. The trial of Pinochet will hopefully bring closure for those Chileans seeking to put the past behind them.


Abstract: Examines the implications of Great Britain’s highest court to deny General Augusto Pinochet immunity from arrest. Pinochet’s claim of immunity according to his lawyers; Amnesty law in Chile.


Abstract: This article assesses the significance for Chile of the effort, begun in Spain and continued in Chile, to prosecute former dictator Augusto Pinochet for human rights crimes. It argues that the arrest and its aftermath proved an important catalyst for change in the political and judicial spheres, accelerating and deepening developments already underway that have had the effect of marginalizing the figure of Pinochet and his political legacy. It contends that the fallout from the case has helped to break down obstacles that hitherto hindered efforts to achieve retroactive justice for the human rights crimes of the dictatorship, and furthered Chile’s attempt to achieve truth and reconciliation, which had reached an impasse by the mid 1990s. These developments in turn have changed the context for remembrance of the 1973 coup, adding a new element to its enduring symbolism.


Abstract: Focuses on the terrorism and political violence in Chile during the regime of Angusto Pinochet. Level of political and social polarization in Chilean society during the regime; Relative economic stability achieved by the country in the years following the establishment of the regime; Violations of human rights committed between 1973 and 1989.

Abstract: Explores the geographic nature of arbitrary armed violence through the works of geographers. Violation of human rights accompanying armed violence; Scope of state terror of Augusto Pinochet’s dictatorship in Chile; Description of imperialist Russia by Peter Kropotkin.


Abstract: Focuses on the issue regarding the right of Spanish authorities to extradite former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet on the grounds of his abuses of power while serving as head of state. Pinochet’s human rights violations; What force governments to tighten their restrictions for asylum.


Abstract: Discusses a study which examined the authoritarian regimes of Argentina, Brazil and Chile. Theoretical background; Methodology; Findings and its implications.


Abstract: This article assesses the impact, if any, of Spanish and British Court rulings on the Pinochet case on human rights progress in Chilean courts. Chilean judges chafe at the notion that foreign courts exerted any influence on them, arguing that, based solely on Chilean law and the evidence already before them, they were empowered to strip Pinochet of his immunity, and proceeded to do so. Human rights critics allege that the courts had been thoroughly immobilized by the authoritarian legacy to which they were enjoined. No progress at all would have occurred were it not for the dramatic verdicts handed down in British courts. The author contends that change was underfoot in Chile prior to Pinochet’s arrest in London, but that Europe set Chile on a faster and steeper trajectory toward justice than would have been possible otherwise. It did so by shaming the Chilean Government into pressuring its own high courts to deliver a modicum of justice to the victims of Pinochet.


Abstract: Focuses on the international law governing state official criminal responsibility for crimes against humanity in Chile. Human rights violations of former president Augusto Pinochet Ugarte; International judicial inquiry on Pinochet; Implication of the arrest of Pinochet and the decision on immunity for international law.
Colombia
by Mariko Frame

With its notoriously vicious paramilitary death squads, rampant drug trade and collusive government, Colombia remains a complex and tumultuous nation. Needless to say, the human rights history of this country has been marked by political violence, absence of due process, and at times a general lawlessness that has made it perpetually unstable. Coupled with Colombia's domestic problems, U.S. involvement in its 'war on drugs' has exacerbated the situations that already were at a boiling point. With an ongoing power struggle between the government, the military and the drug lords, it is no exaggeration to describe Colombia as in a constant state of war. All activists and marginalized peoples are under steady attack from all sides as they strive to secure for themselves and for their country a safe and peaceful future.

Books on Colombia


Abstract: Discusses the anti-narcotics drug aid package of the United States to Colombia, known as Plan Colombia, and the objections of human rights groups to the package. Opposition of the U.S. government to human rights conditions; Support of drug-connected paramilitaries to U.S. policy; Paramilitary massacres and violations; Political issue behind press coverage of Colombia; Rhetorics behind Plan Colombia’s objectives.


This source, written by America's Watch Committee, contains an analysis of Colombia's paradoxical political setting which is characterized by a functioning democracy and a militarized society. Critically examines violations against civil rights and human rights in Colombia's crisis. It also provides the political context for Colombia's crisis and discusses the government's role.


This report examines a series of political reforms made between 1990-1991. It concludes that despite reforms, the government of Cesar Trujillo has been unable to curb politically motivated violence. It ascribes the responsibility of such violence to a broad range of actors including the government, paramilitary groups, and insurgents.


This source written by Amnesty International concerns human rights abuses in Colombia; particularly death squads, disappeared persons, and political persecution. It also provides information on politics and government in 20th-century Colombia. Finally, it discusses the social conditions of Colombia's crisis and examines this crisis in the context of human rights.

This publication by Amnesty International provides information on the political aspect of Colombia's crisis from 1974 onwards. It discusses political persecution and low-intensity conflicts. It also examines violations of human rights in Colombia's crisis.


This source contains information on the continuing violence in Colombia's crisis, addressing the issues of human rights and civil rights. Next, it examines the political setting of Colombia's crisis, with discussion of politically motivated violence. Finally, it analyzes the legal rights of political prisoners and their status under law.


This human rights report published by Amnesty International provides a background to recent increases in human rights violations in Colombia, explaining the legislation introduced by executive decree under state of siege. Also, it contains information on extrajudicial executions and the particular forces responsible for these executions. Finally, it examines various sectors under attack; the communist party, trade unionists, teachers, etc.


In 1992, the Colombian President Trujillo adopted a series of executive decrees which restricted civil liberties and granted more power to the Colombian armed forces. These authoritarian decrees have not resulted in any progress against the insurgent forces; instead the Colombian armed forces themselves are implicated in serious cases of human rights abuses. This report criticizes the ongoing abuses perpetrated by both the Colombian armed forces and the insurgents.


This publication is a series of working papers written by various scholars. It contains presentations on the historical context of violence and human rights in Colombia, the international law and institutional efforts against impunity, and the Peace Process. It also seeks to present a variety of views and expose the complexities of the Colombian situation for a more intelligent policy debate in the United States.


Abstract: *Sara Cameron reports on the Children’s Movement for Peace in Colombia which, with the support of organizations like UNICEF, has put into practice the fundamental principles of child rights and participation. Cameron shows how the Convention on the Rights of the Child gave the power to these children to protest against war in ways that have profoundly transformed communities across the country. She argues that the Children’s*
Movement for Peace provides many lessons for other countries and communities in conflict for children to exert a strong influence on adults to make peace.


Considers the prospects for accomplishing the interlocking goals of promoting democracy and effectively protecting human rights through the new constitutional framework. Overview of the constitutional changes rendered by the Colombian Constitutional Assembly (Constituyente) to the legislative and executive branches; Analysis of the adequacy of steps taken by the Assembly toward a strong and independent judiciary; Constitutional treatment of human rights; Conclusion.


Abstract: Describes the role of the U.S. in helping Colombia to carry out human rights abuses. Shows the connection between military and death squad activities, and how responsibility of abuses committed by paramilitaries is shifted away from the Colombian military. Also provides information for what Americans can do to change the situation.


Abstract: Examines human rights violation cases in Colombia from the viewpoint of a non-governmental organization working with the poor. Failure by the state to comply with its responsibilities; Denial of justice to the victims of violations; Government efforts to improve the performance of justice; Military criminal justice system; Role of the Public Ministry, headed by the Procurator General in protecting human rights.


Abstract: Explores the contributions of narrative and liberation psychology to the understanding of politically based trauma in Colombia. Concept of trauma in the context of war and political repression; Relationship between the concept and the diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder; Analysis of how human rights activists make sense of the political persecution and trauma.


This Human Rights Watch publication criticizes Colombia's Attorney General for failing to make progress in curtailing human rights abuses. The Attorney General directly undermining prosecutions and investigations of major human rights violations in Colombia.


This Human Rights Watch publication examines the actions of the left-wing insurgency group FARC in the context of international law. It analyzes the transgressions that FARC has
committed against international law. It also discusses the assassinations of political figures, other politically motivated crimes, and human rights abuses in Colombia.


This source presents detailed evidence of the continuing close ties between the Colombian Army and the paramilitary groups responsible for gross human rights violations. This evidence is compiled by Colombian government investigators and Human Rights Watch. Also, this source contends that military support for paramilitary activity continues even in areas which are receiving aid from the United States.


This Human Rights Watch publication examines the growing power of right-wing paramilitaries and their gross human rights abuses in Colombia. It also criticizes a newly approved law which is effectively a negotiation between paramilitaries and the Colombian government: it allows paramilitaries demobilization if they are immune from extradition for drug trafficking. Finally, it describes the ramifications of allowing paramilitaries legal protection against prosecution.


This book examines Colombia's war in the context of international law. It proposes that the failure to address fundamental issues, such as impunities for violations of both human rights and international laws, contributes greatly to Colombia's conflict. It also discusses transgressions against international law for both paramilitaries and guerillas and the role that the international community plays in the conflict.


This Human Rights Watch document contains a review of the Public Law 107-1115 signed by the Bush administration which will allow continued funding for the Colombian government to support its 'war on terror.' It concludes that the Colombian government has not satisfied conditions of protection for human rights. According to HRW, there is evidence that the government continues to support paramilitary groups responsible for human rights abuses. Finally, this document urges the Bush administration to implement measures which will help secure human rights in Colombia.


A human rights investigator, Robin Kirk, travels deep into rural Colombia to gather and then retell the personal narratives of men and women caught in the Colombian drug conflict. Kirk sets the historical context for the role of the United States in providing training and weapons
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Abstract: Discusses the policies of the Virgilio Barco and Cesar Gaviria governments; drug and self-defense policies, as well as for the paramilitary groups. Explains how Colombian state failed to maintain military control, provide an adequate police force, and court system to protect civilian rights. Also provides a historical context concerning the weak Colombian state and the emergence of opposition.


This book provides the context for Colombia's conflict in terms of politics and the government, discussing the administrations of Virgilio Barco and Gaviria Trujillo. It also examines the roles that paramilitary forces and drug trafficking play in the crisis, and discusses the human rights abuses being committed by Colombia's rival factions.


Abstract: Presents information as it relates to the increase in drug production and export in Colombia, highlighting 'war on drugs' in the region. Information on Colombia which is described as one of the most violent countries in the world; Examination of the penalty for human rights violators suffered by the Colombian people; Recommendations for violent situations in Colombia; Estimated amount of money the United States is spending in military aid to Colombia.


Abstract: Criticizes the inconsistencies in United States policy toward human rights abuses in China, Colombia and the Russia Federation. Implication of the U.S. relationship with Russia; Suggestion for policymakers in designing framework for action.


Abstract: Investigates whether the U.S. government uses the “Drug War” as a smokescreen to justify arms sales to Colombia and exposes the human rights abuses of the Colombian army against its people and how women specifically have responded to this. In 1996, a delegation sponsored by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) traveled to Colombia to take part in the International Day of Actions Against Violence Against Women. The delegation traveled to Apartado in support of its mayor, a courageous young woman named Gloria Cuartas, who is trying to govern the city in an atmosphere of terror. Includes an interview with Mayor Cuartas.


This book addresses the strategic dimensions of Colombia's crisis. It argues that Colombia's future will deeply affect regional security and U.S. interests. It also presents the view that
counterinsurgency cannot be separated from counternarcotics, and it calls for a scaling back of restrictions on U.S. funding and training of counterinsurgency forces.


Abstract: Paramilitaries commit many of the human rights abuses in Colombia. Provides evidence on the relationship among Colombian army brigades, police and paramilitaries. Shows how the Colombian government has failed to take effective measures to break these links, and how the Colombian military and police often profit from paramilitaries. Also describes the failure of American policy makers to enforce U.S. human rights laws, and how the U.S. contributes to the situation by continuing to provide military assistance to the government despite its poor human rights abuses record.


Abstract: The article contains three reviews on books pertaining to Colombia: 'Colombia: Fragmented Land, Divided Society,' by Frank Safford and Marco Palacios, 'Colombian Labyrinth: The Synergy of Drugs and Insurgency and Its Implications for Regional Stability,' by Angel Rabasa and Peter Chalk, and 'The Sixth Division: Military-Paramilitary Ties and U.S. Policy in Colombia,' by Human Rights Watch. In 'Colombia,' Safford and Palacios discuss the current turmoil taking place in Colombia, including economic troubles and violence. Rabasa and Chalk, in 'Colombian Labyrinth,' explore the strengths and weaknesses of Colombia’s guerrillas and paramilitaries. Human Rights Watch, in 'The Sixth Division,' discuss Colombia's military and state institutions.


This book documents the criminal activities of the Colombian armed forces. It contains interviews with witnesses and victims who retell their stories of murder and death threats issued by government forces. It also criticizes the Colombian government for its state-sponsored terrorist operations in the war against guerrillas and narcotraffickers.


Abstract: The paper explores processes of social movement learning within SINTRAEMCALI, a public service trade union in the South West of Colombia, which has successfully prevented a series of attempts by the national government to privatise public utilities. The paper develops the concept of ‘strategic learning’ and applies it to an exploration of the transformation of SINTRAEMCALI from a narrow ‘corporate’ trade union focused on the defence of members’ particular interests, to a ‘social movement union’ that linked workers and local communities in the defence of public services and operated on a range of scales from the local to the global.

This book contains an analysis of the complexity of the drug intervention in Colombia. The author summarizes reasons for the continuing crisis and explains which forces are working against democracy and human rights. He suggests new strategies for government accountability and peace building and argues that current policies are heading in the wrong direction. He also presents alternatives to drug intervention.


Abstract: *Over the last decade, a wide range of global forces have combined to promote the territorial titling of collective lands to indigenous and black communities in the lowland tropics of Latin America. I describe the World Bank-funded Natural Resource Management Program’s effort to demarcate and title some 5 million hectares of national lands to black community councils in Pacific Colombia since 1996. In so doing, I examine how environmental, human rights, and multilateral lending interests have come together over the last few decades to strengthen ethnic rights to collective lands throughout the Latin American lowlands. Although it is too early to make definitive assessments, I argue that the machinations of the World Bank-funded project interacted in very complex and significant ways with how black social movements instituted a novel ethnic-territorial relationship.*


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Abstract: *Presents information on human rights abuses in Colombia since Andres Pastrana assumed presidency in 1998. Factors behind government abuses; Paramilitary terrorism; Military support from the United States.*


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This book critically analyzes the role of the United States in funding and training the Colombian military. It contains Cold War and post-Cold War history of the U.S.'s role in Latin and South America in supporting various regimes, and it seeks to illustrate the ulterior economic motives behind America's continued role rather than defaulting to the orthodox explanations of “Soviet containment” or a “war on terror.”


Abstract: This essay analyzes Colombian foreign policy over the last three decades with specific emphasis on Bogota's peace diplomacy from 1978 up to 2000 in the context of an ongoing and degrading internal war. Initially, it assumes a modified realist perspective that links international relations with domestic structures. Then, the text defines three models of Colombian peaceful diplomacy according to the purposes, the means, and the rationales employed by the administrations that covered the above-mentioned period. After empirically evaluating the governments of Presidents Turbay, Betancur, Barco, Gaviria, and Samper, and the first two years of the presidency of Pastrana, the article concludes with an assessment of the country's peace diplomacy and its impact on internal violence and instability.


This report is a testimony by the Assistant Secretary of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement before the U.S. Senate Committee. It presents his views considering the progress the U.S. has made in its fight against drug trafficking. He concludes by praising the success of Plan Colombia, but insists that continued efforts must be made to eradicate all sources of drug trafficking.


Abstract: The article discusses insights into an exceptional episode of human rights fact-finding, in which a commission of inquiry set up by the United Nations Secretary-General discovered the disappearance of two boys in Quito, Ecuador. The two boys became notorious not only in their own country but also in neighbouring Colombia and beyond. It was the work of Ecuadorian National Police, who killed them and secretly disposed of their bodies. In the first few months after their disappearance, the boys' parents had kept quiet as the members of police offered them vague stories and promises that the boys were still alive, and that they had been seen in different places. After seven months, fed up with vague stories of police officers, the boys' parents turned to the media. Thereupon, the public started taking a wide interest in the affair. A Special Commission of Inquiry was formed to look into the case. The Commission sought reports from an ex-policeman and General Gilberto Molina who were considered witnesses in this case.


This report is based on an all-day conference held at the Wilson Center on April 4, 1995. It includes bibliographical references and working papers from the Woodrow Wilson International
Center for Scholars Latin American Program which discuss the issue of civil rights and human rights in Colombia's crisis. It also addresses factors which either help or hinder Colombia's peace process.

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Plan Colombia is the main financial aid program provided by the United States in an effort to support counterinsurgency projects by the Colombian government. Plan Colombia is a $7.5 billion project which provides funding to the Colombian military, as well as military training. This U.S. State Department website contains information on the mission and financial allocations of 'Plan Colombia,' and also provides pertinent links to Department of State releases concerning Plan Colombia.


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**Historical Context**


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Abstract: Examines the state-building efforts of Colombia. Information on the illegal armed groups in the country; Increase in the defense budget allocated by President Alvaro Uribe in 2002; Impact of the September 11 terrorist attacks on the politics of U.S. policy toward Colombia; Views of human rights groups on the consequences of Uribe’s strengthening of security institutions.


This book critically analyzes the role of the United States in funding and training the Colombian military. It contains Cold War and post-Cold War history of the U.S.'s role in Latin and South America in supporting various regimes, and it seeks to illustrate the ulterior economic motives behind America's continued role rather than defaulting to the orthodox explanations of “Soviet containment” or a “war on terror.”


Abstract: This essay analyzes Colombian foreign policy over the last three decades with specific emphasis on Bogota’s peace diplomacy from 1978 up to 2000 in the context of an ongoing and degrading internal war. Initially, it assumes a modified realist perspective that links international relations with domestic structures. Then, the text defines three models of Colombian peaceful diplomacy according to the purposes, the means, and the rationales employed by the administrations that covered the above-mentioned period. After empirically evaluating the governments of Presidents Turbay, Betancur, Barco, Gaviria, and Samper and the first two years of the presidency of Pastrana, the article concludes with an assessment of the country’s peace diplomacy and its impact on internal violence and instability.

**Human Rights Abuses**


This source concerns human rights abuses in Colombia; particularly death squads, disappeared persons, and political persecution. It also provides information on politics and government in 20th-century Colombia. Finally, it discusses the social conditions of Colombia's crisis and examines the crisis in the context of human rights.

This publication by Amnesty International provides information on the political aspect of Colombia's crisis from 1974 onwards. It discusses political persecution and low-intensity conflicts. It also examines the violations of human rights in Colombia's crisis.


This report provides a background to recent increases in human rights violations in Colombia, explaining the legislation introduced by executive decree under state of siege. Also, it contains information on extrajudicial executions and the particular forces responsible for these executions. Finally, it examines various sectors under attack; the communist party, trade unionists, teachers, etc.


This Amnesty International website contains information regarding human rights abuses in Colombia and links to the latest news and reports on Colombia's human rights crisis. It also provides links to important official, related websites and U.S. Policy organizations. Finally, it provides information on grassroots organizations which are protesting against Colombian human rights abuses, as well as information on how to get involved.


Abstract: Sara Cameron reports on the Children's Movement for Peace in Colombia which, with the support of organizations like UNICEF, has put into practice the fundamental principles of child rights and participation. Cameron shows how the Convention on the Rights of the Child gave the power to these children to protest against war in ways that have profoundly transformed communities across the country. She argues that the Children’s Movement for Peace provides many lessons for other countries and communities in conflict for children to exert a strong influence on adults to make peace.


Colombia Support Network is a grassroots organization that is seeking to build a democratic and economically-just Colombia. The organization condemns human rights abuses by all factions of Colombia's crisis, including paramilitaries, insurgents, the government, and U.S.-backed projects. This website provides background information on Colombia and links to various articles related to the rival factions, the destruction of Colombia's environment, human rights abuses, U.S. involvement, etc.


Abstract: Examines human rights violation cases in Colombia from the viewpoint of a non-governmental organization working with the poor. Failure by the state to comply with its responsibilities; Denial of justice to the victims of violations; Government efforts to improve the performance of justice; Military criminal justice system; Role of the Public Ministry, headed by the Procurator General in protecting human rights.

Abstract: *Explores the contributions of narrative and liberation psychology to the understanding of politically based trauma in Colombia. Concept of trauma in the context of war and political repression; Relationship between the concept and the diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder; Analysis of how human rights activists make sense of the political persecution and trauma.*


This Human Rights Watch publication criticizes Colombia's Attorney General for failing to make progress in curtailing human rights abuses by undermining prosecutions and investigations of major human rights violations in Colombia.


This Human Rights Watch publication examines the actions of the left-wing insurgency group FARC in the context of international law. It analyzes the transgressions that FARC has committed against international law. It also discusses the assassinations of political figures, other politically motivated crimes, and human rights abuses in Colombia.


This Human Rights Watch publication examines the growing power of right-wing paramilitaries and their gross human rights abuses in Colombia. It also criticizes a newly approved law which is effectively a negotiation between paramilitaries and the Colombian government in which paramilitaries will demobilize if they can avoid extradition for drug trafficking. Finally, it describes the ramifications of allowing paramilitaries legal protection against prosecution.


A human rights investigator, Robin Kirk, travels deep into rural Colombia to gather and then retell the personal narratives of men and women caught in the Colombian drug conflict. Kirk sets the historical context for the role of the United States in providing training and weapons originally intended to fight illegal drugs for armed operations against factions which are seeking to gain control of Colombia.


This book provides the context for Colombia's conflict in terms of politics and the government, discussing the administrations of Virgilio Barco and Gaviria Trujillo. It also examines the role that paramilitary forces and drug trafficking play in the crisis, and discusses the human rights abuses being committed by Colombia's rival factions.

Abstract: Presents information as it relates to the increase in drug production and export in Colombia, highlighting 'war on drugs' in the region. Information on Colombia which is described as one of the most violent countries in the world; Examination of the penalty for human rights violators suffered by the Colombian people; Recommendations for violent situations in Colombia; Estimated amount of money the United States is spending in military aid to Colombia.


Abstract: Investigates whether the U.S. government uses the “Drug War” as a smokescreen to justify arms sales to Colombia and exposes the human rights abuses of the Colombian army against its people and how women specifically have responded to this. In 1996, a delegation sponsored by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) traveled to Colombia to take part in the International Day of Actions Against Violence Against Women. The delegation traveled to Apartado in support of its mayor, a courageous young woman named Gloria Cuartas, who is trying to govern the city in an atmosphere of terror. Includes an interview with Mayor Cuartas. [videorecording]. 1 videocassette (24 min.)


This book documents the criminal activities of the Colombian armed forces. It contains interviews with witnesses and victims who retell their stories of murder and death threats issued by government forces. It also criticizes the Colombian government for its state-sponsored terrorist operations in the war against guerrillas and narcotraffickers.


Abstract: Presents information on human rights abuses in Colombia since Andres Pastrana assumed presidency in 1998. Factors behind government abuses; Paramilitary terrorism; Military support from the United States.


Abstract: The article discusses insights into an exceptional episode of human rights fact-finding, in which a commission of inquiry set up by the United Nations Secretary-General discovered the disappearance of two boys in Quito, Ecuador. The two boys became notorious not only in their own country but also in neighboring Colombia and beyond. It was the work of Ecuadorian National Police, who killed them and secretly disposed of their bodies. In the first few months after their disappearance, the boys' parents had kept quiet as the members of police offered them vague stories and promised that the boys were still alive, and that they had been seen in different places. After seven months, fed up with vague stories of police officers, the boys' parents turned to the media. Thereupon, the public started taking a wide interest in the affair. A Special Commission of Inquiry was formed to look into the case. The Commission sought reports from an ex-policeman and General Gilberto Molina who were considered witnesses in this case.

This report is based on an all-day conference held at the Wilson Center on April 4, 1995. It includes bibliographical references and working papers from the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars Latin American Program which discuss the issue of civil rights and human rights in Colombia's crisis. It also addresses factors which either help or hinder Colombia's peace process.

Key Players


Abstract: Discusses the anti-narcotics drug aid package of the United States to Colombia, known as Plan Colombia, and the objections of human rights groups to the package. Opposition of the U.S. government to human rights conditions; Support of drug-connected paramilitaries to U.S. policy; Paramilitary massacres and violations; Political issue behind press coverage of Colombia; Rhetorics behind Plan Colombia’s objectives.


This source, written by the Americas Watch Committee, contains an analysis of Colombia's paradoxical political setting which is characterized by a functioning democracy and a militarized society. Critically examines the violations against civil rights and human rights in Colombia's crisis. It also provides the political context for Colombia's crisis and discusses the government's role.


This report examines a series of political reforms made between 1990-1991. It concludes that despite reforms, the government of Cesar Trujillo has been unable to curb politically motivated violence. It ascribes the responsibility of such violence to a broad range of actors including the government, paramilitary groups, and insurgents.


In 1992, the Colombian President Trujillo adopted a series of executive decrees which restricted civil liberties and granted more power to the Colombian armed forces. These authoritarian decrees have not resulted in any progress against the insurgent forces; instead the Colombian armed forces themselves are implicated in serious cases of human rights abuses. This report criticizes the ongoing abuses perpetrated by both the Colombian armed forces and the insurgents.


Abstract: Describes the role of the U.S. in helping Colombia to carry out human rights abuses. Shows the connection between military and death squad activities, and how responsibility of abuses committed by
paramilitaries is shifted away from the Colombian military. Also provides information for what Americans can do to change the situation.


This Human Rights Watch publication criticizes Colombia's Attorney General for failing to make progress in curtailing human rights abuses by directly undermining prosecutions and investigations of major human rights violations in Colombia.


This Human Rights Watch publication examines the actions of the left-wing insurgency group FARC in the context of international law. It analyzes the transgressions that FARC has committed against international law. It also discusses the assassinations of political figures, other politically motivated crimes, and human rights abuses in Colombia.


This source presents detailed evidence of the continuing close ties between the Colombian Army and paramilitary groups responsible for gross human rights violations. This evidence is compiled by Colombian government investigators and Human Rights Watch. Also, this source contends that military support for paramilitary activity continues even in areas which are receiving aid from the United States.


This Human Rights Watch publication examines the growing power of right-wing paramilitaries and their gross human rights abuses in Colombia. It also criticizes a newly approved law which is effectively a negotiation between paramilitaries and the Colombian government in which paramilitaries will demobilize if they can avoid extradition for drug trafficking. Finally, it describes the ramifications of allowing paramilitaries legal protection against prosecution.

Human Rights Watch. The Ties That Bind: Colombia and Military-Paramilitary Links.

This source presents detailed evidence of the continuing close ties between the Colombian army and the paramilitary groups responsible for many of the worst human rights abuses in Colombia. This evidence is compiled by Colombian government investigators and Human Rights Watch. It contains first-hand accounts and interviews of victims of Colombia's human rights crisis. Finally, it describes in detail which brigades of the Colombian military have paramilitary links.


This book examines Colombia's war in the context of international law. It proposes that the failure to address fundamental issues, such as impunities for violations of both human rights and international laws, contributes greatly to Colombia's conflict. It also discusses transgressions
against international law for both paramilitaries and guerillas and the role that the international community plays in the conflict.


This Human Rights Watch document contains a review of the Public Law 107-1115 signed by the Bush administration which will allow continued funding for the Colombian government to support its 'war on terror.' It concludes that the Colombian government has not satisfied conditions of protection for human rights. According to HRW, there is evidence that the government continues to support paramilitary groups responsible for human rights abuses. Finally, this document urges the Bush administration to implement measures which will help to secure human rights in Colombia.


Abstract: Discusses the policies of the Virgilio Barco and Cesar Gaviria governments; drug and self-defense policies, as well as for the paramilitary groups. Explains how Colombian state failed to maintain military control, provide an adequate police force, and court system to protect civilian rights. Also provides a historical context concerning the weak Colombian state and the emergence of opposition.


This book provides the context for Colombia's conflict in terms of politics and the government, discussing the administrations of Virgilio Barco and Gaviria Trujillo. It also examines the role that paramilitary forces and drug trafficking play in the crisis, and discusses the human rights abuses being committed by Colombia's rival factions.


Abstract: Investigates whether the U.S. government uses the “Drug War” as a smokescreen to justify arms sales to Colombia and exposes the human rights abuses of the Colombian army against its people and how women specifically have responded to this. In 1996, a delegation sponsored by the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) traveled to Colombia to take part in the International Day of Actions Against Violence Against Women. The delegation traveled to Apartado in support of its mayor, a courageous young woman named Gloria Cuartas, who is trying to govern the city in an atmosphere of terror. Includes an interview with Mayor Cuartas. [videorecording]. 1 videocassette (24 min.)


Abstract: Paramilitaries commit many of the human rights abuses in Colombia. Provides evidence on the relation between Colombian army brigades, police and paramilitaries. Shows how the Colombian government has failed to take effective measures to break these links, and how the Colombian military and police often profit from paramilitaries. Also describes the failure of American policy makers to enforce U.S. human rights laws, and how
the U.S. contributes to the situation by continuing to provide military assistance to the government despite its poor human rights abuses record.


Abstract: The article contains three reviews on books pertaining to Colombia: 'Colombia: Fragmented Land, Divided Society,' by Frank Safford and Marco Palacios, 'Colombian Labyrinth: The Synergy of Drugs and Insurgency and Its Implications for Regional Stability,' by Angel Rabasa and Peter Chalk, and 'The Sixth Division: Military-Paramilitary Ties and U.S. Policy in Colombia,' by Human Rights Watch. In 'Colombia,' Safford and Palacios discuss the current turmoil taking place in Colombia, including economic troubles and violence. Rabasa and Chalk, in 'Colombian Labyrinth,' explore the strengths and weaknesses of Colombia's guerrillas and paramilitaries. Human Rights Watch, in 'The Sixth Division,' discuss Colombia's military and state institutions.


This book documents the criminal activities of the Colombian armed forces. It contains interviews with witnesses and victims who retell their stories of murder and death threats issued by government forces. It also criticizes the Colombian government for its state-sponsored terrorist operations in the war against guerrillas and narcotraffickers.


Abstract: The paper explores processes of social movement learning within SINTRAEMCALI, a public service trade union in the South West of Colombia, which has successfully prevented a series of attempts by the national government to privatise public utilities. The paper develops the concept of 'strategic learning' and applies it to an exploration of the transformation of SINTRAEMCALI from a narrow 'corporate' trade union focused on the defence of members' particular interests, to a 'social movement union' that linked workers and local communities in the defence of public services and operated on a range of scales from the local to the global.


This website is the homepage of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia People's Army: FARC-EP. It contains their mission statement and plenum. The self-ascribed history of FARC is provided, as well as interviews and dialogues with various FARC members. The website also contains information on the laws enacted within the insurgent army and the protocol expected of its members. Finally, it provides pertinent documents and criticisms of the role of the U.S. in Colombia's crisis.


Abstract: The article traces the founding of Colombian paramilitaries to the Cold War era when the U.S. helped the Colombian and Central American governments establish proxy paramilitary forces in its fight against
international communism. The author summarizes the devastating effects this paramilitarism had on Colombian and Central American society during the 1960s to the late 20th century. A concluding section provides an update on the impact of paramilitarism on human rights in contemporary Colombia, and on the implications for peace in the region.


This book critically analyzes of the role of the United States in funding and training the Colombian military. It contains Cold War and post-Cold War history of the U.S.'s role in Latin and South America in supporting various regimes, and it seeks to illustrate the ulterior economic motives behind America's continued role rather than defaulting to the orthodox explanations of “Soviet containment” or a “war on terror.”
Human Rights in Cuba
by Susan Kemp

In 1959, Fidel Castro established a Cuban socialist state closely aligned with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union's collapse brought an end to Soviet economic support which, combined with the U.S. embargo, created an economic crisis in the early 1990s. The Cuban government's instability and desire to maintain control overrides the individual rights of its citizens. These events are the background for the lack of fundamental human rights in Cuba today.

Cuba's legal system limits civil and political rights, such as the freedoms of assembly, religion, and expression. Citizen opposition is seen as connected to a broader conspiracy against Cuban authority. Therefore, actions taken to compel political conformity—including torture, detention, and imprisonment—are justified based on a security rationale. In 2003, Castro charged and arrested seventy-five pro-human rights dissidents as part of a larger crackdown on civil society.

Economic and social rights are also limited by government control. While Cuba is committed to education and free healthcare for all citizens, its policies restrict academic freedom and labor rights. Only educational curriculum that aligns with Marxist principles is allowed. The government also controls all means of production and permits only one labor union, which implements its objectives.

As a result of these rights violations, other countries as well as multilateral and non-governmental organizations have spoken out on conditions in Cuba. The U.S. embargo was applied as a consequence to the Castro regime, though the international community widely opposes these sanctions. International recognition of Cuba's situation is characterized by a demand for democratic legal reform that would allow Cuban citizens the enjoyment of essential human freedoms.

Background

This section provides General Background information on the recent human rights situation in Cuba. The subcategory of Spanish Resources includes eight books on human rights in Cuba. The Socialism subcategory includes sources discussing the changing political environment in Cuba since the Cold War and the impact of the instability of Cuba's socialist system.

General Background


Abstract: This Human Rights Watch report assesses the status of human rights in Cuba in 1992. Covers rights violations including poor prison conditions, restrictions on academics and journalists, and long prison terms for dissidents. Argues that the system of control is part of the government's attempt to maintain power.

Abstract: This website, created and maintained by the Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL), contains a wealth of information regarding Cuba. It serves as a clearinghouse of information on Cuba and includes a bibliographic resource section.


Abstract: Gomez looks specifically at violations in Cuba, El Salvador, and Nicaragua. Chapter 6 argues that repression tends to occur in a cyclical pattern in Cuba, and provides a historical analysis of human rights since 1959. Focus is given to the internal and external pressures on state repression, and the conclusion is that the level of the abuse is most affected by factors of internal stability. Provides empirical data and a theoretical foundation for the discussion of human rights.


Abstract: This 1999 report discusses Cuba’s poor performance on human rights according to international standards, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and other treaties Cuba is party to. Looks at a variety of violations such as repression of dissidents, legal restrictions, prison conditions, labor rights, and religious freedom. Includes recommendations for Cuba as well as the international community in regards to Cuba.


Abstract: Discusses the possibility of the persistence of Fidel Castro’s dictatorship in Cuba in spite of the surfacing of his regime’s weaknesses. Cuban socioeconomic crisis; Prospects of a mass uprising; Overcoming the fear of repression; Extensive and intensive surveillance; Absence of institutional sanctuaries and dissident leaders; Discontent within the armed forces and the Ministry of Interiors; Cultivation of intellectual dependence and submission.

Socialism


Abstract: Focuses on the political situation in Cuba during the 1980s. President Fidel Castro’s successful recentralization of power; Economic conditions; Human rights violations; Support of the Soviet Union for the assertive government of Castro; Reorganization of internal affairs and the dismissal of top government and party leaders from various organizations and faction.


Abstract: Discusses the economic transformation of Cuba in line with the financial crisis during the early 1990s. Impact of the open economy and capitalism on Cuba; Status of socialism in Cuba; Pattern of economic development in Cuba.

Abstract: Reports on the transition of state socialism in Cuba. Review of the state socialism as proposed by institutionalism; Change and stability in State socialism; Mobilizational politics and the Cuban economy; Logic of political change in Cuba in the 1990s; Institutionalism and mobilizational authoritarianism.


Abstract: Discusses the history of Cuba’s relationship to capitalism, including the emergence of social classes within Cuba. The second portion focuses on the development of socialism and the challenges for a socialist state facing the reality of capitalist dominance.


Abstract: This article focuses on the Soviet-Cuban relations in terms of dependency theory, in the period to 1973. Distinctions are drawn between Cuba’s relations with U.S. and the new dependency with the Russia. In the process it will be possible to grasp the specificity of dependence on the Russia. First, there is a discussion of the economic subordination of Cuba to the Russia. Emphasis is given on the role of sugar in Cuba’s exports and the failure to develop a diversified and self reliant economy. Secondly, the adoption by Cuba of the Soviet model of planning, calculation, and organization in the economy. In the final section the history of the ideological and political differences between Havana and Moscow is dealt with. In addition, there is a survey of the abandoning of the “Cuban road” and the emergence of a new Soviet-Cuban ideological and diplomatic alliance against the rivals of the Russia, especially China. The Soviet ruling circles are motivated by the political and ideological uses of a Cuban proxy. Russia enjoyed a varying capacity to enforce policy changes on the Cuban government type of repressive society one finds in Russia. Cuban economic dependence has enabled the Russia to insert its own particular form of “socialism” in Cuba.


Abstract: Focuses on the post-communist crisis in Cuba. Lack of fundamental loyalty to the communist ideology; Generational splits; Fidel Castro’s non-preparation for leadership transition; Economic performance; Demoralization within the Cuban revolution; Human rights conditions; Survival of the state through repression and isolation.

Spanish Resources


Civil and Political Rights

Civil and Political Rights in Cuba have been limited in efforts to silence any dissent against the government. The subcategories in this section cover the 2003 Crackdown of dissidents and limitations on Religious Freedom.

Abstract: Presents an excerpt of a document by Cuban human rights activists relating to democracy called ‘The Homeland Belongs to Us All,’ which is a response to an official document published by the Cuban Communist Party in June 1997. Reason the Cuban authors of the document were arrested.

Abstract: Examines the political structures in Cuba. Reference to a visit by Pope John Paul II to Cuba; Request of Pope Paul for religious freedom in Cuba; Function of socialist democracy in the country; Information on the Communist Party of Cuba (CPC).

Abstract: Focuses on governability of Cuba. Relation of power between ruled and rulers; Equilibrium between diverse types of social demands; Repression in Cuba.

Abstract: Offers important insights with regard to the uses of race in electoral politics, labor and education focusing on the uses and misuses of the myth of racial equality in Cuba. Overview of the problem of black criminality in the region; Details on the book written by lawyer Fernando Ortiz about criminology; Invocation of human rights in the country.

Abstract: Discusses travel restrictions, arrests of democracy activists, prison conditions, and prohibition of human rights monitoring. This Human Rights Watch report considers the situation in 1993, arguing the severe economic crisis in Cuba is a major cause of the government's human rights violations.


Abstract: Explains that even with some limited improvements, brought on by international pressure, structural changes in the law are required to ensure the lasting protection of human rights in Cuba. This 1995 report also offers recommendations to the Cuban government, U.S. government, and European Union.


Abstract: Focuses on Cuban political prisoner Marital Lug Fernandez; Charges against Fernandez; How prisoners are treated in Cuba based from a testimony of political prisoner Armando Valladares; Pattern of brutality and repression against political opposition in the country; Political activity of Fernandez.


Abstract: Assesses how much the emergence of civil society and private market activities are challenging Cuba's ruling communist regime. Conceptualizing the civil sphere in transitions from state colonialism; Cuba in the 1990s; Organized opposition groups in Cuba; Religion and civil society.


Abstract: Considers the arrest in 1997 of Dr. Desi Mendoza Rivero in Cuba. His charges that the Cuban government did not address the public-health crisis in diagnosing dengue; His sentence for behavior that was politically opposed to the Cuban social system; The other Cuban health professionals who have been imprisoned; The physicians for Human Rights joining Amnesty International for the release of these prisoners; Contact point to write and protest.

2003 Crackdown


Abstract: Reports that while the world was distracted by the start of the war in Iraq, Cuban President Fidel Castro, a master of propaganda and repression, unleashed the harshest crackdown on dissent in Cuba since at least 1994. In summary trials, courts were handing out sentences of up to 28 years in prison to the 78 people arrested. They are charged with conspiring with the United States. Their crime is that they met some U.S. diplomats. The new crackdown suggests that Castro is more rattled than he has been letting on. Thanks mainly to the worldwide slump in tourism, Cuba's economy is again in the doldrums. And for the first time, his control has come under credible, if still largely symbolic, threat. Last year a new group, the Varela Project, named after a 19th-century Cuban patriot and of Christian-democratic inspiration, launched a petition to demand basic political freedoms. First, unlike most of the opposition, the movement is based in Cuba, not Miami. Second, it says it accepts the constitution and is committed to peaceful democratic change. The arrests are clearly aimed at smashing
this incipient challenge: many of the detainees were grassroots activists for the project, and 28 were independent journalists.


Abstract: Reports on the statement of International Movement of Parliamentarians for Democracy condemning the arrest and conviction of democracy and human rights advocates in Cuba. Information on the arrests; Violation of the Universal Declaration of the Human Rights; Appeal for the Cuban government to respect its obligation to the declaration.


Abstract: Focuses on the Cuban government crackdown on opposition groups and public protests, as of March 2000. Government response to criticism; Violence against and arrest of members of a human rights group in the town of Pedro Betancur; Background; Harassment as a tool of political repression; Political prisoners.


Abstract: This Amnesty International report covers the crackdown of dissidents in 2003. Since some positive development had been occurring prior to the crackdown, the report refers to the crackdown as surprising and alarming. It also calls for the release of the 75 individuals arrested in the crackdown, explaining the trial documents reveal no obvious criminal behavior. The report concludes with recommendations to the Cuban and U.S. governments.


Abstract: With the world’s attention riveted on the fall of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, another long-reigning despot has been tightening his grip on the nation he has ruled for 44 years. Since mid-March, 2003 Cuba’s Fidel Castro has rounded up 78 independent journalists, human rights activists, and democracy advocates. On Apr. 7, 2003 a kangaroo court handed down prison sentences of up to 28 years for 74 of the dissidents. The crackdown came as a surprise to those who thought the 76-year-old Castro was mellowing. Pockets of private enterprise have been allowed to spring up over the past decade, and a measure of glasnost has crept into society. The latest round of repression threatens to halt -- and even reverse -- the loosening of the U.S. embargo on trade with Cuba.

Religious Freedom


Abstract: Reports that efforts by Cuban churches to re-establish ties with their counterparts in the U.S. , though a symbol of growing religious freedoms, could also spell a new kind of trouble for Cuban religious groups, according to one of the island’s church leaders. Oden Marichal, an Episcopal priest who serves as the rector of the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Matanzas; Need for more faculty; Resistance to go outside the country to get them; Cuban President Fidel Castro; More.

Abstract: Presents an overview of the current situation in Cuba. Open letter from the Cuban catholic bishops; Criticism of the government’s monopoly of power; Deepening economic woes and resulting confusion and suffering; Fidel Castro’s admittance of a need to change with the times; Impact of the collapse of the Soviet Union; Cuba’s need to introduce market reforms; Castro’s refusal to let individuals make their own economic decisions; Factors in Cubans’ meek acceptance of decades of repression.

Abstract: Investigates recent developments toward religious freedom in Cuba. New approval for the entry of large quantities of Scripture into the country; Beliefs of some that President Fidel Castro is only making surface changes due to Cuba’s hosting of the upcoming Pan American Games; Status of Christianity in Cuba.

Abstract: Says that being a Christian in Cuba is a risky business and describes the emotion and tenacity of Cubans whose faith has not been extinguished by Fidel Castro’s political repression. The current youth-led religious revival in Cuba; The house-church movement; Pablo, who explains what it’s like to be a Christian in Cuba; Future status of the Cuban church.

Abstract: Examines the legal status of Christians in Cuba. Decline in Christian persecution in Cuba in the late 1990s; Government restrictions on religious activities; Growth of evangelical congregations and house churches.

Abstract: Considers human rights and Cuban law, the religious and ideological foundations of Marxism-Leninism, and the current religious freedom situation. Short explores the historical developments of the last three decades and their effect on religion in Cuba. She concludes that repression of religious and other civil liberties is intrinsic to Cuba’s code of law.

Abstract: Describes the role of the Catholic Church in Cuban society. Support for revolutionary practices in the 1950s; Closure of Catholic schools and expulsions of priests in the 1960s; Relaxation of official controls on religious practice since 1992; Reflections on political and economic ethics.

Economic and Social Rights

Sources within this section cover the economic and social rights of Cuba citizens. Main topics include health, education, and the economy.

Abstract: Reports on health care in Cuba and the manipulation of humanitarian imperatives. How in July 2004, restrictions on travel and remittances from the U.S. were tightened and U.S. firms were fined for unauthorized export of medicine; Reasons why the U.S. embargo on Cuba has been modified repeatedly; Reaction to Cuba’s health record; Reasons there are few non-governmental organizations active in Cuba today.


Abstract: Focuses on social services for the aged in Cuba. Health services for the aged; Aging of the population in Cuba.


Abstract: Examines the problems associated with the education system in Cuba. Transformation of Cuba’s education system since 1959; Areas emphasized in Cuba’s education system; Overeducation of the country; Efforts of the Cuban government to curb overeducation problem.


Abstract: This paper examines the combined effects of a severe economic decline since 1989 and a tightening of the U.S. embargo in 1992 on health care in Cuba. Methods. Data from surveillance systems for nutrition, reportable diseases, and hospital diagnoses were reviewed. These sources were supplemented with utilization data from the national health system and interviews with health leaders. Results. Changes in Cuba include declining nutritional levels, rising rates of infectious diseases and violent death, and a deteriorating public health infrastructure. But despite these threats, mortality levels for children and women remain low. Instead, much of the health impact of the economic decline of Cuba has fallen on adult men and the elderly. Conclusions. To be consistent with international humanitarian law, embargoes must not impede access to essential humanitarian goods. Yet this embargo has raised the cost of medical supplies and food. Rationing, universal access to primary health services, a highly educated population, and preferential access to scarce goods for women and children help protect most Cubans from what otherwise might have been a health disaster.


Abstract: Strategies for national health care systems and centers in the emerging world: Central America and the Caribbean. The case of Cuba. Over 40% of the 76 million people in Central America and the Caribbean live in poverty with no safety net. Communicable and noncommunicable diseases significantly impact morbidity and mortality, and a tendency toward aging suggests increasing prevalence of chronic conditions. Among factors related to renal diseases: obesity is an epidemic among the near-poor; prevalence of diabetes mellitus is 6% to 8%; and hypertension is 8% to 30%. The region’s racial-ethnic composition—associated with depressed socioeconomic conditions—is comparable to U.S. minorities showing greater chronic renal disease (CRD) rates than those registered in Central America and the Caribbean, which suggests that this region may be among the world’s most seriously affected by CRD. This is a reality masked by lack of health care coverage. Health policies generally have not prioritized human resource development, and training is biased toward curative care instead of prevention. Nephrologists are less than 20 per million population in most countries. Health care infrastructures are poor,
lacking the primary care facilities charged with prevention. Cuba shares economic limitations with its neighbors but is one of the region’s least socially stratified countries, with a universal, free, and public health care system emphasizing primary health care and prevention. Human resource development has resulted in 59.6 physicians per 10,000 inhabitants and a family physician program covering the whole population. A national renal diseases program incorporates preventive strategies at all care levels. Nevertheless, early detection of patients with CRD remains a challenge in the Cuban context. In Central America and the Caribbean, prevention is the key to reducing medical, social, and economic costs of renal disease.


Abstract: Focuses on Fidel Castro and social conditions in Cuba. Persistence of Castro’s dictatorship; Military unhappiness; Opposition to the Castro regime; Discussion on Cuba’s monetary system; Cuba’s adoption of the worse features of the Chinese way of economic openness and status repression.


Abstract: In Cuba, health care is considered a human right for all citizens; health care is therefore a national priority. Cuba’s health policy emphasizes prevention, primary care, services in the community, and the active participation of citizens. These emphases have produced an impressively high ranking on major health indicators, despite economic handicaps. The Cuban experience demonstrates the influence of ideological commitment and policymaking on the provision of health care and challenges the assumption that high-quality care for all citizens requires massive financial investment. The evolution of the Cuban health care system since the revolution thus has implications for the U.S. health care system; specifically, it suggests that the equitable distribution of health care services in the United States requires a national health insurance and service delivery system.


Abstract: The article comment on Cuban response to the AIDS crisis. Cuba has one of the lowest AIDS infection rates in the world. This is astounding when compared to the other nations of the Caribbean islands, which have had on an average, AIDS infection rates of 6-8%. Since its very inception after the Cuban revolution of 1954, health was declared as one of the major priorities of the new communist state. The health care system was and is still based on the principles of equality and social justice.


Abstract: Health care and the practice of endocrinology in Cuba have been severely affected by economic limitations there. This was witnessed by physicians on a recent physician group visit to Cuba. Although the attitudes and biases of the Cuban people themselves have affected healthcare practices and the care of patients in Cuba, health care in Cuba has been even more significantly impacted by the effects of the complex political changes and adverse economic conditions in Cuba, especially over the past decade.

Abstract: *Discusses the control of AIDS in Cuba. National program to contain AIDS; Factors contribution to the control of AIDS; Program's violation of the privacy and freedom of seropositive people.*


Abstract: *The modern idea of health as a human right is examined, as it evolved from the 18th century, in terms of its origins, its essential content, and 20th-century attempts at implementation. Equity for social groups is seen as a guiding principle. Two attempts at implementation, in Britain and in Cuba, are examined for their effects on equity in health service and in health states. The British National Health Service achieved equity between social classes in services but failed to achieve it in health states (as measured by mortality). Deficiencies in commitment to public health services, it is argued, contributed largely to this failure. The Cuban experiment appears to have moved beyond equity solely in services and toward equity in health states. This success reflects an overall Cuban commitment to the public health. Two important elements of that commitment are, first, continuous evaluation with flexible response and, second, community involvement.*


Abstract: *Analyses the Cuban institutional development in its relation with the social policy of the revolution, particularly during the so-called special period between 1990 and 2000. Flaws of the institutional order in the late 1980s; Events which added to the structural problems of the Cuban economy; Impact of the decentralizing measures and the external financial flows; Components of social spending in the 1990s.*


Abstract: *The difficult economic times that Cuba has had to face have taken a considerable toll on its urban ecosystems, with data suggesting that indicators of health, the environment, and social services have been deteriorating. This has been particularly evident in Centro Habana, a municipality with the highest population density in the country. More than half the population was without daily access to potable water, waste disposal was insufficient, overcrowding was serious, disease vectors were prevalent, and rates of various infections as well as noncommunicable diseases and injuries were highest in the country. To improve the situation, the municipality requested help from the National Institute for Hygiene Epidemiology and Microbiology (INHEM) to determine the best use of scarce resources to improve health. INHEM performed an ecological descriptive study and conducted focus groups in five communities to assess perceptions of health, social, and environmental factors, followed by a household survey. INHEM then engaged collaborators at the University of Manitoba to assist in developing a framework, analyzing the data, and planning and undertaking the evaluation requested. Maximum likelihood factor analysis was used to reduce the dimensionality of the data. The perception data were then merged with the ecological level health and environmental data to ascertain the relationship between these two data sources and determine which indicators might be useful for an intervention analysis. The perception results indicated that the greatest community concern was quality of housing, but that the risk perception results were independent of ecological data on morbidity, mortality, and basic sanitation indicators. Based on this conclusion, it was decided to*
use a combined qualitative and quantitative approach to evaluate actual and potential interventions, using the driving force-pressure-state-exposure-effects-action (DPSEEA) framework.

International Perspectives

This section covers International Recognition of Cuba's human rights record. States, non-governmental organizations, and inter-governmental groups have pressured the Cuban government to change its policies. U.S.-Cuba relations, including the U.S. embargo, continues to be an important yet contentious influence on the Cuban economy and human rights. This subcategory focuses largely on the issues surrounding U.S.-Cuba relations and the embargo.

International Recognition


Abstract: Presents an excerpt from the remarks of Czech vice-minister of foreign affairs Martin Palous when he introduced a draft resolution on Cuba at the 56th session of the United Nation Commission on Human Rights. Respect for elementary standards of the international human rights instruments; Concern about the situation in Cuba.

Cuba Section of Human Rights Watch Website.

Abstract: This site includes a variety of resources produced by Human Rights Watch regarding human rights in Cuba, including background information, annual reports, and press releases. Particular attention is given to U.S. / Cuba relations.


Abstract: Address by the President of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights within the OAS. Cuba was highlighted in the annual report for lack of free elections, restrictions on judicial guarantees, and limitations on freedom of expression.


Abstract: This press release is just one of several examples of the European Union's attention to the lack of civil and political freedoms for Cuban citizens.


Abstract: Deals with several human rights problems being faced by the United Nations Commission of Human Rights which were discussed during the commission’s meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, from March 16 to April 26, 2003. Discussion on the issue that the U.S. was denied a seat and a vote on the commission in 2002;
Response of the commission on the human rights violation of Cuban government; Occurrence of human rights violation in other countries that received no actions from the commission.


Abstract: The article reports on major developments in the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) for 1992. It is informed that the forty-eighth session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights was held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland from 27 January to 7 March 1992. The Commission continued its debate over the enhancement of its effectiveness, in which the ideological divide between East and West largely dissolved. The Commission took a number of actions, and began a number of new initiatives. The Commission adopted eighty-three resolutions, and nineteen decisions. The most significant resolutions dealt with Afghanistan, Albania, Cuba, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Guatemala, Haiti, Iran, Iraq, the Israeli-occupied territories including Palestine, Myanmar (Burma), Romania, South Africa, and Western Sahara. However, it is opined that the Commission failed to give adequate attention to the human rights situations in a number of countries. Further, it is informed that the membership of the Commission was expanded in 1992 from forty-three members to fifty-three members.


Abstract: Address by Armando Valladares, former Cuban political prisoner and U.S. Representative to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, to the Subcommittees on Western Hemisphere Affairs and Human Rights and International Organizations of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. He stressed the influence of international pressure on Castro’s behavior, and that the continued U.N. spotlight on the human rights abuses in Cuba is necessary for real change to occur.

U.S.-Cuba Relations


Abstract: Presents a speech by James C. Cason, a career foreign service officer, delivered at the Cuban Transition Project, April 7, 2003. Political developments that affect Cubans and U.S. policy; Impact of U.S. policies on Cuba; Difference between the approach used by human rights monitors and political party leaders in promoting democratic reform.


Abstract: This paper examines the combined effects of a severe economic decline since 1989 and a tightening of the U.S. embargo in 1992 on health care in Cuba. Methods. Data from surveillance systems for nutrition, reportable diseases, and hospital diagnoses were reviewed. These sources were supplemented with utilization data.
from the national health system and interviews with health leaders. Results. Changes in Cuba include declining nutritional levels, rising rates of infectious diseases and violent death, and a deteriorating public health infrastructure. But despite these threats, mortality levels for children and women remain low. Instead, much of the health impact of the economic decline of Cuba has fallen on adult men and the elderly. Conclusions. To be consistent with international humanitarian law, embargoes must not impede access to essential humanitarian goods. Yet this embargo has raised the cost of medical supplies and food. Rationing, universal access to primary health services, a highly educated population, and preferential access to scarce goods for women and children help protect most Cubans from what otherwise might have been a health disaster.


Abstract: Focuses on the strength of trade embargo against by the United States. Discussions on the shortage of supply on types of medical equipments; Descriptions on the effects of the Torricelli Act on trade; Emphasis on human rights in the condition.


Abstract: Assesses the diplomatic policies of Cuba and the U.S. Definition of the problem; Violations of human rights in Cuba; Status of the Cuban economy after the fall of Soviet Union.


Abstract: This article discusses the reluctance of U.S. President George W. Bush to deal with the Cuban government. One reason for the U.S. administration’s reluctance is its apparent expectation that Cuban President Fidel Castro is not likely to endure for long. Castro’s popularity has waned as economic conditions in Cuba have failed to improve, but he still enjoys wide support. Although disgruntlement is on the rise, it is a far cry from anything resembling active opposition. A number of human rights groups have sprung up, but brave though their efforts, they can count on the active support of only a few hundred people. The great majority of Cubans seem prepared to trust Castro to make them. For all its shortcomings, the Castro regime has provided them with universal education and excellent medical care. And despite shortages, Cubans tend to be better fed and housed than the masses of citizens in most neighbouring countries. The fact remains that Cuban policies, especially its foreign policy, have changed. The Cuban leadership’s hope of negotiating with the U.S. has been at least one factor helping to bring about those changes. It is no mystery why Cuba’s willingness to liberalize may be determined in very large part by the state of its relations with the U.S.


Human Rights in El Salvador
by Tait Robinson

Between 1979 and 1991 El Salvador was embroiled in a civil war that claimed over 70,000 lives. Longstanding socio-economic inequality between the rich and poor led to government-backed human rights abuses dispensed by the military. These ranged from denials of freedom and civil liberties to village massacres.

Left-wing rebels, most prominently the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN), were the lone source of resistance against the government and military death squads. The assassination of leading human rights campaigner Archbishop Oscar Romero in 1980 precipitated a decade of increased political violence, social turmoil and human rights violations.

The U.S. effort to ameliorate El Salvador’s internal strife instead exacerbated the problems. Providing the Salvadoran government with financial and non-personnel military resources only fueled further violence between military and guerrilla forces.

U.N. intervention in 1990 resulted in the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL), which facilitated formal peace accords in 1992 and observed democratic elections two years later. The rest of the 1990s were characterized by successful political and social rebuilding, and today El Salvador is a relatively prosperous democratic success story among developing countries.

General Resources


This book provides a historical overview of El Salvador and its people. It examines the El Salvadoran political climate within the broader context of that of Central America. Examines the internal and external political struggles and military conflicts during the period 1979-1992, and associated violence (guerrilla warfare, massacres, etc.) and human rights violations. Discusses the United States’ role and key Salvadoran (Duarte, FMLA, Romero) and American (Reagan administration) political figures.


Provides a historical foundation of political and social events leading up to and through the early part of the Cold War. Examines regional political and economic relationships, and key political figures. Specifically looks at the U.S. /El Salvador relationship up to the early part of El Salvador’s civil war and the beginning of human rights violations. Serves as an early referential “point” to the “counterpoint” of later studies; i.e. what was known at the time, compared to what happened.

Comparative analysis with particular focus on El Salvador concerning relevant political issues, political reform, power-sharing, security reform, overview of U.S. involvement and related issues, key political and military figures involved in conflict resolution and negotiations, Alfredo Cristiani, negotiated settlement, elections, current political figures and state, search for truth and justice through conflict resolution, U.N. involvement and that of the the international and regional communities.


Abstract: Discusses the historical roots of political and social conflict. Looks at the relationship between agricultural-export development and the emergence and consolidation of authoritarian regimes. Also discussed is the importance of the military in the political arena and the role of U.S. policy, insofar as authoritarian regimes are allowed to persist. Revolutionary challenges/movements against the old order during the 1970’s and 80’s, and resulting peace processes bringing an end to regional conflicts are examined. Patterns of political and economic development are highlighted. El Salvador is integrated into all of the above discussions/analyses.


Analyzes how civil society--and citizen activity in organizations--promulgates successful governance and democratic norms. A comparative analysis of the levels of democracy in Central American countries is performed. In El Salvador, the violent and confrontational activities by guerrilla groups and death squads are not necessarily benign forms of activism. El Salvador is of a lower democratic level than other Central American countries.


Provides a comprehensive history of El Salvador, and the economic, political, social and military factors that contributed to the emergence of civil war in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s. Emphasis is given to post-WWII political and economic conditions as predictors of violence. Key political figures and emerging guerrilla groups are discussed.


This book is concerned with labor, race, nation, gender and the intersections of political, cultural and socioeconomic history. It is a comparative and International working-class history of national identity and ethnicity. There is discussion of agrarian influences and internal transformation (in El Salvador and other Central American countries) as a result of non-war factors. It includes several useful tables and provides ample references to related literature.


Discusses wide range of social, political and economic aspects of agrarian reform, and its relevance to war and unrest in El Salvador. Attention given to Duarte and Archbishop Romero.
Topics of discussion include: Junta-declared reform, bank nationalism, expropriated landlords, production cooperatives, power groups, first and second phase agrarian reform, opposition and U.S. involvement in peasant unions. Also discussed is land reform's relationship to increased armed opposition, and passage of a reform-decree preceding Romero's assassination.


Complete history of El Salvador throughout the emergence of civil war in the early 1980's. Specific topics include: rise of the landed oligarchy, 1930's crisis, redefining the military, a failure to modernise, "repression with reform," rise of the Left, internal crisis, the impact of Nicaragua, revolution and reaction, civil war. A complete chronology of events, a glossary of key historical figures and major organisations, and a glossary of key opposition figures is also provided.


A data-based documentation of the argument that population density does not always explain resource scarcity. Includes some comparative analysis of El Salvador and other Central American nations. Discusses certain ecological factors that may lead to war and dispute, particularly in poor countries.


This book highlights U.S. policies and relations towards Latin America within the specific context of capitalism as a prevailing force. Capitalism influenced U.S. regional policies in Central America, including El Salvador in the years preceding its full blown civil war. Regional economic development, democratization processes, social movements, national identity and regional equality within a capitalist context are reviewed. U.S. capitalist interests are seen as a major driving force of U.S. policy at this time, the short and long term effects of which were not then realized.


Abstract: Living in a diverse nation inevitably requires working closely with people from a variety of backgrounds. In medicine it means that physicians must care for patients whose race, ethnicity, and language are often different from their own. What does this do to the sensitive, often complicated interactions that take place between a doctor and a patient? Does the preponderance of non-black, non-Hispanic physicians in a country that is increasingly black and Hispanic explain the poorer health outcomes that are frequently seen in these populations? Glenn Flores, a pediatrician from the Medical College of Wisconsin, explores the varieties and effects of physicians' attitudes in a short story about a recent El Salvadoran immigrant and her infant daughter.

Attitude matters.

This book is a comparative analysis of internal and international factors affecting human rights abuse patterns in Central America. Insofar as international factors are concerned, the bulk of these come back to U.S. involvement and policy towards Central America, particularly with respect to El Salvador in terms of sanctioned atrocities. It is found that international factors (including governments and NGOs) can substantially influence the nature and frequency of human rights abuses. The conduct of human rights advocates and the resultant state-changes in abuse methods are also analyzed.


Popular education played a vital role in the twelve-year guerrilla war against the Salvadoran government. This book is a study of its pedagogy and politics. Popular education brought literacy to poor rural communities and to peasant combatants in the guerrilla army. Popular education taught people skills, raised the morale that sustained them in unequal combat, and helped create a well-bonded organizational network. Salvadoran students and teachers coped with the hardships of war and organized civilian communities politically to support a guerrilla insurgency. Poorly educated peasants overcame an imbued sense of inferiority to teach each other and work together in a common struggle. It offers both a detailed account of a historical moment and a broad theoretical discussion of the relationship between education, community organizing, and the political process.


Article examines politically motivated migration from El Salvador and Guatemala to the U.S. The author argues that the post-war nature of these countries' insertion into the global economy call for close ties between natives and immigrants. The Salvadoran immigrant hometown organizations are more organizationally developed; greater interaction/collaboration with government officials, and a greater degree of democracy. Government policies that attempt to channel remittances will contribute little to productive development at the local level in the absence of state-supported macroeconomic policies aimed at reducing the socioeconomic disparities.


This work is an anthropological compilation of articles and commentary from academics. Included are specific chapters pertaining to El Salvador: “From The Massacre at El Mozote: A Parable of the Cold War (Mark Danner); “The Continuum of Violence in War and Peace: Post-
Cold War Lessons from El Salvador (Philippe Bourgois). Within the comparative context of other works, there are many similarities, differences, and lessons to be discerned.


This work is a comparative demographic analysis of the impact of war. El Salvador's civil war is examined in a political and social light, within the broader context of demographic movement and change factors. Topics include: migration patterns, death tolls, statistical analysis, and socio-economic factors. Guerrilla and military groups, and their movements, are also examined as factors affecting post-war demographics.


Policy making is affected during periods of political violence: conflicting agency approaches, parallel health systems organized during war, international funding-agency conflicts, policy making conflicts. Traditional indicators (infant/maternal mortality, malnutrition, disease rates) are insufficient to measure impact of war. Selective primary care may improve these indicators even if general health status of population deteriorates. Agencies focusing on post-conflict rehabilitation tend to overlook effects of war that are less visible and more difficult to assess.


Abstract: In this remarkable and engaging book, William LeoGrande offers the first comprehensive history of U.S. foreign policy toward Central America in the waning years of the Cold War. From the overthrow of the Somoza dynasty in Nicaragua and the outbreak of El Salvador's civil war in the late 1970s to the final regional peace settlements negotiated a decade later, he chronicles the dramatic struggles--in Washington and Central America--that shaped the region's destiny. For good or ill, LeoGrande argues, Central America's fate hinged on decisions that were subject to intense struggles among, and within, Congress, the CIA, the Pentagon, the State Department, and the White House--decisions over which Central Americans themselves had little influence. Like the domestic turmoil unleashed by Vietnam, he says, the struggle over Central America was so divisive that it damaged the fabric of democratic politics at home. It inflamed the tug-of-war between Congress and the executive branch over control of foreign policy and ultimately led to the Iran-contra affair, the nation's most serious political crisis since Watergate. This book provides an extensive account of what gave rise to El Salvador's civil war, human rights violations that occurred during it, and its subsequent history. Focus is given to U.S. policy, including relations, motivations, and outcomes. Describes how El Salvador's--and Central America's, in general--present and future states are inextricably linked to U.S. involvement.
Key Actors


Abstract: An analysis of the Salvadoran FMLN guerrilla movement based on captured documents, interviews, and personal combat experience. This book examines the military organization, strategy, and tactics of the Salvadoran FMLN guerrillas during their efforts to overthrow the government. It is largely based on the authors’ personal collections of guerrilla documents captured in the war, interviews with former and captured guerrillas, and personal combat experience during one of the fiercest wars fought in the Western hemisphere in the 20th century. The book describes the guerrilla tactics from a technical point of view, and their evolution during the war in El Salvador. Based on information acquired through personal combat experience, describes the strategy and tactics that proved most effective for the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front in El Salvador for two decades and that have been adapted by other guerrilla operations in Latin America and elsewhere. Examines the general organization of the movement, force categories, special select forces, urban combat, defense, logistics, support, sanctuary, and other aspects. Annotation c. Book News, Inc., Portland, OR (booknews.com) This book offers an in-depth analysis of the FMLN during El Salvador’s civil war, with particular tactical and strategic emphasis, as well as its role in the future.


Abstract: After a period as military-appointed president, Duarte became El Salvador’s elected leader in 1984 and is now making strides in turning the country into a true democracy. Amid the morass of conflicting information about the situation in El Salvador, Duarte’s straightforward and unpretentious autobiography helps clarify the relationship between right, left and center (the latter led by Duarte himself), as well as the delicate relationship between San Salvador and Washington. His account of the laborious, frequently dangerous but ultimately successful struggle to win the allegiance of the Salvadoran army forms the core of the narrative. The book also includes an account of the investigation into the murder of the Maryknoll sisters, the story of his daughter’s kidnapping by guerrillas and an analysis of the devastating effect of the “discovery” by the American media of El Salvador as a hot issue. Most readers interested in Central America will find this autobiography by El Salvador’s president an insightful view into his own personality, but more importantly, into the politics of the region. This sometimes frank and self-effacing memoir offers valuable interpretations as to the role of the oligarchy and military, the nature of political repression, the interconnected world of social and political leaders, the source of guerrilla leadership, and the unfortunate interventions by the United States. Duarte captures many of the misconceptions which official Washington has about El Salvador, providing a worthwhile Latin American account of a middle-class professional’s conversion to politics. Highly recommended. Roderic A. Camp, Latin American Studies Dept., Central Coll., Pella, Iowa. This book is an autobiography published before El Salvador’s civil war was over, and well before peace came to the nation more than 6 years later.


Abstract: Monsignor Romero: A Bishop for the Third Millennium is a collection of speeches given in honor of the late archbishop by distinguished visitors to Notre Dame.” As the title implies, this book examines Romero’s role as a model bishop for the new millennium. It places particular emphasis on his commitment to human rights, his innovative implementation of the option for the poor, his dedication to the Church, and his views of the role of...
the laity. It is also an inspirational account of Romero's deep and abiding faith that seemingly insoluble problems can be resolved by following the Spirit.


Abstract: Three Short Years transformed Archbishop Oscar Romero from a conservative defender of the status quo into one of the church's most outspoken voices on behalf of the oppressed. Though silenced by an assassin's bullet, his spirit—and the vital challenge of his life—lives on.


Abstract: Spencer provides a history of the FMLN guerrilla special forces—known collectively by the acronym FES—in El Salvador. Trained in Cuba and Vietnam and utilizing techniques taken from the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese army, the FES terrorized the armed forces of El Salvador from 1981 to 1992. After reviewing their training, Spencer examines the major operations of the special forces and gives an in-depth discussion of their tactics and methods. He concludes with a look at the special forces groups in other Latin American countries. A former political and public affairs advisor to the Salvadorian military examines the guerrilla war and warriors of the liberation front in that country. His topics include their generation from models in Cuba and Vietnam, special forces techniques and operations, training, equipment, the various factions of the front and their coordination, and the influence they have had on other Latin American struggles. Annotation c. by Book News, Inc., Portland, Or.


This book chronicles nine true stories of feats of leadership. One chapter is devoted to Alfredo Cristiani, who helped transform El Salvador's decade-long civil war into a negotiated settlement.


This book chronicles Duarte's rise to political power in the years preceding El Salvador's civil war.

The United Nations


Provides a pre-election analysis of success and failures of ONUSAL, the U.N. observer mission to El Salvador. Looks at current and competing parties in El Salvador, and a brief look ahead. Main focus is on U.N. efforts to ameliorate effects of human rights violations at the hands of guerrilla groups; how this was done, and how the positive outcomes/effects might have been enhanced.

Article looks at the role of the U.N. Observer Mission (ONUSAL) in El Salvador, and specifically looks at its success and failure in dealing with human rights violations in light of the political climate. Suggests reasons why certain programs worked and why certain programs did not work, and the prospects of similar success/failure in future interventions in other countries. Sheds light on the current pre-election political state in El Salvador.


Abstract: As *El Salvador* winds up the campaign for presidential, legislative, and municipal elections scheduled for March 20, 1994, no issue represents a greater threat to the peace process than the rise in political murders of leaders and grassroots activists belonging to the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN). These assassinations, which became more frequent, brazen, and selective in the fall of 1993, have continued into the new year. They have raised fears that notorious death squads which sowed terror in the 1980s have been reactivated if, in fact, they were ever disbanded. Several of these squads have publicly claimed credit for death threats, which have then been followed by abductions, attacks, or murders.


An assessment of the veracity and utility of the Commission of Truth as a starting point for future remedial action and redress. Examines the findings of the commission and speculates how it might be used to ensure a certain level of accountability on the part of the Salvadoran government and those accused of committing human rights violations. The report may also be used as a tool for identifying future violations and implementing corrective action. Includes examination of some key political figures and groups.


Abstract: In the 1980s, security forces and paramilitary organizations killed, abducted, or tortured an estimated 80,000 Salvadoran citizens. But such abuses were curtailed when peace talks, largely motivated by international human rights activism, led to interventions by United Nations observers who raised the degree of respect for human rights. Includes a detailed comparative study of human rights abuses in El Salvador and Guatemala from 1980 to 1996, lays out the mechanisms by which the United Nations and transnational human rights activists have intervened in civil wars and successfully linked international peace and security with the promotion of human rights. The meaning of state sovereignty has changed over the past two decades to allow for more aggressive action in support of international moral standards.

Human rights played a central, if not unprecedented, role in the Salvadoran peace process. The United Nations was crucial in negotiating, and monitoring implementation of, the agreements. Social injustice and human rights violations played an important role in triggering and perpetuating the conflict, making it necessary for any substantive negotiations to address the root causes of the violence. The final peace accord of January 1992 included many provisions with a direct bearing on human rights. The agreements provided for an Ad Hoc Commission to purge the military of human rights violators and a Truth Commission to investigate past abuses; the replacement of military security forces by a new National Civilian Police; constitutional reforms to de-politicize the judicial system and enhance its independence; and the creation of an ombudsman’s office.


Article explores the dichotomy between U.N. dependency on human rights information supplied by NGOs, and government resentment of NGO reports and activism. Governments often seek to limit access and participation of NGOs and challenge their own legitimacy, and that of their findings. The role of NGOs in El Salvador, with respect to the Salvadoran government and the U.N., is explored. The following are also examined: Commission on Human Rights (Resolution 1235), Resolution 1503, ONUSAL, ECOSOC NGO committee, U.N. -appointed rapporteurs. General description of role/effects of U.N. field operations (peacekeeping operations) in El Salvador is provided.


This study covers the 1992 peace accords, which include the removal of human rights abusers from the military, the creation of a truth commission, and the demilitarization of public security. Some emphasis is also given to Alfredo Cristiani and negotiated settlement. It also discusses the troubling indications that the government is once again reducing the space available for freedom of expression, including the undermining of the Office of the Human Rights Counsel, the hostile attitude of President Francisco Flores, and the evidence of internal espionage. Later chapters focus on police reform. The book concludes by presenting some suggestions for increasing freedom of expression in transitional societies such as El Salvador.


A distinct type of democratic transition emerged from years of sustained popular mobilization by the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN). That mobilization succeeded in transforming the political and economic interests of the country's ruling oligarchy. After decades of political exclusion and repression of the left, many elites became convinced that the only way to end the war and rebuild the country's infrastructure to support an export economy would be to allow the left to participate in the formal political process. In return, the armed left had to surrender its vision of creating a revolutionary state in El Salvador. The FMLN agreed to disarm, demobilize, and accept electoral politics as the only legitimate means to attain state power. These simultaneous transformations on the left and the right, together with a number of favorable domestic and international conditions, led to the historic signing of the Peace Accords between the FMLN and the government of El Salvador in January 1992. Also provides history of state repression, electoral fraud, guerrilla history (in 1980, five groups united to form the Marxist-Leninist insurgent group FMLN). Insurgents battled the U.S. -backed Salvadoran military for 12 years to a stalemate, forcing the country's economic and political elite to accept a negotiated settlement.

Violations During the Civil War


Abstract: Despite a decade of promises by government officials to bring to justice those responsible for gross violations of human rights in El Salvador, the impunity of military officers and death squads members remains intact. Although thousands of cases of political killings, torture, and disappearances of civilians at the hands of government forces have been documented, to date, no officer has been convicted of a politically motivated human rights abuse in El Salvador. Six officers have been charged in connection with two recent massacres but have yet to be tried. The following is a status report on nine human rights cases in which prosecutions are still pending. Despite their particular visibility and significance both internationally and within El Salvador, each case is a story of the denial of justice. The way in which each case has unraveled -- investigations never completed or never initiated, trials that never occur, the persecution of witnesses or judicial officials -- sheds light on the impunity of the armed forces and death squads which allows such gross abuses to continue. This article examines the legal impunity of alleged violators of human rights. Violations were rife on the part of the military and guerrillas during the civil war. Topics and key figures include: Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero, Kidnapping for profit, Massacre at San Francisco, Bombing at FENASTRAS Office, Seven Young Men Killed in Cuscatancingo, Rocketing at Corral de Piedra, Killings of Members of the Press, Mauricio Pineda Deleón, B. Roberto Navas, Luis Galdámez, Slayings of Jesuits.

Examines lessons and implications of El Mozote Massacre. Includes the following: introduction to the massacre, when the massacre became known, lack of press coverage, U.S. press accounts, perpetrators, guerrilla groups (Morazan), National Civil Police, Reagan administration response, Congressional Hearings, Atlacatl Battalion and U.S. policy, U.S. government response to massacres, “official story,” and current status of the case. The largest mass killing during the war, it fueled the growth of the guerrilla movement.


A comprehensive account of human rights violations. Documents the civil war between an armed insurgency and the military-backed government--including related actors and groups--and explains how it precipitated a decade of political violence that cost tens of thousands of civilian lives. Impact of U.S. policy and general relations is examined.


This article takes a look at U.S. policy towards El Salvador specifically in 1984. It examines actions taken towards El Salvador in light of the fact that it was a re-election year for the Reagan administration. The article discusses policy initiatives that ultimately led to human rights violations in El Salvador.


Examines cases of human rights violations throughout 1990. Specifically looks at the judicial trend to rule in favor of the accused in terms of accountability. Looks at reasons why this is the case, and how these decisions are arrived at in light of seemingly insurmountable evidence to the contrary. The political, social and judicial culture is balanced together as a whole in light of a history of war and violations, and ultimately leads to different standards and motivations for authoritative punishment.

Looks at the Jesuit trial, what gave rise to the associated perpetrated human rights violations. Discusses the political and social climate when the violations occurred, as well as during the trial. Examines the longstanding effects of the human rights violations on judicial proceedings future political developments (i.e. potential future democratic elections).


Particular focus of this article is on the long-term political and social effects of the El Mozote massacre on the Salvadoran people and government. Contains references to other related works that have been published by different organizations, authors and academics. Looks at El Mozote within the greater context of related human rights violations that likely occurred as a result of the El Mozote massacre, as perpetrated by guerrilla groups that likely formed as a result of the El Mozote massacre.


A 1984 examination of current human rights violations at the hands of warring guerrilla and military groups in El Salvador. Includes discussion of the effects of U.S. involvement and policy, from the related political and economic standpoints. Discusses the rise and scope of current violations and the potential for future civil and political strife.


Assesses human rights violations in El Salvador, from their gestation in the late 1970's to their widescale implementation as a form of political persecution and repression up through 1988. Romero, Duarte, El Mozote, FMLN and ARENA are examined. Political parties’ engagement in human rights violations and their impact on elections is provided.


Examines the struggles over formulation and implementation of U.S. foreign policy towards Central America. Examines then-recently declassified information requests stemming from the


Provides overview of then-recent national history, specifically political persecution. Looks at civil war, human rights violations, current political state, prospects for elections including potential people and parties. Examines the influence of the U.S. and the role of the U.N. to date. Looks at political and social issues that need to be addressed (including redress of human rights violations) and future prospects.


An assessment of human rights violations in El Salvador couched within a somewhat comparative context of civil liberties violations in the U.S. Looks at similarities and differences and the prospects of remedial action; from accusation to judicial and civil accountability. Article is also of interest due to its publication; it came out before many of the more widespread human rights violations occurred later in the 1980's.


The book examines El Salvador as being a test case for assessing the effectiveness of U.S. counter-insurgency strategy. From a policy perspective, discusses how the Pentagon and State Department conducted themselves in/towards El Salvador. The book asserts that El Salvador represented an experiment to attempt to reverse the record of American failure in waging small wars--comparisons to Vietnam are rife--through a concerted effort to defeat an insurgency by providing training and military support without committing American troops to combat.


Discusses reduction of cultural distance in human rights reporting. Topics include: the make-up of the El Mozote community and subsequent massacre, the El Salvadoran oligarchy and guerrilla make-up, U.S. involvement and cover-up, political repression and survival in northern Morazan. Discusses the role of a judiciary--from investigation to judgment--even as part of a reformed military arm. Historical and anthropological analysis is provided, specifically focusing on social and economic trends towards civil war.

Book is based on the author's experiences/research in El Salvador from 1981-1982. Also referenced are documents and cables released under the Freedom of Information Act. Provides social and political history and perspectives. By 1982, El Salvador was the fourth-largest U.S. aid recipient due to fears of Marxist attitudes in Central America. Discusses the attitudes of both Washington agencies and Congressional committees pertaining to publicized human rights violations, insofar as the formulation and implementation of policy is concerned. Topics include: death squads, Salvadoran military, guerrilla groups, political figures. A comprehensive real-time analysis of U.S. foreign relations in a third world country during a civil war with no end in sight.


Examines civil rights and political tensions in the aftermath of the El Mozote massacre and Archbishop Romero's assassination. Duarte's election in 1980 serves as a backdrop to growing social unrest and guerrilla violence. A look at more widespread human rights violations that were occurring on a larger scale and in a more organized fashion. This took place in the early stages of U.S. involvement and well before U.N. intervention.


An examination of some of the processes and considerations taken into account by the Reagan administration with respect to human rights violations in El Salvador. Specifically, how an administration deals with potential conflicts of interest or priority among competing internal and external organizations. Sifting through potential propaganda is necessary to determine credible information that can be relied upon, particularly during a time of war.


This book provides a comprehensive review of foreign relations between the United States and Central America, highlighting key historical and political events that occurred independent of, and in relation to, one another. Focuses on the buildup to financial and political trouble that emerged in Central America in the early 1980's, specifically as it pertains to the role played by the U.S. . Highlights key role players in the U.S. and Central America.


This book examines the influence of U.S. policies towards El Salvador during the first six years of its civil war. Topics cover the ousting of General Carlos Romero as president, the rise of the FMLN, U.S. responses to Duarte's election in 1980, the U.S.'s stance as a supporter of the Salvadoran government in the face of French and Mexican recognition of the FMLN as a political force, the National Republican Alliance (ARENA), Duarte's reelection in 1984. The Reagan administration's methods and support is couched against the disparate reality of the
political and social reality in El Salvador. Overall short and long-term implications of the impact of U.S. policy is provided.


An analytical history of human rights in El Salvador. The author examines rhetorical statements and practical commitments made in the name of rights, thereby attempting to elucidate the changing content, tone, and spirit of the Salvadoran human rights discourse over the past twenty years. The author offers a periodization of human rights in El Salvador, delineating three stages in the formation of rights discourse. The liberal discourse formed in El Salvador--especially with the contributions of international monitoring groups and the U.S. State Department--effectively denounced the Salvadoran government's violation of civil and political rights. A rights discourse also developed from the vision of many martyred Salvadorans, giving rise to a more socially--and economically-oriented language that is especially important today, as the country reconstructs and transforms itself. Also discussed are recent battles against neoliberalism its effects on second and third generation rights; further evidence of the politicized nature of different rights claims.


There are thousands of cases of death squad killings in El Salvador, yet Salvadorans are at a loss for justice since virtually none of the responsible parties have been brought to trial. Impunity prevails due to a largely complicit judiciary and executive branch of government. Internal and external political or social pressure has little effect. The 1987 Amnesty Bill exemplifies the corruption and remains a primary problem for future trials of justice. Specific U.S. -Salvadoran relations within this scope involve extraditions which may or may not eventuate.


This book contains a vast amount of data tables delineating U.S. aid and corporate sales to foreign countries in the areas of military and police training, narcotics control, and arms transfers. Related historical and current political analysis is provided. It is suggested that U.S. corporations and governmental agencies are involved in the supply of repressive technology and techniques to many of the world's more authoritarian regimes. It is further asserted that Congressional measures in 1974 to restrict arms and training assistance to foreign police forces were unsuccessful.


El Salvador's judicial reform program was inhibited by the passing of an amnesty law in 1987 that granted virtual impunity to purported human rights violators during the nation's civil war. Internal and international political forces have not been effective in turning perceived culpability into trials for justice. USAID's role in this process is examined, as are current and potential future obstacles to further judicial reform.

A report of civil rights and civil liberties violations at the hands of government, military, and guerrilla groups during the early years of El Salvador's civil war. Discusses the current and future implications of increasing human rights violations throughout the nation. Discusses the potential role of outside organizations and foreign intervention as methods of abatement.


A comprehensive U.N. -sponsored review of the war in El Salvador between 1980 and 1991. Looks at the following: mandate, methodology, applicable law, chronology of violence (including cases and patterns), violence against opponents by agents of the state, murders of Jesuit priests, extrajudicial executions, enforced disappearances, massacres of peasants by armed forces, death squad assassinations, FMLA violence, execution of mayors, murders of judges, abductions, recommendations, and epilogue. Also provides comprehensive list and descriptions of people and places.


Explores the reasons that individuals participated in the rural insurgency. Success of the FMLN (and similar armed insurgent groups) was largely due to the high level of support it received from “campesinos” - a person engaged in agricultural activities. Campesinos provided the foundation of the rural insurgency at great risk to their lives, and incurred disproportionate levels of suffering. Author argues that traditional explanations of revolutionary mobilization--class struggle, political opportunity structures, solidarity among peasant communities, relative deprivation are incomplete. Author's alternative explanation: civilian supporters chose to contribute to the insurgency mainly for the participatory moral/affective benefits. Also discussed are local landlords, mid-level FMLN commanders, military officers, members of the government, members of the United Nations mission in El Salvador, and workers with various government agencies and NGO's.

Websites

Human Rights Watch. http://hrw.org/doc/?t=americas&c=elsalv

Site is devoted to expanding human rights knowledge and awareness, providing a comprehensive list of reports, briefings, papers, books, maps and other general information on El Salvador, generally, and human rights, specifically. Contains links to “Americas Watch” material, which closely followed the civil war and documented most major developments as they pertained to human rights violations. Contains a vast amount of information on El Salvador, and numerous links and references to television films/programs about the country. Many of these are focused on the civil war and human rights violations. Contains specific information on political figures, parties, guerrilla groups, etc. Provides much historical and current information and reference material.


A complete history of ONUSAL, from its creation to its status as a “Completed Peacekeeping Operation.” Also includes links to its Background, Mandate, Facts and Figures, Maps, and a comprehensive list of related United Nations documents. UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN EL SALVADOR ONUSAL (July 1991 -- April 1995) ONUSAL was established in July 1991 to verify implementation of all agreements between the Government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional, including a ceasefire and related measures, reform and reduction of the armed forces, creation of a new police force, reform of the judicial and electoral systems, human rights, land tenure and other economic and social issues.


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Human Rights in Guatemala
by Jennifer Archibald

Thirty six years of civil war affected human rights negatively in Guatemala. Many actors that violated human rights were also victims of human rights violations; a complex series of events that has still not been fully resolved today.

During the Cold War the United States feared the president of Guatemala, Jacobo Arbenz, was a communist threat. In 1954, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) orchestrated an operation that forced Arbenz into exile. Civil chaos resulted with military officers revolting against autocratic rule. Multiple guerrilla groups conducted economic sabotage and attacks against the government. The army launched counterinsurgency campaigns resulting in a sequence of military dominated governments that were backed by the U.S. During the 36-year war Guatemala experienced a variety of military, government, and civilian conflicts, that left thousands dead and over a million displaced.

The primary actors guilty of human rights violations were guerilla forces, succession of military juntas, and indirectly the CIA. The army was blamed by a Guatemalan truth commission for the majority of the abuses. The U.S. and various guerilla groups were also blamed for specific human rights violations and for fueling the war in general.

The civil war and human rights violations were also characterized by mass displacement and gross human rights violations of the Guatemalan population, especially indigenous groups, women and children. For many Mayan communities, torture, targeted killings, disappearances and displacement were a daily experience. Public officials trivialized the murders and rape of women. Women lacked basic healthcare, economic security, and political access. Children suffered from malnutrition, inadequate healthcare, and sexual abuse or child prostitution.

The 1996 signing of peace accords removed a major obstacle to foreign investment, but the distribution of income remains highly unequal, with the majority of the population under the poverty line. A small amount of social and political progress has been seen, but most are still deprived of the full range of international human rights. Despite some progress, many peace accord commitments remain unfulfilled. There are still enormous problems of poverty, social and political participation, and economic opportunity.

History


Abstract: Discusses the implication of peace negotiations in the political democratization and social justice in Guatemala. Elements of the peace process; Phases of the civil war; Formation of the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity; Creation of peace accords; Role of the United Nations Verification Mission on peace accords; Achievement of peace accords.

Abstract: With the powerful voices of more than 6,000 victims, perpetrators and survivors, this historic document tells the story of Guatemala’s civil war. Monumental, historic, and most of all human, this report is an indispensable party of the library of any Central American or human rights scholar. Documenting over 55,000 human rights violations, this report was Bishop Juan Gerardi’s final contribution to peace, released 48 hours before his assassination, April 26, 1998. -EPICA


Abstract: Analyzes the work of the Reconstruction of Historical Memory Project in Guatemala (REMHI). Testimonies gathered by REMHI; Purpose of the project; Design of the REMHI questionnaire; Focus on how victims of war coping with providing testimonies; Problems with conventional human rights analytic categories; Assassination of REMHI Coordinator Juan Gerardi.


Abstract: The book is divided into 13 chapters, with each chapter dedicated to addressing a particular “problem” - or issue - in modern Latin America. Each chapter includes an interpretive essay that frames a clear central issue along with excerpts from historical writing that advance alternative - or even conflicting - interpretations. In addition, each chapter contains primary passages of Latin American fiction in translation, biographical sketches, and images.


Abstract: Focuses on the intellectual rivalry between historians Manuel Montúfar and Alejandro Marure within the context of politics and history of Guatemala. Details on the events that led to the civil war in Central America between 1826 to 1829; Discussion on the struggle between the Conservatives and the Liberals; Books that chronicle the history of Central America written by the two historians.


Abstract: Most episodes in the cold war have been written and rewritten, evaluated and reevaluated. One striking exception, however, is the 1954 American intervention in Guatemala. This article analyzes the coup that led to the overthrow of Jacobo Arbenz Guzman’s.


Abstract: Focuses on MINUGUA (Mision de las Naciones Unidas de verificacion de derechos humanos en Guatemala), an organization formed to monitor human rights in Guatemala following the end of the civil war there. Impact of the end of the Cold War on the internal conflict in Guatemala; Origin of the MINUGUA organization; Details on MINUGUA’s mandate; Reference to reports from the organization.


Abstract: Focuses on the initiative towards ending human rights violations in Guatemala. Concerns on the government’s failed efforts to reconstruct its judicial system; Elevation of the court decision on the Xaman massacre to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights; Failure of the government to implement the changes to the 1985 constitution; History of political violence in the country.


Abstract: Within the context of a 36-year civil war, state security forces carried out repression and genocide, murdering over 200,000 civilians. Efforts on the part of organizations and dedicated individuals in the search for truth, justice and reconciliation have continued to be subject to state impunity and human rights violations. (Amnesty International)


Abstract: Discusses the establishment of the Commission for Historical Clarification (CHC), a truth commission to uncover details of the civil war in Guatemala. Mandate to investigate all human rights violations within a six-month period; Surrogate justice; Guatemala President Alvaro Arzu’s extremely negative and damaging reaction to the CHC report; Efforts at reconciliation and reconstruction.


Abstract: The article examines the growth of nongovernmental organizations (NGO) in Central America and the evolution of NGO and state relations. The 1980s were the most turbulent years in Central America’s recent history, as brutal conflicts in Nicaragua (1981-1990), El Salvador (1980-1992) and Guatemala (1962 to present) uprooted two million people and left 150,000 dead.


Abstract: Focuses on an agreement between the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the Guatemalan government to compensate relatives of victims of human-rights abuses. Guatemalan President Alfonso Portillo, who claimed state responsibility and offered an apology; Human rights abuses which were carried


Abstract: A lawyer with Human Rights Watch, who had gone to Guatemala in 1993 as a human rights observer, tells of his journey and the history of the 30-year civil war. The main body of the book is conversations with those involved in the Agrarian Reform and civil war years and the terror that reigned, which is the “silence on the mountain.” (Resource Center of the Americas.org)


Abstract: *Silence on the Mountain* is a work of reporting and a masterfully plotted narrative telling the history of Guatemala’s thirty-six-year internal war, a conflict that claimed the lives of more than 200,000 people, the vast majority of whom died (or were “disappeared”) at the hands of the U.S.-backed military government.


Abstract: Provides information about the civil war in Guatemala and the effects it brought to the country. Effects of the war to the people and forest of Guatemala; Guatemala’s civil war as the longest and bloodiest of Central America’s conflicts; How the cycle of violence began; Underlying causes of the civil war.


Responsible Actors


Abstract: The article focuses on the book “Fourth Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Guatemala,” by the Organization of American States, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. The introduction presents Guatemala as one of the four countries in the region with the lowest human development indicators. In each chapter, the authors discuss various causes contributing to the social unrest and inequality of opportunities within the country, as well as organizations and constitutional protections established to combat these tensions.


Abstract: Presents excerpts from the speech of Guatemalan president Alvaro Arzu on occasion of the signing of accord between the government of Guatemala and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca, ending its
36-year-old civil war. Approval of the Reconciliation Law; Complex and comprehensive commitment in the national program.


Abstract: In recent decades boundaries between “political and “common” crime have become blurred in many parts of the world, making it sometimes impossible to separate the two. This article explores the shifting categories of violence in the specific context of postwar Guatemala, arguing that the familiar distinction between “common” and “political” crime has always been based on an Abstraction—an Abstraction that has become increasingly tendentious in recent years.


Abstract: Is the United States a Force for Democracy? From China in the 1940s to Iraq today, in this updated edition William Blum provides the most comprehensive study of the ongoing American holocaust. (Front Cover)


Abstract: Politics in the Developing World identifies and analyses the processes of change that are transforming the politics of the Third World, bringing them together in an edited textbook. It deals with central political themes and issues in the developing world, such as globalization, (both economic and cultural, and resistance to this) inequality, identity, religion, the military, democracy, the environment, and policy development.


Abstract: The CIA’s classified account of its operations in Guatemala, 1952-1954, with a new introduction by the author and an afterword by Piero Gleijeses.


Abstract: Recently declassified U.S. intelligence documents reveal the close ties between the United States and the Guatemalan military and security forces during Guatemala’s 36-year civil war, even though U.S. officials were aware of the government’s and army's massive human rights abuses.


Abstract: Theories of third-party involvement are applied to understand the dynamics of intrastate war. An analysis of event data for three Central American conflicts (El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua) from 1984 to 2001 is used to examine transnational actors' influence on the dynamics of civil war. Findings show that
transnational third parties often alter levels of cooperation among domestic adversaries, and that consistency affects the strength and direction of third-party influence.


Abstract: Reports on the resignation of Otto Ardun, the prosecutor investigating the murder of Roman Catholic Bishop Jose Gerardi of Guatemala on December 3, 1998. Suspicion of the human rights group on the death of Gerardi; Priest accused by Ardun on the murder; Result of the forensic experts’ exhumation on the body of the bishop.


Abstract: Reports that on 26 April 1998, Roman Catholic Bishop Juan Gerardi Conedera was beaten to death in his Guatemala City home, after releasing a report focusing on human rights violations committed during the country's long civil war. What was the title of the report; Who was criticized in the report; Announcement made by Guatemala President Avaro Arzu after the killing.


Abstract: Reports on the end of the civil war in Guatemala and the new rights gained by the Indian majority. Indians’ use of their own language and practice of indigenous religion; Membership of Maya priests in a council of elders.


Abstract: Examines the Guatemalan peace process by focusing on different participants of civil society. Consideration of the peace negotiations between the government and the guerrillas; Discussion on the end of the civil war in December 1996; Impact of civil society on the political transition of Guatemala.


Abstract: Examines how militarism leads to internal repression of the civil population. Why are Guatemalans blowing their brains out? When did killing teachers become part of the defense of the Free World? Yet the killing of teachers goes on, not only in Guatemala but in nations as diverse as Afghanistan, Ethiopia, and El Salvador. During the past decade, militarized governments were three times as likely as nonmilitarized regimes to practice torture routinely. One of the clearest correlations in the politics of Third World nations is the relationship between militarization and repression. Marek Thee has defined militarization as a process involving a “rush to armaments;” the emergence of the military as a prominent force in various aspects of nation's political, economic, and social life; and a marked preference for the use of force to settle domestic or international disagreements.

Abstract: Reports on the signing of a comprehensive accord between Guatemalan President Alvaro Arzu and the commanders of the guerrilla movement Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca on December 29, 1996 ending the Central American country’s 36-year-old civil war. Failure of civilian rule; Guatemala’s key political institutions; Consolidation of democracy.


Abstract: Since the early twentieth century, technological transfers from the United States to Latin American countries have involved technologies of violence for social control. As the chapters in this book illustrate, these technological transfers have taken various forms, including the training of Latin American military personnel in surveillance and torture and the provision of political and logistic support for campaigns of state terror. The human cost for Latin America has been enormous—thousands of Latin Americans have been murdered, disappeared, or tortured, and whole communities have been terrorized into silence. (University of Texas Press)


Abstract: Discusses the role of third parties in the peace process in Guatemala. History of the violent conflicts in the country; Characterization of the peace accords; Assessment of achievements and failures of the peace process; Members of a group of countries dubbed friends of peace negotiations. The purpose of the Symposium is to share experiences on preventing violent conflicts, especially with regard to the situation of ethnic minorities. In this respect, this contribution might be slightly off-base: Guatemala’s experience is not about preventing violent conflicts, but of ending a conflict of 40-years duration. Still, there is an underlying concern common to all, and that is to promote peace, plural democracy, respect for human rights and development.


Abstract: Investigates the testimony of Rigoberta Menchú opposed by David Stoll about human rights violations in Guatemala. Social impact of the politics of truth telling; Comparison of guerrilla tactics and the army’s strategy; Reaction of solidarity and human rights movement to military administration. A most heated debate has involved David Stoll’s (1993) charge that Rigoberta Menchú’s testimony was a tissue of lies. He has been accused of missing the essential truths about which Menchú spoke. Stoll’s ethnography and the many responses to it are flawed in that they both omit the testimony of the most powerful actor in Guatemala, and don’t expand the concept of truth to include that one key actor—the army. This paper examines that testimony and asks: Whose meaning of truth will prevail to serve as the political baseline for Guatemala’s future?
Abstract: Landscape interpretation, or “reading” the landscape, is one of cultural geography’s standard practices. Relatively little attention, however, has been paid to reading landscapes transformed by insurgency movements or civil wars. Those landscapes can tell us a great deal about past and present political and social relationships as well as continuing power struggles. Guatemala presents a complicated postwar landscape “text” in which the struggle for power continues by many means and media, including how the war is portrayed on memorials, and in which the Catholic Church and the military/state are the two main competing powers. This essay explores some of the images and the text presented in Guatemala’s postconflict landscape through contrasting landmarks and memorials associated with the country’s thirty-six-year-long civil war that formally ended in 1996.


Abstract: The article focuses on the creation of the Guatemala Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH) through the Oslo Peace Agreement in 1994. This Agreement provided that the CEH shall clarify the human rights violations and acts of violence committed during the armed confrontation that affected Guatemala for thirty-five years. Agreement on the establishment of a truth commission, which is entrusted with investigating a criminal past, denotes a fair degree of political maturity of a country.


Abstract: Through the ethnographic exploration of the trial and murder conviction of military commissioners for their participation in the massacre of Rio Negro, the NGO-sponsored exhumation of clandestine cemeteries as well as other human rights NGO initiatives, this article discusses contemporary debates about truth versus justice, national security ideology and impunity, and the role of national and international NGOs.

Violations

Abstract: Reports on the prevalence of the brutal murdering of women in Guatemala and Mexico as of January 2004. Number of women murdered since 2001; Report presented to the Mexican Congress by the National Human Rights Commission.


Abstract: Cites a report from Human Rights Watch denouncing persistent sex discrimination and abuse faced by women workers in Guatemala. Working conditions in the maquila sector; Recommendation to the government.


Abstract: Reports the incidence of sexual violence against two female street children by a policeman in Guatemala. Assistance accorded by a staff from Casa Alianza to the children; Violation of human rights; Negligence of the public prosecutor in handling the case.


Abstract: The main challenge for community development efforts in post-conflict societies with large numbers of traumatized people is to create hope and reconciliation through community healing and participatory democratic community development. The community development efforts should aim at creating a set of values and practices conducive to peaceful co-existence through non-violent conflict resolution, thereby reducing the alarming levels of violence in post-conflict societies. This article describes a community development approach in Guatemala to supporting people affected by organized violence and torture.


Abstract: Many countries still face extreme differences among ethnic groups and submerged nations, leading to marginalization and violence. Examining these inherent instabilities in multicultural nations such as the U.S., Canada, Mexico, and Guatemala, the authors confront problems of coerced assimilation for indigenous communities whose identities predate the formation of the nation states, often by thousands of years. (AltaMira Press)


Abstract: Examines the assumptions on asylum law in the United States by juxtaposing accounts of religious, legal and political violence experienced by immigrants from El Salvador and Guatemala. Protection provided by the tenets of liberalism to refugees and politically persecuted; Analysis of the political utility of liberal notions of human rights; Sources of legal remedies created for Central American asylum seekers.

Abstract: Discusses the long-term effects of psychological and ideological militarization of the K'iche Mayans on Post-war Guatemala. Groundwork for a peace process in El Salvador and Guatemala; Continuation of human rights violations on victims and survivors; Group of people targeted for genocide.


Abstract: The refusal or reception of refugees has had serious implications for the social policies and social realities of numerous countries in east and west. Exploring experiences, interpretations and practices of 'refugees,' 'the internally displaced' and 'returnees' in or emerging from societies in violent conflict, this volume challenges prevailing orthodoxies and encourages new developments in refugee studies.


Abstract: Nearly two decades after the most brutal period of Guatemala's 36-year civil war, the notions of 'memory' and 'truth' have become critical socio-political issues; institutional memory projects have taken an important place in the peace process and in Mayanist political struggles.


Abstract: This article examines the process by which state violence ruptured and replaced preexisting institutions of civil society in Guatemalan communities, and various ways in which this process has led to lynching in the postwar period. These practices blur the distinctions between victim and victimizer, popular mobilization and mob rule and in so doing, they challenge many of the implicit assumptions that underlie contemporary thinking on violence, democracy, and human rights.


Abstract: The Commission for Historical Clarification published its report on violent conflict and violations of human rights in Guatemala between the 1970s and the signing of the peace accord in 1996. Focusing on a municipality in the Mayan highland, the article aims at showing how the conflict was understood from the inside of the rural communities affected, how divisions within them were radically deepened by the conflict, and in what forms Government and army repression was experienced.


Abstract: Comments on the book 'Rigoberta Menchu and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans,' by David Stoll. Criticisms on the claims of Stoll about Menchu's narration; Support given by the Commission for Historical Clarification on his claims; Significance of the book to the scope of human rights study.

Review Digest: Human Rights in Latin America

Abstract: Explores the significant use of testimonio as a tool of shared witnessing, collective remembrance and individual recollection of the special brutality directed against Maya women in Guatemala. Characteristics of Latin American testimonial literature; Discussion on qualitative research in geography; Scales of terror in Guatemala.


Abstract: Although rape by soldiers occurred frequently during the recent civil war in Guatemala, rape survivors' own accounts have been excluded from public testimonials of state violence. It is commonly assumed that cultural ideologies that blame and stigmatize rape victims are responsible for the underreporting of rape in war. Based on ethnographic research in a transnational Guatemalan community, this article challenges the claim that local culture silences survivors of state-sponsored rape. Rather, it demonstrates the ways national and international forces collude in the depoliticization of rape and the silencing of rape survivors.


Abstract: The Guatemalan society was exposed to an internal armed conflict during the period from 1962 to 1996. During these years, the civil society suffered multiple traumatic events. The objective of this study is to understand the psychological impact that the conflict had on the mental health of the Guatemalans.


Abstract: The Guatemalan peace process will ultimately be considered successful if it contributes to reconciliation among the many participants in the armed conflict. While international human rights norms and institutions clearly support uncovering the truth about Guatemala’s bloody past, such inquiries call into question the fundamental structures of military, political, and economic power in Guatemala.


Abstract: On May 29, 1978, members of the Guatemalan army shot indiscriminately into a crowd of Maya Kekchi campesinos who had gathered in the town square of Panzos, Alta Verapaz, to express demands for land. With 53 dead and another 47 wounded, it was one of the army’s first major assaults of the civil war era, the 1960s to 1990s, against a civilian population, fueled by a racism that equated “Indian” with “subversive” and became an integral part of the state’s counterinsurgency mentality.


Abstract: Reports that a growing number of women are taking the increased risk of crossing the Mexico-United States border under stepped-up border enforcement. Story of the human rights abuses suffered by a woman from Guatemala; Detention of women caught crossing borders in facilities with sub-human conditions; Human-rights advocates’ contention that tighter border enforcement does not deter crossings.

Abstract: Within the context of a 36-year civil war, state security forces carried out repression and genocide, murdering over 200,000 civilians. Efforts on the part of organizations and dedicated individuals in the search for truth, justice and reconciliation have continued to be subject to state impunity and human rights violations. (Amnesty International)


Abstract: Montejo is deeply invested in furthering the discussion of the effectiveness of Mayan leadership because he believes that self-evaluation is necessary for the movement to advance. He also criticizes the racist treatment that Mayans experience, and advocates for the construction of a more pluralistic Guatemala that recognizes cultural diversity and abandons assimilation. This volume maps a new political alternative for the future of the movement that promotes inter-ethnic collaboration alongside a reverence for Mayan culture. (The University of Texas Press)


Abstract: The role of women in conflict resolution and peace building is increasingly emphasized in multilateral policy discourse. The article examines both aspects of the issue, whether the representation of women at the peace table resulted in the expressed commitment of negotiating parties toward women and gender equality, and whether the explicit commitments achieved gender equality.


Abstract: Provides information on a study which examined how contexts as diverse as bodies, states, refugee camps become strategic sites for struggles over women’s and men's human rights and citizenship in Guatemala. Methodology; Violence and exile of Guatemalan men and women refugees; Creation of female refugee subjects; Elaboration on gender relations and practices in guerrilla encampments.


Abstract: This book examines the struggle for indigenous rights in eight Latin American countries. Initial studies of indigenous movements celebrated the return of the Indians as relevant political actors, often approaching their struggles as expressions of a common, generic agenda. This collection moves the debate forward by acknowledging the extraordinary diversity among the movements’ composition, goals, and strategies. By focusing on the factors that shape this diversity, the authors offer a basis for understanding the specificities of converging and diverging patterns across different countries.


Abstract: The Guatemalan state has employed several forms of violence; all variants on the doctrine of low-intensity warfare exported to Central America though the U.S. military aid and training programs beginning in the 1960's. The first variant, developed in the aftermath of the counterrevolution of 1954 and continuing into the
1990's, consists of violence against designated individuals who lead labor unions, human rights organizations, peasant efforts at unionization and Mayan leaders seeking to defend community lands. Sometimes leaders are simply assassinated.


Abstract: This paper examines how, at the municipal level, current memories of the civil war, especially of the civil defence patrols, still shape perceptions, actions, and social relations. These are marked by fear, prejudice, and distrust, thereby creating important impediments for erasing the legacy of violence and building local democracy and civil society.


Abstract: Between the late 1970s and the 1980s, Guatemala was torn by a time of mass terror and extreme violence in a genocidal campaign against the Maya that became known as “La Violencia.” More than 600 massacres occurred in villages destroyed by the army, one and a half million people were displaced, and more than 200,000 civilians were murdered. Eighty-three percent of the victims were Maya, the indigenous people of Guatemala. Buried Secrets brings these statistics to life as it chronicles the journey of Maya survivors seeking truth, justice, and community healing and demonstrates that the Guatemalan army carried out a systematic and intentional genocide against the Maya.


Abstract: Focuses on fighting femicide in Guatemala. Factors that contribute to the violence against women. Indifference of the government to the problem of violence in the country; Efforts of feminists to fight crimes against them; Interest of foreigners in supporting the efforts of the feminist group, CONAPREVI.


Abstract: Focuses on Guatemalans' preoccupation with their nation's past. Peace accords of the 1990s; Search for a path forward from the ravages of the Cold War years; Number of people killed before the end of the civil war; Nation of rememberers and forgetters.


Abstract: Describes the visible, enduring links between land and power, and between landlessness and poverty, ill health, and low life-expectancy in Guatemala. Agrarian reforms appear to provoke violence.


Abstract: Reports that on December 29, 1996, Guatemalan army and rebel leaders signed a peace accord which ended 36 years of terror and internal violence. How the civil war devastated the nation’s economy, health and social order; Impact of the war on the indigenous Mayas; Efforts to rebuild their lives.

Abstract: Recent cases of state violence against returning refugees cast serious doubts on the Guatemalan government’s commitment to ensure safe repatriation. In one incident, uniformed troops of the Guatemalan army were involved in a massacre of returnees in the northern department of Alta Verapaz. In other incidents in neighboring El Quiché department, the civil patrol apparatus created and controlled by the army was responsible for numerous human rights violations against returnees and those working with them.


Abstract: Focuses on the role of the Trickle Up Program in helping women become economically independent. Providing seed capital grant to K’aslemal, a Guatemalan human rights non-government organization; Benefits of micro-finance to women; Providing business-skills training opportunities for women entrepreneurs.


Abstract: Focuses on international human-rights violations against children. Examples of children who disappeared during civil war in Guatemala and a boy who was tortured in Kurdistan; Evidence of such violations and recommendations for strengthening remedies against such abuses by Amnesty International; Role of health personnel in child protection and meeting the needs of children who have experienced torture.
Human Rights in Honduras
by Andrea DeGaetani

Honduras' history of human rights violations is rooted in a political culture of militarization. Following a military coup in 1963, Honduras faced strengthened military authority and a decade of harsh military rule. It was also during this time that the United States used the country as a base for Contras fighting leftist Sandinistas in Nicaragua. In 1981 Honduras returned to a parliamentary democracy, electing Roberto Suazo Cordova as president. However, by then the process of militarization had been so heavily funded by the U.S and had made such a significant impact on public policy that little changed for the better. The 1980s, then, were characterized by a major increase in rights violations, as armed forces, having been ousted by civilian government, remained very much in control.

Over the first half of the 1980s, military aid from the U.S—alongside violence and warfare across borders—increased dramatically. Under the authority of General Gustavo Alvarez Martinez and his infamous death squad Battalion 3-16, Honduras broke its tradition of international neutrality by illegally arresting Salvadoran refugees and their supporters. Over the next few years victims came to include laborers, agrarians, and students suspected of leftist activism, all of whom were targets for more severe violations such as extrajudicial murder, torture, and disappearances. Battalion 3-16, backed by the CIA, operated secret detention centers where victims were interrogated, often beaten to death, and then buried in secret burial grounds. While the U.S. is not suspected of playing an active role in these atrocities, it was still a major actor in that it not only funded the Honduran military, but also withheld reports and ignored indisputable evidence of human rights violations.

Faced with criticism for violations in the 1980s, the Honduran and U.S. governments have denied that any wrongdoing took place, and have blamed the Sandinista regime for threatening Honduran stability with propaganda and exaggerated Committee for the Defense of Human Rights reports. For their part, the military's own country reports have allegedly made repeated excuses and under-reported figures. It was not until 1994 that a president was elected who, on behalf of civilians and in response to outside pressure, began to demand accountability for the violations of the 1980s. The army protested this by deploying tanks to the streets, sending death threats to government officials and rights activists, and through on-air propaganda aiming to justify past violations. These were all means to illustrate how powerful the military still considered itself.

Because of its significant role in Honduras' military history, human rights violations, and related political and social instability, the United States is arguably obligated to engage in commissions for reconciliation. The U.S., however, either denies or justifies the violations. At the same time, civilian governance remains weak as officers of the Honduran armed forces continue to hold high government positions. Goals for democratic governance, separation of military and police forces, and minor policy reforms have all been small but encouraging steps toward greater respect for human rights in Honduras. Yet, it seems that political frustration and human rights violations will persist, at least until relevant actors can make efforts to repair the effects of this unfortunate past.
A Legacy


Discusses how government and the armed forces in Latin American countries have remained closely linked even after movements toward democracy. Connects extreme military rule in the 1980s with military entrepreneurship in the 1990s; in Honduras, officers are “deeply involved in commercial ventures.”


Abstract: For years, nongovernmental terrorism in Latin America was considered an epiphenomenon of the Cold War. The persistence of this type of political violence in the 1990s, however, not only belied many assumptions about its causes but also led scholars to reexamine the phenomenon. This article investigates the validity of a number of hypotheses by applying a pooled time-series cross-section regression analysis to data from 17 Latin American countries between 1980 and 1995. Findings indicate that nongovernmental terrorist acts in Latin America are more likely to occur in poorly institutionalized regimes characterized by varying degrees of political and electoral liberties, a deficient rule of law, and widespread human rights violations. The analysis also shows that nongovernmental terrorism in the region tends to surface in cyclical waves; but it finds no association between economic performance or structural economic conditions and the incidence of nongovernmental terrorism.


Abstract: Focuses on the August 1999 assertion from farmers that the El Aguacate military base in Honduras was the home of political prisoners who were tortured and killed. Call from human rights advocates for an investigation on the military base; Honduran political prisoners who disappeared during the 1980s; Speculations on the farmers’ assertion.


Discusses aspects of democratization in Latin America, including Honduras’ first presidential election in 1981 and the shifts in power that followed thereafter. Argues that optimism for a true and peaceful democracy in Honduras is low because military impunities linger, repression continues, and domestic forces remain relatively weak.


Abstract: Is the success of democratization efforts in developing countries tied to the quality of public administration? Based on an evaluation of three Central American countries (Honduras, Panama, and Costa
Donald Klingner claims that democratization and public personnel management are closely related. Although each country's development must be viewed in the light of its own conditions, public personnel management in these countries has evolved through a relatively uniform process, in three stages: (1) political patronage; (2) a transition to merit systems marked by passage of a civil service law, creation of an effective civil service agency, and elaboration of effective personnel policies and procedures; and (3) a dynamic equilibrium among the desirable but contradictory objectives that characterize public personnel management in developed countries. Because this process is essentially similar to the evolution of the field in the United States, it is possible that a general evolutionary model can be developed to predict or explain the relationship between democratization and enhanced public personnel management in developing countries.


Discusses the history of militarization and human rights violations in Honduras, and connects this past to the contemporary housing rights crisis.


Ties the current refugee situation in Honduras to history, geopolitics, and border tensions. Refugee policy remains in the hands of the military, making it a national security issue, especially in regards to Salvadoran refugees who are denied rights to work and travel. Many have remained in camps near Honduran military zones subject to harassment.


Argues that in the 1960s Honduras military achieved political hegemony, but claims that since the turn of the century this has declined because of military downsizing and budget cuts, as well as constitutional reform that separates the military from the police force. The democratization process remains incomplete, however, because the military still has “de facto institutional autonomy.”


Outlines the transition from a military to civilian government by discussing past and future roles of the military in Honduras. Amnesties protecting certain actors in rights violations have impeded justice and were not reversed until 1995. Since then there has been progress in budget and institutional reform, but Sriram says accountability is inhibited by general fear of the military. Democratic progress is slow because military officials and perpetrators of past violations still hold high government positions.


Abstract: Focuses on Latino gangs and street violence. How the spread of gangs across Central America, Mexico and the U.S. has set off a crime wave; Perception of the gangs in Honduras and El Salvador as a threat to national security; Counterinsurgency strategies against gangs; Concerns of human rights advocates and community leaders that aggressive measures governments are taking gangs have not solved the problem; How gangs are moving
Background on two gangs in Los Angeles, California; Overview of the problem; Why some gang members are having their tattoos removed; Implications of deporting gang members to their home countries.

NGO Reports


Abstract: Reveals that investigators had found three mass graves and secret prison cells at the former military base at El Aguacate in Honduras. Purpose of El Aguacate military base; Statement issued by Sara Ponce, special prosecutor for human rights on the findings at El Aguacate military base; Charges of Ponce against the Honduran military concerning El Aguacate.


Emphasizes the disappearances in Honduras in the 1980s, first by detailing what they entailed, then by citing fourteen specific cases and testimonies from individuals who were involved. Concludes that in spite of general indolence as a response to violations, there were Honduran nationals and media that did much to relay the truth. Makes recommendations regarding victim compensation, prevention of recurrence through land reform, accountability, and guarantees for civilian political control.


Responses to Violations: International and National


Abstract: Hondurans have long suspected that the U.S.-backed contras were more than incidentally connected to the 'death squads' that have harassed and killed hundreds of people inside Honduras. A confidential military report has now confirmed the public's suspicions. The report has drawn a cool response from Honduran human-rights activists. A controversy also surrounds U.S. knowledge of such activities.

Abstract: Reports on Edmundo Orellana’s, Attorney General of Honduras challenge of an appellate court’s ruling that 10 military officers could not be charged in civilian courts for human rights abuses. Details of court’s ruling; Praise from President Carlos Roberto Reina; Number of days Supreme Court has to confirm or change ruling; Comments by Orellana.


Abstract: The government of Honduras is on trial in Costa Rica before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. In the landmark case, Honduras has been charged with ‘integral responsibility’ in the disappearance and presumed murder of citizens by army death squads.


Abstract: Discusses relations between the United States and the United Nations. How the U.S. was secretly voted off the U.N. Human Rights Commission, and responded by threatening to withhold dues; Nomination of John Negroponte as U.S. envoy to the U.N.; His career as a diplomat; Questions about his role as U.S. ambassador to Honduras in the 1980s; Opinion that as an envoy, he will need to work against the perception that the U.S. is arrogantly independent on important issues.


Abstract: Twenty years after Latin American military dictatorships shocked the conscience of the world by “disappearing” their political opponents, the United Nations and the Organization of American States have adopted standards that seek to prevent and punish this grisly practice. This article reviews the process of the development of these standards and examines the extent to which they respond to the concerns raised by human rights groups and families of the disappeared.


Abstract: Reports on the decision of Jesuits in Honduras to take three murder cases to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights due to their frustration over the lack of justice in the country. Presentation of petitions before the commission asking for its intervention in the cases of assassinated Honduras environmental activists.


Includes: the 1987 Esquipulas II Accords agreed to by the governments of Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua; documentation of Honduras’ role in sweatshop labor in 1996; Ronald Reagan’s statement on “The Fear of Communism in Central America,” which includes Honduras and the contra bases; and an excerpt from the International Court of Justice in 1986 condemning the U.S. for using Honduras and other countries to fight guerilla warfare and then leaving without helping to ensure stability.

Abstract: Reports on the failure of the strategies used by the U.S. government to solve the political crisis in Central America. Refusal of the El Salvadoran regime to carry out agrarian reforms or curb human rights abuses; Negative impact of the creation of counterrevolutionary in Nicaragua on the political stability in Honduras.


Abstract: In recent years, Latin American countries have sought to come to terms with prior periods of widespread human rights violations, relying increasingly on investigatory commissions. Investigatory efforts have been undertaken by democratically elected governments that replaced military dictatorships, by U.N.-sponsored commissions as part of a U.N.-mediated peace process, and by national human rights commissioners. This article examines truth commissions in Chile and El Salvador, an investigatory effort in Honduras, and a proposed commission in Guatemala. It compares the achievements and limitations of these commissions within the political constraints and institutional reality of each country, focusing on four major goals: the effort to create an authoritative account of the past; vindication of victims; recommendations for legislative, structural, or other changes to avoid repetition of past abuses; and establishing accountability or the identity of perpetrators.


Explains why 1980s human rights violations in Central America incited political activism among U.S. citizens. In 1986, courts rejected the U.S. claim of self-defense in its unethical intervention against Nicaragua, and found the U.S. guilty of violating past treaties and international law. Honduras along with much of Central America was left unstable; Lists and defines the procedures elicited in the 1987 Esquipulas II Accords established by the presidents of Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras to ensure “Firm and Lasting Peace in Central America.”


Connects 1980s increase in violence with militarization sponsored by the U.S. Mentions Battalion 3-16 and the emergence of state terrorism. President Callejas commissioned Leo Valladares to investigate and report on human rights abuses, after which Honduran courts began to prosecute people involved in disappearances; this has been slow because of past amnesty laws. Discusses the role of international law in jurisprudence on amnesties.


Abstract: Presents information on civilian efforts to prosecute the Honduran military for human rights violations during a decade long war. Defiance by commander of armed forces; Central Intelligence Agency’s role; What Hondurans discovered; Details on inquiry; Comments from the Director of Central Intelligence, John M. Deutch.

Abstract: Discusses the challenges faced by John D. Negroponte, U.S. President Bush’s nominee as director of national intelligence. Human rights advocates criticisms against Negroponte; Description of the repeated scrutiny which was faced by Negroponte for his work as envoy to Honduras from 1981 to 1985.


Abstract: Criticizes President George W. Bush for appointing John D. Negroponte, former U.S. ambassador to Honduras, as the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. Assertion that Negroponte did not support human rights in Honduras despite obvious government abuses; Comment on Negroponte’s support for Nicaragua’s anti-Communist Contra rebels; Comment on Negroponte’s allegedly amoral approach to politics.

The Role of the Honduran Military


Abstract: Commends the ‘Baltimore Sun’ for exposing the United States government’s involvement in human-rights violations in Honduras. U.S. President Ronald Reagan’s establishment of a death squad; Accounts of the atrocities of the secret army; Death squads as part of government’s military and tactical policy.


Outlines the human rights Covenants to which Honduras is a party. The government not only commits violations in spite of its obligations, but has denied and or made excuses for them. Gives background within a regional context on Honduran military, armed opposition, and the evolution of “death squads.” Makes conclusions about specific violations—torture, illegal arrest, disappearances, and intimidation—and recommends a twelve-step program for preventing torture.


Abstract: Reports that Honduran military forces are being held accountable for human rights violations committed during the 1980s. Charges filed; Use of information from United States documents.


Discusses the crisis that ensued when the Honduran government began to either move Salvadoran refugees from border camps to the interior, or make them repatriate. The author suspects coercion, which would contradict Honduras’ long-standing ideal for voluntary repatriation or emigration. The relocation project sparked hostility toward refugees and relief workers; when the project was cancelled, violations did not cease. Details specific incidents on the border, and recommends letting refugees stay where they are, but increasing security.

Abstract: Reports the deployment tanks by the Honduran Army in Tegucigalpa in support of soldiers implicated in human rights abuses.


Abstract: Describes the short-term treatment of Luis, a young Honduran man severely tortured and illegally incarcerated for a year by the country's armed forces. Background on the author's mental health and human rights work in Honduras; Discussion of issues that arise in the treatment of survivors of torture and persecution.


The Role of the U.S. Military


Abstract: Comments on the U.S. government’s transformation of Honduras into a launching pad for attacks on the Nicaraguan government and the Salvadoran rebels. Former ambassador John Negroponte’s task of orchestrating the buildup; His familiarity with airpower and his record of disregard for human rights; Claim of Negroponte that the facilities are for contingency use.


A comparative analysis of Honduras and Costa Rica, Bowman shows how institutionalized military autonomy and Cold-war influence from the U.S. has inhibited development—democratic and economic equality—in Latin America. Militarization has been dramatic and Honduras continues to struggle because of it.


Explains the militarization of Honduran politics prior to the 1980s beginning with the military coup of 1963. (After the democratic presidential election of 1981, the military still controlled policy.) Describes the role of the United States contras, and the extent to which the militarization process incited mass human rights violations. The author explains that the U.S. ignored and denies wrong-doings, having left Honduras without helping to rebuild the country’s political and economic stability.

Abstract: The author claims John Negroponte, the Bush administration's choice for the first ambassador to Iraq, has a record of downplaying human rights abuses. Like dirty money, tainted reputations can be laundered, as the Administration fervently hopes in the case of John Negroponte. Now U.N. ambassador, Negroponte has been chosen by George W. Bush to be the first ambassador to post-Saddam Iraq. When Bush selected Negroponte to be his U.N. representative in 2001, Negroponte was one of several Iran/contra figures being resurrected by the Bush crowd. As Honduras ambassador in the early 1980s, Negroponte, a career diplomat, participated in a secret and possibly illegal quid pro quo in which the Reagan Administration bribed the Honduran government with economic and military assistance to support the contras fighting the socialist Sandinistas of Nicaragua. Perhaps more significant, while Negroponte served in Honduras, he denied or downplayed serious human rights abuses by government security forces. These days Negroponte's tenure in Honduras is old news. But his tour of duty there is worth scrutiny, for it raises questions about his credibility and his ability to handle tough situations and inconvenient truths. Negroponte has claimed "there was no effort to soft pedal" abuses in Honduras. Yet in public statements he repeatedly conveyed a misleading appearance, and in the years since he has held tight—in the face of compelling evidence—to the view that the abuses that did occur were merely unfortunate exceptions.


Abstract: The recent increase in human-rights violations raises serious questions about Honduran democracy and about the White House's repeated efforts to extol its virtues.


This book shows that Honduras illustrates the “tragic consequences” of U.S. democratization policies. Dependency theory explains why Honduras was a prime candidate for U.S. intervention. Hopes for democracy were optimistic but empty, because the U.S. was increasingly aiding a military regime. Military rule ensured consistently weak civilian authority and a polarized society.


Abstract: The article reports on John Negroponte appearing before the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence April 12 for his confirmation hearing to become the nation's first director of national intelligence. John Negroponte, the president's nominee to be the first director of national intelligence, told a Senate committee April 12 that he believes in calling things the way he sees them. Negroponte, however, couldn't find evidence of government- and military engineered human rights abuses in Honduras during his time there.


Abstract: This is an excellent historical account that delivers on its promise to “bring new light to the shadowed corners of U.S. policy in Central America during 1980 and 1981” (p. 3). Arriving at the transition between the Carter and Reagan administrations, the author was ideally situated to observe both the multiple layers of Honduran civil-military relations and, more importantly, the gradual shift of U.S. foreign policy towards confrontation with Sandinista Nicaragua. Besides managing the collective effort of his U.S. charges, Binns also maintained a constant balancing act between often adversarial Honduran civilian and military leaders. Some of the most interesting passages in the book relate the seemingly endless attempts by Honduran leaders such as National Party candidate Ricardo Zuniga to create leverage by manipulating the policy making
process in Tegucigalpa and Washington. Importantly, the narrative illuminates the almost constant friction between civilian foreign service officers in Honduras and the military commanders assigned to U.S. Southern Command. The author is pointed in his criticism of the military tendency to supersede both the embassy and U.S. law governing foreign policy and illustrates a trend identified in Dana Priest’s recent work, *The Mission: Waging War and Keeping Peace with America’s Military* (2003). If there is one weakness in the book, it is the use of what Binns describes as a “heavily annotated diary” format (p. 3). The decision to jump from topic to topic, often without adequate context or analysis, handicaps many opportunities to take a longer view on events in the manner accomplished by other former U.S. policy makers, such as Robert Pastor. Overall, however, *The United States in Honduras* is an important book for any student or lay person interested in a pivotal moment of Cold War and Central American history.


Abstract: The U.S.-sponsored programs of military and police collaboration with the Central American governments during the Cold War also contributed to the surveillance capacity of those states during the period when the Central American state formation process was being completed. Guatemala is used as a case study. Washington’s contribution was framed by the conventional discourse of “security against communism” but also by an underlying technocratic ethos in which “modernization” and “security” were higher priorities than democratization. Points to the role of the United States in Central-American state-formation (including that of Honduras) as initiated by activities during the Cold War and capacity-building efforts for intelligence agencies. At the same time, strengthened militaries in the region forged rivalries, such as that between Honduras and El Salvador. These events indicate that democracy was not the priority as the U.S. suggested.


Abstract: Discusses the relationship of Israel’s military with Honduras and other Central-American countries in the 1980s. Israel has been accused of helping the CIA train the contras, but deny it. They did, however, sell Honduras planes and “bombers” and signed agreements for more “sophisticated” arms sales, of which the United States did not approve.


Abstract: Focuses on foreign service officer, John D. Negroponte, and his diplomatic career. Topic of his nomination to ambassador to United Nations, which is ensnared in the United States Senate over his role as ambassador to Honduras during Reagan administration’s effort to back contras’ fight against leftist Sandinista government in Nicaragua; Issue of human rights abuses in the region.

Includes an essay by Joan Kkruckewitt on “U.S. Militarization of Honduras in the 1980s and the Creation of CIA-backed Death Squads,” and tables showing levels of financial backing from the U.S., human rights violations in the 1980s, and numbers of disappearances documented.


Details a pre-1980s history of a strengthening “military institutional identity,” beginning primarily with political shifts under the Liberal leader Ramon Villeda Morales in 1957. There was also a series of military coups up until that of 1972, which left the military in power for the next decade. Describes state-society and international relations, constructs of national elections, political sectors, economic development and subsequent crises in the 1980s.
The Organization of American States
by Natalie Knowlton

The international community focused its attention on protecting human rights in response to horrendous human rights abuses during World War II. Latin and South American states enacted The American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man [Declaration] in 1948, shortly after their creation of the Organization of American States [OAS]. While the Declaration set forth dozens of rights, little was done in the next decade to establish a means for their protection.

The 1948 Charter of the OAS [Charter] originally provided for a Commission on Human Rights but one was not formally established until the amending 1959 Protocol of Buenos Aires [Protocol]. The Protocol established the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, but gave it little power and only a vague mandate to promote human rights. Recognizing ongoing abuses and the need to strengthen the human rights system, the OAS adopted the American Convention on Human Rights [Convention] in 1978.

The Convention reaffirmed the region's commitment to human rights and empowered the Commission. It also established the Inter-American Court of Human Rights [Court] to work with the Commission and further ensure compliance with the Convention. Combined, the Commission and the Court form the sole organ dealing with the promotion and protection of human rights in the Americas. The Commission publishes reports, carries out site visits and reviews petitions which it may then pass along to the Court. The Court has contentious and advisory jurisdiction over signatory members and its decisions are binding.

Because of the system's uneven development--the Commission operating independently prior to the Court's establishment--the joint venture of the Court and Commission has been constrained by institutional problems. While there have been calls for major changes, immediate reforms rest largely on increased cooperation between the Commission and Court. The Inter-American system has already made a positive impact on human rights in the region and further reforms and improvements will create an even more successful regime.

Inter-American Commission on Human Rights

This section is divided into Primary and Secondary sources.

Primary Sources


Secondary Sources


The article argues that the Commission's twofold role of promotion and protection of human rights reflects a dramatic development in its role from past to present. Uses the example of disappearances to illustrate that the Commission has challenged the gross and systematic human rights abuses in the region. Emphasizes the need for increased cooperation between the Commission and Court.


Traces Commission growth and prospects for the future, focusing specifically on the Commission's role in issuing country reports. The article looks to Panama, Nicaragua, and Argentina as illustrative of the reports' positive effects on violating governments and concludes that these reports must continue to be the Commission's central preoccupation.


Discusses the background and framework of the Commission and explores enforcement mechanisms. The article focuses on four cases that illustrate the Commission in practice, commenting especially on the problems in the Commission's handling of petitions. Author concludes by emphasizing the need for institutional changes.


Concentrates on the OAS and its developments in promoting human rights. Analyzes the origins, organization, and role of the Commission and its activities before the American Convention and creation of the Court. Case studies illustrate the Commission's experience in processing petitions.

Analyzes the jurisprudence of the Commission and Court, in the context of creating more economic, social, and cultural rights claims. Helps the advocate of these rights to present an effective claim and offers approaches through which to do so. Considers additional procedural issues in preparing a case. Appendix contains forms and model petition.


Reviews the OAS purpose, organs and agreements pertaining to human rights. Covers the creation and organization of the Commission and the expansion of its functions and powers. Appendix includes the founding texts, model complaint, and on-site observation information.


Discusses the post-WWII evolution of the OAS and human rights, specifically the history of the Commission as the "conscience of the Americas." The development of its functions, efficacy of on-site visits and country reports in improving human rights in the region is illustrated using country specific examples.


Provides historical information on the Commission and discusses various innovations including a series of thematic rapporteurships. In the areas of indigenous persons, prisons and penal conditions, women and girls, migrant workers, displaced persons, children, and freedom of expression, this article examines how these rapporteurships have furthered the protection of their respective rights.


Offers a better understanding of the Commission as a complaint forum by private actors. This article discusses the functions performed by human rights NGOs involving petitions, investigations, hearings, on-site visits, settlements, and other provisional measures when availing themselves of the Commission's services. Provides examples of these functions using case studies.


Focuses on the Commission's organizational structure, jurisdiction, and activities and suggests the Inter-American human rights experience as being applicable to other regions. The author
offers models and considerations for establishing regional human rights mechanisms based on the Inter-American model.

**Inter-American Court of Human Rights**

This section is divided into Primary and Secondary sources.

**Primary Sources**


The most up-to-date report of the Court's activities. Includes an official history of the court, record of recent jurisdictional and advisory activities, discussion of the Court's activities with the Commission, and a section on inter-institutional cooperation agreements.


**Secondary Sources**


This article examines the role and scope of the Court's advisory jurisdiction and selected procedural issues relative to the practice of this jurisdiction. Author suggests that advisory jurisdiction has positively contributed to human rights law and emerging concepts illustrate the continued usefulness of this process in implementing human rights obligations in the Americas.


Provides an overview of the Court's institutional framework and a detailed description of the scope and application of contentious and advisory jurisdiction. Author discusses problematic issues within this framework and argues for the Commission to take the lead in engaging the Court by referring cases and requesting advisory opinions.

Reflection of a former Court judge on the early years of the Court and the problems facing the Court at that time. Discusses the initial election, early cases, frustrations with the Commission, and relations with the European Court of Human Rights. Concludes with present observations and suggestions for increased effectiveness.


This article provides an overview of the authoritative instruments governing the Court and the organization of judges, President, Vice-President, Permanent Commission, and Secretariat. Also includes a discussion of the Court's contentious and advisory jurisdictions and the extent to which both reach.


This article recounts an interview with nine former and present judges, presenting their views on the evolution of the Inter-American Court. The judges respond to questions regarding the manner of operations, the problematic relationship with the Commission, and the changing role of the Court.


Comprehensive study of the Court's advisory jurisdiction. Outlines the role and scope of this jurisdiction, and recommends a three-prong test in determining its use. Author sets forth proposals for refining and expanding, pushing for an even stronger and more effective advisory jurisdiction.


Evaluates the Inter-American system's significant developments and limitations. Beginning with a general discussion of international human rights law, this article evaluates jurisprudential, procedural, and evidentiary precedents set by the Court. Author concludes with limitations on effectiveness and enforcement.


Comprehensive look at the Court's advisory and contentious jurisdiction, provisional measure orders, procedural issues and recent changes to Rules of Procedure. Analyzing and critiquing the
practices and procedures, as well as the relationship between the Commission and Court, this book concludes with proposed changes to the Inter-American system.


Analyzes the decisions and opinions of the Court to assess the accomplishments and limitations. Discusses the jurisdiction, procedure, evidentiary issues, and the normative texts binding the Court. Author concludes that the Court's jurisprudence has made significant contributions to the interpretation and application of human rights in the region.

**Joint Venture of the Court and Commission**


Examines the Inter-American system for human rights in a historical context to draw lessons from the past. Discusses the issue of state compliance with decisions set forth by the Commission and Court, specifically in Peru during the 1990s. Author gives her recommendations and urges increased education on the Inter-American system in the U.S..


Discusses the composition, tools, and function of the Commission and Court, their relationship to one another, and how their procedures create the potential for backlog and delay. This article analyzes the effects of several possible procedural reforms and suggests reform is necessary for the survival of the system.


Comprehensive account of the Inter-American human rights system. Discusses background, competence of Commission, and system of individual petitions. The author reviews the jurisprudence of both the Commission and Court and the contribution to international human rights law, concluding with an assessment of the system's overall effectiveness.


Examines responsibilities of the Commission and Court in supervising human rights compliance, focusing on the Commission's visits in loco, referrals to the Court, special rapporteurs, and role of the case system. Discusses problems with enforcement but counters these issues with the impact the two organs have at domestic levels in the national courts.

Analyzes the Court’s manner of operation and its introduction into the inter-American human rights system. Discussing how the Commission’s role changed after the Court’s introduction, the author concludes with an analysis of the limitations that may impede the system in the future.


Author examines what she believes to be the main human rights issues in the region and what the OAS and its organs have done to address them. Looking at poverty, women, and indigenous people, the article concludes with suggestions for changes to the system, emphasizing the necessity for both promotion and protection efforts.


In the context of democracy's relationship to human rights, this review focuses on the OAS in the last decade, looking to regional democratic initiatives and the work of the Commission and Court. Conclusion illustrates existing problems in both institutions and offers suggestions for remedy.


Reviews the historical development of human rights in the Americas through the international conferences and meetings that led to the Commission and Court's establishment. The conclusion illuminates structural, normative, and procedural problems and provides remedies.


After a detailed discussion of the Inter-American human rights system, authors present suggestions for strengthening the mechanisms of protection. Improved procedure, greater coordination between the Court and Commission, and follow-up procedures for verification and monitoring cases are among the recommendations for reassessing the system.
Human Rights in Peru
by William Osborne

As many Central and South American nations continue to experience the human rights violations that characterized the twentieth century, Peru has moved forward. The truth and reconciliation process, which officially ended with a final report in August 2003 and corrective legal action by recent governments, created a stable nation where the rule of law applies.

Violations throughout the 1980s and 90s led to the truth commission, beginning with General Juan Velasco’s 1968 overthrow of democratically elected leader Fernando Belaunde. Velasco instituted wide-ranging socialist reforms that economically crippled Peru. Another military leader, General Francisco Bermudez, orchestrated a violent counter-coup that ultimately returned Peru to democratically elected leadership in 1980. Although the new government repealed most of Velasco’s economically crippling socialist reforms, Peru’s economy fared no better under the new democratic regime. This period of economic instability precipitated many of the human rights violations seen in Peru in the following two decades.

Under Bermudez, the Maoist insurgency Sendero Luminoso grew, and the frequency of human rights violations by both the insurgents and the government increased. In 1991, Alberto Fujimori’s economic reforms finally returned prosperity to Peru. Although gifted in revitalizing the economy, Fujimori and his subordinates were corrupt and operated outside the law. In 2000 a scandal centered on Vladimir Montesinos, Fujimori’s intelligence chief broke and the government fell. Valentin Paniagua took over as caretaker and began the truth and reconciliation process.

Peru’s success in moving past an era of violence can provide insight for other Latin American nations. Although Peruvians experienced violations of their legal, societal, healthcare and religious rights, attempts to rectify those violations and move beyond a difficult time the nation’s history have been successful.

Alberto Fujimori


Examines the Government of Alberto Fujimori. Takes a specific look at the role of Vladimir Montesinos and ties with the CIA, Peruvian Secret Service, and criminal elements.


Abstract: Provides a historical background on the efforts of Alberto Fujimori, former president of Peru, to dismantle the country’s democracy. Manipulation of the Congress; Suspension of the constitution; Impact of Fujimori’s administration on the economic conditions in the country.

Abstract: This article strengthens and extends economic theories of presidential approval, assesses accountability in Peru’s “delegative democracy,” and explores the political feasibility of economic policies. The analysis finds that prospective evaluations shape presidential approval in Peru, demonstrating the utility of economic theories in the developing world. Peruvians hold politicians accountable not only for the economic past, but also for future implications of past actions, which suggests that vertical accountability exists and that this type of accountability encourages forward-looking policy choices. Finally, the analysis indicates that important political events, including the capture of the Sendero Luminoso guerrillas and Fujimori’s autogolpe, influence Peruvians’ approval of the president.


A study of the mechanics of Alberto Fujimori’s rise to power in Peru. Examines the 1992 coup and offers an explanation focusing on the weakness of the Peruvian Legislature.


Abstract: Examines the extent to which a government’s success in resolving deep political and economic crisis strengthens its popular support, through an analysis of the Peruvian administration under President Alberto Fujimori beginning in 1990. Fujimori’s political success; Determinants of presidential popularity; Issue salience in citizens’ evaluations; Role of valence issues in democracies.

Economic Instability


Abstract: Reports on the effect of political activities in Peru to the situation and condition of its mining industry. Implication of the economic and social programs of President Alberto Fujimori on the industry; Government efforts to control the political movement Sendero Luminoso and its involvement in the drug trade; Government’s focus on the restoration of government control of the judiciary and state-owned universities.


Abstract: Features Peru’s mineral reserves. Revenues from mining industry; Discussion on economic statistics; Site of mining expedition, Tecnomin ’95.


Abstract: Suggests that analysts in Latin America have tended to ignore the political component of economic readjustment as illustrated in the neoliberal initiatives of the governments of Mexico and Peru. Centralized process of economic modernization; Institutional outlook of state reforms in Peru; Political consequences of privatization in the corporatist system in Mexico.

Abstract: Through discussion of Fujimori’s Peru in the 1990s, focuses on the cause and effect relationship between societal groups and government reformers. The author uses tax reforms, privatization of pensions, and social-sector reforms to illustrate group incentives for supporting, opposing, or modifying reforms.


Abstract: Presents a class analysis of capitalist industrialism in Peru as of September 1985. Efficacy of capitalist development and bourgeois reformism for amelioration of material deprivation and the denial of human rights; Dimensions of Peruvian industrialism; Determination of material bases of class formation; Interpretation of politics in Peru since 1980 derived from the dialectic of class power.


Abstract: From 1968, a reformist military regime in Peru implemented an industrialising development strategy which was fundamentally at odds with the interests of the traditional ‘oligarchy’ that had dominated the primary export phase of the country’s development. In order to understand this new phase of development it is necessary to reject the idea of a monolithic ‘oligarchy’ before 1968, and to see the Peruvian dominant class as already internally differentiated. An important sector of that class was by 1968 committed to the development of industry and of the urban economy generally. Its interests were explicitly at variance with those of the exporting fractions of the Peruvian dominant class.


Abstract: Presents the author’s analysis of the Latin American economy, particularly Peru as an example, which he believes to be in great measure informal. Author’s view on the phenomenon of informal entrepreneurs in Peru; Comment on the book ‘The Other Path,’ by Hernando de Soto; Economic, social and political importance of the development of the informal housing sector in Peru.


Abstract: Examines the evolution of external positions of eight developing countries namely: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Korea, Mexico, Peru, the Philippines and Venezuela. Foreign debt pattern; Projecting debt-export ratios; Need for external adjustment and the ways to effect them.


Looks at the effects of the U.S.-Peru patron-client economic relationship during the latter half of the Twentieth Century. Also examines the European model of economic and political involvement with developing nations, which the author finds more successful than the U.S. model.

Abstract: Presents an interview with Mario Vargas Llosa, defeated candidate in the 1989 presidential elections in Peru. Assessment of the changes in Latin America; Populism in Brazil; Gap between rich and poor in Chile; Economic opening of Argentina.


Abstract: The article focuses on the revolutionary changes in Peru. The Peruvian regime is generally seen not as the typical Latin American caudillo government but rather as an essentially institutional effort. Although a government of force, it is widely regarded as relatively unexpressive. From various foreign perspectives, Peru's current process of military-directed change is regarded with hope. Paradoxically, many international lenders and even some investors also regard Peru's experiment favorably. The military regime has earned plaudits for its prudent fiscal management and for its pragmatism in dealing with foreign companies. Within Peru, the military regime's program is not so widely acclaimed. Articulate observers from both sides of the political spectrum assail the government. Though the traditional Communist party openly supports the military regime, many on the Left regard it as far from revolutionary, but rather as an ally of international capitalism, exploiting the Peruvian masses for the sake of dominant minorities.


Abstract: Focuses on profound transformations and community development undergone by Peru. Details of the investigation conducted on a number of low-income neighborhoods in Lima, Peru; Transitions underwent by Peru over the last two decades; Shift of Peru to an elected government in 1980.


Abstract: Presents information on a study analyzing the implication of structural reforms in the formal and informal sectors of Peru in the early 1990s. Structural reforms undertaken and the legislative changes in informal sector; Basic earnings equations for both sectors and segmentation issues after the reform.


Abstract: Chronicles the politics of Peru's economic reform. Reasons for Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori's suspension of democratic rule in April 5, 1992; External financing and macroeconomic neglect; Interplay between the state and the private sector; Political capacity of the state to intervene; Process of rectifying the political and economic aspects of the government-led economic reform.

Insurgency


Abstract: Presents an analysis of Peru's drug production and trafficking and insurgency of Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso). Peru is world's largest producer of coca leaf. Economic arena; Coca production as major (sole) source of income for 300,000 farmers in Upper Huallaga Valley (UHV); Factors complicating Peru's efforts to mount effective anti-drug campaign; President Fujimori's proposed Alternative Development Program; U.S. foreign policy of 'Drug War'; Communist Party of Peru.

Extensive bibliography of Sendero Luminoso and related literature.


Abstract: *Focuses on the Maoist insurrectionists known as Sendero Luminosos or the Shining Path in Peru. Evolution of the Maoist movement; Demonstration of power in November 1989's municipal elections; Origins and development of the movement; Movement's effects on Peru's political development.*


Detailed account of the Shining Path's Maoist insurgency. Specific focus on the period from 1980-82.


Abstract: *Examines the Sendero Luminoso, an unorthodox Peruvian terrorist organization. History of the terrorist organization; Details on the intellectual foundations of Sendero; Description of the structure and membership of the party.*


Abstract: *Describes the development and applications a statistical method for estimating animal populations. Applications in the documentation of human rights abuses; Study of the conflicting accounts of the death toll from two decades of civil war in Peru; Procedures for the multiple-systems estimation method.*


Abstract: *Assesses ways in which land reform created structural conditions conducive to peasant support for a revolutionary insurgency in Peru. Agricultural status of Peru prior to land reform; Impact of implementation of land reform program on Peru; Rise of Sendero Luminoso in the country.*


Comprehensive study of the Peruvian military from 1930s through the end of the Twentieth Century. Examines relationship between military and society. Also looks at reforms enacted by military dictators in Peru.


In discussing the FMLN and Shining Path, McClintock finds that Peru's insurgency was not caused by lack of political freedoms, but economic policies that destroyed peasants and
constrained the young middle class. McClintock also talks about the future role of revolutionary
groups in responding to peoples’ concerns about hunger, poverty and corruption.

Gordon H. Mccormick. 1992. From the Sierra to the Cities: The Urban Campaign of the Shining
Path. Santa Monica, CA: Rand.

A discussion of Shining Path’s urban guerilla campaign. Includes information on the reasons for
moving into the city and specifies regarding the disposition of Shining Path forces in 1992 and
the organization's strategic plan.

Office of the Secretary Of and Corporation Rand. 1990. The Shining Path and the Future of
Peru. Santa Monica, CA: Rand.

RAND study regarding the impact of the Shining Path on stability in Peru. Examines the origins
and goals of the organization.


Edited volume containing eleven articles on the Shining Path. Most relate to the origins of the
insurgency.

American Bureau; Distribution in North America by Monthly Review Press.

Without supporting either the government or the insurgency, examines the founding of the
Shining Path. Also looks at the U.S. role in supporting the Peruvian Government.


Abstract: This article explains tactical escalation by a Peruvian left-wing group during the 1980s and 1990s as
an interaction effect between organizational ideology and the broader political and organizational environment. In
1980, Peru’s Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) organization ended a decade of political organizing and launched
armed struggle against a new civilian government. Peru had been governed since 1968 by military officers, but
popular pressure, including strong left-wing protests, had forced the military to cede control. In responding to
democratization with revolution rather than electoral participation, Sendero broke with the rest of Peru’s Marxist
left. In 1983, Sendero again escalated its tactics, initiating a campaign of violent intimidation against Peru’s legal
left. By 1996, according to data assembled for this study, the group had selectively assassinated some 300
prominent Peruvian leftists. For theorists of revolutions and social movements, Sendero’s tactical trajectory poses
two important puzzles. First, many revolutionary theorists believe that transitions from authoritarianism to
elections decrease armed insurgency. Why, then, did Peru’s democratization provoke Sendero’s escalation? Second,
Sendero might well have been expected to cooperate with other left-wing groups, rather than to attack them so
brutally. Why did Sendero choose an alternative path? The group’s anti-left measures are all the more puzzling
given the opposition they provoked among potential allies at home and abroad. The article explains Sendero’s
choices by drawing on political opportunity theory, theories of organizational competition, and the concept of
declining protest cycles. Democratization can promote greater levels of strife if small but violence-prone groups fear
marginalization in electoral politics.

Abstract: In August 2003 members of American Association For the Advancement of Science's (AAAS) human rights staff traveled to Lima, Peru to take part in a historic event, the public release of a report concluding that 69,280 people were killed or disappeared during a 20-year conflict between government forces and Maoist insurgents. The report exemplifies the use of scientific methods in human rights investigations. Based on the reports of witnesses, the authors suggest that the Shining Path, a Maoist rebel group, committed 45% of the killings, and that 30% could be attributed to government security forces. The AAAS Science and Human Rights Program has conducted quantitative analyses for large-scale human rights data projects in Africa, Asia, South America, and Eastern Europe.


Abstract: Examines the history and ideology of the Communist Party of Peru-Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso). Claim of embodying a distinctly Peruvian Marxism; Conspicuous indifference to Peruvian culture and traditions; Leader Abimael Guzman’s thinking within the Maoist tradition of philosophy and politics; Principles of Gonzalo thought.


Annotated bibliography containing 1185 citations from 1980-1993. The introduction contains information about the origins of the Shining Path.


Edited volume covering the rise and failure of Sendero Luminoso. Also includes the experience of women and legacies of the war.


Discusses the origins of Sendero Luminoso and government responses to the organization. Also studies the link between Sendero Luminoso and drug production in the Huallaga Valley of Peru.


Abstract: Examines the efficacy of the Peruvian state's efforts to defeat the PCP-Sendero Luminoso. Indication that the paper is structured around the counter-insurgency model advocated by Robert Thompson; Questions surrounding the theory of counter-insurgency; Details on the study; Conclusions reached.


Abstract: My purpose in this essay is to raise some questions about what is involved in research on political violence. Since 1995 I have conducted ethnographic research in rural villages throughout Ayacucho, the region of
Peru most heavily affected by the war between the guerrilla group Sendero Luminoso, the rondas campesinas (armed peasant patrols) and the Peruvian armed forces. A key factor motivating my research was a desire to write against the culture of violence arguments that were used to "explain" the war. The concept of a "culture of violence" or "endemic violence" has frequently been attributed to the Andean region, particularly to the rural peasants who inhabit the highlands. I wanted to understand how people make and unmake lethal violence in a particular social and historical context, and to explore the positioning and responsibilities of an anthropologist who conducts research in the context of war.


Public testimony before the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, One Hundred Second Congress, second session, September 23, 1992.


Abstract: Examines the causes underlying the persistence of the Sendero Luminoso communist movement and its impact to politics in Peru. Modification and maturity of Sendero Luminoso; Territorial expansion and competition; Sendero Luminoso's overall goal; Prospects for Peru in 1990.


Abstract: This article examines the evolution of ETA and Shining Path and the leaders' early theoretical justifications for armed action and the views of dissenters. Although both organizations emerged under similar circumstances, members of each differed in how they thought about violent politics. This resulted in different types and amounts of violence. Leaders revised their thinking amid constitutional change, fierce government repression and the entrance of new generations of activists. The two cases corroborate several recent scholarly theses--in particular, hypotheses about the ubiquity of discord and the propensity toward fragmentation within movements that use violence--and suggest new hypotheses about the role of leadership in the evolution of revolutionary movements.

Social and Religious Rights

Abstract: Focuses on the role of health care system on human right victims in Peru. Creation of centers for sexual abuse victims; Proposal for health service; Provision of psychological care.


Abstract: Offers a look at reproductive health in Peru. Lack of reproductive rights; Occurrence of forced sterilizations; Documentation of human rights violations in Peru by the Peruvian Human Rights Ombudsman’s Office; Restrictions on access to information about contraceptive methods; Penalties for abortion; Statement that the Peruvian policies discriminate against women; Possibility of reproductive health reforms in Peru.


Provides perspective on human rights violations that occurred during the 1970s and early 1980s as a review prior to democratically elected president Alan Garcia Perez took office. Provides recommendations to the incoming Peruvian administration.


Amnesty International’s web archive of documents related to human rights in Peru. Includes reports and news items from 1996 through the present.


Abstract: Focuses on the politics of pension reform in Peru. Consequences of pension privatization; Investigation of the political and economic conditions in the country leading to the implementation of pension reforms; Effect of pension reforms on social interests. ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR; To date, the bulk of the research on the politics of social security reform analyzes privatization as a dependent variable and explores the political and economic conditions leading to the implementation of pension reforms. Departing from the tradition of previous scholarship, this article redirects attention to the political consequences of pension privatization by focusing on how pension reform affects social interests, and the effects of those interests on reform processes. The analysis reveals the importance of looking beyond the initial alignment of interests surrounding market reform initiatives to explore the broader political implications. In Peru, the pension reform created concentrated beneficiaries who pushed for the deepening of the reform process at the expense of costs that were widely distributed among workers in the formal sector.


Abstract: Presents a class analysis of capitalist industrialism in Peru as of September 1985. Efficacy of capitalist development and bourgeois reformism for amelioration of material deprivation and the denial of human rights; Dimensions of Peruvian industrialism; Determination of material bases of class formation; Interpretation of politics in Peru since 1980 derived from the dialectic of class power.


Provides policy recommendations to Alberto Fujimori prior to his assuming the Presidency of Peru. Also examines U.S. policy toward, and support of, Peru during the 1980s.


Abstract: Discusses the Inter-American Court of Human Rights' judgment challenging the convictions by Peruvian courts of four Chileans for the crime of treason against the fatherland. Fair trial guarantees; Trial of civilians by military tribunal; Annulment of criminal proceedings; Obligation to amend legislation.


Edited volume containing several chapters discussing political and economic reform in Peru from the 1970s - 1990s. Includes discourse on the relationship between stable democratic governments and continued development in Latin America.


Web site contains English and Spanish text from Peru's commission on truth and reconciliation. Includes information on exhumations and disappeared persons.


National Security Archive's collection of declassified documents pertaining to human rights violations in Peru. Includes several U.S. Government reports on the Fujimori administration.


Abstract: Examines the slow recovery of health systems in Peru which is just emerging from a civil war. Recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Peru which ranged from reparations for victims of human rights abuses to, investment in infrastructure in the worst hit areas; Plan of the ministry of health to address the psychological needs of victims; Work at training health care workers and at dealing with the needs of the youngest victims; Other plans to help the population adjust to a new time; Lack of money which hinders all efforts.

Biography of a priest who ministered to a migrant peasant and indigenous population in Peru's Ene Valley. Explores the interrelationship of Ashaninka Indians, communist guerillas, the government, and foreign actors.


Abstract: Discusses the process of achieving protection and institutionalization of religious liberty and its significance to the evolution of the three generations of human rights in Peru. Role of Roman Catholicism in societal, cultural and political development in Peru; Association between the concept of three generations of human rights and the growth of religious liberty; Application of the generational human rights model to religious liberty; Changes in the traditional concept of religious liberty.


Abstract: Examines the state of Peruvian press under the regime of President Alberto Fujimori. Influence of the press in Latin America; Peruvian press in the 1970s; Peruvian democracy and the press from 1980 to 1992; Exposure of corruption and the role of investigative journalism; Internal war with the Shining Path; Human rights violation involving the press; Faltering of the press after the Fujimori coup.


Abstract: Focuses on medical care provided by the International Committee of the Red Cross to hostages taken by the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement in Peru. Background and political issues involved in the hostage taking; Psychological support provided by Red Cross volunteers; Role of the Red Cross in forestalling aggressive measures.


Memoirs of a reporter, Robin Kirk, who spend a significant amount of time with Shining Path Guerillas during the 1980s. Gives specific insight into what drove women to participate in the uprising.


Abstract: The hypotheses of three alternative models of education's role in political socialization-Marxist functionalism, rational-action theory, and Weberian perspectives—are presented to illuminate the reasons behind one of Latin America’s most enigmatic rebellions of youths: Peru’s Sendero Luminoso. These hypotheses were tested using data from a survey of graduating secondary-school students in the Cuzco area. The students were asked to choose from among five solutions to their nation’s problems: “social revolution,” “more education,” “change of government,” “eliminating corruption,” and “other.” The analysis of these data shows the factors that determined the students’ preferences for revolutionary change over education and the viability of the various hypotheses in explaining these preferences.


Abstract: This study uses semi-structured interviews to examine the attitudes and values of Peruvian coca growers toward coca leaf and cocaine basic paste (CBP) consumption and its distribution. The subjects of the study were 186 coca growers from Peruvian jungle valleys who are involved in illegal commercialization of coca leaf and cocaine paste production. Data collected in 1994 reveal that growers consider coca leaf to be a most profitable product and a unique opportunity to improve their quality of life. Although growers acknowledge that a problem exists among local users, they do not assume any responsibility for CBP consumption and dissemination in rural areas. This leads to the conclusion that awareness of a CBP consumption problem is not enough for growers to stop drug production; they need consistent training in social values, as well as support in legal and economic alternatives. [Translations are provided in the International Abstracts Section of this issue.] The Center of Information and Education to Prevent Drug Use is a Peruvian non governmental organization focused on the field of drug abuse prevention. CEDRO has developed an integrative model of drug abuse prevention which includes peer-based community programs, family training and leaders involvement. CEDRO’s philosophy states that drug abuse is related to poverty, poor quality of life and lack of educational and laboral opportunities. Therefore, its actions are not only focused on the improvement of health and education but also on the promotion of employment in the context of democracy and human rights. CEDRO, as a non governmental organization is mainly supported by international funds (USAID, N.A.S-U.S.; Kellogg, the European Union, GTZ of Germany, ODA of the United Kingdom), as well as by other private and local sources.


Abstract: Reports that terrorism has made an impact on religious gatherings in Peru. Murder of church members who speak against armed conflict; Launching of the Sendero Luminoso of their ‘People’s War’ in 1980; Brutality of the Peruvian armed forces.


Abstract: “These collected essays explore important elements of Latin American cinema and its associated national film industries. These essays examine the impact of modernization on both Latin American screen images and the industry itself, focus on filmmakers who deal with issues of gender and sexuality and discuss the relationship between national identity and the Latin American film industry”--Provided by publisher.

Abstract: Examines the role of the truth and reconciliation commissions in healing the society, prosecution of those responsible for crimes, and prevention of further abuses. Findings unveiled by Peru's Truth and Reconciliation Commission in August 2003; Discussion of the Argentine experience in attaining partial justice; Role of the Chilean commission in revealing the pattern of repression and the deaths that occurred during Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet's rule; Investigation conducted by the Peruvian commission into the human rights abuses committed under democratically elected governments in the 1980s and 1990s.


Abstract: Focuses on Peru’s withdrawal from the jurisdiction of Inter-American court of Human Rights following adverse cases against the country. Violation of the American Convention of Human Rights in the case involving Baruch Ivcher Bronstein, a television station operator; Impeachment of Constitutional Tribunal justices.


Abstract: More than 21 truth commissions have been established since 1972. Countries such as Yugoslavia, South Africa, Guatemala, Peru, Bosnia, East Timor, and Sierra Leone have all announced the creation of truth commissions to investigate past wrongdoings. Several prestigious American universities are offering academic courses on the subject. Despite their popularity, however, almost everything about the truth commissions is the subject of intense debate. And much of the criticism has come from the mainstream human rights community. Truth commissions face two basic types of problems: those that are avoidable and those that are inherent. The first relate to how commissions are established, conducted, and followed up. To minimize this problem, new commissions need to learn from the experiences that are occurring. The second type involve the tremendous difficulty in achieving, or even understanding, reconciliation. The most appropriate response to this type of problem is to appreciate the commission for what it can do. Two examples of successful commissions are South Africa’s TRC and Guatemala’s CEH. However, justice is difficult to obtain because human rights abuses trials of any kind remain elusive, and achieving accountability extremely difficult. Too often, the choice faced today is not between truth commissions and trials, but between truth commissions and nothing. But airing the truth can be a powerful remedy.


Discusses the systemic failure of Peruvian and other Latin American democracies. Implies that democracy will continue to fail until democracy-supporting institutions are developed.


Discusses the economic, political and social costs of Peruvian Autocratic Neoliberalism.


Abstract: This article is a case study of a country whose President rules through the military, and where a radio station is a vital element in the struggle for human rights. The Institute for Legal Defence (IDEELE) is an organization that offers legal advice to the victims of human rights violations, and the families of those extra-judicially executed. IDEELE also publishes a human rights magazine and coordinates a network of radio programmes. It provides 'packages' to more than 60 different regional outlets, covering both international news
items and items of immediate concern. It also offers extensive training programmes to those working on human rights issues in the community media and to local officials of relevant organizations. Its two main radio series, 'You and Your Rights' and 'The Power to Choose' follow the U.N.'s Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the country's own constitution in promoting free and fair voting.


Abstract: This paper extends the conceptualisation and refines the operationalisation of gender inequality. The aim is to bridge theory -- on gender relations -- and measurement -- of the reality of gender for women and men -- by means of a set of social indicators of gender inequality. We first elaborate the concept of gender inequality and differentiate it from 'women's status'. Gender inequality is defined as the departure from parity in the representation of women and men in key dimensions of social life. Next, we operationalise the concept through a set of social indicators developed from statistics provided in the United Nations Women's Statistics and Indicators (WISTAT) database. The 21 indicators measure disparities in the distribution of women and men in socially valued positions in five dimensions -- physical well-being, public power, family formation, education and economic activity -- within two spheres: human rights and social relations. Finally, we apply the social indicators of gender inequality in a cross-national analysis of the disparities between women and men at different levels of national development. The findings reveal the dismal state of women's human rights across all levels of national income and the disadvantage women experience in the interconnection between social relations of production and reproduction in countries rich or poor. This more complex measure of gender inequality has the potential to inform policy and practices aimed at achieving gender equality.


A comparative analysis of Peru's Shining Path, Germany's Greens, and Poland's Solidarity. Discusses social movements as a force for change.