



Review: [untitled]

Author(s): Alan McPherson

Reviewed work(s):

Emperors in the Jungle: The Hidden History of the U.S. in Panama by John Lindsay-Poland

Source: *The Americas*, Vol. 60, No. 1 (Jul., 2003), pp. 133-134

Published by: Academy of American Franciscan History

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3654767>

Accessed: 06/03/2009 11:52

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efforts in the late 1960s and early 1970s seemingly offered peasants who were mobilized into regional associations the opportunity to gain land, but these associations ultimately subordinated local efforts to an increasingly strengthened state apparatus more responsive to regional economic and political power-brokers. Ironically, perhaps, successful popular organizations were co-opted by the state.

Together, these two parts constitute a masterful analysis of agrarian transformation at the local level. Striffler's use of interviews imparts a human face to a historical process that is too often depersonalized by global forces and grand theories. The generational dynamics that separated Tenguel workers in the 1950s and popular organizations in the 1970s are particularly well articulated. In his conclusion, Striffler reveals his ambitious project as one that aims to help bridge the divide between 1960s structuralism and "populist/postmodern" studies of agency rooted in subaltern theory. His articulation of changing worker agency vis-à-vis a strengthening state and a transforming UFCO is convincing. To fully bridge the divide, however, the agency of the UFCO, other international banana producers, and regional elites merit greater attention.

Juniata College
Huntingdon, Pennsylvania

DAVID SOWELL

Emperors in the Jungle: The Hidden History of the U.S. in Panama. By John Lindsay-Poland. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003. Pp. x, 265. Illustrations. Notes. Index. \$18.95 paper.

On 31 December 1999 the United States handed over the Panama Canal and ended what seemed to be a trouble-free transition. But Panamanians held bitter grievances, among which was the U.S. refusal to clean up depleted uranium and more than one hundred thousand pieces of unexploded ordnance left in the former Canal Zone. The clean-up issue, argues John Lindsay-Poland, was only the latest consequence of attitudes that made Panama "an instrument of grander U.S. aims" (p. 3).

In various doggedly researched and richly illustrated accounts of selected U.S. misadventures in Panama, Lindsay-Poland weaves together several intertwined themes. First is the pervasive racism of Americans, who designed and then segregated the Canal Zone to replicate U.S. color-line inequality. Second is the ecological rapaciousness of U.S. expansionists, who couched their desire for control in scientific rationalism. These two issues were long linked in U.S. planning. During the building of the Canal, for instance, diseases such as pneumonia and tuberculosis, common among West Indians, were largely ignored while the eradication of diseases that killed whites, such as malaria and yellow fever, became a high priority. As a result, according to one count, "coloreds" died at nearly three times the rate of whites (p. 33). This is not the first account of U.S. efforts to re-make Panama's racial and physical landscape. Michael Conniff and Stephen Frenkel have done work on those respective topics. Yet placing both at the center of the building of the Canal offers a counterpoint to the somewhat triumphal aura of David McCullough's *The Path*

Between the Seas (1978). A third theme of the book is the destructive result of the U.S. military's undemocratic ability to dictate U.S. policy in Panama. Almost every one of its branches—Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Marines, Army Corps of Engineers—conducted operations on the Isthmus, sometimes over the objections of the Congress, the State Department, or civilian administrators of the Canal.

Some episodes from the book are better known, such as the engineering of the 1903 revolt against Colombia, the 1960s plans to excavate a new sea-level canal using nuclear explosives, and the School of the Americas' training of the Latin American military. However, the author also uncovers truly "hidden" crimes, partly through exclusive interviews. It turns out that the U.S. military endangered not only the environment but also the people of Panama and its own personnel by secretly testing chemical weapons for nearly five decades starting in 1923. Early on, the idea was to protect the Canal by bombing the beaches and inland routes with chemicals. One self-described "guinea pig" in the 33rd Infantry Regiment recalled that he and others were exposed to tear gas and mustard gas and were rushed to the hospital after they developed breathing problems (he still had problems a half-century later, and his hospital records had been destroyed in the meantime) (p. 50). On San José Island, the military conducted more than 130 tests, throughout which the soldiers, many of them Puerto Ricans, were told little about what was being done to them. Many suffered severe burns and chronic illnesses. After 1946, Panama became a stand-in for all tropical environments, hosting Agent Orange tests even after the Pentagon's chemical program ended in 1968.

The theme of racism wears a bit thin by the final chapters. In the analysis on the U.S. invasion of 1989, the author argues that the Bush I administration captured strongman Manuel Noriega because it framed the war on drugs as a war against dark-skinned persons, but his evidence is merely suggestive. Overall, however, the book presents us with a compelling, saddening record of militaristic environmental racism. Because of Panama's size and its geographical location, it became the largely unknowing victim of perhaps the most sustained crime spree in the history of U.S. imperialism.

Howard University
Washington, D.C.

ALAN MCPHERSON

Building the Fourth Estate: Democratization and the Rise of a Free Press in Mexico. By Chappell H. Lawson. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002. Pp. xiv, 287. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$50.00 cloth; \$19.95 paper.

In recent years, political scientists have moved beyond the examination of elections and governing pacts to study many of the additional institutional requirements for democracy in the Third World such as a free press. Chappell H. Lawson argues convincingly that "media opening and democratization are . . . best conceived as interacting and mutually reinforcing processes" (p. 6). In the case of Mexico, Lawson finds that the opening of the media, both print and electronic, did not