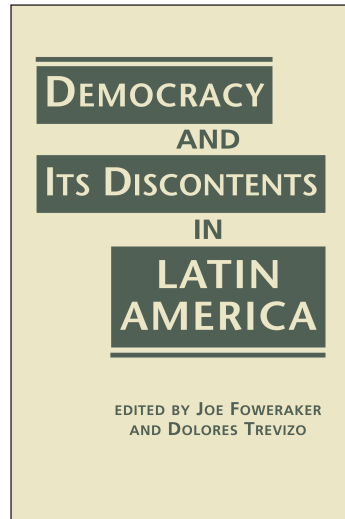


EXCERPTED FROM

# Democracy and Its Discontents in Latin America

edited by  
Joe Foweraker  
and Dolores Trevizo

Copyright © 2016  
ISBN: 978-1-62637-276-4 hc



LYNNE RIENNER PUBLISHERS

1800 30th Street, Suite 314  
Boulder, CO 80301 USA  
telephone 303.444.6684  
fax 303.444.0824

This excerpt was downloaded from the  
Lynne Rienner Publishers website  
[www.rienner.com](http://www.rienner.com)

# Contents

<i>List of Tables and Figures</i>	vii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
1 Democracy and Its Discontents in Latin America <i>Joe Foweraker</i>	1
<b>Part 1 State and Regime: Institutions, Policy, Accountability</b>	
2 The Characteristic Contradictions of Democracy <i>Joe Foweraker</i>	17
3 State Capacity and Democratic Quality <i>David Doyle</i>	33
4 Inequality and Democratic Representation <i>Melissa Ziegler Rogers</i>	51
5 Making the Military Accountable <i>David Pion-Berlin</i>	75
6 Liberal vs. Popular Models of Democracy <i>Gerardo L. Munck</i>	93
7 Radical Claims to Accountability <i>Javier Corrales</i>	115
<b>Part 2 Citizenship: Issues of Rights and Representation</b>	
8 Democracy and Human Rights <i>Todd Landman</i>	133

vi Contents

9	Quota Laws and Gender Equality <i>Jennifer M. Piscopo</i>	149
10	Women's Rights, Indigenous Rights, and Social Cohesion <i>Jane S. Jaquette</i>	171
11	Indigenous Peoples and Dilemmas of Electoral Participation <i>Neil Harvey</i>	187
12	The Changing Profile of Party Systems <i>Will Barndt</i>	205
13	A Democratic Paradox: More Governability, Less Trust <i>Roderic Ai Camp</i>	223
14	Counting the Costs of Political Repression <i>Dolores Trevizo</i>	241

**Part 3 Conclusion**

15	Lessons from the Democratic Record to Date <i>Dolores Trevizo</i>	261
----	--	-----

*Appendixes*

1	<i>Summary Statistics and Variable Descriptions in Latin American Sample</i>	272
2	<i>Personal Vote Rank in Latin American Sample</i>	274
3	<i>Change in Regional Inequality, 1990–2010</i>	274
4	<i>Regional Inequality Dynamics in Latin American Sample</i>	274

	<i>References</i>	275
	<i>The Contributors</i>	309
	<i>Index</i>	311
	<i>About the Book</i>	325

# Democracy and Its Discontents in Latin America

---

*Joe Foweraker*

**In a broad comparative view, Latin America is the great success** story of the third wave of democracy. All the countries of the region, with the exception of Cuba, have now enjoyed relatively stable democratic government for at least twenty-five years and, over that period, the rhythm of their political life has been set by regular schedules of competitive and reasonably free and fair elections. Yet this democratic revolution seems to have brought scant satisfaction, either to professional observers of Latin American politics—academics, survey specialists, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)—or, more importantly, to the increasingly mobilized peoples of the region. Indeed, the progress of democracy in Latin America has been closely accompanied by increasing discontent with the cumulative outcomes or record of its democratic governments. While the motives for this discontent may vary over time and across countries, it appears that there is a palpable dissonance between the democratic aspirations of the demos and its experience of democratic governance, a discontent with the content of democratic government itself.

This pervasive sense of discontent is distinct from the many and diverse political struggles of the 1990s and early 2000s that expressed a certain confidence in the capacity of mobilized civil society to improve the quality of democratic government, and still more so from the optimistic era of democratic transition that preceded them. Moreover, the discontent persists despite some notable achievements over the years in procedural democracy and in its policy outcomes—indicating that the earlier optimism was not entirely groundless. On the one hand, the vote has been extended, contested elections have continued, and the military has been removed from politics almost completely. On the other, poverty has been alleviated and even economic inequality reduced in some instances. But in large degree, these achievements have recently been outweighed by three major problems that together explain the pervasive and persistent discontent: first, executive overreach; second, corruption and lack of accountability; and, last but



nowhere least, citizen insecurity. Possibly only the first of these requires some elucidation here.

It is clear that incumbency confers an increasing advantage in electoral competition across the region, an advantage that can be damaging to democracy when combined with an extended or even indefinite mandate for the executive. In times past this problem was thought of as peculiar to sub-Saharan Africa, if not exclusively so, rather than Latin America—with the scandalous exception of Alberto Fujimori in Peru. But times change. In Argentina, the Kirchners first tried to finesse term limits by passing the presidency between them and then, following the death of her husband, Néstor Kirchner, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner tried unsuccessfully to extend her mandate against the ruling of the judiciary. In Bolivia, Evo Morales persuaded the Constitutional Court not to count his first partial term on the grounds that the rules had changed in the interim, and few are convinced that he willingly will step down at the end of his current (second but, in fact, third) term. In Colombia, Álvaro Uribe Vélez tried for a third term, but was blocked by the independence of the Supreme Court. In Ecuador, Rafael Correa has easily persuaded a compliant Constitutional Court to wave through the abolition of term limits to allow him to run for office again in 2017 when his current term expires. Although the opposition is mobilizing around a referendum to stop him, the final decision will rest with the equally compliant National Electoral Commission. In Nicaragua, the opposition was complicit in Daniel Ortega's power grab and the abolition of term limits in January 2014, just so long as its major figures could continue to pursue their business interests without interference. And notoriously, in Venezuela Hugo Chávez succeeded in extending the executive mandate indefinitely in 2009, a prerogative now enjoyed by his successor. All of this suggests that the continuity of the electoral cycle does not everywhere contribute to spreading democratic norms across the political system but, on the contrary, may lead to political polarization and a loss of system legitimacy. Indeed, the strength of the tendency has led to rather bizarre calls for democratic transitions to return government to a more procedurally constrained and openly competitive form of democracy.

The problems of endemic corruption and radical and widespread citizen insecurity tend to go hand in hand, largely because both of them derive in large part from a lack of accountability in the democratic regimes of the region, and especially in their criminal justice systems. The evidence in support of this proposition is now overwhelming, and it finds further and ample confirmation in the chapters assembled here, demonstrating beyond doubt that these problems are ubiquitous, however much they may vary in degree and scope across national boundaries. Naturally, attention tends to be drawn to the most recent or notorious cases, whether in Argentina, Brazil,

Mexico, Venezuela—or even Chile. But subliminal corruption and insecurity of the kind that is present throughout the subnational governments of Peru, for example, may be just as serious in their effects as high-profile national failings. One lesson to be drawn from this is that a Manichean view that demonizes some governments while extolling others makes little sense, in that all these governments suffer from similar symptoms and face analogous challenges. Thus, there seems to be little doubt about the lack of accountability, political polarization, widespread criminality, and citizen insecurity in Venezuela, but it must be recognized that the Mexican regime suffers from all of these in equal or greater measure while the degree and reach of political violence and insecurity were greater still in the Colombia of Uribe, albeit in circumstances of armed insurgency against the regime.

Accordingly, there is more than enough evidence of the failings of these democratic governments—both occasional and pathological—to provide good reason for the discontent, though it should be recognized that this picture may be overdrawn or distorted in some degree by the predominant academic preoccupation of recent years with the quality of democracy in Latin America. Since the premises of this body of research—and the universal measures that derive from them—are drawn either from a descriptive and ideal-typical version of the established democracies of the West (or less frequently from a normative model of a classically liberal democracy), they tend to reach largely unfavorable judgments on democratic governance in Latin America. Indeed, the judgmental tenor of the enterprise tends to focus first on the failings and only later, if at all, on the successes of these governments in meeting considerable challenges, both political and economic, despite the institutional and cultural constraints inherited from the past. More importantly the deployment of speciously objective criteria for judging the quality of democracy can justify the ignorance of these constraints—the exclusion of any sense of historical and cultural context—and, consequently, any consideration of the distinct nature of democracy in Latin America.

### **The Nature of Latin American Democracy**

Taken together, the chapters assembled here provide a balanced account of the democratic record to date that encompasses both failings and achievements, both the bad news and the good news. But the chapters aspire—each in its own way—to move beyond this descriptive tour d’horizon to analyze and explain the variations in the record by reference to the nature of democracy in Latin America. Unsurprisingly this notion of a distinctive nature is interpreted differently by our different authors, with consequences for their subsequent analysis, but these interpretations tend to fall into three distinct

approaches. The first approach adheres quite closely to the received notion of the quality of democracy and focuses on the breadth or fullness of the contents of democratic government and its effectiveness in delivering its policies and securing its goals; the second sees the nature of democracy in terms of the specific model of democracy adopted by different countries of the region and the political aspirations and practices that follow from it; the third understands the nature of democracy to be shaped by deep historical patterns of state formation and development. It is clear that these different approaches are not mutually exclusive and may intermingle in the analysis and argument of each chapter, but it is useful to look at them separately before bringing them together.

The core question that informs the first approach is, Just how much democracy are we getting? Although democracy now appears to be securely embedded as the default form of government in Latin America, recent developments in some countries of the region have led some scholars to doubt the fulfillment of the basic requirements for democracy that comprise the institutional machinery of electoral politics, a differentiated political party regime, and reasonably free and fair elections that can make a plausible claim to be able to change the composition of the government. These features represent the minimum measure of democracy imagined at the time of the democratic transitions but are now seen as under threat in some countries, notably Venezuela and Nicaragua, and—as emphasized above—in many more countries if an extended mandate, even an indefinite mandate for the executive, is seen as a significant retreat from the minimum measure. Beyond this minimum, the concern is with the breadth of the democratic remit, whether it promises social rights and basic welfare in addition to individual and minority rights and protections; and whether policy is concerted to address problems of poverty, inequality, and uneven educational opportunity. Last but possibly most pertinent is whether democratic government is delivering on its commitments, however narrowly or broadly defined, and here the outcomes are often counterintuitive—or at least contrary to what might reasonably have been predicted at the time of the transitions. While the reach and impact of social policy of different kinds have greatly improved overall in the past couple of decades, the regime of civil rights and protections has drastically eroded over the same period, with insecurity the dominant public issue nearly everywhere in the region.

The second approach is mainly concerned with what kind of democracy is emerging across the countries of the region and what kind should be preferred, for this is a question that is hotly debated by the intellectuals, politicians, and political publics of Latin America. In many instances, the question is stereotyped into a simple choice between two divergent models. On the one hand is a more or less traditional model of liberal and procedural

democracy, where political parties do their usual job of translating the preferences of an amorphous political public into policy platforms that eventually become government policy and programs after being subject to the discussion and deliberation enshrined in the legislative process. On the other is a more participatory and possibly less pluralist model that maintains electoral politics, but favors forms of more direct representation combined with a stronger and often more enduring executive with increased powers and greater legislative initiative and capacity. In the context of the so-called pink tide, which ushered in an era of speciously left-wing government in Latin America, these two models are often distinguished by a greater or lesser concern with poverty and inequality, an emphasis on either group and minority rights or individual rights, and the delivery of social welfare packages either to mobilized political constituencies or to individual families through Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs). In fact most countries of the region have maintained a fairly stable and centrist economic and social policy mix for many years now, combining fiscal discipline with moderately progressive goals of redistribution. The key difference is in the model of government itself, pluralist and subject to institutional checks and balances versus plebiscitary and mobilizing, with legitimacy derived either from democratic procedure or from charismatic appeal and popular acclaim.

For the third approach it is the historical context, both political and cultural, that is all important for the nature of democracy and, in particular, a patrimonial pattern of state formation—to use Max Weber’s language—where the state is shaped by oligarchic and eventually corporate interests in a way that blurs the divisions between things public and things private, so preventing the establishment of a legal-rational authority that can regulate these divisions and defend the republic, or *res publica*. As a consequence, the democratic regime can only ever be one part of the political system (not coterminous with it) and only one source of political power, and will always be constrained in its policy reach and capacity to tax by the structured inequality that derives from the direct insertion of oligarchic interests into the structure of state. There is no claim here that this circumstance is static or immune to political protest and struggle. Indeed, it is the emergence of civil societies and the mobilization of political publics that have underpinned the democratic revolution of our times. But there is no doubt that these variegated or combined and uneven political systems strongly influence the scope and *modus operandi* of current democratic regimes, not least the multiple combinations of formal and informal rules that are so often required to make democracy work and that, in the realm of high politics and especially executive-legislative relationships, tend to create trade-offs that privilege governability over the democratic principles of representation and accountability.

The analytical premise of this latter approach assumes an explicit distinction between the state on the one hand and the democratic regime on the other, thereby suggesting that the apparent failings of the democratic regime may—in some instances at least—be attributed to state incapacity or state constraint. This complicates the application of the accepted normative model of liberal democracy to the democratic governments of Latin America because core democratic values tend to resonate differently in the context of combined and uneven political systems, and often have different empirical references. Thus, autonomy is a fundamental principle of the normative model, expressing the belief that each individual citizen must be presumed to be the best judge of their own best interests. But autonomy in the Latin American context tends to be either a negative reference to the collective autonomy of the military or the police (often vested in the democratic constitution) and the political license that flows from it or a more positive reference to the collective autonomy implicit in minority rights and prerogatives, and especially in recent decades to the autonomy of indigenous communities. Similarly, accountability (and representation to the degree that it is a *sine qua non* of accountability) sits at the center of the normative model because the primary purpose of democracy is to make government accountable to the people. But in Latin America, it is the lack of accountability that is central because the oligarchic and corporate interests inserted into the carapace of the state resist accountability wherever possible while their presence at the apex of clientelist networks of different kinds tends to vitiate the working of accountability within the democratic regime. One notorious if clichéd reflection of this systemic failing is the lack of any word for “accountability” in the Spanish or Portuguese vernacular.

These three approaches to the nature of democracy have been treated separately for the purposes of exposition but, in the chapters that follow, they tend to be mixed and matched or layered according to the topic and the objectives of the inquiry. This has the virtue of bringing together and, in some instances, connecting things that are often kept apart such as the normal politics of procedural democracy and populist politics, or the low politics of social mobilization and the high politics of legislative coalition building. It also has the virtue of not just recognizing but often highlighting the malleable and dynamic qualities of democracy in Latin America, with democratic institutions, practices, and values all evolving in sometimes different directions (in addition to sometimes advancing, sometimes retreating), at different rhythms, and differently too at national and regional levels. As a result of this dynamism, there is considerable variation in the institutional composition and quality profile of these democratic governments that creates a rich resource for comparative inquiry across both time and space.

The chapters in this book deploy these analytical perspectives in differ-

ent ways and degrees, and use their own particular methods to explore the nature and current condition of democracy in the region. But they are all consistently comparative in approach and they all tend to address the same broad set of core issues—in response to our editorial brief!—and, hence, share a common thematic content (as I illustrate below). These common themes allow the chapters to be divided into two broad descriptive categories that comprise, first, a section on state and regime that encompasses institutions, policymaking, and accountability; and, second, a section on citizenship that focuses on rights and representation. Inevitably, there is some degree of overlapping if only because the chapters tend to bring together things usually kept apart on the understanding that analytical insights are often achieved at the orthogonal and tangential intersections of the political system overall. By way of illustration, much of the pressure for change (as well as resistance to it) in these political systems and in the composition of their democratic governments has come from a rising tide of social mobilization and protest across the region over the past two decades, a process of mobilization that has expressed not only economic and social demands but, increasingly, legal and constitutional struggles for increased representation and accountability. It may appear remarkable, therefore, that no chapter is exclusively dedicated to the topic of social mobilization, but only because many of the chapters do address the topic as an important element of their overall analysis.

## **The Thematic Content of the Chapters**

### *State and Regime*

The first section of the book opens with my own chapter, where I state the reasons for my belief that the quality of democracy in Latin America cannot be properly understood without a clear sense of the nature of this democracy. In my view, what determines the quality of democracy in Latin America above all else is accountability—or the lack thereof. The deficit of accountability so often observed in the governments of the region can be best explained not merely by the mode of democratic transition, but especially by the process of state formation in Latin America as well as by the structured inequality that expresses the consistent but variable influence of oligarchic and corporate interests in this process and their tendency to resist accountability wherever possible.

Yet the political systems formed in this way are not fixed or static, but rather beset by a rising tide of social mobilization that pushes for change and has some degree of success in increasing access to the political arena of institutional representation, and even in changing democratic institutions—

as the democratic governments of the region seek to respond to an autochthonous perception of a crisis of representation. But unsurprisingly, attempts at reform are often captured in the legislatures by the same oligarchic and corporate interests, thus leaving the root problems of representation and accountability unresolved. In some cases, this may lead to populist insurgencies that inveigh not only against the parties in government, but against the *partidocracia* in general. Whether this happens or not, it is noteworthy that political crises in contemporary Latin America do tend to exhibit a systemic dimension with extraordinary, but often constitutional, measures required for their resolution. Consequently, both party and popular leaders often come to see the constitution as the key to a more democratic politics and defend their reform projects in these terms, especially insofar as they concern rights and representation.

In Chapter 3, David Doyle takes up and explores the question of accountability by looking at its variation across the region as viewed through the prism of public policy making and asking why some governments are effective agents of the citizenry, providing effective public policy through channels of accountability and representation, while others remain predatory, producing policy that is ineffective and sometimes harmful. He argues that the causal link between citizens' preferences and aspirations on the one hand and effective policy on the other is state capacity, as reflected in a consistent and uniform defense of the rule of law, the provision of public goods, and an ability to gather enough tax revenue to fund these attributes. Consistent with my own arguments above, the variation in state capacity is then explained by different trajectories of state formation and the subsequent stickiness of state institutions; however, Doyle also suggests that the colonization of state institutions by oligarchic and corporate powers is expressed in Latin America today through political parties that are personalist, clientelist, and largely unconcerned with policy effectiveness.

In Chapter 4, Melissa Ziegler Rogers looks at the same issues through the lens of modern political economy, beginning with the question of inequality—which is germane to both Doyle's argument and my own. In a groundbreaking analysis, she divides this question into interpersonal and interregional inequality before looking at the effect of both on democratic institutions. Her first important finding is that interpersonal inequality drives government spending up (presumably to address the social consequences) while interregional inequality drives it down. This represents a difficult disconnect between regional demand for distribution and its eventual supply. Rogers then goes on to explore the impact on democratic institutions, especially electoral systems, some of which are more attuned to interpersonal inequality (strong centralized party systems with broad social constituencies) while others are more regional in orientation, with more par-



ticularistic connections between voters and local representatives. The latter systems reflect the presence of strong regional oligarchies with regionally bound ambitions and preferences—an analysis that connects directly to Doyle’s investigation of the variation in state capacity and policy effectiveness. Add legislative malapportionment and what Rogers calls “enclaves of subnational autocracy” and distributional policies are rendered ineffective because regional autocrats capture a large share of any interregional transfers that then fail to reduce overall inequality. As suggested, her argument dovetails at several points with that of Doyle, and reminds us that the quality of subnational democracy varies far more across Latin America than that of national democracy.

In all of these chapters, there is an implicit recognition of the importance of institutional reform for effective policymaking and accountable government, and of the political and cultural constraints that make reform so difficult. In Chapter 5, David Pion-Berlin addresses these concerns directly by shifting the focus from vertical to horizontal accountability and seeking to answer the central question of how to make the military more accountable to freely elected democratic governments. The question is central because—given the long history of military intervention in the region and the recent experiences of the four countries under scrutiny, namely, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay—the survival, development and quality of democratic government depend on it. For Pion-Berlin, the answer to the question lies in institutional development and design and, specifically, in the reform of the Defense Ministries in these countries and beyond, with the Ministry of Defense being the “key link in the chain” of accountability. He demonstrates notable improvements in design in all four cases and this is good news for democracy, but Brazil and Uruguay tend to lag behind Chile and Argentina because of the delegation of vital tasks to military agencies and personnel, so attenuating and clouding accountability. In his account, there is no single overarching explanation for the variation across cases that rather depends on country-specific institutional histories and features.

In Chapter 6, Gerardo L. Munck pursues a similar line of inquiry to those of Doyle and Rogers insofar as he addresses the variation in the form and degree of representation, accountability, and the effectiveness of public policy—but now as refracted through distinct models of democracy. For Munck, the democratic transitions of the 1980s and 1990s did not settle the question of democracy but, on the contrary, made it yet more salient. The concern for a minimal standard of democracy that had motivated the transitions remained but, in addition, a new concern with the development and deepening of this democracy arose—and transformed democratic politics. In particular, the divide between those who supported and those who opposed neoliberalism—the key axis of ideological conflict—spurred the



emergence of different and in some respects opposed models of democracy, with implications for how democracy developed and, in extremis, whether it would endure. After first describing the main models to emerge, Munck goes on to examine the record of four political and ideological actors—right, center-right, center-left, and left, both in government and out—to assess their impact on the basic rules of electoral democracy as well as on the core institutions of democratic government. Coinciding with the analysis of both Doyle and Rogers, he argues that the main points of contention between the models tend to turn on the questions of inequality and, by extension, of what to do about the oligarchy; he returns to my own core concerns when pointing up the implications for constitutional reform and reformation and the defense of accountability. Munck's detailed and differentiated account leads him to conclude that the central issue is not the presence of opposing models so much as the way in which some political actors—regardless of the model of democracy they favor—accentuate a top-down form of governing that suppresses the roles of parliament and the extraparlimentary opposition. This raises the contentious question of whether the democratic governments of Latin America have in fact governed democratically; he refers, in particular, to those cases of left government where efforts to build an alternative to liberal democracy have gone furthest because this is where the conflicts between government and opposition are most bitter.

In Chapter 7, Javier Corrales picks up the inquiry at this point by examining the experimental alternatives to liberal democracy in Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Nicaragua—in particular, their radical projects of participatory democracy. These are understood as a response to the popular rejection of the *partidocracia* and the public perception of a crisis of representation, whereby democratic governments are made unaccountable to the demos. Early in the life of these projects constitutional reformation extends rights to previously excluded groups, so promising stronger vertical accountability, but at the same time vitiating horizontal accountability by constraining institutional checks and balances and hobbling those autonomous actors in civil society with some capacity for contestation. The growing strength and invulnerability of the executive leads to increased state intervention and regulation, a more autocratic style of policymaking, and a retreat to social conservatism. In consequence, where some measure of participatory democracy subsists, it tends to be partisan and polarizing (seeking not to include, but exclude opposition elements of all kinds) while representation overall is further curtailed—with accountability more apparent than real. In an interesting tangential argument, Corrales notes the increasing dependence of these speciously national regimes on international finance capital with their governments obliged to put the interests of foreign

capital above those of domestic social actors through reconstructing conservative ruling coalitions comprising foreign capital, domestic banks, large landowners, mining corporations, and the military. In this way, he assimilates these specific cases to the more general analyses that precede his chapter; paradoxically, the effort to reconstitute the nation in the name of the people eventually invites the return of an even less accountable oligarchy.

### *Citizenship*

In Chapter 8, Todd Landman sets the scene for the section on rights and representation by putting together the big picture of human rights across the region over the entire period of democratization from the 1980s to the present. Democracy is one story. The other begins with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, which together constitute the second most developed regional system for the promotion and protection of human rights in the world. Landman first sets out to compare measures of both democracy and human rights, carefully distinguishing the institutional from the rights dimensions of democracy, to discover that there is a strong association between the two in Latin America, if a far from perfect fit. He then explores a series of explanations for the patterns emerging from his statistical description and analysis, emphasizing political and contingent influences over structural explanations deriving from trajectories of socioeconomic development. Clearly, there remain obvious and often depressing gaps between rights in principle and rights in practice, disparities between legal protections and the lived experience of the citizenry, and a long way to go politically before most countries approach anything like a secure rights regime. But there are also significant improvements in the record over recent decades and greater availability of legal redress for public wrongs. In sum, despite the pessimism of the intelligence required for any informed reading of human rights, Landman concurs with the conclusion to my own chapter in choosing to emphasize the optimism of the will that drives the continuing political struggle to make rights a democratic reality in Latin America.

The chapters that follow all flesh out the bones of the big picture in different ways, beginning with Jennifer M. Piscopo's investigation in Chapter 9 of the state's role in promoting quota and more recently parity laws for women's representation in national legislatures. Impressive progress in this direction has been made almost everywhere, the most glaring exceptions being Venezuela and Guatemala; and Piscopo makes effective use of the analytical distinction between negative protections from discrimination and positive rights enshrined in law through constitutional amendment to counter the skeptical view that this is all just lip service, *para inglês ver*—a view

that is anyway belied in large degree by the evidence of quota diffusion. In this regard, the state ties its own hands (the point of all constitution making in some degree) and commits governments to a proactive enforcement of legal provisions—which simultaneously provide pathways to legal redress. For this reason, the proportion of female legislators in Latin America rose by 15 percent between 1990 and 2015; this successful push for greater gender balance in political decisionmaking clearly improves the quality of Latin American democracy and stands as an unalloyed good news story. In one instance, Piscopo looks forward to Jane S. Jaquette's discussion of complementarity versus equality (see below) when noting that in Mexico the push for quotas and eventually parity supersedes the restrictive and often oppressive practices implicit in *usos y costumbres*.

In Chapter 10, Jaquette poses the difficult question of whether a plural-national democracy that encompasses local autonomy for indigenous communities can address a crisis of representation while protecting human rights and fostering social cohesion. Her answer focuses on the conflict between indigenous identity politics and women's claims to equal rights and the end of gender discrimination. The indigenous view contends that gender complementarity protects and values women as women while Western notions of equality violate important cultural norms, and that outside interference, whether by the state or NGOs, has created a problem that was never part of native culture. Most feminists retort that the blatant discrimination and violence against women within indigenous communities leave them marginalized and vulnerable, and conflict with core liberal values of individual rights and protections. These positions appear hard to reconcile and any solution hard to come by, especially if indigeneity is understood as a moral and holistic stance that enshrines the *sui generis* nature of the community against the feminist and liberal projection of universal values. Jaquette sees real autonomy as a bad outcome for indigenous women while simply waiting for cultural change to occur through enhanced communication and mobility offers no affirmation of liberal values. But if gender oppression can achieve equal salience with those of class and race, then perhaps it may be alleviated in some degree with a more effective and inclusive rule of law.

In Chapter 11, Neil Harvey adopts a very different perspective on indigenous communities and peoples by beginning with the novel indigenous mobilization of the 1980s and 1990s. Although the focus here is usually on the emergence and impact of new ethnic parties and organizations, Harvey sets out to redress the balance by examining the internal practices that sustain or erode them. He understands the initial electoral mobilization as a response both to neoliberalism broadly writ and to the political manipulation of the traditional parties while the variable success of indigenous par-

ties in achieving constitutional reform depended—inter alia—on a willingness to broaden their political agenda and engage in political coalitions beyond their indigenous heartland. A primary dilemma of electoral participation—even if successful in winning reform—is the potential loss of autonomy and corporate protections, yet there was no guarantee that refusing participation would offer any better prospect. In this regard, the Zapatista insistence on autonomy was—at least in some degree—a frustrated response to the lack of constitutional reform, but Harvey’s examination of the internal organization and governance of the Zapatistas’ liberated areas shows impressive democratic advances that in his view offer important lessons for democratic governance more generally. For example—recalling the conflicts central to Jaquette’s chapter—Harvey invokes the Zapatistas’ concerted efforts to resolve gender disparity and discrimination so as to counter perceptions that women’s rights and indigenous cultures are incompatible. But possibly the lesson of his story is that the compatibility is a consequence of the Zapatistas’ transformative project—a combination of Jaquette’s cultural change and affirmation of liberal values.

Many of these chapters refer to the changing nature of party systems in Latin America (Doyle, Chapter 3; Rogers, Chapter 4; Munck, Chapter 6; Corrales, Chapter 7), but in Chapter 12 Will Barndt addresses the issue directly by switching the analytical focus to the question of party building; whereas Harvey is concerned with building indigenous parties through social mobilization from below, Barndt looks at how corporate interests build them from above. The majority of parties across the region have converged on an electoralist or campaign-oriented model with campaigns their predominant *raison d’être* but, since campaigns are expensive and traditional resources scarce and dwindling, the process of party building is increasingly driven by the need to maximize private sources of financial support. This has led to a proliferation of classic conservative parties with broad core constituencies in the business sector but, in some instances, individual business leaders or their conglomerates have built their own parties that draw directly on the assets and infrastructure of the business, so spawning the emergence of what Barndt calls “corporation-based parties.” For Barndt, the rise of this electoral conservatism has a range of potentially negative consequences as policy choices are narrowed and nonprivatized parties are forced to seek shadowy and possibly corrupt sources of funding, so destabilizing and delegitimizing the system overall. In this way, electoral conservatism may precipitate a more populist politics—as Corrales would agree—as party systems are increasingly shaped by a reversion to forms of competitive oligarchy; and Barndt’s self-conscious use of this phrase from Robert A. Dahl’s *Polyarchy* connects his chapter directly to the dominant themes of the first section of the book.

The ultimate two chapters of this section are both Mexico centered—though still maintaining a fully comparative perspective—and concerned with the question of legitimacy, one of the more slippery concepts in the study of politics. Roderic Ai Camp's point of departure in Chapter 13 is the ambitious reform agenda of the current Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) administration in Mexico and, more important for his purposes, the pragmatic strategy that has sought to garner broad political party and legislative support for this agenda. This unprecedented degree of cooperation among the elite actors of Mexico's high politics has the potential to deliver a far-reaching package of political reforms that could transform Mexico's economy and society. But the endemic violence within Mexican society and the pervasive corruption of its legal and political systems may yet place the effects of the reform in check as well as continuing to erode the quality of Mexican democracy. In this view, the greater degree of trust among the country's political party elites that leads to greater governability sits in stark contrast to a marked deterioration of trust in the core institutions of democratic government and in their capacity to solve the public's most pressing problems. Support for democracy in Mexico is now at an all-time low. So the paradox is the declining legitimacy of the system even as it begins to deliver what Doyle might call "effective public policy." This is an important finding for our understanding of democratic quality in general, for it demonstrates that the aspects or dimensions or values that comprise democratic quality do not necessarily move in the same direction to create a uniform improvement or deterioration in quality but, on the contrary, some may improve while others deteriorate, so changing the quality profile or mix.

In Chapter 14, Dolores Trevizo begins to unpack this paradox by developing an original approach to the question of legitimacy that focuses in the first instance on one of Mexico's most trusted institutions, its armed forces. Her rigorous comparative analysis demonstrates that there is significant variation in that trust across space and over time. Furthermore, comparisons of two time periods (the first following the dirty war of the 1970s and the second following the beginning of the war against the drug cartels in 2006) across different states of the federation reveal how past experiences of military abuses serve to construct a collective memory that continues to impair the legitimacy of the system in the present. It is also true that current and recent rights violations tend to reduce the previously high levels of trust in the armed forces, but the legacy of the past remains strong. At the same time—paradoxically once again—there are continuing calls for repressive action to restore law and order, but the benefits of such action are a lot less apparent to those suffering the violations or close enough to witness them. These effects are specific in the sense that the public is clearly capable of

distinguishing poor system performance owing to a lack of resources from institutional incompetence and abuse that degrade the quality of citizenship. The consequences include significant legitimacy deficits at the local level and the emergence of fragmented loyalties that leach legitimacy from the system overall.

In conclusion, it may be helpful to recall that the thematic content of the chapters in this book derives first and foremost from their empirical focus on democracy and its discontents. Thus, while all the chapters certainly address the nature and current condition of the democracies of Latin America, their primary concern—clearly manifest in the chapters by Camp and Trevizo—is with the lived experience of the citizens of these democracies as measured by the fulfillment of their aspirations as well as by their wish to be rid of tangible evils. Hence, the chapters in the first section on state and regime seek to assess the degree to which the inner workings of government and, in particular, the process and outcomes of policymaking succeed in attaining the primary goal of democracy, which is to make government accountable to the people. Then, the chapters in the second section on citizenship examine the practical progress of the rights enjoyed by the citizens in principle; the degree to which their views and preferences are effectively represented within the political system overall; and, last but not least, the consequent impact of all this on the political legitimacy of the region's democratic governments.

It was Dankwart Rustow who referred to “the wish to be rid of tangible evils” as the main motor of the “prolonged and inconclusive political struggles” that nearly always pave the way for democratic transitions (1970: 352). In his seminal essay, Rustow argued that the achievement of democracy did not depend on “functional requisites” so much as on strategic agency, a proper sense of the autonomy of politics, and purposive action over at least one generation and often more (361). These insights were largely vindicated by the ensuing third wave of democratization, yet today the lessons of the third wave make it quite clear that the moment of transition is not the end but only the beginning of the process of democratization, not least because transitions cannot provide complete or enduring solutions to tangible evils. Hence, insofar as the governments of Latin America remain unaccountable, the progress of rights partial and imperfect, the views of the citizens undervalued or ignored, and democratic legitimacy diminished by corruption, insecurity, and poverty, democracy will continue to be assailed by its discontents. One generation on from the third wave, the prolonged and inconclusive struggles continue—and will continue into the foreseeable future.