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Nations of Emigrants: Shifting Boundaries of Citizenship in El Salvador and the United States by Susan Bibler Coutin

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class politics. Yet owing to the wealth of information it provides and its thought-provoking claims, the book is recommended to all academic and other observers of contemporary Venezuela, and of Latin America in general.

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Nations of Emigrants: Shifting Boundaries of Citizenship in El Salvador and the United States by Susan Bibler Coutin. *Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 2007. 263 pp. Cloth, \$59.95; paper, \$19.95.*

Susan Bibler Coutin has done an excellent job of capturing what it means to be Salvadoran, both in El Salvador and in the United States as well as transnationally. Having grown up Salvadoran in the United States, this book resonated with my personal life experiences; chronicling many of the challenges that my community, friends, family, and I personally have had to face and continue to confront. Throughout the book, the author weaves together different strands of Salvadoran reality in a way that covers vast dimensions of Salvadorans' lived experiences. While she does this through the lens of emigrants' lives and struggles, she does so in a way that connects the Salvadoran experience to issues of relevance to scholars of U.S. foreign policy, comparative politics (revolution and civil war), Latino politics (political incorporation and political engagement), and contentious politics (solidarity and sanctuary movements).

The book does not follow a conventional narrative format, and the individual chapters can stand alone. One could easily read any chapter without having to read the previous ones and not miss a beat. However, an added quality of the book is that when read in order, the chapters come together to form a multifaceted whole, which captures how supposedly disparate phenomena related to the emigrant experience are in fact interconnected. This is probably one of the book's greatest strengths, because while as a whole, it is probably more appropriate for advanced undergraduates or graduate students, individual chapters could be very useful for introductory courses. While all the chapters are superb, I summarize three that stand out.

Nations of Emigrants begins with a powerful chapter on Salvadorans who have been deported from the United States. It is filled with examples from everyday experiences of deportees and Salvadorans residing in the United States, both of whom challenge theoretical notions of citizenship in legal, spatial, cultural, and political ways. The chapter vividly conveys the anxiety, confusion, and despair felt by those who have never known what it means to be Salvadoran except in the United States, and who, subsequent to their deportation, struggle to adapt to their new society and the identity shift it requires.

Chapter 2, entitled "La Ley NACARA" (Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act), documents the origins and impact of this law on the Salvadoran community. However, as an international relations scholar,

what I found most valuable was its empirical illustration of the “second image reversed”: how domestic policy is sometimes subordinated to the needs of foreign policy. Throughout the 1980s, it was well documented that human rights violations were much more severe under the right-wing Salvadoran and Guatemalan governments than under the leftist Nicaraguan Sandinistas. Yet Nicaraguans were given preferential treatment for entering the United States, while Salvadorans and Guatemalans faced a much more difficult time receiving asylum; to do otherwise would have been tacit acknowledgement that U.S. foreign policy supported human rights-violating regimes. Coutin details how the NACARA law further enshrined this double standard, but at the same time, because of its preferential treatment of Nicaraguans, later served as the basis for the legal arguments that other Central Americans used to fight for their own legalization.

Chapter 3 contrasts the way in which the Salvadoran government sees the Salvadoran diaspora in the United States today—as a valuable resource—versus how it was perceived during the civil war (1980–1992). It notes how Salvadoran immigrants fleeing the war settled in the United States and tried to deal with the issues affecting them by forming civil society organizations that opposed U.S. policy toward El Salvador, denounced state-sponsored human rights violations, provided support for other refugees, and tried to gain legal status for the community. During this time, the Salvadoran government perceived these organizations as guerrilla sympathizers, and the organizations viewed the government as the primary cause of their misery. Today, the government has a working relationship with many of these organizations. Coutin masterfully draws on her knowledge from previous research in the community to bring together a powerful account of this evolution.

In sum, Susan Bibler Coutin has written a brilliant ethnographic study rich with Salvadorans’ personal accounts of their political reality and in their own voices. But the book is also valuable for the insights it offers for the study of other emigrant communities with significant undocumented populations.

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Over a Barrel: The Costs of U.S. Foreign Oil Dependence by John Duffield. Palo Alto, CA, Stanford University Press, 2007. 312 pp. \$27.95.

Now here is a well-timed book! And a very rewarding one. John Duffield’s analysis of American dependence on foreign oil arrives amidst steep global oil prices and staggering American oil imports, conditions likely to persist and to provoke rising controversy.

The author concisely covers the fundamental aspects of the world oil situation, and how cheap oil long fostered American, Western, and others’ economic