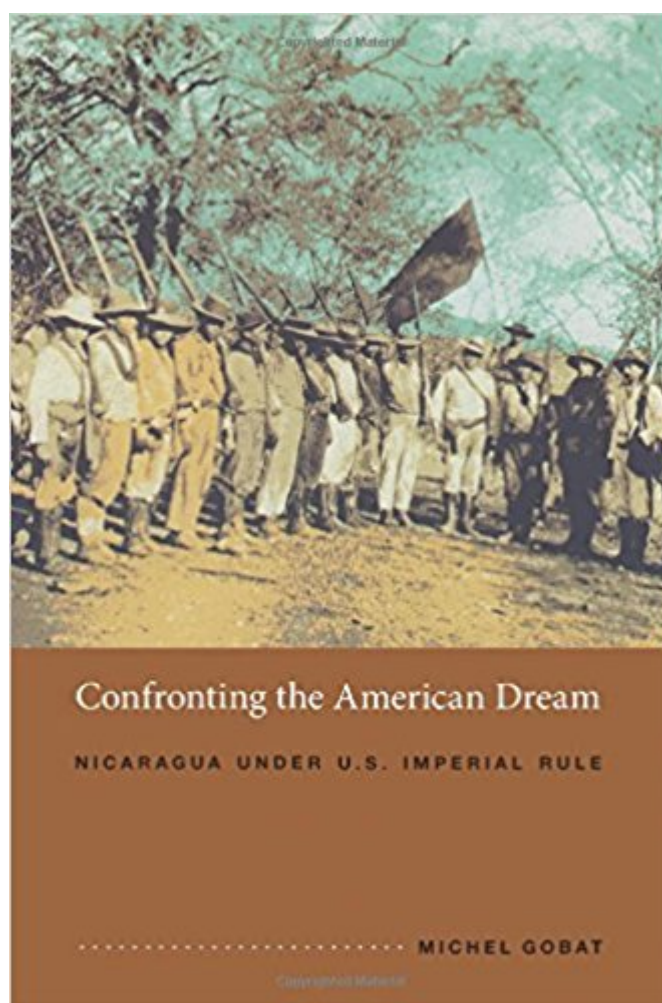


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Confronting The American Dream: Nicaragua Under U.S. Imperial Rule (American Encounters/Global Interactions)



Synopsis

Michel Gobat deftly interweaves political, economic, cultural, and diplomatic history to analyze the reactions of Nicaraguans to U.S. intervention in their country from the heyday of Manifest Destiny in the mid-nineteenth century through the U.S. occupation of 1912–1933. Drawing on extensive research in Nicaraguan and U.S. archives, Gobat accounts for two seeming paradoxes that have long eluded historians of Latin America: that Nicaraguans so strongly embraced U.S. political, economic, and cultural forms to defend their own nationality against U.S. imposition and that the country's wealthiest and most Americanized elites were transformed from leading supporters of U.S. imperial rule into some of its greatest opponents. Gobat focuses primarily on the reactions of the elites to Americanization, because the power and identity of these Nicaraguans were the most significantly affected by U.S. imperial rule. He describes their adoption of aspects of "the American way of life" in the mid-nineteenth century as strategic rather than wholesale. Chronicling the U.S. occupation of 1912–1933, he argues that the anti-American turn of Nicaragua's most Americanized oligarchs stemmed largely from the efforts of U.S. bankers, marines, and missionaries to spread their own version of the American dream. In part, the oligarchs' reversal reflected their anguish over the 1920s rise of Protestantism, the "modern woman," and other "vices of modernity" emanating from the United States. But it also responded to the unintended ways that U.S. modernization efforts enabled peasants to weaken landlord power. Gobat demonstrates that the U.S. occupation so profoundly affected Nicaragua that it helped engender the Sandino Rebellion of 1927–1933, the Somoza dictatorship of 1936–1979, and the Sandinista Revolution of 1979–1990.

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Customer Reviews

"Extraordinarily engaging, *Confronting the American Dream* is far and away the best work ever written on the convoluted path of elite/Conservative disenchantment with the U. S. imperial project in Nicaragua. Its relevance to broader historical and contemporary phenomena throughout Latin America and well beyond is really quite remarkable." -- Lowell Gudmundson, coauthor of *Central America, 1821-1871: Liberalism before Liberal Reform* "This is a beautifully argued and researched book -- one of the most important and revealing case studies we have in U.S.-Latin American relations. But it goes far beyond that. Without ever significantly moving past the 1930s, Michel Gobat has provided an indictment of the early-twenty-first-century embrace of "American empire," and, in a model of scholarship, provided stunning insights into the ironies and tragedies of the misuse of U.S. power." -- Walter LaFeber, author of *America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-2002*

"Extraordinarily engaging, *Confronting the American Dream* is far and away the best work ever written on the convoluted path of elite/Conservative disenchantment with the U. S. imperial project in Nicaragua. Its relevance to broader historical and contemporary phenomena throughout Latin America and well beyond is really quite remarkable." -- Lowell Gudmundson, coauthor of *Central America, 1821-1871: Liberalism before Liberal Reform*

I am a Nicaraguan and this book is extremely accurate. It is a must to anyone studying the turbulent, violent, fair and unfair relationships between the United States of America and Nicaragua in particular and Latin America in general. Very well documented and supported in facts and not the myths of the leftists intellectuals very prone to US bashing. It describes us as we were, as we are and as we will be. Explain lots of historical and transcendental happenings in a very clear and concise manner. It worth every dollar that you pay for it. Highly recommended.

Great book. Very well researched. My great great grandmother told my father about her memories

of that time frame between 1912 and 1933 when the US was heavily involved in Nicaragua. Nice to read up on the history through a very well written book. Gave it to my father as a gift after I read it. He loved it as well.

This book was essential in helping me write my BA thesis. It was informative, easy to read, and well-organized. It was recommended to me by one of my Spanish professors at the University of Chicago and also assigned as reading in a history class at UChicago, so it's respected by top scholars.

Extremely informative. Great piece of research. A must for Nicaraguan History, Sociology and Literature.

Excellent History

If you REALLY want to know about the USA involvement in Nicaragua read this book. One comes away with a clear picture of the years 1912 through 1933 in Nicaragua. To be even better the book could have explored the position of the middle and worker class but information is scarce. All in all one of the best books written on this era in Central America

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