

S'avouant d'emblée une contribution d'un niveau d'abstraction élevé, *Les frontières du politique en Amérique latine* tente de répondre à la question : «Qu'est-ce que le/la politique»? C'est une question d'une grande pertinence aujourd'hui. Cependant, en adoptant un angle d'approche qui le lie un peu trop à un cadre conceptuel déterminé, ce recueil d'une vingtaine d'articles perd, à plus d'une occasion, son potentiel de conviction quant à la compréhension des transformations elles-mêmes du mouvement politique.

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Dancing Around the Elephant: Creating a Prosperous Canada in an Era of American Dominance, 1957–1973

Bruce Muirhead

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Canadian feelings of anti-Americanism have a long history. Some have suggested that Canada was born more out of a sense of wanting to protect itself from American invaders than with a sense of what it was. The view that Canada is the lesser state is seen in Pierre Trudeau's comment to the Washington Press Gallery in 1969: "Living next to you, is like sleeping with an elephant; no matter how friendly and even-tempered is the beast, one is affected by every twitch and grunt." The elephant-mouse metaphor has been one of the best ones to describe the relationship between the two nations and is often used by left-leaning Canadian nationalists to illustrate how much weaker Canada is in the partnership.

Bruce Muirhead uses this metaphor in his book, *Dancing Around the Elephant*. As the title suggests, Muirhead's thesis does not support Canada's inferior position. To the contrary, in the several case studies he provides, the evidence suggests that Canada was able to promote its interests in its negotiations with the United States. Canada's ability to push forward its agenda on wheat, oil and other commodities illustrated its power in holding the Americans at bay. The best example of Canada's skill to get the better of the Americans can be seen in the Auto Pact, which Muirhead argues became the cornerstone of Ontario's economy.

The book is meticulously researched and provides a very detailed, yet readable account of the political, economic and interpersonal relations between the two countries and their leaders. One such illustration is the revelation of how much relations can change between the two countries depending on who is at the seat of power. For example, President Kennedy was personally interested in Can-Am relations. Upon his sudden death, the Pearson government was disconcerted with the lack of interest that President Johnson had in the Canada file, especially in comparison to Kennedy. Paul Martin, Sr., observed at the time that Johnson "did not seem to like to discuss problems at length or in great detail; ... he appeared to be paying little attention to the responsibility of government and matters of state" (77).

While not explicitly stated by Muirhead, this book can be divided into two sections. The first three chapters provide a chronology of the relations between the two countries beginning with the Diefenbaker years in chapter one. Muirhead at once refutes the popular wisdom that the poor relations between Diefenbaker and Kennedy negatively affected US-Canada trade relations. While he acknowledges the animosity between the two leaders, he also shows that this interpersonal dispute did not change trade patterns. In chapter two Muirhead demonstrates that, despite the White House's enthusiasm for Pearson and the cordial relations between Kennedy and the Canadian prime minister, the Americans were livid when the Gordon budget "levied a 30 per cent take-over tax on sales of shares by Canadian residents to non-residents,

and to companies controlled by non-residents in Canadian companies listed on Canadian stock exchanges.” This was interpreted by the White House as an “egregiously anti-American piece of legislation” (55). Yet the result was that Americans did not retaliate by limiting Canadian access to capital.

The focus of chapter three is the Trudeau years. Ironically, American policy makers heralded Trudeau as a refreshing antidote to the “failures” of the Diefenbaker-Pearson years (93). Nonetheless, during the Trudeau/Nixon years we saw the relations between the two countries deteriorate, and Muirhead provides evidence of American dominance over Canada. While it has been well documented that Nixon and Trudeau did not have the rapport of previous heads of government, Muirhead does not link this interpersonal division as a cause for the policy division. Indeed, he takes great pains to provide the context of the economic conditions that seemed influence the Americans far more than personality.

In the second half of the book three case studies are provided, chapter four is on the wheat economy, chapter five on Britain and Canada moving apart and chapter six on the GATT and the EEC.

While Muirhead faithfully provides the economic history of the relations between the two countries, the book does not have an explanatory theory to help make sense of the shifts in policy over time. In terms of readability, while Muirhead for the most part makes dull policy negotiations interesting and informative with his extensive research, more analysis and linking of the events would be helpful to a general reader. One may be taken aback by how little analysis is provided between chapters or even in the conclusion. At the very least it would have been helpful to know why the book was organized the way it is. At the end of reading chapter three, one had the impression that the book was over since he concludes that chapter with the 1974 election. The reader is not provided the rationale as to why it should now focus on wheat in chapter four, which takes the reader back to the beginning of the trade in wheat since 1879.

The book will no doubt prove to be invaluable for the economic history of trade relations between Canada and the US, but it lacks the theoretical and analytical perspective to provide any insights into why events turned out the way they did.

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Not this Time: Canadians, Public Policy and the Marijuana Question, 1961–1975

Marcel Martel

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It is said of the 1960s, “If you can remember them, you weren’t really there.” For those who need a refresher course, this book is an alternative to time travel. For the younger, post-1970s generation who literally were not there, this book tells them all they ever need to know about the history of Canada’s marijuana laws and why they have been so resistant to change. Considering that nearly three quarters of this current crop of young adults has tried marijuana, according to the Canadian Addiction Survey of 2004, perhaps they should be asking why the drug of choice for so many is still illegal. Martel’s detailed snapshot of this crucial 15-year period sets out the actors, forces and political pressures that are still very much a part of the ongoing and unresolved debate on drug policy reform in Canada.

Perhaps if Canada had actually moved ahead on the various reform bills that have been discussed and discarded since 1975, up to the demise in 2003 of Bill C-85