Marx Redux?

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Marx and Modernity: Key Readings and Commentary, edited by **Robert J. Antonio.** Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002. 399 pp. $72.95 cloth. ISBN: 0-631-22549-8. $30.95 paper. ISBN: 0-631-22550-1.

The Enemy of Nature: The End of Capitalism or the End of the World? by **Joel Kovel.** London, UK; New York: Zed Books, distributed in USA by Palgrave, 2002. 273 pp. $19.95 paper. ISBN: 1-84277-081-0.

The Theory of Revolution in the Young Marx, by **Michael Löwy.** Leiden, NDL; Boston, MA: Brill, 2003. 206 pp. $55.00 cloth. ISBN: 90-04-12901-4.

Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe, Part I, Vol. 14: Werke, Artikel, Entwürfe: Januar bis Dezember 1855, edited by **Hans-Jürgen Bochinski** and **Martin Hundt,** in collaboration with **Ute Emmrich** and **Manfred Neuhaus.** Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2001. 1695 pp. 188.00 EUR cloth. ISBN: 3-05-003610-9.

Karl Marx: The Burden of Reason (Why Marx Rejected Politics and the Market), by **Allan Megill.** Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002. 365 pp. $90.00 cloth. ISBN: 0-7425-1165-0. $29.95 paper. ISBN: 0-7425-1166-9.

In 1997, as the 150th anniversary of the *Communist Manifesto* was being marked, something strange transpired. Marx's social theory, long declared dead, reemerged as a fundamental source for the emerging debate over globalization. In an essay entitled "The Return of Karl Marx," the *New Yorker*'s John Cassidy intoned: "Marx's legacy has been obscured by the failure of Communism. . . . 'Globalization' is the buzzword of the late twentieth century . . . but Marx predicted most of its ramifications a hundred and fifty years ago." This theme underpins U.S. sociological theorist Robert Antonio's new collection, *Marx and Modernity,* in which Cassidy's essay is reprinted (pp. 264–72).

Marx and Modernity contains a 200-page selection of Marx's writings, grouped thematically, as well as Antonio's scholarly Introduction and 150 pages of commentary on contemporary social issues by a range of U.S. sociologists and social commentators, from William Julius Wilson and Saskia Sassen to Erik Olin Wright, and from David Harvey and Jeremy Rifkin to Nancy Fraser. The volume is part of a series on modernity and society edited by Ira Cohen, who has contributed a brief Foreword.

Antonio's finely crafted Introduction highlights Marx's conceptualization and critique of modern industrial capitalism:

> The most decisive context for Marx's future work was the Second Industrial Revolution, or the rise of mechanized production, large firms, mass labor unions, the interventionist state, modern urbanism, and the world market. Although these changes were barely getting under way in the late 1840s, he already detected an emergent profound alteration of everyday life caused by "large-scale capitalism," which he inscribed later under the sign of "modern industry." Marx was the first modern social theorist to address social change so radical and so extensive that it overturned nearly all accustomed modes of existence, identity, association, and organization. (p. 10)

This profound and prescient analysis of large-scale capitalism, Antonio argues, is the source of Marx's enduring relevance.

For this reason, Antonio draws about half of his Marx selections from *Capital.* These cover a wide range of topics, from commodity fetishism in Vol. I to the tendential fall in the rate of profit in Vol. III, as well as fairly extensive material on machinery and the labor process. In briefer selections, Antonio chooses several texts concerning colonialism,

among them two 1857 articles on India from the period of the Sepoy Rebellion for the *New York Tribune* (one of them mistakenly dated 1887). These contained much sharper attacks on British rule than were found in the 1853 India articles, which have with some justification become the target of many recent critiques of Marx, most notably in Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978). There are also some brief selections on the state and revolution.

The high point of Antonio's Introduction comes in the discussion of what he felicitously calls Marx's "sociological materialism," traditionally known as "historical materialism," although Marx himself never employed the latter term. Antonio treats at length the issues of reductionism and determinism so often raised today by Marx's critics, even very sympathetic ones:

> Although rigidly determinist passages exist in his texts, Marx suggested much more often a complex, historically contingent materialism, which is not reducible to the totalizing position's "technological determinism" (i.e., social change arises only from technical change) or to "reflection theory" (i.e., ideas are mere emanations of physical reality). He frequently pointed to changes arising from diverse sources (e.g. cultural and political, as well as material), which can either heighten or deflect class struggles. (p. 25)

One unfortunate technical problem with Antonio's Introduction, however, is that page references to Marx's writings are not cross-referenced to those in this volume.

It should also be noted that, as against earlier one-volume collections of Marx's writings, especially the most notable ones edited by Robert Tucker (1978) or David McLellan (2000), let alone Erich Fromm (1961), Antonio gives short shrift to the young Marx. Since he includes nothing at all from the *1844 Manuscripts,* the reader is plunged directly into the *German Ideology's* propositions concerning material production, reproduction, and the formation of social classes. This loses an important thread of Marx's work and the literature surrounding it. From Georg Lukács to Raya Dunayevskaya, this literature has underlined the centrality to Marx's *oeuvre* of the dialectic, and along with it, the more visionary, "utopian" side of his thought, which points beyond the capitalist order toward a new human society.

The selections from contemporary authors that comprise the last parts of the book discuss salient features of contemporary capitalism, the debate over globalization, and the relationship of class to race, gender, and sexuality. As a whole, the volume lives up to its title, *Marx and Modernity.*

In *The Enemy of Nature,* the well-known psychologist and critical theorist Joel Kovel also focuses on the nature of capitalist modernity. However, his study draws on the young Marx as well as *Capital.* Kovel's thesis is that the core features of capitalism as a system lie behind the increasingly acute ecological crisis facing us today. He does not mince words:

> The thesis that drives this work, that capital is both ecodestructive and unreformable, is either true or false. If it is false, then I have been wrong, and the apologists for capital right. But their correctness would require a great sea change in capital, a historic adaptation and overcoming of its evil tendencies. (p. 255)

At one point, he focuses on the 1984 disaster in Bhopal, India, where 16,000 people eventually died as a result of negligence by Union Carbide. He views this disaster as an example of the normal workings of a modern capitalism that seeks at all costs to foster the self-expansion of capital.

Although Kovel's book is more a manifesto or a polemic than a traditional scholarly monograph, he succeeds in posing some old questions in new ways. Kovel argues forcefully against the notion that human culture as a whole is the culprit in the ecological crisis, or that modern technology or science per se is at fault. Instead, the problem lies in the relationship of science, technology, and culture to capital

> "The world today teems with brilliant innovations that deserve application as ways of checking the ecological crisis, but will not be used because they run against the exigencies of [capital] accumulation. (p. 117)

In a lengthy treatment of human nature and ecology, Kovel attempts a non-reductionist interweaving of the biological with the historical and the social. He argues for the uniqueness of modern capitalist civilization in terms of its destruction of nature, both nonhuman and human. The same system, he maintains, not only destroys the ecosystem, but also deeply alienates human beings from the more creative sides of their own nature, thus alienating them from themselves in the Marxian sense. While he sometimes lapses into an overly idealized view of precapitalist societies, Kovel develops some interesting points on what he sees as enduring human capacities and needs. Far from a plague upon nonhuman nature as is argued by deep ecologists, human beings are here seen as part of nature, one "that catalyzes nature's exuberance" (p. 110). But again, it is capitalism that thwarts such possibilities.

Michael Löwy's book is a carefully constructed monograph on the young Marx. A former student of Lucien Goldmann with an even greater intellectual debt to Leon Trotsky, Löwy is one of France's best-known sociologists, whose commentaries on Marxism, globalization, critical theory, and culture appear regularly in *Le Monde*. (See, e.g., Löwy 2002). His work is also widely discussed in Latin America, including his native Brazil, but in the United States it is not as well known as it should be in sociological circles. Among his recent books are one on Walter Benjamin (2001) and a study in the sociology of culture (Löwy and Sayre 2001). *The Theory of Revolution in the Young Marx* first appeared in French in 1970 and has been translated (anonymously) as part of a series under the auspices of the London-based quarterly *Historical Materialism*.

Löwy views the young Marx's theoretical positions in the context of the intellectual and especially the political currents that influenced his work and in which he was involved during the years 1842 to 1848. In this way, he brings together in a single work issues that are usually discussed separately, either in biographies or in theoretical examinations of Marx. Löwy is at his best when describing the relationship of Marx's thought to the various socialist groups and workers' movements of the era. Such an approach of course runs the risk of contextualist reductionism, something he assures the reader he rejects in favor of a notion of the "partial autonomy of the sphere of ideas" (p. 5).

Löwy holds that "Marx's militant activity is not a biographical detail but the necessary complement of his writing, since both the one and the other had the same purpose, namely, not just to interpret the world but to *change* it, to interpret *in order* to change it" (p. 12). To be sure, this echoes Marx's eleventh thesis on Ludwig Feuerbach—"philosophers have interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it"—but in Löwy's case without the anti-intellectual thrust that so often accompanies its citation by orthodox Marxists. In his analysis of the eleventh thesis later on in the book, Löwy is careful to separate himself from the "superficial" view that it centered on "revolutionary practice contrasted with abstract speculation" (p. 108). Instead, he describes the Marxian notion of praxis as "a *total* human activity, *practical-critical* activity in which theory is already revolutionary praxis, and practice is *loaded with theoretical significance* (p. 109).

Löwy's approach yields some interesting insights, for example, on Marx's well-known 1843 article, "Contribution to a Critique of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*." There, in addition to characterizing religion as "the opium of the people," Marx for the first time embraced the proletariat, a class he described as bound up by "radical chains." Because the proletariat's oppression ran so deeply and was a central feature of capitalism, however, it was the new "universal" class, whose quest for emancipation embodied society's general social emancipation as well. Marx followed this immediately with a call for the unity of philosophy and revolution as a necessary condition for such emancipation: "The head of this emancipation is philosophy, its heart is the proletariat" (cited on p. 57). Noting Feuerbach's influence on Marx in 1843, Löwy takes up the former's notion of the heart as "passive" or "contemplative." He concludes that the 1843 passage "must not be confused" with Marx's later emphasis on the "self-activity of labor" (p. 58). And as Löwy proceeds to tell us, a year later, after completing the *1844 Manuscripts*, after the Silesian weavers' revolt, and after his first direct contacts with worker activists, Marx posed the question somewhat differently:

> A philosophical people can find its corresponding practice [*Praxis*] only in socialism, hence it is only in the proletariat that it can find the dynamic element [*tätige Element*] of its emancipation. (cited on p. 94)

By now, Löwy underlines, the working class had become for Marx the "active element in emancipation" and that "the people and philosophy are no longer presented as two separate terms with the second 'penetrating' the first." (p. 94).

At other junctures, however, Löwy is less convincing, for example, on the *1844 Manuscripts* themselves. This is the case when he discusses Marx's critique of "crude communism," which he characterized in the *Manuscripts* as a theory that "everywhere negates the personality of the human being," thus serving to level society downward toward a preconceived minimum (Marx 1968: 534). When the *Manuscripts* began to be widely published and discussed after World War II, critical Marxists used these passages to separate themselves from the authoritarian versions of communism in Russia, Eastern Europe, and China. While Löwy acknowledges that Marx never ceased to critique crude communism, he gives too much credence to the notion that Marx was here following Feuerbach's ivory tower contrast between "noble" and "vulgar" communism. Thus, instead of using the unpublished *1844 Manuscripts* as a window from which to grasp better Marx's subsequent and intermittent critiques of crude communism, here Löwy's contextualism operates too narrowly. It confines Marx within the limits of Feuerbachianism, even though he was already attacking Feuerbach in the *Manuscripts*. Similar problems emerge in Löwy's discussions of private property, humanism, and the dialectics of negativity in the *Manuscripts*. Nonetheless, this study remains a valuable and unusual one in its attempt to draw connections between the young Marx's more abstract theoretical concepts and his involvement in socialist and working class politics.

It may come as a surprise to some *CS* readers to learn that large portions of Marx's writings have yet to be published in any language. This is true of his original drafts for what became Vols. II and III of *Capital*, for example, which Engels edited for publication. The *Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe* (hereafter referred to as MEGA) has undertaken to publish the whole. The first attempt at a MEGA began in the Soviet Union in the 1920s, but ground to a halt after its illustrious editor, David Riazanov, was arrested for bourgeois deviationism. The present or second MEGA began in East Germany and Russia in 1975. After 1989, it was substantially reorganized with the help of Jürgen Rojahn of the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam and other Western scholars. The editorial process, until 1989 almost a state secret, was opened to scholarly scrutiny and debate. (For more background, see Rojahn 1998, Hecker 1998, and Anderson 1998.) The MEGA publishes each Marx text in its original language, which does not necessarily mean German, for he wrote many of his texts in English, most notably *The Civil War in France*, and many others, like *The Poverty of Philosophy*, in French. In all MEGA volumes, the Introductions, Notes, and other editorial apparatus are in German, however.

The MEGA consists of four *Abteilungen* or parts: (I) General writings by Marx or Engels, including drafts of books and articles; (II) *Capital* and other economic writings; (III) Correspondence, including letters by third parties to Marx and Engels; (IV) Excerpt notebooks. Volumes are typically referred to as MEGA I/3, II/14, and so on. Overall, less than half of a projected 114 volumes have been published. In terms of previously unpublished material, Part II is especially rich, since it will include Marx's original texts even for those cases: for example, Vols. II and III of *Capital*, where Engels edited Marx's work for publication. The most recent MEGA volume to appear is Vol. II/14, which contains part of Marx's original text and Engels' editing for Vol. III of *Capital* (Marx and Engels 2003). Part IV, Marx and Engels' notes on other authors, also has a wealth of new material, the vast majority of which has never been published in any language. However, even when MEGA volumes republish material that has previously appeared, the scholarly rigor and depth of the editing still makes these editions well worth consulting as the standard source. This is certainly true of MEGA I/14, under review here, which contains journalism by Marx and Engels from the year 1855.

Most of the texts in MEGA I/14 concern the Crimean War, in which Marx and Engels critically supported Britain, France, and Turkey against Russia, which they regarded as an utterly reactionary power that had repeatedly intervened in Western and Central Europe to crush revolutionary movements, most recently in 1848. Other texts discuss Ireland, the British labor movement, and Bonapartism. At a more general level, this volume shows Marx's continuing interest in non-Western societies (here Russia and Turkey) during the 1850s, when he also wrote widely on India and China and developed a section of the *Grundrisse* on precapitalist modes of production. The majority of the articles in MEGA I/14 are in English, but a substantial number are in German, with each published in its original language.

Since the vast majority of these texts have already appeared in English in the *Marx-Engels Collected Works* (hereafter referred to as MECW), Vol. 14 (Marx and Engels 1980), I will focus on what MEGA I/14 adds to our previous knowledge of Marx. Most of the advantages of MEGA I/14 over the earlier MECW 14 lie in the former's superb editorial apparatus. The fact that most of these writings appeared anonymously in either the *New York Tribune* or the *Neue Oder-Zeitung* means that ascertaining their authorship has required considerable research over many years, beginning with that by Riazanov. In 1980, the nearly anonymous MECW 14 editors, doubtless constrained by a party apparatus wary of any ambiguities concerning Marx and Engels, adopted an omniscient tone, referring to the problems of establishing authorship in just a few lines, and never mentioning previous scholars like Riazanov who had helped to resolve them. In contrast, the MEGA I/14 editors—Hans-Jürgen Bochinski and Martin Hundt, working with Ute Emmrich and Manfred Neuhaus—provide detailed information, both in their general Introduction and in explanatory notes for each article, on the state of the evidence concerning authorship. MEGA I/14 also has brief sections for *dubiosa* and for articles published by the *Tribune* where that newspaper's editors incorporated material from Marx or Engels alongside other texts.

Among the latter, one very interesting new discovery is a *Tribune* article entitled "Signs in the English Heavens." Written only partly by Marx, with other parts added by *Tribune* editors, it discussed the relationship of the Crimean War to the possibility of revolution in Europe. Marx concluded with the general statement that revolutions "will not come logically to please the professional logic-hewer, or judiciously to please the theoretizing reformer . . . they will fall as the rain falls from heaven, suddenly, but usually not without some portentous clouds palpable to all bent on seeing" (p. 831). The MEGA I/14 editors provide plausible and detailed analysis concerning those parts of this article that were almost certainly not written by Marx. (One clue is a statement explicitly attacking Queen Victoria, which a vulnerable political refugee like Marx would not have signed.) Other material newly unearthed in MEGA II/14 includes a number of articles by Engels on the military aspects of the war.

In MEGA I/14's introductory material, the editors' lengthy discussion of the relationship of Marx and Engels to the *Tribune* covers some previously unexplored ground on their relationship to the United States. The editors document the *Tribune's* in-your-face hostility toward the slave owning party and its strong support of the abolitionists in Kansas. With a circulation of nearly 200,000, greater than the (London) *Times,* it was by far the most influential newspaper in the United States at the time. They carefully analyze the *Tribune*'s tilt toward Russia during the Crimean War, in part due to editor Horace Greeley's greater hostility toward Bonpartism, as well as how these differences led to the rejection of many articles written by Marx and Engels. The MEGA editors also show that the *Tribune* editors were particularly proud of the astute military analyses provided by Engels, even allowing the rumor to circulate that America's top military commander, General Winfield Scott, had written these unsigned contributions.

Once in a while, however, the MEGA I/14 editors come perilously close to economistic reductionism, as in the following description of the sources of pre-Civil War tensions in the U.S.:

> Most important was the sharpening of conflict between, on the one hand, the industrialists of the North, the free farmers, and the developing labor movement, and on the other hand, the advocates of

slavery as well as parts of the financial and commercial bourgeoisie." (p. 887)

One problem is that this is packaged a bit too neatly, with the labor movement and the farmers clearly aligned against the slave power. More important, neither the restive African American slaves themselves nor the abolitionist movement are included here as social forces. It might have been better to have referred to the more nuanced Marxian analysis that W. E. B. Du Bois developed in his *Black Reconstruction* (1935), which included forces like the "abolition-democracy" and black labor.

Intellectual historian Allan Megill's *Karl Marx: The Burden of Reason* holds the distinction of being the first English-language book that uses the new MEGA as its principal source. This erudite study is that rare commodity, a serious and well-informed yet strongly critical exploration of Marx's thought. In a very general sense, it recalls Joseph Schumpeter's classic *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (1942). Schumpeter advocated a separation of Marx the sociologist from Marx the revolutionary propagandist in order to make him usable for normal social science. Megill takes his critique of Marx in a different direction, that suggested by Michel Foucault, who wrote that "Marxism exists in nineteenth century thought like a fish in water; that is, it is unable to breathe anywhere else" (1973: 262). Among other things, this is a very elegant way of saying that Marx is dead. Therefore, rather than a Schumpeterian salvage operation that would rescue a considerable part of Marx for today's social science, Megill proposes something harsher, an "autopsy"; although even he concedes that "some of its bones and organs are useful still" (p. 237).

One of the merits of a truly scholarly work like this one is that the author presents his arguments and evidence, as well as the acknowledgment of counterarguments and counterevidence, so judiciously that even readers with opposing standpoints can find support within the text for their arguments against those of the author. Before going any further into Megill's core thesis, which is a critique of Marx, let me mention some of the gems that his scholarly endeavors have uncovered. One concerns the Marx's use of the term *Aufhebung,* as in the *Communist Manifesto's* advocacy of the "abolition [*Aufhebung*] of private property." This term, which is even more central to Hegel's work, carries the multiple meanings of abolition, preservation in a higher form, or raising up, among others. In one of the lengthy footnotes that enrich this book, Megill critiques not only "abolition" (the standard translation) as too strong, but also Terrell Carver's "transformation" (in a newer translation in Marx 1996) as too weak, before settling on "transcendence" (p. 213).

At another juncture, Megill offers one of the best discussions I have ever seen of a very tangled issue, Marx's 1843 essay "On the Jewish Question." Throughout, Megill draws on writings by and on the very young (pre-1843) Marx, especially the 1841 doctoral dissertation on Democritus and Epicurus. He also unearths a colleague's 1841 assessment of Marx as "although a desperate revolutionary," still "one of the sharpest minds that I know" (p. 301). As against Löwy, Megill portrays Marx's pre-1843 stance as not inconsistent with his later ones, here drawing on a wealth of new scholarship on the very young Marx.

A third gem emerges during a discussion of Marx's materialist interpretation of history, which, Megill argues convincingly, "applies only to human society up to now." Because Marx used the term "prehistory" to describe various class societies from the ancient world up through capitalism, Megill concludes that "the materialist conception of history is actually . . . a conception of the *pre*history of human society" (p. 228).

Megill's threefold critique of Marx, which is hard to summarize briefly without caricature, begins with the charge that Marx had a far too rationalist conception of history, outdoing even his mentor Hegel in this respect. Megill argues this point through a close reading of the very early Marx, reaching the surprising conclusion that the *History of Philosophy* was the work by Hegel that most greatly influenced Marx. He denies a central role to the *Phenomenology of Spirit* because he did not come across a detailed and serious discussion of it anywhere in Marx's writings. I did not find this very convincing, especially when Megill argues that Marx's 1844 "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic," his most sustained essay on dialectics, and one

that centers explicitly on the *Phenomenology*, "does not suggest a deep . . . involvement" with this work (p. 18). This causes some difficulty for Megill later on, when he examines a well-known statement from Marx's 1859 preface to the *Critique of Political Economy* to the effect that "humanity always sets itself only such tasks as it can solve" (cited on p. 234). As he proceeds to criticize Marx's overly rationalist progressivism on the basis of this passage, Megill fails to notice its close relationship to an equally famous passage from the Preface to Hegel's *Phenomenology*: "It is the nature of truth to prevail when its time has come, and that it appears only when its time has come, and therefore never appears prematurely, nor finds a public not ripe to receive it" (1977: 44).

Second, Megill charges Marx with having rejected politics, which he defines rather narrowly as "those practices of deliberation, negotiation, and compromise by which human beings decide how to organize their lives together" (p. 101). This leaves out quite a bit, especially politics as war or revolution, or even a militant social protest movement. Behind Megill's discussion here is the well-known (post) modern argument that "totalizing" revolutionary doctrines like Marxism seek to create a de-politicized utopia where factions are no longer necessary, which leads to the end of politics. One obvious objection is that Marx was hardly alone in his yearning for a society of consensus and community that would be free of parties and factions, for such notions can be found in perhaps even more pronounced form in eighteenth century liberalism, including the version of it expressed in 1776. A second objection is that Marx's idealized description of the Paris Commune in *The Civil War in France* does not suggest any such elimination of parties and factions, although he does point to a more direct grassroots type democracy than that found in societies dominated by capital.

Megill's third critique concerns the fact that Marx rejected private property and the market, something that is not in dispute. Again, he argues that Marx rejected them because they did not fit into his abstract rationalist schema. One could easily counter, for example, that there were strong humanist grounds on which to reject a system of brutal exploitation inside "satanic mills." Megill makes some interesting points along the way in his treatment of Marx on private property and the market, however. This is especially the case concerning alienation. Unlike so many other commentators, Megill grasps that for Marx, alienation is even more fundamental than private property or exchange as the hallmark of capitalism. He writes that the critique of alienation "is much more an argument against the system as a whole" (p. 162). Megill also discusses the young Marx's writings on gender, although he unfortunately characterizes them as "outside his general theory" (p. 260). Megill's book concentrates on Marx up to about 1860. In the Preface, he indicates that he may write a sequel focusing on *Capital*. That would be a happy development indeed.

Taken together, these five books suggest that the debate over Marx, far from having died with the collapse of the Soviet Union, has taken on new life in recent years. The removal of the heavy lid of an ideological and state-supported "Marxist-Leninism," combined with the growing criticism of globalized capitalism, has created new ground for the publication and discussion of Marx's writings.

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Images of Terror: What We Can and Can't Know About Terrorism, by **Philip Jenkins.** New York: Aldine de Gruyter (Transaction), 2003. 227 pp. $47.95 cloth. ISBN: 0-202-30678-X. $24.95 paper. ISBN: 0-202-30679-8.

Philip Jenkins has written a provocative, timely but, ultimately, flawed and frustrating analysis of the social construction of the problem of terrorism. He argues: "[W]e must understand the rhetorical processes by which certain interest groups and bureaucratic agencies present their particular view of terrorism . . . and try to establish these as the ones that come to be accepted as obviously correct" (p. x). To accomplish his task he reviews issues of definition, presentations of motives, media presentations, and the role of intelligence agencies in providing much of the raw material to policymakers. He describes how terrorism has been viewed over the past few decades within the United States and the shifting interpretations of the Iraqi role in terrorism from the early 1980s until the present. There is much to admire in his analysis.

Jenkins demonstrates that the social construction approach can be quite useful as a means to introduce the study of terrorism to students. For students who believe that there is truth just waiting to be discovered and that our theoretical and political frames are independent of "facts," his approach can be quite salutary. For example, his account of the changing interpretations of the recounting of the downing of Pan Am 103 in 1988 is an excellent accounting of the shifting blame and potential motivations of the various actors in the tragedy, although most of his discussion focuses on the needs of the U.S. government rather than the potential perpetrators. Thus, no one took responsibility at the time of the explosion, and while Qaddafi ultimately took responsibility for the act, it is not clear if this was not simply a business decision to enable him to get Libya back into the international economic market to sell oil.

However, it is not only important to introduce students to the analysis of how social and political processes, bureaucratic needs, and media structures construct problems, but also how scholars should approach such problems beyond a critical evaluation of the presentation of others. This, Jenkins does not provide. There are many useful insights with respect to how the problem of terrorism is framed. Jenkins identifies the propensity to personalize structural problems, to look beneath the reporting of information to the sources and motives, and most important to place the reporting or the discussion within a historical context that can provide meaning and interpretation of events.

Jenkins argues that we should not accept the U.S. Department of State reports of international terrorist attacks because it is difficult to be certain of the motivations of the actors. However, in making the charge, which may well be justified, he does not actually give a single example of what events the State Department includes that they should not or events that were not counted that should have been. He uses the critique further to