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Book Review of "Cruel and Unusual: Bush/Cheney's New World Order," by Mark Crispin Miller

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Harper's pieces. Like Vidal's, some of this material has appeared already; certain passages in Lapham's 2002 collection, *Theater of War*, are identical to passages here. Consequently, this is an optional purchase for libraries, which can gauge the degree of redundancy they want in their own collections.—**Bob Nardini, Chichester, NH**

Mexico Under Fox. Lynne Rienner. Jul. 2004. c.170p. ed. by Luis Rubio & Susan Kaufman Purcell. bibliog. index. ISBN 1-58826-242-1. \$38.50; pap. ISBN 1-58826-218-9. \$16.95. INT AFFAIRS

Following the format of their successful *Mexico Under Zedillo*, Rubio (president, Ctr. for Research and Development, Mexico City) and Purcell (Americas Society and Council of the Americas) offer an in-depth analysis of Mexican president Fox at the midpoint of his six-year term. Fox's initial relationship with President Bush was soured by the events of 9/11 and Mexico's opposition, as a member of the UN Security Council, to the war in Iraq. Economic and social ties between the two nations have been strained, creating a diplomatic divide over immigration, future economic cooperation, and the war on drugs. Not surprisingly, Fox's ratings improved domestically when Mexico voted against the United States in the UN. Yet Fox has little power, and the promise of a new democracy faded rapidly under a system Rubio describes as gridlock. These six insightful essays (five by Mexican scholars) provide fresh views of Mexico's government under Fox, including the political roadblocks presented by the still strong Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). Of special interest is Juan Pardinás's powerful essay on Mexican poverty and its impact. Recommended for academic libraries.—**Boyd Childress, Auburn Univ. Libs.**

MILLER, MARK CRISPIN. Cruel and Unusual: Bush/Cheney's New World Order. Norton. Aug. 2004. c.388p. ISBN 0-393-05917-0. \$24.95. POLITICS

In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, Tocqueville's "tyranny of the majority" made it difficult for voices critical of President Bush's policies to find a place in the public sphere. Today, with the war in Iraq going poorly, the opposite seems true. A spate of new books, mostly critical of the President, now flood the market. Miller (media studies, NYU; *The Bush Dyslexicon*) offers one of the harshest. Condemning the Bush/Cheney administration's bullying religiosity, foreign policy, and obsession with secrecy as irrational imperialism and reckless militarism, Miller argues that the Constitution is in danger; for the goal of

this administration is to "abort American democracy, and impose on the United States another kind of government." This "other" kind of government is a radically Christian form of militarism and imperialism that undermines the Bill of Rights and favors the wealthy. The Bush regime, Miller concludes, is un-American. Lively, entertaining, and hard-hitting, this book is a searing indictment of the Bush administration. However, the case made does not always lead to the conclusions drawn, and this work may be too polemical for mainstream tastes. Recommended for public libraries.—**Michael A. Genovese, Loyola Marymount Univ., Los Angeles**

MITTER, RANA. A Bitter Revolution's Struggle with the Modern World. Oxford Univ. Jul. 2004. c.300p. photogs. index. ISBN 0-19-280341-7. \$30. INT AFFAIRS

This book discusses how the fundamental narrative of the May Fourth Movement of 1919 was framed, changed, and transmitted during the 20th century in the Chinese civil war, Great Leap Forward, Chinese Cultural Revolution, and Tiananmen Democracy Movement. Mitter (history of modern China, Oxford Univ.; *The Manchurian Myth*) identifies May Fourth as a time of "transformative change" in which Chinese intellectuals self-consciously promoted the adoption of international ideas and sought, wholesale, to abandon Confucianism. Among Mitter's observations are that the rise of communism was not the most important story of mid-20th-century China and that while Mao Zedong, Chen Duxiu, and other intellectuals rejected Confucianism for its oppression of women and the poor, they were ignoring the Confucian obsession with ethics and mutual obligation. Mitter's fresh and interesting analysis effectively demonstrates how the May Fourth Movement was reframed, but it tends to force political and cultural development in China into a rigid comparison with the ideals of May Fourth and the accompanying New Culture movement. Recommended only for specialized collections in Asian studies.—**Peggy Spitzer Christoff, Rockville, MD**

NEWPORT, FRANK. Polling Matters: Why Leaders Must Listen to the Wisdom of the People. Warner. Jul. 2004. c.300p. bibliog. index. ISBN 0-446-53064-6. \$26. POLITICS

Poll-driven is one of our stronger political epithets today, but Newport, editor in chief of the Gallup Poll, argues that the term should instead be considered a laurel. "Representatives," he says, "must and should pay more, rather than less, attention to the col-

lective wisdom of the people, and polling provides them with the means to do so." Taking on critics like columnist Arianna Huffington and political scientist James Fishkin, Newport offers an accessible introduction to the methods of scientific public-opinion polling and makes a strong argument for the value of polls. Early in the age of polling, Newport's predecessor, George Gallup, said many of the same things in *The Pulse of Democracy* (1940), so this book, a historical echo, will be interesting to research libraries while useful to undergraduate collections and public libraries alike. It's an optional purchase only because there are so many other good books on polling, e.g., Jeff Manza's scholarly *Navigating Public Opinion* and Michael Traugott's more general *The Voter's Guide to Election Polls*.—**Robert Nardini, Chichester, NH**

ROSS, DENNIS. The Missing Peace: The Inside Story of the Fight for Middle East Peace. Farrar. Aug. 2004. c.544p. photogs. index. ISBN 0-374-19973-6. \$30. INT AFFAIRS

Ross was the U.S. government envoy to the Middle East peace process for 12 years, from 1988 to 2001. This memoir, based on his extensive notes and diaries, presents a detailed account of the considerable efforts made to achieve a viable settlement. Many of these efforts were not documented by the press; some were deliberately kept secret. Ross is very frank in pointing out failures and errors of judgment, including his own; neither side is blamed exclusively for the lack of success. While researchers will find this a valuable resource for its firsthand perspective, nonspecialists will likely be overwhelmed by the minute detail and the regular use of first names only when referring to other participants in the negotiations. They may turn instead to Madeleine Albright's recent *Madame Secretary*, which devotes three chapters to this topic, or to Charles Enderlin's *Shattered Dreams*, comparably detailed but a journalist's account (based on interviews with the participants) rather than an insider's. For academic and research collections. [See Prepub Alert, *LJ* 4/15/04.]—**Marcia L. Sprules, Council on Foreign Relations Lib., New York**

SCHLESINGER, ARTHUR M., JR. War and the American Presidency. Norton. Sept. 2004. c.224p. ISBN 0-393-06002-0. \$23.95. POLITICS

A liberal public intellectual and two-time Pulitzer Prize winner (for *The Age of Jackson* and *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House*), Schlesinger presents cogent essays that provide historical background to the Iraqi War. He condemns the