

Leslie E. Anderson

SOCIAL CAPITAL IN DEVELOPING DEMOCRACIES

Nicaragua
and Argentina
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Social Capital in Developing Democracies

Drawing on extensive fieldwork in Nicaragua and Argentina, as well as public opinion and elite data, Leslie E. Anderson's *Social Capital in Developing Democracies* explores the contribution of social capital to the process of democratization and the limits of that contribution. Anderson finds that in Nicaragua strong, positive, bridging social capital has enhanced democratization, while in Argentina the legacy of Peronism has created bonding and non-democratic social capital that undermines the development of democracy. Faced with the reality of an antidemocratic form of social capital, Anderson suggests that Argentine democracy is developing on the basis of an alternative resource – institutional capital. Anderson concludes that social capital can and does enhance democracy under historical conditions that have created horizontal ties among citizens, but that social capital can also undermine democratization where historical conditions have created vertical ties with leaders and suspicion or noncooperation among citizens.

Leslie E. Anderson is a University of Florida Research Foundation Professor of Political Science at the University of Florida. She is a scholar of democracy, popular politics and protest, and democratic development. Professor Anderson is also the author of *The Political Ecology of the Modern Peasant: Calculation and Community* and *Learning Democracy: Citizen Engagement and Electoral Choice in Nicaragua, 1990–2001* (with Lawrence C. Dodd), in addition to multiple journal articles.

Social Capital in Developing Democracies

Nicaragua and Argentina Compared

LESLIE E. ANDERSON



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For Elizabeth P. Anderson
BA Sarah Lawrence College, 1945
PhD in Biochemistry
Stanford University, 1951

All the people like us are We, and everyone else is They.

Rudyard Kipling

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Preface

When I was a doctoral student at the University of Michigan I rode a Yamaha 150 motorcycle around Central America so that I could more easily reach the rural poor, my subject of study. I continued to ride that motorcycle long after I finished my dissertation because it was the best and cheapest way to get around in Nicaragua. But it was a rough-and-tumble way to do research, and I got into trouble plenty of times. I got stuck in the mud. I had flash floods reach up over the handlebars. I ran out of gas. I knocked the chain off the gear wheel. Whenever I got into trouble, the Nicaraguans helped me out, rescued me, found me a pint of gas somewhere, leveraged the bike out of two feet of oozing mud, fixed the bike, replaced and oiled the chain, kept it running.

The Nicaraguan people were poor, always and everywhere, but their generosity toward me and toward each other never ceased to amaze me. Those who had nothing always seemed to have something to give. Although the Nicaraguans were certainly not saints, they had a stoic kindness, a willingness to pitch in, reach out, buckle down, work together. That willingness was so evident everywhere in the country, in rural and urban areas, and so constant over time that in the first ten years of my research on Latin America, I came to take it for granted, to consider it Latin American.

Then I went to Argentina. I began researching Argentina in the early 1990s, not too long after the nation had returned to democracy after nearly seven years of brutal dictatorship. But cruelty was still evident to a foreign visitor. In 1992, on a street in downtown Buenos Aires, I saw a bus stop at a curb to pick up an elderly, crippled woman. She moved slowly and painfully to the open door as the driver waited for her to climb in. But just as she reached the stairs onto the bus, the bus suddenly crept forward a foot or two. She nearly fell but recovered her balance. Then she slowly moved forward the additional two feet and tried, once again, to climb onto the bus. But once again the bus rolled forward another couple of feet. This time I knew it was no accident. The bus driver was doing this deliberately. I watched aghast at the cruelty I was witnessing. No one in the street did or said anything. It appeared that no one but I had even noticed. Suddenly a wave of anger rushed over me, and I started

toward the bus and the woman. In fluent Nicaraguan Spanish, that bus driver was about to get a piece of my mind. But at that moment, suddenly the driver pulled away entirely and drove off. The woman stared at the bus as it went away. I stood in the street stunned, shocked by what I had seen.

By the time I was researching Argentina in the late 1990s, nearly ten years later, I no longer saw events like the bus incident, and sometimes I witnessed acts of real kindness among citizens on the street. Every time I came to Argentina, people seemed kinder, more trusting; neighbors more willing to open their doors, talk on the streets, help each other out. But there was always an edge of caution and distrust in Argentina that was simply not there in Nicaragua. Why? Why would Argentines, who had so much and who, relatively speaking, were so wealthy, be so cautious, ungenerous, and guarded toward each other while Nicaraguans, who are clearly so very poor, were so often generous, trusting, and kind? And while Argentines appeared to grow more trusting over time, there was always a marked difference between the two societies. This book tries to uncover why.

The research for this book combined extensive fieldwork with public opinion and elite surveys in both Nicaragua and Argentina.¹ Between 1984 and 2009 I visited Nicaragua 16 times. My work in the 1980s addressed citizen involvement in the Sandinista revolution both before and after its 1979 triumph. I researched rural and urban revolutionary participation in 1984 and continued that work during a six-month visit in 1985. I returned for visits of two or three months in 1986, 1987, and 1990. During the 1990s I returned every twelve to eighteen months, and I observed national elections in 1990, 1996, 2001, and 2006, as well as the municipal elections of 2000, 2004, and 2008. I conducted interviews of citizens and political leaders in Nicaragua. Interviewees included citizen activists, former and current legislators, political leaders, party organizers, union activists, opposition activists, editors of the major newspapers, and presidential and vice-presidential candidates. During the 1996 and 2001 elections, I conducted nationwide public opinion surveys funded by the National Science Foundation and the Manning Dauer Research Fund at the University of Florida. These surveys asked questions about associational memberships, social activities, political participation, support for democratic institutions and processes, and democratic values, as well as about the elections themselves. In 2002 I conducted a survey about associational membership and political activism in a Sandinista neighborhood in Managua. Finally, between 2001 and 2003 I surveyed 53 members of the 92-member single-chamber legislature.

I visited Argentina nine times between 1992 and 2009. I began by focusing on social and human rights movements and developing democratic institutions. I spent six weeks in 1992 researching the role of social movements in Argentina's return to democracy. I returned as a Fulbright Scholar for four months in 1993 to continue research on popular movements and citizen

¹ These surveys are described in the Appendix.

initiative. I observed the national and midterm elections in 1995, 1997, and 2000. Funded by a Howard Foundation Fellowship from Brown University, I returned for five months in 1997 and 1998 to study the relationship among citizens, the legislature, and the president. I returned again in 1999, 2000, 2002, and 2005 for brief visits. In 2008 I received a second Fulbright Fellowship to continue my research on Argentina. I spent a full semester in Buenos Aires at that time, during which period I also taught a class of doctoral students at the University of Buenos Aires. I offered them a course on social capital in Argentina and elsewhere. I am appreciative of those students for their insights on my research in this book.

These visits allowed me to conduct in-depth interviews in Argentina with citizen leaders, social-movement activists, members and leaders of human rights organizations, political party activists and leaders, current and former legislators from both the Senate and the House of Deputies, political advisors, government ministers from the Alfonsín and Menem administrations, and former President Alfonsín. In 1997 and 2000 I conducted public opinion surveys funded by the Institutions Program, Department of Political Science, University of Florida and by a Humanities Award, also at the University of Florida. These surveys addressed associational memberships, social activities, political participation, support for democratic institutions and processes, and democratic values, as well as electoral opinion. In 2002 I conducted a survey about associational membership and political activism in a Peronist neighborhood in Buenos Aires. In 2002 and 2003 I surveyed 83 members of the national Congress.

A number of individuals expressed great faith in this project at different points in its development. One of the earliest true believers was my father, Thornton Hogan Anderson, who became excited about my theory even before this book became a manuscript. He was often on the phone, calling me in Argentina, asking what I had learned in my field research that week. I am sorry that he is not around to see the completed book now. I also thank Aimee and Bill Hagerty for the support they showed during my sabbatical year of 2003–4. I am greatly appreciative of my Kentucky cousins, who have kept careful track of the development of this project and supported it throughout its history: Mildred and Jack Woodruff, Elizabeth and Bernie Conrad, and Steve Woodruff. Although I have never lived there, my cousins have certainly given me a sense of my old Kentucky home. Other strong supporters include Nancy Bermeo, Robert Dahl, Daniel Levine, Guillermo O'Donnell, Robert Putnam, and Theda Skocpol. Powerful intellectual mentors, they inspired me to do my best, lest I disappoint them. I thank them for their interest and support.

At the University of Florida I have received support from multiple sources. I am indebted to H. Russell Bernard for helping me to discover the scholarship of social capital beyond political science. In the Department of Political Science, I have received strong encouragement from Richard Conley, Margaret Conway, Aida Hozic, Renee Johnson, Margaret Kohn, and Richard Scher. I am deeply grateful for their interest and enthusiasm. I have benefited from

particular insights about the various issues of this book from several of my colleagues. On the desirability of participatory democracy, I have learned a lot from Dan O'Neill. On corruption, the perception of the common good, and differing visions of community, I have learned much from Beth Rosenson. And on the commonalities between German and Argentine culture, I have gained important help from Conor O'Dwyer. Won-ho Park helped with some aspects of the statistical analysis. Scholars who read an earlier version of this book and offered helpful comments include Elizabeth Anderson, Nancy Barber, H. Russell Bernard, Laurent Berthet, Margaret Conway, J. Samuel Fitch, Yael Harari, Goran Hyden, Daniel Levine, Cynthia McClintock, Dan O'Neill, Anne Pitcher, Beth Rosenson, and Katrina Schwartz. In the final stages of the revision process for this manuscript, the Latin American Collection at the Smathers Library of the University of Florida purchased the recent Latinobarometro data for inclusion in this book. I am grateful to Richard Phillips and Paul Losch for entertaining my purchase request in the midst of the economic crisis, and to John Ingraham, Associate Dean of Libraries, for authorizing the purchase of the Latinobarometro data for the University of Florida scholarly community. The graphics for this book were paid for by funds from my University of Florida Research Foundation Professorship. I would like to thank Carmen Diana Deere, Director of the Center for Latin American Studies, for nominating me to compete for the professorship. I also thank Associate Deans Allan Burns and Lou Gillette for encouraging me to compete for the professorship.

In Argentina and from Argentines, I have also received support that deserves particular recognition. To be Argentine today and still be able to acknowledge the true character of Peronism, including the knowledge that Argentina produced such a movement in the first place, is to display a level of personal courage and intellectual honesty that is difficult and rare. Individuals who have supported this work and displayed that level of courage include Aníbal Corrado, Carlos Escudé, Andrés Fontana, Ana Maria Mustapic, Enrique Peruzzotti, and Guillermina Seri, as well as Guillermo O'Donnell, mentioned above. Andrés, Ana Maria, Enrique, and Guillermo deserve a second mention for having waded their way through an early draft of this manuscript. Aníbal read a later version in its entirety and gave extensive detailed comments. Thanks to all of them. The book is better for their input. Nicaraguans who have supported this project include Ricardo Chavarría, Milagros and Gabriela Chavarría, Sergio Santamaría, and Marvin Ortega. The pollsters I have worked with have been invaluable: Maria Braun of MoriArgentina and Gerardo Androgué of KNACK, both in Argentina; Sergio Santamaría of CINASE in Nicaragua; and Gustavo Mendez of DOXA in Venezuela, who conducted the earlier polls in Nicaragua.

I would like to thank Charles Chamberlin and Erin Johnson of Erin Johnson Designs for meticulous work on the graphics for this book. At Cambridge University Press I received excellent input from two anonymous reviewers.

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I thank Lyle and Teresa Sherfey, Tinker Harris, Helen Gould, and Randy and Cheryl Winter for keeping me riding and keeping me sane. I thank my husband, Lawrence C. Dodd, who has supported me and this project through it all. I will never know why I got to be so lucky as to have found him. Finally, this book is dedicated to my mother “who raised a banner and pointed the way.” It is dedicated to her because, after all, we still need each other and because, although she finds it hard to believe given her fundamental faith in humanity, we still have a very long way to go.

Boulder County, Colorado
July 19, 2009

An Introduction

There is no faith in America, between either men or nations. Treaties are papers; constitutions books; elections combat; liberty, anarchy, and life, a torment.

*Simon Bolivar, Mirada Sobre America española*¹

...conflicts are more threatening among people who distrust one another. Public contestation requires a good deal of trust in one's opponents. They may be opponents but they are not implacable enemies.

*Robert Dahl, Polyarchy*²

Our mutual faith in each other is one fundamental essence of democracy. We must have faith that if we lose (an election, an argument) to “the other,” we and our interests will nonetheless live to see another day, to make another argument, to discuss another issue, to contest another election.³ We will not be destroyed forever by our loss today. Some scholars have called this faith in the system and argued that participants must believe that the system will protect them, within reasonable limits, even if they are the (temporary) losers. Moreover, that same system will provide them a level playing field so that, come the next contest, they will have every advantage and at least a reasonable likelihood of winning the next round. But the system, of course, consists of both the citizen members within it and the institutional framework around it. We must trust each other, or trust our institutions, or both before we can trust the system. The ability to trust one another, cooperate, and work together is a valuable asset in the development, consolidation, and continuation of democracy. Particularly when a democracy is new, but also as it consolidates, citizens need resources that they can use to confront authoritarian power and resolve differences among themselves peacefully. Citizens' mutual faith in each other is a resource to combat authoritarianism and resolve disagreements. It is a basis of democracy.

¹ Quito, (1929). Cited in Rippy (1963, p. 22).

² Taken from Dahl (1971, p. 152).

³ Linz and Stepan (1978; 1996).

ECONOMIC AFFLUENCE OR SOCIAL CAPITAL?

The suggestion that citizens' faith in each other is a basis of democracy is an argument in favor of social capital that deemphasizes the importance of affluence to the health of democracy. Barrington Moore, for example, argued that a larger economic pie would allow more individuals to access resources, resources that citizens could then translate into political power.⁴ Similarly, Seymour Martin Lipset suggested that the broad distribution of resources would facilitate democratization, while Tatu Vanhannen explored the link between affluence, intellectual and economic resources, and democracy.⁵ However, Lawrence Dodd and I have demonstrated that national and individual poverty have not prevented democratization in Nicaragua, although that study does not explicitly address the creation of social capital.⁶ The forward movement of democracy in many poor nations calls the argument about affluence into question.

One way to reconcile the steadfast development of democracy in low-income nations with arguments about affluence is to focus upon equality of resources rather than upon the sheer level of resources themselves. Resources per se may or may not be positively related to democratization, but the *relatively equal distribution* of the resources that do exist does, in fact, enhance democracy. The notion that resources are distributed relatively equally, regardless of the absolute amount of economic resources, levels the playing field among citizens in much the same way that Moore's larger economic pie did in more affluent societies. Focusing on equality also allows a connection between the resources argument and the social capital argument, since original arguments about citizen cooperation and associational life underscored the extent to which equality among citizens enhanced cooperation. Tocqueville, for example, in work that originally influenced social capital theory, stressed equality among American citizens along with his focus upon associational life as an explanation for democratic development.⁷

In contrast to affluence theories, arguments that democratization depends on social capital do not privilege national or personal affluence, although they do have an original basis in economics. Modern social science recognizes mutual faith and cooperation as assets and defines them as capital – social capital. But capital was originally economic. The notion of capital originates with Marx's description of economic relations in human society.⁸ For Marx,

⁴ Moore (1966); Andrew Janos (1992) has made a similar argument with respect to the current process of democratization in Russia.

⁵ Vanhannen (1992; 1997).

⁶ Anderson and Dodd (2005).

⁷ Recent theory on equality and social capital criticizes Putnam's work for its lack of attention to Tocqueville's argument about equality. McLean et al. (2002).

⁸ I am indebted to the criticisms of H. Russell Bernard for the discussion in this section. He forced me to look at the ways that disciplines other than political science have considered the concept of social capital.

capital was purely economic. It constituted the surplus created by the laboring classes but retained and controlled by capitalist industrial owners. This definition of capital saw it as a resource essential for building society but simultaneously connected it with exploitation. Capital created by workers was inappropriately expropriated by capitalists, and directed in ways that served them, but not the workers to whom it belonged. Marx's definition of capital constrained it further by defining it as a group phenomenon, something that resulted from the group efforts of many but belonged to no single individual in particular. An implied individual disempowerment inadvertently emerges from Marx's definition of capital, since it is not something created by one person nor can it necessarily be used by any single individual other than the uniquely-positioned capitalist. So while Marx abhorred the exploitation and disempowerment of the individual, his own theory did not see that same individual as capable of using or controlling the capital he or she created.

Later considerations of capital freed it from Marx's restriction of considering it purely economic and primarily a group phenomenon. Scholars began considering human capital something that belonged to one individual and comprised the assets that person brought to the world: education, skills, talents, intelligence, but also acquired or inherited goods. Once individualized in this manner, human capital became something that people could increase of their own volition and use according to their own decisions, thus empowering the individual. The notion of human capital also extended the definition beyond economics, although individual economic resources, particularly when used to increase individual capacities, remained a part of the definition.⁹

From the definition of human capital – which included all resources, some at least partially under individual control – the notion of social capital developed, although in a much more restricted fashion than political science uses it today. A large community of sociologists began studying social capital, defined as resources that individuals could gain through work with others, namely involvements beyond the individual self, as exemplified in the work of Nan Lin.¹⁰ Specifically, we are talking about social networks and the resources that networks brought to the individual: personal connections, enhanced knowledge and wherewithal, and inside information. This understanding of social capital still included economic goods but was not confined to them. It also kept the individual central and personally able to access, control, and increase social capital resources. Sociologists acknowledged that individuals with more human capital (more money, a better job) would be better able to access social capital. Thus, while all people had some access to human capital to create social capital, some had more human capital and thus more social capital. The notion of inequality returned to the study of capital, although not the notion of exploitation. In addition, sociologists saw social

⁹ Fernandez and Castilla (2001).

¹⁰ Lin, et al. (2001).

capital as something that individuals could use to their own advantage, and so individualism predominated in their view of this resource.

This understanding of social capital allows sociologists to treat it as something quite specific, tangible, and measurable. If social capital consists of specific, tangible resources, sociologists ought to be able to identify it precisely and measure it quantitatively.¹¹ This expectation has sent sociology students of social capital off in pursuit of measures of social capital, both how much of it individuals possess (e.g., how many connections they have with what kinds of people) and how much it has enhanced their position (e.g., better jobs, more job offers, higher salaries).¹²

The working definition that political science today uses for social capital comes from this work in sociology and then moves beyond it. Robert Putnam suggests that social capital includes the increased resources that individuals gain from personal connections – the value of the rolodex. He acknowledges that such connections bring better capacities, access, and outcomes to the individual who holds such connections. But social capital, according to Putnam, is much more than just the additional resources one gains through connections. Social capital also includes the connections themselves, which are of inherent and intrinsic value both to the individuals and to society at large.

The difference between Putnam's and Lin's understanding of social capital can be captured in a simple example. Suppose X has a delivery to make but has no vehicle. Through her social connections (and access to social capital) she knows Y. Y, perchance, owns a bicycle – a specific, tangible resource that X lacks. X asks Y if she can borrow the bicycle; Y says "yes" and X makes her delivery that way. For Lin, social capital is the bicycle, a tangible, measurable resource that accrues directly to X as a result of her network connections to Y. For Putnam social capital is the relationship itself between X and Y. The bicycle is only a part of it. Putnam's understanding of social capital defines it as something much less tangible, less measurable, and something that accrues to society as a whole as well as to both X and Y as individuals.

Beyond this, political scientists studying social capital argue that the relationship itself and the myriad of relationships like it have a political effect. Here they move the definition of social capital beyond sociology entirely. Putnam suggests that the relationship between X and Y has a positive, enhancing effect on society at large and on the polity. Through such relationships, individuals learn to like, trust, and respect each other. They learn to work together. Eventually this mutuality translates into the basic faith in each other that is necessary for a society to resolve differences peacefully, make compromises and agreements, and ultimately to function in a democratic fashion. In this sense, many relationships between many Xs and Ys, particularly those enhanced and structured through organizations and associations, create the foundation of a democratic society.

¹¹ La Duke Lake and Huckfeldt (1998); Dietlind (1998); Smith (1999).

¹² Green and Brock (1998).

In political science today, social capital is individual, but not only individual. The strength of social capital lies primarily in the group, namely, in group cooperation. Social capital is thus social, with broad social advantages. Those social advantages have an important political effect.¹³ In addition, the political science notion of social capital makes it far more intangible than sociology has understood it to be, and therefore harder to measure. This is not to say that social capital as understood in political science is immeasurable. But measuring something that is both intangible and of social and political value will be more difficult than measuring the much more individual, tangible, and restricted definition of social capital that many sociologists use.

In this movement beyond the sociological understanding of social capital, and toward viewing it as having a broad, amorphous political effect, political scientists have moved backward as well as forward. One hundred and fifty years ago, Alexis de Tocqueville, also a student of politics, fielded the notion that a democratic society was more likely to develop where human relationships and interactions were strong and positive. He wrote, “Feelings and opinions are recruited, the heart is enlarged, and the human mind is developed, only by the reciprocal influence of men upon each other. . . . these influences . . . must be . . . created, and this can only be accomplished by associations.”¹⁴ “Thus,” wrote Tocqueville, “the most democratic country on the face of the earth is that in which men have . . . carried to the highest perfection the art of pursuing in common the object of their common desires, and have applied this new science to the greatest number of purposes.”¹⁵ Thus, action within social associations was a key to why democracy was working in America.¹⁶

Tocqueville’s argument is even more important for the study at hand and, in general, for the study of developing democracies than it is for the large body of political science literature that examines the state of democratic health in established democracies today. This is true for two reasons. First, Tocqueville looked at democracy at a much earlier stage in the development process when he considered the role of associations in American democracy in the mid-nineteenth century. Skocpol also studies associations and social capital in America during this period.¹⁷ This perspective is closer to the subject of this book, since I examine the role of associations in the early stages of democratic consolidation and the relationship between social capital and democracy in its early years. But second, Tocqueville actually emphasized the role of *political* associations specifically in contributing to democracy.¹⁸ In this way, my own

¹³ For critiques of the prevailing political science perspective on social capital see Hero (2003) and Kohn (1999).

¹⁴ Tocqueville (1956, p. 200).

¹⁵ Tocqueville (1956, p. 199).

¹⁶ Tocqueville (1956, esp. Chap. 29).

¹⁷ Skocpol (1999; 2003).

¹⁸ Hulliung (2002, p. 184). Hulliung is correct to point out that Tocqueville stressed political associations and that he saw them as *preceding*, not following, general associations in the process of democratic development. But Tocqueville’s argument itself is sometimes confusing

work is also closer to his than to more recent studies of social capital since the findings of this study will underscore the direct importance of political association for the early development of democratic politics. Tocqueville's stress on political associations is often missed in contemporary renditions of his argument about associations and democracy.¹⁹

Inherent in these arguments about social capital is the notion that capital – human, social, or otherwise – is something that is built slowly over time, with small incremental inputs, not unlike equity in a house or a retirement account. Also inherent in these arguments is the idea of a gradual, forward movement as a result of building on something that has happened in the past. X can use Y's bicycle now because she built a positive relationship with Y in the past. Tocqueville suggests that democracy moves forward better now because members of society joined and worked within associations previously.²⁰ Within this connection between past actions and positive results now or in the future is the notion of *learning*. Persons X and Y have learned to work together with positive results. Americans are more able to engage in a democratic polity because they learned to interact through their associations. Current theorists of social capital also embrace the notion of learning, although they do not say so explicitly in their arguments. Italians or Americans, the two groups Putnam studies, who have learned to interact with each other in the past are more constructive at making democracy work today. But those who have not learned such interactive lessons are unable or less able to contribute to making democracy work. This book also relies on the role of learning from the past as a key component in understanding how social capital can develop and what kind of social capital develops. That reliance forces us to incorporate history into our understanding of the development of social capital.

CREATING SOCIAL CAPITAL

If many political scientists agree that social capital has a political effect and is a basis for democracy, they are less certain of how societies develop or retain

since there are other places in his writing where he does specifically stress the importance of all kinds of civic associations in making democracy work in America. See Tocqueville (1956, esp. chap. 29).

¹⁹ A decade before the more recent focus on social capital and during the 1980s, Benjamin Barber also noticed that citizens' confidence in national government was in decline while citizen involvement in local level politics was still high. He suggested that after a decade in which national government was characterized by "greed, narcissism and hostility to big government," citizens had turned instead to local and community affairs (1984, p. xi).

²⁰ Tocqueville's argument and other, more recent views of social capital all assume a stable society where members live in one place for long periods of time. Such assumptions do not apply in migrant societies where most members come and go, staying in one place for only a few years. Yet the evidence is that even in migrant societies, individuals are capable of creating supportive associational relationships, even if only on a small scale. These can be seen as a kind of mobile social capital. While her work is not about social capital and she does not

social capital. Putnam, following Tocqueville, argues for the centrality of citizen organization. The breeding ground of social capital lies in organizations that citizens join for enjoyment, relaxation, and social interaction.²¹ These are often casual groups and may be devoted to a variety of activities that matter little for their direct contribution to democracy. It is the fact and habit of interaction, cooperation, and mutual support within these activities and organizations that cause citizens to develop capacities to interact in a democratic fashion – in other words, to develop social capital. Joining is itself the social good and the democratic contributor.

In his examination of social capital, especially in Italy, Putnam further argues that these organizations and the development of social capital trace far back into national history, requiring generations, even centuries to develop. Social capital is thus a slowly evolved good that societies can only expect to enjoy if they have had generations of associational experience. Where societies have a long history of mutual association, democracy will work better. Skocpol picks up on this historical perspective, as well, by examining voluntary associations in the United States in the nineteenth century.²² There is, then, a strong precedent in the study of social capital for considering a nation's history, and particularly the history of that nation's popular organizations and associations. If democracy is governance by the voice of the people, then the history of the popular political experience, particularly the pre-democratic history of the people, ought to be of relevance as democracy takes shape.

The argument that social capital develops slowly contrasts with an earlier position that social interaction and democratic engagement may be attained in a much faster and more effective manner via social revolution.²³ According to this earlier argument, revolution breaks the ice of political tyranny, mobilizes and empowers the population rapidly, and forces the popular agenda onto the political stage in a manner that forever changes the nature of political relationships and power.²⁴ Although revolutions in the real world have not necessarily bred democracy, those outcomes are more due to leadership that later corrupted the revolutionary ideals than to the nature of citizen

consider the concept of mobile social capital, Lara Putnam (2002) describes mobile associational relationships developed by migrants in Caribbean Costa Rica.

²¹ Crawford and Levitt (1999).

²² Skocpol (2003).

²³ On the relationship between revolution and democracy in the United States, see G. Wood (1969; 1974). See also Elkins and McKittrick (1993). With respect to the relationship between revolution and democracy in France, Moore argues that the French Revolution marked a critical step toward democratic development in that country, first and foremost, by sweeping aside the *ancien régime* and its upper classes who were so hostile to democracy (1966, p. 108). Also see Woloch (1994, pp. 91–92) and Hunt (1984). Even today, electoral studies in France emphasize ideology, related to social class, and deep social cleavages, as a result of the impact on democracy that has come from the French Revolution. The study of social cleavage, of course, is also of European origin (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967; Rokkan, 1970).

²⁴ For a consideration of changes in popular political culture after the Cuban revolution see Fagen (1969).

associations themselves. These, of course, did cooperate to end tyranny and create a visionary society, even if that vision was later lost by leaders who gained power without accountability. The argument in favor of a relationship between revolution and democracy remains because the revolutionary movement ended a tyrannical regime. And it differs from a social capital argument first in allowing for *rapid* advancement of the foundations for democracy and second in acknowledging that *disruptive* citizen organization, despite and indeed because of its dissenting characteristics, can help democracy develop.

THE NATURE OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

If we embrace the argument that citizen organization enhances democracy slowly, or we accept the earlier suggestion that revolutionary action builds democratic capacity rapidly by destroying tyranny and empowering citizens, either way we have assumed a positive kind of citizen organization that contributes constructively to democratic political development. Either position suggests that citizen organization has a long-term effect that is positive in its relation to human freedom. The outcome of such involvement is a better society, not a worse one.²⁵ Association, organization, joining, belonging, all of these activities lead individuals to think better and more positively toward others and to interact with more mutuality and respect. Whether they get there slowly through generations of associational activity or rapidly through revolution, the point at which they arrive has an enhancing effect on democracy. Such associational ties create a “we” that can work together to make society – and democracy – function.

Putnam has called these associational ties “bridging social capital.” Bridging social capital teaches individuals and groups to overcome and even value difference and forces those individuals and groups to find a common ground on which to interact, build a relationship, and work toward a mutual future. Another genre of literature has called them “cross-cutting ties,” which bind individuals to each other across natural lines of division, such as race, ethnicity, class, or religion. Ties that cut across such natural divisions reduce conflict in society. Reduced conflict enhances the possibilities of compromise and non-violent conflict resolution.²⁶

²⁵ Even in studies of social capital that confine themselves to Latin America, here again the presumption is that social capital is a positive good that enhances democracy. This book challenges that assumption. See, for example, Klesner (2007).

²⁶ See Anderson (2002). Also Ross (1985; 1986; 1993). Cross-cutting ties theory has been used and explored by many authors. For an early description of it, contrasting it with other theories of conflict see Levine and Campbell (1972) who contrast cross-cutting ties methods of describing social divisions with “pyramidal segmentation,” arrangements where social members are segmented into separate divisions in hierarchical order. These authors note that pyramidal segmentation is related to higher levels of conflict than are cross-cutting ties (see esp. chap. 4). See also Pruitt and Rubin (1986, p. 68). Similarly, Dahl argues that cross-cutting social contacts and checks are essential in making democracy possible (1956; 1971). For a study confirming the above theories see Harris (1972). In Harris’ study, divisions in an Irish

But some scholars of social capital have questioned whether social organizations and associations are always positive.²⁷ Some scholars suggest that popular organizations do not always enhance respect, cooperation, mutuality, and social cooperation and do not always contribute to democracy.²⁸ Organizations differ: some enhance mutual respect, cooperation, or egalitarian interaction, while others do not.²⁹ Some encourage members to empower themselves, work together, reach outward, and create mutuality, cooperation, and respect. Others encourage associational members to view each other positively while viewing non-members negatively, with suspicion, caution, hostility, distrust. Some organizations bind members to each other in large part by defining them as special, different, and better than others, but not necessarily by encouraging them to work together. Some associations create “associational glue” by erecting barriers between members and non-members, insiders and outsiders, “us” and “them.”

Putnam’s work acknowledges the existence of “bonding social capital” within organizations that bind members to each other but do not enhance mutuality and social respect across society, and recognizes that this bonding social capital does not have a positive relationship with democracy. This aspect of his argument, however, is less developed.³⁰ The notion of bonding social capital remains largely unexplored and its relationship to democracy poorly understood. If bridging social capital fosters democracy, what does bonding social capital do to and for democracy? Studies of social capital in political science have left this issue largely unexplored and these questions mostly unanswered. Yet if we are to understand fully the relationship between social capital and democracy, we must comprehend the effect of bonding social capital on making democracy work.

The broader social context is also relevant here because organizations do not develop in a vacuum. Rather, they emerge in a social context with its own traditions, and they reflect the values of their social surroundings. Some societies have cultures conducive to relatively egalitarian ties and interactions. There, associations that develop are more likely to build horizontal ties among members and to encourage mutual respect among equals. But other societies have strong traditions of hierarchy, vertical ties, and deference by those at the bottom toward those at the top. Strong hierarchical or clientelist social traditions that encourage vertical ties make it particularly difficult to develop bridging social capital. Most observers agree that the social context in the United States encouraged horizontal cooperation. But in Italy, Putnam found that horizontal cooperation was more common in the north, while hierarchy

community paralleled each other rather than cutting across each other with the result that conflict was more extensive than it otherwise would have been.

²⁷ Fiorina (1999).

²⁸ Berman (1997).

²⁹ Wood (2002).

³⁰ Putnam (2000, chap. 22).

and vertical ties were more prevalent in southern Italy. Scholars studying civil society in Spain have also argued that hierarchy characterized social relations there, particularly before the return to democracy in 1975. A hierarchical civil society encouraged hierarchical forms of social control in Spain, including the Catholic Church and the fascist state, and the development of democracy had to overcome such hierarchical traditions.³¹ Social context affects the nature of the organizations that are created in a particular society.

If organizations create at least two different kinds of ties within themselves – horizontal and vertical – the nature of those ties is determined in part by the style of leadership. In organizations where members consider each other peers and partners, horizontal ties are created, enhanced, and encouraged. Members look sideways toward each other, build and retain an awareness of each other, and consider each other resources. They are “tuned in” to each other. They learn ways of working together as equals. The horizontal ties among them become part of the strength and resources of the organization itself. Members learn that together they can do things that they would be unable to do alone. Horizontal ties empower associational members and encourage citizen initiatives. They build citizen faith in each other.

Vertical ties, on the other hand, emphasize the bond between each individual associational member and the leader. Organizations that encourage vertical ties stress the separate value of a direct connection between each individual and the leader. Individuals who cultivate a strong vertical tie to the leader can create great benefits for themselves. Organizations that promote vertical ties encourage members to look upward toward a leader rather than sideways towards each other. Members are to be loyal followers, and such loyalty may result in greater benefits from organizational membership. But vertical ties do not promote mutual cooperation among peers or faith in each other. In fact, members may not be tuned in to their peers at all because vertical orientation yields greater benefits than horizontal orientation. Vertical organizations may even discourage horizontal ties among members. Vertical ties can promote dependency, passivity, and an incapacity to work together.³² Citizens tied vertically to a leader above them typically have less capacity for citizen initiative, and such an organization may lack the resources to accomplish tasks that individuals are unable to complete alone. Organizational members bound by vertical ties may even be less able to accomplish group tasks than they would be if they were not associational members because of induced passivity and dependency.

These differences in organizational style create two dimensions along which organizations may relate to democracy: internal relationships inside the organization and outward perspectives toward non-members. Organizations may produce horizontal ties of mutuality and empowerment along with positive or tolerant attitudes toward those outside the organization. Or they may

³¹ Pérez-Díaz (1993).

³² Madsen and Snow (1991).

produce vertical ties of dependency and passivity that induce powerlessness while fostering suspicion, caution, separateness, and even hostility toward non-members. The nature of relationships within an organization (both relationships among equals and ties to leaders) and the view members take of non-members are as much a part of the social learning experience as is the speed with which such associational experience evolves. The nature of internal ties and the character of external views determine the kind of social capital created.

CAUSALITY AND INGREDIENTS

The tendency to assume that associations are more likely to make a positive contribution toward democracy derives from studying societies that are already fully democratic and tracing causality backward. Scholars have looked at the democratic outcome and asked why. Their answer has been associations, regardless of whether those associations are pro-status quo or disruptive. But that is an answer made inevitable by a lack of observation during the process of democratic construction. Just as one cannot guess all the ingredients that have gone into making a cake after the cake is finished, so one cannot fully know all of the ingredients that have gone into making a democracy work.

The best way to know what is in a cake is to be present while it is being made. Similarly, studies of the relationships among associational membership, the social capital it creates, and the relative success or quality of democracy can be improved by a perspective that looks at causality in a forward direction. We can begin by studying citizen associations themselves and following their development forward through time. We can consider the history of those associations, the social context, the nature of internal ties, and the character of external views that they encourage among associational members. We can find citizen associations that fostered horizontal internal ties and positive outward views, and contrast them with associations that encouraged vertical internal ties and suspicious outward views. We can study the relationship between those two types of associations and the development of democracy. We can also ask what, apart from associations, is helping a new democracy develop. Such forward-looking examination of democratization, along with an analysis of the relationship between associations and democratic development, will help determine whether and when citizen associations contribute to democracy.

A TALE OF TWO DEMOCRACIES

If, in fact, associational life sometimes contributes to positive mutual relations and respect, but may also produce internal dependency and external suspicion, a relevant question is how and why societies create one type of social organization or the other. Under what historical, contextual, and ideological circumstances does each type of social organization develop? How does each type of social organization contribute to the development of democracy?

TABLE 1.1. *Standard Economic Indicators: Nicaragua and Argentina*

	GNP 2006	Per Capita Income 2005	Literacy	Infant Mortality 2007
Nicaragua	\$17.33 billion	\$910	67.5% (2003)	27.14/1000 births
Argentina	\$608.8 billion	\$4470*	97.2% (2001)	14.29/1000 births

Note: * per capital income in Argentina was \$8909 in 1999 before the national recession

Sources: www.finfacts.ie/biz10/globalworldincomepercapita.htm; www.indexmundi.com; CIA World Fact Book, January, 2007.

This book explores these questions by examining the relationship between different types of social organizations and democratic development. We have chosen two modern societies with histories of extensive mass organization both of which are currently attempting to democratize. Unique among late twentieth-century Latin American nations, Nicaragua and Argentina each experienced a mass organizational phenomenon in which most low-income citizens joined or supported a single political organization. These were the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua and Peronism in Argentina. Each of these two mass movements organized huge proportions of the population and fundamentally altered political loyalties among citizens. Each retains extensive popular loyalty in their respective countries today, despite long periods out of power. And yet each used a very different kind of social organization and left a very different legacy within civil society from which to develop democracy. This book studies the relationship between Sandinista or Peronist social organization and democratic development in Nicaragua and Argentina today.

The choice of Nicaragua and Argentina sets aside standard explanations about democratic development that emphasize economic resources, affluence, or industry. Standard economic indicators invariably advantage Argentina, as shown in [Table 1.1](#).

As this book will show, despite these economic indicators, Argentina's democracy is not developing more smoothly or faster than Nicaragua's. In fact, democratization in Nicaragua is moving forward despite the poverty that these indicators reveal. This book focuses on social capital, its creation, and its limits in both nations, and redirects our attention away from economic development and toward citizen cooperation. If arguments about social capital are universally true, then they should travel easily irrespective of national affluence. Social capital theory does not claim to apply only to wealthy nations. Instead, social capital theory presents itself in a universalistic fashion. Accordingly, the relationship between social capital and democracy should be evident regardless of national context, both in a poor agrarian society and in a wealthy, industrial society. If social capital is a foundational asset for democracy, then its relationship to democracy should not be contingent upon national affluence but should be evident anywhere. This is the value of good

theory.³³ In fact, the best test of social capital theory is to apply it in comparing two different nations where economic indicators would lead us to expect that the wealthier nation would have the democratic advantage.

Experiments are more difficult in social science than they are in the natural sciences, particularly experiments that engage entire nations. Yet if there was ever an opportunity to construct an experiment using contrasting types of mass movements, Nicaragua and Argentina are perfect examples to produce, combined, that experiment. Nicaragua is building its democracy based on an egalitarian revolutionary movement that depended upon and fostered horizontal ties of mutual cooperation among citizens. Argentina is building its democracy based on hierarchical authoritarian populism that depended on vertical ties from the grassroots to a single charismatic leader, and that fostered distrust and mutual suspicion toward those outside Peronism and even among those within it. The contrasting values these movements created in their loyalists underscore the need for political science to study different kinds of social capital in relationship to democratic development. A brief overview of the Nicaraguan and Argentine democracies illustrates the extent to which the standard focus on level of national development cannot explain differences in democratic development. We need to incorporate an understanding of social capital to begin to explain the differences in democratic development in these two cases.

We begin with Argentina because standard explanations about democratic development that privilege levels of economic development would give the advantage to Argentina. From the outside, Argentina should seem an obvious case for successful democratization. Relatively affluent, the most cosmopolitan and European of all Latin American nations, Argentina should move readily and swiftly toward democracy. Highly industrialized, potentially self-sufficient in industry and agriculture, and a producer of multiple commodities for the global market, Argentina has many of the economic advantages normally associated with democracy. Home to an educated, literate middle class, historically the base of organized, unionized labor, Argentina should be enjoying a civilized, educated, politicized, cosmopolitan population who can readily embrace democratic institutions and process. And yet Argentina's democracy seems always on the verge of, already deeply mired in, or just emerging from crisis. Since its return to a regular electoral calendar in December of 1983, it has suffered hyperinflation, several attempted coupes, an economic collapse, the resignation of several presidents, rampant corruption, the decline of its legal system and a lack of two-party contestation for office. Even now, as it appears to be enjoying competent governance, the presidency is still haunted by lack of effective party competition and suspicions of strong-man rule disguised as nepotism. An apparent *caudillista* control in presidential power is being greeted as positive. No one even seems to be troubled by the fact that the

³³ For a similar choice of very different cases to test the power of an argument in contrasting settings see E. Wood (2000).

presidency, which was continually staying within the same party, is now staying within the same family. Why? Why would a nation with so many apparent democratic advantages have so much trouble developing democracy?

The answers to Argentina's troubles do not lie in current events, or in the choice of a president, or in the failure of economic policy, or in investigations of the electoral capacity of political parties. These are immediate manifestations of more fundamental problems. Many observers have noticed that Argentines lack a basic ability to cooperate with each other and that deficiency has been evident over many decades as well as in contemporary problems. But the reasons behind that inability are historical and lie in the nature of Argentine society. By looking into historical context we can understand why Argentina's democracy appears to be so often troubled, and by understanding that we can find pathways out of that trouble. Whatever temporary measures Argentina takes to address its current problems, over the long term its democracy must address the fundamental issues of trust and cooperation if it is to survive.

In Nicaragua, by contrast, democracy seems to be developing against remarkable odds and multiple disadvantages.³⁴ Nicaragua is a tiny, poverty-stricken, agricultural nation whose entire economy depends on a few agricultural export crops. It has almost no industry and relies on foreign imports for much of the basis of its economy. Its people are poor, traditionally undereducated, and many have historically been illiterate. It has suffered intensive foreign imperialism for much of its history. It has all the disadvantages and few of the advantages that tend to auger well for democracy.

And yet, Nicaragua has moved slowly but steadily toward democracy ever since it began a regular electoral calendar in November, 1984.³⁵ Since then, each of its three major parties, the Liberals, the Conservatives, and the Sandinistas, have won and then lost national elections, and have left office on schedule. There has been no hyperinflation and no attempted coups. Although there is poverty, there has been no major national crisis and no threat to default on international loans. No president has resigned. Its most corrupt president, Arnaldo Alemán (1996–2001), was tried and punished through the legal system – an effort led by the next president, Enrique Bolaños, who had been Alemán's own Vice President and a member of the same Liberal Constitutionalist Party.³⁶ Nicaraguans have engaged in thoughtful, reflective discussions in recent elections, in a manner similar to that of citizens in established democracies and one that has advanced democratic development in Nicaragua. This has occurred despite circumstances that theorists find antithetical to democratization.³⁷ In the most recent national election, the leftist Sandinistas won office legitimately and were allowed to take office peacefully. The new president, Daniel Ortega, who appears to be bent on personalistic

³⁴ Anderson and Dodd (2002; 2004; 2005).

³⁵ Anderson and Dodd (2002; 2009).

³⁶ Anderson (2006).

³⁷ Anderson and Dodd (2002; 2004; 2005; 2007).

control, is being accused of *caudillista* politics and meets resistance at every turn. He faces firm opposition from the legislature, other members of the left, and from within his own party.³⁸ Nicaraguans are responding negatively to the attempted *caudillista* control, recognizing it as wrong and trying to stop its development.³⁹ While Nicaragua is not without its problems, it does not seem to have the repeated dramatic crises that plague Argentina. Personalized politics is greeted as a problem rather than a solution. Why? Why would a nation with apparently so few democratic advantages be developing its democracy in such a steady fashion?

As in the case of Argentina, current events and contemporary issues are not enough to explain Nicaragua's democratization. Current events reflect social relations underlying Nicaragua's progress. The outcome of one election, the role of domestic actors, domestic responses to international influences at a given moment in time, and strong electoral parties that win office and alternate in power are all manifestations of a deeper pattern of human relations that has facilitated Nicaragua's democracy in a remarkable way. As with Argentina, the answer to Nicaragua's democratization lies in historical context. Despite multiple disadvantages, Nicaragua has habits of social behavior that facilitate democratic development. Its citizens have a capacity for cooperation – a capacity that has been mildly present for generations but was dramatically encouraged by social revolution. Today it is causing democratization. The popular histories examined here have formed popular culture within each nation and it is that popular culture which determines social capital and its role in democracy.⁴⁰

This tale of two democracies has also been told before, and the paths Nicaragua and Argentina travel have been taken before by older democracies that today are considered established democratic nations. Upon reaching the end of this book, the reader will understand how the stories of Nicaragua and Argentina also pertain to those of the developing democracies of France and

³⁸ Anderson and Dodd (2009).

³⁹ On legislative resistance to Ortega's caudillista maneuvers see *El Nuevo Diario*, December 1, 2, 3, 2007, p. 1. Leading the legislative resistance to Ortega's efforts to ignore constitutional law is Wilfredo Navarro, head of the legislative bloc for the Liberal Constitutional Party (PLC). For leftist resistance to Ortega's efforts to control power extra constitutionally see *El Nuevo Diario*, December 16, 2007, p. 1. Leading leftist resistance to Ortega's efforts to subvert aspects of constitutional rule is Edmundo Jarquin, 2006 presidential candidate for the center leftist party, Sandinista Renovating Movement. On this issue Jarquin raised questions about Ortega's mental fitness for office. On the 2006 election see Anderson and Dodd (2007).

⁴⁰ Jeffrey W. Rubin (2004) likewise seeks to understand the relationship between social movements and the cultural politics behind those movements. Like his, my approach requires contextual understanding of the different historical paths by which these movements have developed. Likewise, Nancy Bermeo (2003) uses historical and contextual analysis to inform her understanding of popular support for democracy across Europe and Latin America. Her analysis reveals findings that have gone unnoticed by scholars less steeped in historical analysis.

the United States, of Germany and Italy. For the struggles being played out in these two Latin American nations have also been played out before in other developing democracies in the early nineteenth century. This book places the cases studied here in the broader comparative context of history, and compares them to the development or failure of democracy elsewhere.

In Nicaragua we are looking at a nation with a revolutionary history. [Chapter 2](#) will illustrate how that history has folded itself into every aspect of contemporary politics. In particular, it has affected how citizens relate to each other and how they view their leaders. It has also produced a particular brand of politics, strong with respect to mobilizational capacity and weak with respect to institutions. Those strengths and weaknesses shape Nicaraguan democratization today. But the story of the relationship between revolution and democracy does not belong to Nicaragua alone. In France and in the United States, many scholars have found the connection that popular cooperation and revolution have with democratic development. That story of revolution and democracy emphasizes the presence of horizontal ties of cooperation and mutuality, the strong development of associations and popular participation, and the importance of citizen participation.

Crucial to the relationship between revolution and democracy in Nicaragua is the role of alternation in power. Unlike the revolutions of Cuba, Russia, and China, Nicaragua's revolution benefited from the liberating aspects of popular revolution and then removed the revolutionary leaders from power before they could become totalitarians. Alternation in power allowed popular participation to flourish rather than crushing it at its height. Nicaragua's story reminds us that revolution was originally supposed to be a liberating movement against authoritarianism. By taking the liberating aspects and curtailing the totalitarian aspects of revolution, Nicaragua has put us back in touch with the democratizing potential of revolution.

In Argentina, by contrast, we are looking at a nation with a deep authoritarian culture and a history of repression toward the popular sectors that were never broken by revolution. [Chapter 3](#) will show how that culture produced a popular social movement that only intensified the previous cultural tendencies toward vertical ties, clientelistic control, personalized, charismatic strong-man politics, and a lack of citizen cooperation or initiative. Argentina's political history, far more than Nicaragua's, is shared by many other Latin American nations. Clientelism and deep authoritarian patterns of leadership also characterize Brazil, Peru, and Mexico, to name but a few. A tendency to embrace personalized politics also characterizes the Dominican Republic and, until recently, even Venezuela. But Argentina's authoritarian political culture is not confined to Latin America. [Chapter 3](#) will show that Argentina also shares the characteristics of authoritarian personalism and democratic breakdown with the European nations of Germany, Italy, and Spain.

This overview indicates that Argentina does not have the advantage in democratization that we would expect it to have given its status as a relatively

wealthy industrialized nation. Nicaragua, on the other hand, looks more successful in its democratic development than we would expect it to be given its status as a poor agrarian nation. The argument of this book is that part of the answer to this contrast lies in social capital theory, and specifically in the kind of social capital these nations developed with the mass movements of the Sandinista revolution and Peronism. Differences in social capital, rather than differences in industrial or economic development, explain democratic development in these two cases.

But even there we do not have the full answers. Even by understanding social capital in these two nations, we fall short of a full explanation for democratic development in each context. Even if we allow that social capital is strong in agrarian Nicaragua because of the type of association Sandinismo created, and that social capital is weak in industrialized Argentina because of the type of social capital Peronism instilled, we still face the fact that modern Argentina is democratizing. In a determined fashion and in the face of extreme military brutality, Argentine democracy is lurching forward. Even if Argentine democratization is not as smooth and untroubled as we would expect it to be judging from the nation's level of industrial development, nevertheless, Argentina is making forward progress in the construction of a recognizable democracy.

This can only be possible upon the basis of some democratic foundation other than social capital. We find that, despite the popular culture of suspicion and distrust, despite clientelism and authoritarianism, or possibly precisely because of them, Argentina has attended to the development of its institutions – far more than Nicaragua. Indeed, it has given more attention to the establishment of democratic institutions than it has to the establishment of democracy itself. Argentina's story will focus our attention on the power of institutions and the capacity of institutions to create and protect democratic space, provide a bulwark against authoritarianism, and gradually grow into the role of democratic governance. Argentina's path to democracy is weak with respect to popular participation but strong with respect to institutional development. It is an alternative path to democracy that has received less attention.

By placing this tale of two democracies within the larger tale of democracy in Europe and Latin America, we will find the universal lessons about how the patterns of human relations and civil society influence the polity. By learning what those patterns are in Nicaragua and Argentina, we will be able to identify them elsewhere and to understand beforehand where and why democracy will develop with reasonable steadiness and where and why its development will be troubled. By having that knowledge, we can then inject human agency into the course of democracy, as, in fact, both the Nicaraguans and the Argentines have already done. Whether human agency comes in the form of mobilized, cooperative popular participation, or whether it comes by the deliberate careful construction of the institutions of state, either way human agency produces for itself a resource that can be used against authoritarianism.