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Deborah Welch Larson. *Anatomy of Mistrust: U.S.-Soviet Relations During the Cold War.* Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997. xi + 329 pp. $37.50 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8014-3302-3.

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Psychoanalyzing the Cold War

It should be kept in mind that anyone writing a book these days on the former USSR risks being outdated before their work gets published. As archives open and new information surfaces, all previous research is cast in a new light and sometimes it is found to be missing big pieces of the puzzle. Another thing the reader needs to be aware of is the dramatic shift that has taken place in the field of Russian Studies, particularly the changes in methodology that is making "Sovietology" defunct as a Soviet slogan. This is important for understanding the context of Deborah Welch Larson's *Anatomy of Mistrust.* It is a good book, but perhaps written too late.

As the full title makes clear, the book is about the USSR and its counterpart, the United States, during the Cold War. The "anatomy" is Larson's paradigm for explaining trust that is exercised in foreign relations. She suggests three explanations for trust and distrust in such situations: 1) rational choice, 2) domestic structure, and 3) psychological factors. Examples of "rational choice" are decisions and actions that help cultivate good relations between nations. The "domestic structure" has to do with the state's domestic sectors, including bureaucracies, that exert influences. As implied by its category, the "psychological factors" are about the human element that sometimes can by found to be less than rational. Larson suggests that it is this third explanation that is most useful in analyzing events of the Cold War. For testing or proving her thesis, Larson reviews several episodes of the past, as indicated by these chapter headings: "German Reunification and Disarmament" (Chapter Two), "Disengagement, German Nuclear Weapons, and the Test Ban" (Chapter Three), "JFK, Khrushchev, and the German Question" (Chapter Four), and "Success and Failure in SALT" (Chapter Five).

In her final analysis, she puts much of the blame on the Cold War on the United States: "American leaders fundamentally distrusted the Soviets because they were communists. Often, what U.S. officials feared was not principally that the Soviets might cheat on any particular arms control agreement, for most violations would have had inconsequential effects on the strategic balance. Rather, policymakers such as John Foster Dulles believed that the Soviets would lull Western public opinion into complacency and reduce public support for defense spending. The Soviets might also take advantage of an atmosphere of good feeling to subvert democratic governments" (p. 237).

The author could be taken to task for not considering many details in her analysis. For example, in regard to the events following World War II, the author makes no mention of the Yalta Conference and the "psychological factors" that many American leaders had based on their feelings that Roosevelt had not negotiated well and had "given away" (or "sold out") all of Eastern Europe. Or–in regard to Kennedy and Khrushchev–the latest information is that it was Kennedy who "blinked" during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Regarding Reagan's initial totally mistrust of Gorbachev, the author fails to consider how the Soviet delay in acknowledging the Chernobyl accident was a strike against the new Soviet leader who was proclaiming glasnost and "fresh breezes."

Larson's scant mention of one of the last mysteries of the Cold War, the 1983 downing of the Korean airliner KE007, omits details that would make her review of trust and mistrust less neat and clean (pp. 197-198). There is no mention of the fact that the RC-135 American reconaissance plane that had earlier been in the area was a routine actuality, part of a strategic monitoring system as negotiated between the two superpowers. Furthermore, there is no mention of the new laws that had been promulgated by the Soviets that in essence required the shooting down of any aircraft straying into Soviet airspace. Rather than analyze the rhetoric of Reagan and Schultz after the event, Larson could have served her readers better by analyzing why Andropov felt such laws on Soviet airspace were necessary. (Murray Sayle's "Closing the

File on Flight 007" in *The New Yorker* magazine of 13 December 1993 offers a good analysis of this tragedy.)

And this leads to another point of which I think Larson and others would do well to consider. Sometimes in our attempt to categorize events in precise academic fashion we fail to realize that some bad things in history are a result of incompetence and ineptness. Grand schemes of right and wrong do not always accomodate the reality of historical events.

Another author might take the same information and reach the opposite overall conclusion that Larson suggests. The American policy of containment might be hailed as having worked. There were many risks and grave dangers along the way, but it would be naive to think that any other plan would have been without other hazards of a global scale. In the final analysis, there has been no world war for a half century and there has been no use of nuclear weapons. At the beginning of her book, Larson states that "we must wonder if the arms race and global competition…could have been better managed" (p. 1). This is a good thing to ask, but at the same time we must wonder how events might have turned out for the worse had they not been managed at all. (Some observers wish Russia today could be better managed within its borders; it remains to be seen what the long-term ramifactions are for the world if things there do not dramatically improve.)

The real weakness of *Anatomy of Mistrust* is its lack of new material. A review of the primarcy sources cited shows mostly American ones. The limited amount of Soviet sources makes this book one-sided, although the author seems to make up for such omission by giving all benefits of the doubt to the USSR.

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