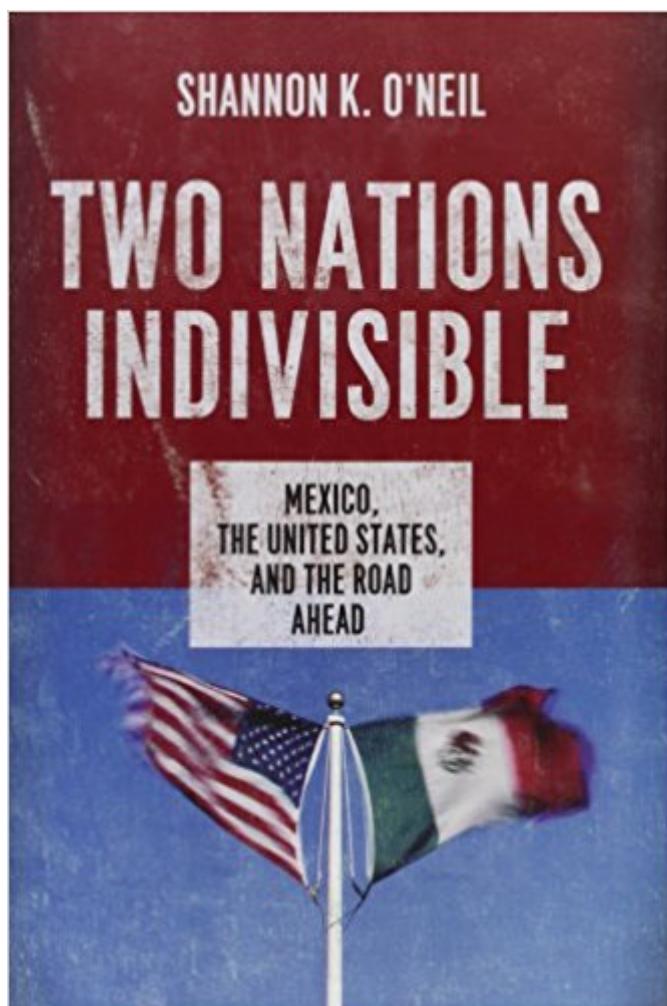


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Two Nations Indivisible: Mexico, The United States, And The Road Ahead



Synopsis

A lawless border shootout with American guns in Mexican hands. Tragic stories of immigrants dying in the desert while heading north. Decapitations, kidnappings, and body counts. These sorts of grim tales dominate the media, infiltrate movies and TV shows, and ultimately shape Americans' perception of Mexico as a dangerous country, overrun by brutal drug lords. Without a doubt, the drug war is real. In the last six years, more than 60,000 people have been murdered in narco-related crimes. But there is far more to Mexico's story than this gruesome narrative would suggest. Hidden behind the headlines is a more hopeful Mexico, one undergoing rapid and widespread social, political, and economic transformations. It is one of a globally competitive economy, a rising middle class, and increasingly influential pro-democracy voters. It is a thriving Mexico whose people, communities, companies, and commerce are intricately tied to the United States. In her groundbreaking book, *Two Nations Indivisible*, Shannon K. O'Neil argues that the United States is making a grave mistake by focusing on the politics of antagonism toward Mexico. Rather, America should wake up to the revolution of prosperity now unfolding there. This is the Mexico Americans need to get to know. Now more than ever, the two countries are indivisible. It is past time for the United States to forge a new relationship with its southern neighbor. In no uncertain terms, America's future depends on it.

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Customer Reviews

Q&A with Shannon K. O'Neil, author of *Two Nations Indivisible* Q. Why should we care about Mexico? A. Perhaps no other country affects the United States on a day-to-day basis as much as Mexico. The two nations have always been linked by their shared two thousand mile border, but the nature of this relationship has broadened and deepened over the last three decades. Today energy, the environment, corporations, supply chains, people, communities, and security bind the two nations together, making them truly indivisible, and Mexico's path forward matter more than ever for its northern neighbor. The challenge ahead is for Mexico and the United States to work together to strengthen the good and diminish the bad in this close but still unequal relationship. Q. So what is happening next door? A. Mexico has transformed over the last three decades, mostly in good ways. It is now a vibrant, if at times messy, democracy. It has an open and globally competitive economy, and it has a growing middle class. Yet alongside these many positive trends, Mexico faces a crisis of violence. Over the last six years newspaper counts put the drug related death toll at over 60,000, and some independent analysts estimates tens of thousands more. The question now is where will Mexico head -- what path will it take in the twenty-first century. Can Mexico reach its real potential -- becoming a top ten world economy, a market-based democracy, a strong ally for the United States and a leader among emerging countries; or will it be consumed by instability, corruption, and crime. Q. What can the United States do? A. Working together means not just a new set of policies but also a larger shift--to a true partnership. It should start with people, and reforming immigration laws to support rather than shun the binational individuals and communities that already exist-- and link the two nations. It means embracing and deepening economic ties, recognizing that a rising tide can lift all boats. And it requires shifting U.S. security cooperation to move beyond drug trafficking to focus on reducing the general crime and violence afflicting Mexico's people. In this the United States will need to take a hard look at its own drug, gun, and money laundering policies, and consider the bilateral effects of domestic decisions. Q. How will Mexico affect the United States? A. Whether we like it or not, the direction Mexico takes now affects not just Mexico's citizens but also Americans. And while there is much to lose, there is much more to gain. In fact, Mexico is less a problem and more an answer for the economic, security, and diplomatic challenges the United States faces today.

"A good political and economic history of modern Mexico, the book will be of interest to those seeking a deeper understanding of the country." --Publishers Weekly "In delightfully entertaining yet fact-filled prose, O'Neil sketches a persuasively optimistic portrait of Mexico, one at odds with the crime-drenched media reports and alarmist warnings of nativists in the United States." --Foreign

Affairs "Shannon O'Neil's new book about U.S.-Mexico relations is probably the best since 1989's *Distant Neighbors* by Alan Riding . . . O'Neil concentrates on the issues of immigration, the lack of rule of law in Mexico, and how Mexico has helped U.S. companies become more competitive in the global market, thus adding U.S. jobs. She provides concrete examples and historical context, mixing the stories of individuals deftly with her macroeconomic observations." --San Antonio Express-News

"[O'Neil] provides both a readable recent history of Mexico and a cogent argument for why U.S. policymakers, business leaders and citizens should care about the future of their southern neighbor . . . The book will interest those who are concerned about the future of U.S.-Mexico relations, but it is also an indispensable account of Mexico's recent history-including its processes of democratic opening and political reform. The author manages to cover in less than 200 pages most of the major developments that have shaped Mexico's emergence as a democracy and modern economy, as well as the work that needs to be done to make those changes permanent. And the writer's easy style makes it a quick and accessible-even exciting-read without sacrificing depth." --Americas Quarterly

"Shannon O'Neil's new book *Two Nations Indivisible: Mexico, the United States, and the Road Ahead* insightfully analyzes and explains the different and at times paradoxical aspects of modern Mexico. Throughout the book, O'Neil livens the narrative with well-told anecdotes drawn from her own experiences in Mexico City and other parts of the country. She distills more than two decades of research into straightforward prose and also shares the stories of the friends and acquaintances she met through the years." --Forbes.com

"In her book *Two Nations Indivisible*, Shannon K. O'Neil dissects the complicated, symbiotic and often testy relationship between the United States and Mexico as they charge ahead in the 21st century." --Texas Tribune

"Groundbreaking." --San Antonio News Express

"Shannon O'Neil's *Two Nations Indivisible* challenges us to delve beyond how and what we think of Mexico and its splashy headlines. She has written an absorbing book about our two nations' common border and mutual destiny, a critical read to grasp turbulent but pivotal and promising Mexico. This is a revealing, fresh look into a country undergoing transformation, a book brimming with insight and thoughtfulness about a strange and difficult neighbor that many of us claim to know, yet so few of us really understand. I was instantly captivated." --Alfredo Corchado, Mexico correspondent for The Dallas Morning News, and author of *Midnight In Mexico*

"Shannon O'Neil has combined her deep knowledge of Mexico with illuminating anecdotes and insightful analysis to set out the opportunities and challenges for Mexico and to persuasively make the case that a successful Mexico is of vital importance to the United States. In that context, she thoughtfully explores the policy paths that Mexico and the United States should pursue to realize the potential for Mexico's success that she strongly believes in. And, while this

discussion is serious and important, it is also well written and engrossing." --Robert E. Rubin, Co-Chairman, Council on Foreign Relations, and former U.S. Treasury Secretary "Wedded-for better or for worse. Trade booms, they reshape each other's societies, and Mexico democratizes. Yet, Mexico's thugs get weapons in the United States; U.S. kids get cocaine from Mexico. Shannon O'Neil's smart, articulate, well-researched, and illuminating book sheds light on this binational intimacy, its tragedies and hopes, and sets the path for a better future." --Jorge Domínguez, Professor, Harvard University "Two Nations Indivisible provides a brilliant, well-documented roadmap showing how and why the United States and Mexico could and should collaborate to solve shared economic, social and security challenges and in doing so advance their respective national interests. Leaders, public and private, on both sides of the border should take note." --Ambassador Carla A. Hills, Chair & CEO, Hills & Company, International Consultants "Two Nations Indivisible is an in depth analysis of the relationship between two nations that together can play a major role in the 21st century." --Claudio X. Gonzalez, Chairman, Mexico Business Council "The U.S.-Mexico relationship is as complex as it is misunderstood. Shannon O'Neil provides a lucid and timely correction to the many myths that have long plagued this relationship." --Moises Naim, Senior Associate in the International Economics Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and author of The End of Power "O'Neil presents a contemporary overview of US-Mexico relations and focuses on the current state of affairs regarding trade, security, and immigration issues... Anecdotes help to present the human face of immigration, the devastating effects of violence, and the challenges that politicians and diplomats face in dealing with the complexities and contradictions of the bilateral relationship at the federal level." --CHOICE

It is one of the most objectively written books at least for the last decade. In two nations indivisible Ms. O'Neil portray a vivid picture of the reality in both countries, historically and economically. In her book thanks to her deeply knowledge of Mexico Ms. O'Neil laid out clear and concise ideas of how moving forward both countries need to work together to face the enormous problems that can't be tackled only on one side of the border. Also as a Mexican living in the USA I can see how many Americans have a wrong picture about Mexico. It is a book that lawmaker in Mexico and the USA should read and take into account, it is definitely an eye opener book.

The author's basic premise is that the relationship between these two neighboring countries has a huge potential, one that Mexicans recognize but Americans do not. While there is an important component to the book which lays out why the United States and its people could benefit more from

the relationship, particularly taking into account NAFTA, a large portion reveals some of the trials and tribulations currently being suffered by the people of Mexico. Nonetheless, Mexico has enjoyed very rapid and solid economic growth over the past years and one symptom of this is that the number of Mexicans migrating legally or illegally to the United States has diminished dramatically. In fact, it is probable that there are more Mexicans returning to their homeland currently than Mexicans migrating across their northern border. A very well written book by O'Neil -- it is clear that the author spent some time in Mexico researching it. Excellent -- I recommend it unreservedly.

A timely read for anyone who cares about Mexico or the US. O'Neil makes a strong case for why the two nations are permanently connected, for the better of both. She covers Mexico's successes in building its democracy and its economy, and the benefits of Mexican trade and immigration for the US economy. Who knew that 40% of the value of products made in Mexico is actually made in the US (at least I didn't before I read this book). O'Neil also provides a very accessible guide to many of Mexico's challenges: the dark side of democratization, which has led to violence as drug cartels negotiate with new political bosses; the lack of social mobility (including a fantastic quote from Mayor Villaraigosa that I won't spoil by repeating here); and the monopolies and oligopolies that restrain growth and result in the average Mexican family paying 40% more than they should for everyday basics, per the OECD. *Two Nations Indivisible* is a very accessible, well-researched argument for a more hopeful view of Mexico from north of the border, and I for one am convinced.

was a little disappointed especially with all the reviews, to be fair, i read this in chunks, part in the mexico city airport, part when i was in havana, and the remaining part in san diego across 2 months so maybe the problem with continuity was only in my mind - however, i perceived this book just as a statement of fact and some commentary and would have been more interesting with some deep analytical insight ...

This book is an incredible journey through the untold stories of a shared economic interest between both Mexico and the United States. This book also supplies statistical reports that contradict American fears, and names media and propaganda the key players in an unjust metaphorical "trial." O'Neil boldly suggests plans for the future that should be recognized and nurtured NOW for the two countries, as unbeknownst to the United States, Mexico is realizing its place in the global economy. However, the book WOULD suffice as a significant call to action, led by its readers to enforce the friendly economic partnership between the 2 countries IF a Spanish version were made available.

People on both sides of the border should read this.

Shannon O'Neil provides key insights into why Mexico is the most important relationship for the United States and why the US government and its citizens must look beyond the security issues that dominate the headlines.

This is a profound work by one of the few scholars that is widely accepted as knowing and understanding our complicated relationship with Mexico! Thank you for writing the book and keeping us informed.

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