BOOK NOTICES

Initiated notices were written by Wilber Chafee, John Findling, Jean-Claude Garcia-Zamor, Wendell Gordon, Terence Grieder, Guy Manaster, Stanley R. Ross, Ismael Silva-Fuenzalida, Richard Sinkin, David T. Sisto, and Brian Stross, all of the University of Texas, Austin.


Professor Beals' book is an entertaining commentary on a dozen "revolutions" from 1776 to the present, which casually raises questions about their "origin" and, presumably, inquires aggregately into the "nature" of revolution. The purpose of the title must be more organizational than conceptual, since there is little in the book, apart from a disturbingly loose introduction, which discusses the general theme.

More serious, perhaps, is the author's assumption that revolutions, particularly those selected for this survey, have sufficient similarities to justify even implicit comparisons. Beals sketches briefly the United States', French, Mexican, and Bolshevik revolutions, Latin American wars of independence, as well as the Paris Commune, the "Black Shirt" revolution of Mussolini, the 1931 republican "revolution" in Spain, the Chinese communist and Cuban revolutions, the Mau Mau, and what he calls "revolution and the power structure" in the contemporary United States. Assuming for the sake of argument that all these events represent a common phenomenon to be called "revolution," explanation would require either extensive case studies for each or an explicit analytic framework on revolution which a brief survey could illustrate. Unfortunately the book provides neither. The rise of Mussolini cannot convincingly be reviewed and explained in 18 pages, any more than Latin American independence revolutions grouped together can be explained in 14 pages. What framework there is in the first chapter is vague if not useless; for example:

"Revolution is born of an abnormal state of mind, sensitized by an accumulated body of experience. Revolutions are psychological explosions resulting from irritations commonly economic in origin, and they are conditioned in their programs by the stock of knowledge and aspiration peculiar to their time and place."

If the book is intended for a general public, then these criticisms may not be important. The events themselves are exciting, and Beals' commentary is interesting and readable. For the social scientist and historian there is more useful literature on the general topic of revolution and on the specific instances reviewed in the book.

Syracuse University RONALD H. McDONALD


Walter Krause and John Mathis have written an easily understood exposition of the merits of economic integration in Latin America.