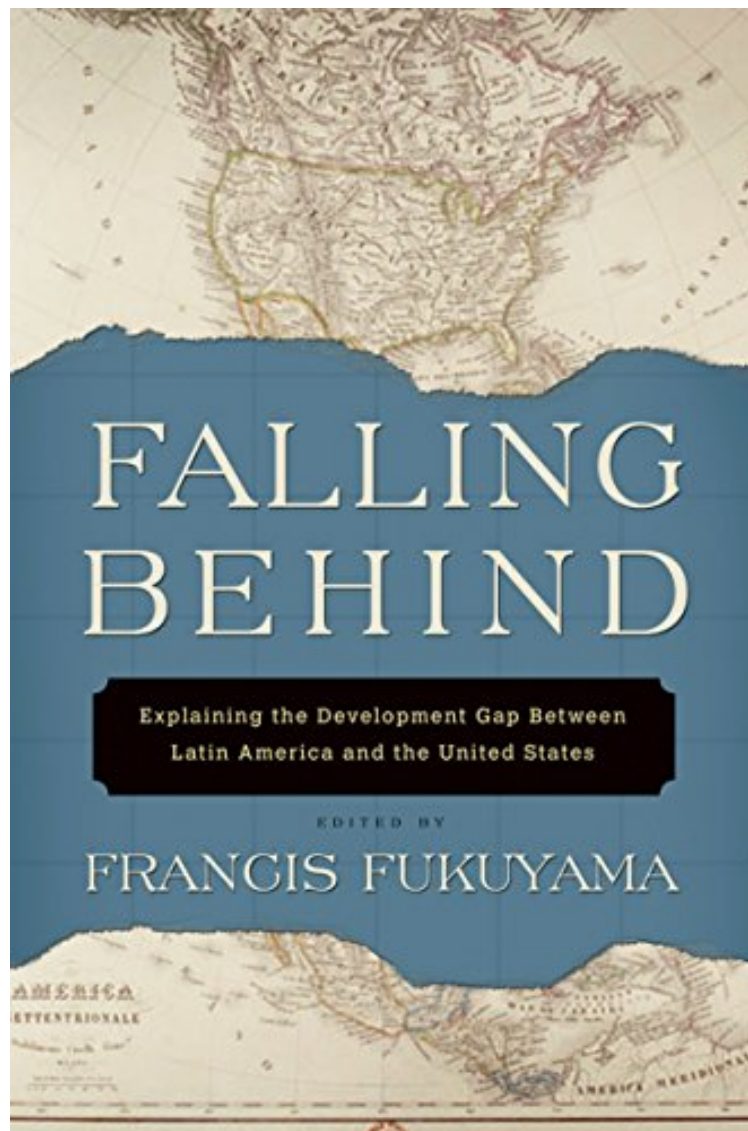


(Mobile ebook) Falling Behind: Explaining the Development Gap Between Latin America and the United States

# Falling Behind: Explaining the Development Gap Between Latin America and the United States

*Francis Fukuyama*

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**Francis Fukuyama : Falling Behind: Explaining the Development Gap Between Latin America and the United States** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Falling Behind: Explaining the Development Gap Between Latin America and the United States:

1 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy charlesfine14 of 14 people found the following review helpful. Thoughtful Essays about Factors Affecting Economic Performance in Latin AmericaBy Donald

Mitchell Falling Behind contains nine excellent essays exploring different aspects of why Latin America and the United States have different income levels. The key points in those nine essays are nicely summarized in Francis Fukuyama's conclusion, the tenth essay. The authors were well chosen to reflect both Latin American and U.S. perspectives. I found that some of the arguments were more persuasive than others, especially the time series work that showed much of the loss of relative economic performance occurring during the time when Latin American countries were establishing their governments. That evidence seemed to be the smoking gun that shows that economic development requires stable, effective government. Of equal interest were the investigations of the factors that don't seem to explain the differences, including religious culture, tropical climate, and disease. The book is short on prescriptions. But Latin America seems likely to profit from improved government policies for economic development, better educational results, more inclusive two-party politics in democracies, improving security of property rights, making entrepreneurship easier, and avoiding regime changes. Historical data make it hard to test everything, but I did wonder if geography might not have played a bigger role in falling behind the United States than this book suggests. A lot of the economic development of the U.S. in the early industrial revolution depended on having lots of cotton growing and the raw materials to make steel-based goods that could be inexpensively shipped across the North Atlantic to Europe. Latin America mostly lacked those same resources and access to the European markets at the same time. I'm sure the debate over what went wrong in Latin America will continue as long as Latin America's prosperity lags behind the United States. It's a subject well worth considering to provide guidance for other developing regions, especially in Africa. 3 of 18 people found the following review helpful. He never falls short. By Jose C. Lopez. Great writer, amazing book, you go thru this book as he was talking to you. I have read most of his books and he always keeps amazing me, amazing knowledge, great writer.

In 1700, Latin America and British North America were roughly equal in economic terms. Yet over the next three centuries, the United States gradually pulled away from Latin America, and today the gap between the two is huge. Why did this happen? Was it culture? Geography? Economic policies? Natural resources? Differences in political development? The question has occupied scholars for decades, and the debate remains a hot one. In *Falling Behind*, Francis Fukuyama gathers together some of the world's leading scholars on the subject to explain the nature of the gap and how it came to be. Tracing the histories of development over the past four hundred years and focusing in particular on the policies of the last fifty years, the contributors conclude that while many factors are important, economic policies and political systems are at the root of the divide. While the gap is deeply rooted in history, there have been times when it closed a bit as a consequence of policies chosen in places ranging from Chile to Argentina. Bringing to light these policy success stories, Fukuyama and the contributors offer a way forward for Latin American nations and improve their prospects for economic growth and stable political development. Given that so many attribute the gap to either vast cultural differences or the consequences of U.S. economic domination, *Falling Behind* is sure to stir debate. And, given the pressing importance of the subject in light of economic globalization and the immigration debate, its expansive, in-depth portrait of the hemisphere's development will be a welcome intervention in the conversation.