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War Against All Puerto Ricans: Revolution and Terror in America's Colony. Nelson A. Denis. New York: Nation Books, 2015. 400 pages.

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Nelson Denis's polemical bestseller is a passionate narrative undertaking about the repression of the Puerto Rican independence movement during the 1930-1950 period, especially the sufferings of its most famous hero, Pedro Albizu Campos. Part of the book's success in the U.S. and on the island is that Dennis writes in English as a diasporic person of Puerto Rican heritage reclaiming a story unknown to many readers in the United States. The book focuses on the unsuccessful nationalist revolt of 1950 but it describes in detail the process leading to it and the aftermath. The struggles for independence Denis retells are part of a larger foundational fiction of Puerto Rico as a *dream nation*, one full of heroes fighting for independence (what the story does not explore is why the majority of Puerto Ricans have scorned independence).

The book has been both lauded and panned. Many greeted it with joy since it opens to a new audience to the account of Puerto Rico's "revolution and terror." Historians, however, have challenged the veracity of some of the book's claims as well as its methodology, particularly the use of anonymous sources. The title of the book itself has been debated because it misquotes a notorious U.S. chief of police, therefore fashioning a denunciation of a U.S. will to war against all Puerto Ricans. Yet defenders of *WAAPR* allege that despite its exaggerations most of its claims are verifiable facts and that even when it strays from history, its errors are secondary to its moral value. *WAAPR* features chapters on historical real-life events such as the Jayuya uprising, the Ponce massacre and the imprisonment of many nationalists, all told with great vigor and colorful language. The plot is that of a page-turning suspense novel or thriller, with many adventure sequences centering on the doomed fight for independence.

The narration uses literary techniques for maximum sensational impact; for instance, chapters 16 and 17 deal with a heart-rending sequence of unlawful detentions and torture suffered by a nationalist barber, Santiago Vidal. In those sequences, however, the book's fictional heightening of history is laid bare when it recounts the anecdote of a nationalist that was fed his own son, a gruesome legend that has been used from Herodotus in ancient times to contemporary *Game of Thrones*.

The extensive descriptions of Albizu Campos's imprisonment are vivid and epitomize Denis's indictment of the mistreatment of the independence movement and its leader--whose experiences had already been documented in Spanish. The nationalist is a mythic figure, "[Albizu] was indeed a teacher, a great pianist of ideas, about to sit at his instrument and unleash a Wagnerian fury" (115). What makes the book more of a novel, are the passages where it describes the inner life and thoughts of Albizu while in prison, much as narrative fiction would.

Denis denounces a consistent historical continuity of U.S. oppression and repression of the island. The story, therefore, features a cast of villains from the U.S. and their Puerto Rican sympathizers. Center stage is Luis Muñoz Marín as the antagonist to Albizu; in one of its most controversial approaches, the book portrays Muñoz Marín as an opium addict who hijacked the national project therefore betraying the independence ideal he held at first. Also villainous are the four dastardly U.S. governors from the early 20th century, whose stories prove that from the beginning the U.S. had a "cavalier" attitude to the island's people. To give the story balance there are figures such as good guy Congressman Vito Marcantonio, who protects and defends Puerto Rico.

The book works as an exposé of the United States and for that reason large segments consist of detailed, affecting narrative descriptions and fictional motifs that move the reader. Chapter 8 has as its motif a line from Hollywood's *Chinatown*, "Forget it, Jake; it's Chinatown," which serves as a synecdoche of the perpetual injustice machine that the U.S. has visited upon the island.

Some of the book's charm comes from the obvious devotion to telling this story as a thrilling account of historical wrongs. The resulting narrative style is a page-turning noir novel detailing the U.S. abuses, corruption and greed. The overarching sweep of *WAAPR* is that of a heroic saga whose central hero is not just Albizu but the freedom-seeking nation of Puerto Rico itself.