

Laurence Whitehead**Title:** Advantages and Downsides of Three of O'Donnell's Convictions

Abstract: Guillermo O'Donnell's lifetime of scholarly and practical achievement extends across an exceptionally wide array of domains. This essay will focus on a small subset of topics closest to my own interests and expertise. Guillermo has always tried to address both scholars and practitioners; he has sought to integrate theoretical, empirical and normative perspectives on what is politically possible, and desirable; he has defended and promoted macro-comparative approaches; and he has foregrounded Latin American regional realities. These are all both contentious and problematic undertakings. They are very much worth defending, and they each come at a price. My paper will review the justifications for these positions, and also consider their downsides. It will conclude by noting Guillermo's exceptional and distinctive achievement in sustaining and indeed interpreting this complete set of methodological precepts.

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