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Trust, but Verify: The Politics of Uncertainty and the Transformation of the Cold War Order, 1969–1991

Trust, but Verify: The Politics of Uncertainty and the Transformation of the Cold War Order, 1969–1991. Ed. by Martin Klimke, Reinhild Kreis, and Christina F. Ostermann. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016. xiv, 313 pp. \$60.00.)

[Barbara Keys](#)

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President Ronald Reagan's favored phrase, "trust, but verify," calls to mind the *Fowler's Modern English Usage* definition of *slogans* as "those catchwords with which in the modern world politicians, ideologists, and advertisers try to excite our emotions and atrophy our minds." On its face a vacuous, oxymoronic appeal, "trust, but verify" became a potent rhetorical tool in the hands of a politician with an uncanny ability to elicit public trust.

Some of the best essays in this volume, on the multifaceted roles of trust and mistrust in Cold War politics in the 1970s and 1980s, measure the power of rhetoric in shaping public opinion. Reagan's language of trust, even when vitiated by "but verify," was a major shift from the policies of the Carter...

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