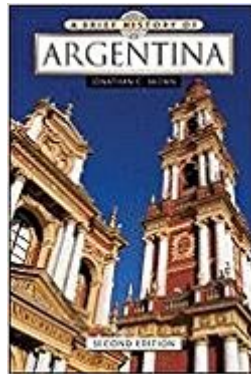




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A Brief History Of Argentina



Synopsis

A comprehensive history of Argentina, including its origins, culture, and future. Argentina has a population that ranks among the most educated and skilled in Latin America. Illiteracy scarcely exists among even the poor and working-class citizens, and Argentina's middle class has historically been large and politically engaged. Yet this country remains mired in economic instability, chronic unemployment, strict class divisions, and political corruption. Juan Peron's attempts to establish a democracy were all but erased during the militaristic Dirty War, and the last three elected presidents did little to raise the morale of their country. Still, Argentine citizens refuse to accept their current conditions. Prosecutors, victims, and families of victims remain determined to address the injustices and tyranny that occurred during the Dirty War and the two-decade silence that followed. Additionally, in a significant demonstration of progress, Argentines elected a woman president for the first time in October 2007. Spanning more than 12,000 years of history, *A Brief History of Argentina, Second Edition* thoroughly and comprehensively explores these issues and discusses how they will affect Argentina's future. Coverage includes:

- A comprehensive summary of Argentina's diverse geography and its varied natural resources
- The origins of the deep-seated practices of discrimination, which continue today
- The effects of neoliberalism on Argentina's large working class and urban poor, culminating in the caserola movement, the piqueteros movement, and the birth of the cartoneros
- The impact a changing global economy has had within Argentina's borders
- The rich culture of Argentina, which has created five Nobel laureates, vibrant cities that draw millions of tourists annually, and sports teams that have won multiple world championships.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The author's relaxed, conversational writing style makes this wonderful history book a great read for someone who seeks a solid introduction to Argentina's history. It is written by a well-credentialed professor of Latin American Studies who bases the book, at least in part, on the research of five doctoral dissertations and 15 master's projects written by his students, and former students, about Argentine history. It makes a nice companion to your travel guide.

This book was not good. It was conversationally written and thus easy to read, but if you are really paying attention and trying to learn something, you will notice inconsistencies and places where the chronology of events is not clear. For example: the Due Obedience Law is passed (exempting low-ranking soldiers from prosecution for dirty war crimes, as they were following orders). Next paragraph: "Despite government actions favorable to their interests, the officer corps remained unrepentant." Next paragraph - a group of soldiers protest. Next paragraph: "The Due Obedience Law followed." Huh? And that is just one example... one chapter was so jumbled I couldn't even follow it. If I could do it all over again, I'd choose one of the other histories of Argentina.

I taught this book in my course on Argentina at Colgate University, and I have grown more and more disappointed with it. My first major concern with the book (beyond disagreements with what is included and what left out) was a strongly misogynist section on Evita Peron (really the only treatment of her in the entire book) which calls her a "consort" and says that she succeeded as an actress by "exploiting her relationships with powerful men." Appalled by the tone, connotations, and overall superficial treatment of her biography, I looked at the origins of the excerpt and discovered it was a section from one of Brown's former student's masters thesis. Many, many themes in the book are treated thus: by including a superficial and sometimes inflected or inaccurate excerpt from a University of Texas at Austin masters thesis. The worst mistake in this book as far as I've discovered was a total confusion by the author on the difference between La Noche de los Bastones Largos, which was a student and faculty protest of the military takeover of the Universidad de Buenos Aires in 1966 and which was put down with military/police violence, and the Noche de los Lapices, which was a series of kidnappings of students that happened over about 5 days in 1976 and was one of the first and most visible events in the Dirty War. Brown mistranslates the former as "The Night of the Long Pencils" and then goes on to include an editorial written by a professor involved to the NY

Times, dating it 1955 (Eleven years before the event happened. When I looked up the source, no surprise it was sent in 1966). To me this is an unforgivable muddle of extremely important events and another admission of shoddy sourcing of material. I cannot condemn this book strongly enough as a resource from which people who don't know about Argentina should attempt to seriously begin to understand the country and its history.

Regardless of any criticism by other reviewers of one or another paragraph, I find this to be a very clearly written, concise, but at the same time thorough review of Argentina's history. Like other works in this series it is made attractive by illustrations and informative excerpts from other works or source materials included in the sidebars. I find the sections on Argentina's colonial history and that of the 19th century especially enlightening. The book does a great job of showing continuity and change in Argentina and is quite well balanced in presenting the conflicting interests over time of various sections of Argentine society. The book is suitable for the general public as well as those with more specialized interests, great for the comparative study of Latin American countries. It does a good job of showing the interplay of political, cultural and economic forces in the history of the nation. Unlike some other Kindle Versions in the "Brief History" series (see the price currently being charged for the Brief Histories of Bolivia and Peru or the Greenwood introduction to the history of Ecuador, this work is very reasonably priced. This makes a big difference to struggling students, adjunct professors, and ordinary working people. A great work at a reasonable price. A Brief History of Argentina

This book is a very good history of Argentina. But, it is less of a traditional history than it is a sort of social history of the country. For example, the important Paraguayan War of 1864 to 1870 is mentioned is given only a brief mention, while race relations (certainly a very important part of Argentinean history) cover page after page. I did find this to be an interesting and enlightening book. It covers a lot of things about Argentina that I did not know, giving me a feel for what life was like in Argentina and how it got to be what it is today. So, if you want a book about Argentina that eschews wars and generals, and focuses instead on the sociology of Argentina, then this very well might be the book for you.

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