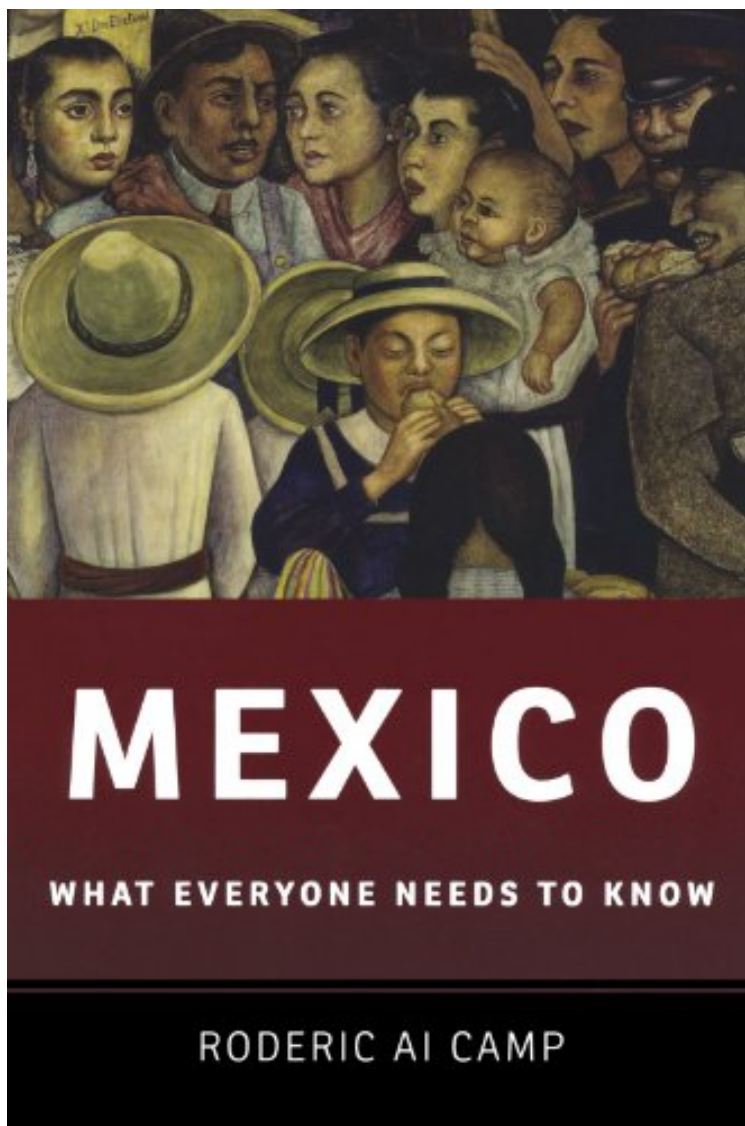


(Free pdf) Mexico: What Everyone Needs to Know

Mexico: What Everyone Needs to Know

Roderic Ai Camp

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#900304 in Books Camp, Roderic Ai 2011-09-09Ingredients: Example IngredientsOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 5.40 x .70 x 8.20l, .50 #File Name: 0199773874216 pagesMexico What Everyone Needs to Know | File size: 60.Mb

Roderic Ai Camp : Mexico: What Everyone Needs to Know before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mexico: What Everyone Needs to Know:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Poor organization, repetition, and superficialityBy KirbyThe book's content is informative, but the presentation is poor. It is organized as a series of general questions and answers about Mexico's history, economy, culture, and politics. The question and responses, however, are repetitive, so the same information ends up being presented -- nearly word for word -- multiple times. At the same time, although questions

and answers are grouped thematically, the information is fragmented. One has a feeling of jumping around from topic to topic, from data point to data point with little analysis of trends or conclusions. I eventually stopped reading the book altogether. You would be equally or better served by reading the World Factbook on Mexico (or some World Bank report) and then picking up a more narrative history or account. I've so far found David Lida's "First Stop in the New World: Mexico City, The Capital of the 21st Century" to be far superior and more informative (although it focuses almost exclusively on the DF).

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Approachable and informative
By Charles Zakem
This is a very approachable and informative text for someone wishing to learn a bit about the political and social history of Mexico. As another reviewer mentioned, it's a bit like standing in line for coffee with an expert and asking them 100 questions about Mexico. It focuses primarily on the social and political history from the Porfirio Diaz era to current day. The book does an excellent job of covering the revolution of 1917 and the making of the current political system. This book is not for anyone who already has a good handle on Mexican politics and history. It is a crash course perfect for briefing someone entering Mexico on study abroad or a business trip. Easily approachable for the most ignorant of readers.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. academic bypasses editor
By T. Stilwell
The author clearly knows his subject but he frustrates the user because he writes as if having a conversation while standing in line at Starbucks rather than seriously attempting to make cohesive points using clear arguments with well defined thoughts. This makes the book unnecessarily difficult to read. To make sense of facts spews at random, the reader must repeatedly jump between pages in different chapters. The book has a lot to say about the drug trade and organized crime but statistics are directly quoted from sources that are not explained even when they appear to contradict or overlap each other. For example: "Illustrative of the increased violence is the fact that from 2004 to the end of 2010, twenty-seven mayors have been murdered--fourteen of them in 2010 alone." The reader is left to ponder how Mexicans feel about democracy if they are regularly bumping off elected officials until learning much later that the drug trade is quite lucrative and profits are used to bribe local politicians who may later ask for an increase in bribes or attempt to switch alliances between drug cartels resulting in their untimely deaths. Similarly, exactly which Mexican states are involved in the drug trade seems to be quote dependent. It is odd that such strong economic sources are left out of the detailed state by state descriptions of the economy at the Museo Interactivo de Economa in Ciudad de Mexico. Much later the reader learns that police and military are also in on the take to a very large degree so basic assumptions need to be reset. For example, does the average Mexican have many economic opportunities available outside the drug trade such that family members need not become involved and can look askance at those involved and demand government support to crack down on it or can those unhappy can safely accuse wrongdoers with necessary witness protection? Meaningful conversations about sufficiently diverse environments need ground rules to avoid confusion. Many other comments are made without sources or explanation. On page 7 the reader learns that a Sinaloa Cartel is at war with a Juarez Cartel for control over overland routes of unknown region presumably within some Mexican states and extending to an American border. On page 12, this is contradicted by the comment that the Juarez Cartel is no longer influential. On page 11 the reader learns that the US somehow shutdown air and sea routes forcing drug shipments overland but no explanation of where these routes are. Apparently media reports of drug busts of ships, ship containers or small planes are imaginary. Presumably, a learned academic could collect data from property confiscations indicating common overland routes. If we can determine the ancient Salt Roads, surely drug routes are not so challenging. On page 8, after a discussion regarding drug cartel infiltration into American and Canadian cities, the US DEA is cited as having identified drug distribution networks in 230 cities but it is unclear if these cities are Canadian, American or Mexican. The reader might want to know. The author has a liberal slant that probably doesn't belong in the book. For example: "In 2010, 15,273 individuals were murdered, compared with 9,614 executions in all of 2009, a 63 percent increase." Why are victims considered murders one year but only executions another year? "Mexico's drug problems emanate from the insatiable demand for drugs in the United States." The huge problem of Mexican domestic drug use is mentioned in passing much later. It is a worthwhile read but as a regular purchaser of books from Oxford University Press, this book missed the mark on quality. On the plus side, it doesn't read like a textbook.

Today all would agree that Mexico and the United States have never been closer--that the fates of the two republics are inextricably intertwined. It has become an intimate part of life in almost every community in the United States, through immigration, imported produce, business ties, or illegal drugs. It is less a neighbor than a sibling; no matter what our differences, it is intricately a part of our existence. In this outstanding contribution to Oxford's acclaimed series, What Everyone Needs to Know, Roderic Ai Camp gives readers the most essential information about our sister republic to the south. Camp organizes chapters around major themes--security and violence, economic development, foreign relations, the colonial heritage, and more. He asks questions that take us beyond the headlines: Why does Mexico have so much drug violence? What was the impact of the North American Free Trade Agreement? How democratic is Mexico? Who were Benito Jurez and Pancho Villa? What is the PRI (the Institutional Revolutionary Party)? The answers are sometimes surprising. Despite ratification of NAFTA, for example, Mexico has fallen behind Brazil and Chile in economic growth and rates of poverty. Camp explains that lack of labor flexibility, along with low

levels of transparency and high levels of corruption, make Mexico less competitive than some other Latin American countries. The drug trade, of course, enhances corruption and feeds on poverty; approximately 450,000 Mexicans now work in this sector. But Camp reveals that President Caldern's recent assault on narcotics smugglers--and the violence resulting from it--may have actually lessened the government's control of parts of the country and national institutions. Brisk, clear, and informed, *Mexico: What Everyone Needs To Know* offers a valuable primer for anyone interested in the past, present, and future of our neighbor to the South. *What Everyone Needs to Know* is a registered trademark of Oxford University Press.

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