Latin America
An Interpretive History

Tenth Edition

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Preface

I have always endeavored to substantially update each edition of Latin America: An Interpretive History. The tenth edition offers the greatest change to date—the addition of a new chapter. In the ninth edition, I looked at the “Pink Tide,” the swing left in Latin America that began at the end of the twentieth century. Now fifteen years into the twenty-first century, it is clear that this change was not a brief moment. Latin America has changed profoundly in this century, and those changes deserve a closer look. These changes have brought a new and expanded prosperity for more of the population. Unfortunately, these changes have not diminished the central paradigm of the text: “poor people inhabit rich lands” because the elites have “tended to confuse their own well being and desires with those of the nation at large.”

New to this Edition

- Chapter 11, now titled “The Limits of Liberalism,” has been revised to focus only on the late twentieth century, including expanded attention to the end of the Cold War and the war in Colombia while asking whether revolution has come to an end in Latin America.
- A new Chapter 12 recasts as a question the title of the old closing chapter, “Forward into the Past?” This exciting new chapter focuses on the twenty-first century and includes an expanded section, “Latin America Swings Left,” updating the political changes in the region. The new section “A Mobilized Population” addresses the new movements that struggle to push the governments further left, including groups focused on race and LG-BTQ rights. “The Conservative Exceptions” looks at Mexico, as well as the coups that ended progressive governments in Honduras and Paraguay. “A New Regional Independence” shows how the region has challenged the United States on the drug war and shown more independence by welcoming investment from China and joining the BRICS movement. “Rise of the Middle Class—And the Vulnerable” shows that despite profound economic changes in the region that have brought greater prosperity to more people, Latin America continues to be the region of greatest economic inequality in the world. And finally, “Change and Continuity” expands the Latin American theoretical approaches presented to include modernity/coloniality/decoloniality.
- Chapter 12 also includes a brief profile of Pope Francis, the Argentine native who has taken the world stage with a renewed focus on poverty and social justice.
- Further attention has been given to women through new sections, “Unsung Heroes and Heroines,” in Chapter 3, “Independence,” and “Las Soldaderas,” in Chapter 7, “The Mexican Explosion.” In addition, there is also an expanded discussion of the remarkable number of women presidents in the region in Chapter 12.
- In addition to updating the table “Latin America Elects Leftists,” there are two new tables: “Women Presidents in Latin America” and “Latin American Inequality Data.”
Acknowledgments

I owe a debt of thanks to the many colleagues and students who have taken the time to send me their feedback on the text. I am particularly grateful to the eight anonymous reviewers who evaluated the ninth edition and offered excellent suggestions for the tenth. Special thanks are due to Jennifer Johnson at Whitman College’s Penrose Library for her indispensable and always gracious assistance. My students in History 188, Modern Latin America, have asked questions that made me rethink aspects of the textbook. This book is for them and shaped by them. As always, I am most indebted to my husband, Charly Bloomquist, and my daughter, Delaney; they are my joy.

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