



Latin America: An Introduction

Gary Prevost, Harry E. Vanden

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Latin America: An Introduction offers a contemporary, thematic analysis of the region that is grounded in Latin America's social, political, economic, and cultural past. Based on chapters from Harry Vanden and Gary Prevost's popular text, *Politics of Latin America*, this book provides an accessible and interesting discussion of a broad range of topics, including democracy, revolution, indigenous populations, culture, gender, religion, politics, economy, and relations with the United States. Unlike many texts on the region, this book places the voices of long-ignored and previously marginalized groups in Latin America--women, indigenous peoples, Afro-Latinos, workers, peasants, and gays and lesbians--at the heart of its analysis.

Offering balanced regional coverage, the book discusses such recent political, social, and economic developments as the failure of the neoliberal economic policies of the 1980s and 1990s to deliver promised prosperity; the related resurgence of progressive politics in the region, as manifested in the election of numerous left and center-left governments; and the strong role of numerous social movements in setting the region's political agenda in the new century. The authors analyze the continuing power of the United States in the region, as seen in the implementation of the Central America Free Trade Agreement (Cafta), bilateral trade agreements with Chile and Peru, and the continued funding of Plan Colombia. They also discuss the role of various Latin American-based initiatives, including the expansion of Mercosur, the Bolivarian Alternative, and The Bank of the South. Providing a historical perspective for the challenges and problems facing the region today, *Latin America: An Introduction's* regionally balanced, multidisciplinary approach makes it an ideal text for introduction to Latin American studies courses.

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