In the last decade several reference guides to Latin American history have been published ranging from Barbara Tenenbaum's five-volume Encyclopedia of Latin American History and Culture (1996) to the one-volume Cambridge Encyclopedia of Latin America and the Caribbean (1992). In addition to these are specialized works including the one-volume Archaeology of Ancient Mexico and Central America (Garland, 2001), the three-volume Oxford Encyclopedia of Mesoamerican Cultures (2001), and the single volume South America, Central America and the Caribbean (Europa Publications, 2000), which takes an individual country approach. The Reference Guide to Latin American History, with its broad scope and unique format, stands without equal among the single volume works available. Its counterpart in U.S. History is Richard B. Morris's Encyclopedia of American History, which the authors used as their model.

Organization is the key to usefulness of a reference work, and the authors of this volume have designed three distinct sections to satisfy a variety of needs. Part I has the most complex organization offering encyclopedic style information in a chronological framework. This gives it something of a narrative flow while also serving as a reference work. Each of the eight chronological sections is divided geographically (except the one on Independence) and within each region entries are by year. Part I covers nearly half the total pages of the volume. In contrast, Part II consists of a series of five thematic essays cutting across chronological and regional boundaries. This section covers roughly one-fourth of the text. Part III offers 300 vignettes of major historical figures in the remaining one-fourth of the text. A nine-page bibliography and fifty-page index round out the 615-page work. Maurice P. Brungardt authored sections on the pre-Columbian and colonial periods, Helen Delpar traced the independence era and the nineteenth-century, and James D. Henderson undertook the twentieth-century.

Part I begins with Pre-Columbian civilizations which cover a mere sixteen pages. The focus is on major cultures in Mesoamerica and the Andean region with only the briefest mention of the rich cultures that pre-dated the Aztec, Mayan, and In-
can. In terms of proportion, this period receives only minimal space, and therefore is the most disappointing of the sections. Nor does the bibliography compensate for this brevity by providing only four references for the pre-Columbian era. This is particularly unfortunate given the new archaeological discoveries and techniques, which have enhanced our knowledge of the field.

The following seventy-five page section on Colonial Latin America is much more satisfying as it gives comprehensive coverage of the Spanish background, conquest, and major events in the various regions. The use of geographical divisions here causes some repetition as several conquest figures participated in more than one region. For example the exploits of Pedro de Alvarado y Mesia and Pedro Arias de Avila (Pedrarias) are repeated in several sections. This might have been avoided by cross-referencing, but perhaps at the expense of breaking the flow of the text. Obviously editorial decisions had to be made. Coverage of the colonial period ends with a separate section on Brazil, 1500-1803, a pattern, which continues throughout Part I. However, starting in 1822 it might have been better to incorporate Brazil with the rest of Latin America as it shares common themes of militarism, immigration, infrastructure development, foreign investment, privatization and others with the rest of the continent.

After the section on Independence, a consistent regional format is followed for the remaining five periods: "Caudillos and Conflict, 1826-1870"; "Incipient Modernization and Social Change, 1871-1929"; "Economic Nationalism and Political Protest, 1930-1959"; "Revolutionary Movements and Economic Development, 1960-1989"; and "Democracy and Neoliberalism, 1990-1999". The emphasis appears to be on major political events as well as U.S. relations with Central America and the Caribbean. Revolutionary movements are carefully detailed for Central America in the 1970s and 1980s so that the reader can quickly see what is happening simultaneously in the various countries. The same is true for the emergence of military governments beginning in the 1960s. At times it is easy to forget that this is a reference guide given the readability of the narration of events. The authors consistently provide thorough entries with the implications and outcome of events. For example in 1985 there is note of the arrest, trial, and conviction of Jorge Videla and Roberto Viola, as well as their pardon in 1990 by President Carlos Menem; all in the same entry.

Part II provides a series of essays covering five broad topics: "Society", "Politics and Government", "Economic Developments", "Culture", and "Popular Culture". Each is developed chronologically, is succinctly written, and makes reference to the most recent scholarship. The section "Society", addresses issues of demographic trends, immigrants, indigenismo, race, gender, and rural-urban migration. Coverage is good given the limited space, although mention of Manuel Gonzalez Prada would have added to the discussion of indigenismo and noting the significant number of Japanese in Peru, given their experience in World War II and the presidency of Alberto Fujimori, would have enhanced the narrative. This essay concludes with a section on science and medicine noteworthy for its comprehensive nature rather than depth. The next essay on "Politics and Government" complements Part I by expanding on earlier references to political institutions. Here is where cross-referencing within the text would have been helpful. After careful descriptions of several levels of colonial offices, there follows a review of the political turmoil after independence and the emergence of anarchism, socialism, anti-imperialism and other movements leading into the twentieth century. Populism, statism, World War II, the Cold War, revolutionary movements, and the neoliberalism in the 1990s are all included. It would seem appropriate to have a section on the prevalence of military governments between the 1960s and 1980s, violations of human rights, and the desaparecidos of the Dirty War. While Part I chronicles the changing military
leaders, and Part II mentions the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in the essay "Society," there needs to be a short narrative bringing these issues together. The essay on "Economic Developments" is perhaps the best in Part II. This thirty-six-page overview begins with a brief introduction followed by more detailed coverage of major trends using both a regional and chronological approach. Following the colonial period comes a discussion of the major developments: export economies, import substitution, multi-nationals, statism, IMF intervention, debt crisis, regional integration, and neoliberal reforms of the 1990s. Becoming somewhat interpretive, this essay ends on a gloomy note. While regional integration offers some hope, the gap between rich and poor continues to widen with 40 percent of the population living in poverty, and several countries suffering severe economic decline in the 1990s. The final two sections of Part II survey culture, including both traditional and popular forms. An exceptionally wide-ranging essay on the Catholic Church includes work of the religious orders, expulsion of the Jesuits, Inquisition, Church-State conflict, and liberation theology. There is a similar broad treatment of art, architecture, music, literature, radio, cinema, and sports with mention of the superstars Diego Rivera, Oscar Niemeyer, Heitor Villa Lobos, and others. These essays will be most beneficial for the non-specialist or those with minimal knowledge of the area who are looking for introductory treatment. For those wishing greater depth, the bibliography offers numerous specialized works. Part III profiles the lives of 300 "Notable Figures" in Latin American history representing all time periods, countries, and fields. Present are Aztec and Inca leaders, Spanish royalty, authors, artists, athletes, entrepreneurs, and politicians. There is a consistency in the presentation of each entry showing the person's significance in the context of the period and region. This is where fragmentary entries from Part I come together and the lives of figures like Pedro de Alvarado and Pedrarias gain continuity. Essays are one-half to one page in length, balanced, and succinctly written. Indeed, this section could stand alone as a valuable reference work for students of Latin American history. The names of individuals profiled appear in bold-face in the Index, however a list of the 300 in the Table of Contents would have been helpful.

Throughout the text, thirty-four maps help illustrate events as varied as the routes of Cortes and Pizarro, the Paraguayan and Chaco Wars, the territorial settlement in the War of the Pacific, and much more. One of the most useful for contemporary events is a map of guerrilla movements from 1955. On some maps where lines converge, as with the voyages of Christopher Columbus, it is hard to discern origin and destination, but otherwise the maps are clear and a valuable enhancement for the text.

Acknowledging that the bibliography must be selective in nature, the only area where it is woefully lacking is the pre-Columbian period, as noted above. While improved, the Colonial section could also use some help. Particularly noticeable for their absence in these early sections are works by David Carrasco, Michael E. Moseley, and James Lockhart. The nineteenth and twentieth centuries are adequately covered with the standard works, but could be augmented to enable users to find specialized information. What makes this volume eminently useable is its fifty-page index. Entries of all events and individuals are meticulously listed with multiple page references as well as identification by column a or b. Rarely is a reference work of this scope so carefully and accurately indexed. Indeed this is the final selling point in its being the most user friendly reference guide available.

Every university as well as public library should have a copy of this well-designed and handsome volume. Scholars and students of Latin American history will also find it a valuable addition to their personal library. It has no equal given its combination of a detailed chronology of Latin American history, comprehensive thematic es-
says, and 300 biographical profiles. Throughout the text the authors have woven a seamless narrative and the reader cannot discern any difference in writing styles across the sections. Being a single volume makes it especially attractive in addition to its user-friendly format of double columns and boldfaced headings and dates. In short, its balance, comprehensive nature, readability, and accuracy make it an indispensable reference work and standard for the field.

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