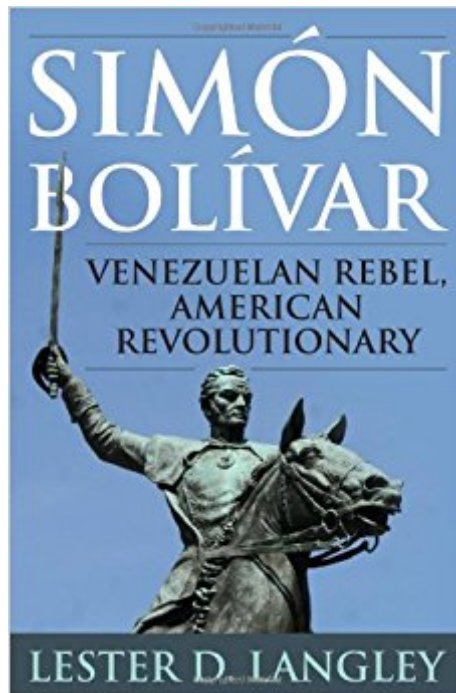




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Simón Bolívar: Venezuelan Rebel, American Revolutionary



Synopsis

This compelling biography offers a unique perspective on the life and career of one of Latin America's most famous and most adulated historical figures. Departing from the conventional, narrow treatment of Bolívar's role in the Spanish-American wars of independence (1810–1825), leading historian Lester D. Langley frames this remarkable figure as the quintessential Venezuelan rebel, who by circumstance and sheer will rose to be the continent's most noted revolutionary and liberator. In the process, he became both a unifying and a divisive presence whose symbolic influence remains powerful even today. Twice Bolívar gained power, twice he confronted a formidable counterrevolution, twice he was compelled to flee. His ultimate tactic of using slave and mixed-race troops aroused both the admiration and fear of U.S. leaders and became a topic of heated discussion in the critical debates of 1817 and 1818 over U.S. policy toward the Spanish-American wars as well as the arguments over the admission of Missouri as a state in 1820–1821 and the U.S. decision to participate in the ill-fated Congress of Panama. Although he earned the sobriquet of the "George Washington" of South America, Bolívar in victory became more conservative and critical of the democratic tide of the era. Unlike Washington, Bolívar was forced into exile, the victim of his own ambitions and the fears of others. In his tragic end, he symbolized the glorious warrior so consumed by his own ambition and hatreds that he was destroyed. In death, he became a cult figure whose life and meaning casts a long shadow over modern Venezuelan history. As the author convincingly explains, he remains the most relevant figure of the revolutionary age in the Americas.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Lester Langley's succinct *Simón Bolívar: Venezuelan Rebel, American Revolutionary* fills a gap in both the historiography and the marketplace. . . . The work reads well for Langley's intended audience of undergraduates and general readers. The chronological organization allows Langley to assess the broad outline of Bolívar's life in an easily accessible way. . . . Bolívar, like Thomas Jefferson, remains enigmatic. Langley's biography clarifies the mystery a little, and places Bolívar firmly where he belongs, in the pantheon of American (hemispherically speaking) heroes. (Journal Of Historical Biography) Langley moves Simón Bolívar to the center stage of 'American' politics in this masterful biography, which ranges from the eighteenth-century stage of Enlightenment philosophy to the twenty-first century of Venezuela under Hugo Chávez, one of the Liberator's greatest admirers. This is vintage Langley and an essential read if you are interested in the political, social, and intellectual milieu of modern Latin America. (Lawrence A. Clayton, University of Alabama) Accessible and insightful. Langley's perspective on the South American Liberator offers a clear view of the details of Simón Bolívar's life and remarkable historical trajectory within a broad view of the contemporaneous historical context in the United States, Europe, and South America. Balanced and well informed, this book will be a highly satisfying experience for all those curious about this exceptional moment and this charismatic figure in South American history. (John V. Lombardi, University of Massachusetts, Amherst)

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This was such a good acquisition as a present to an elder person wanting to learn about latin american history. I would recoment this product

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