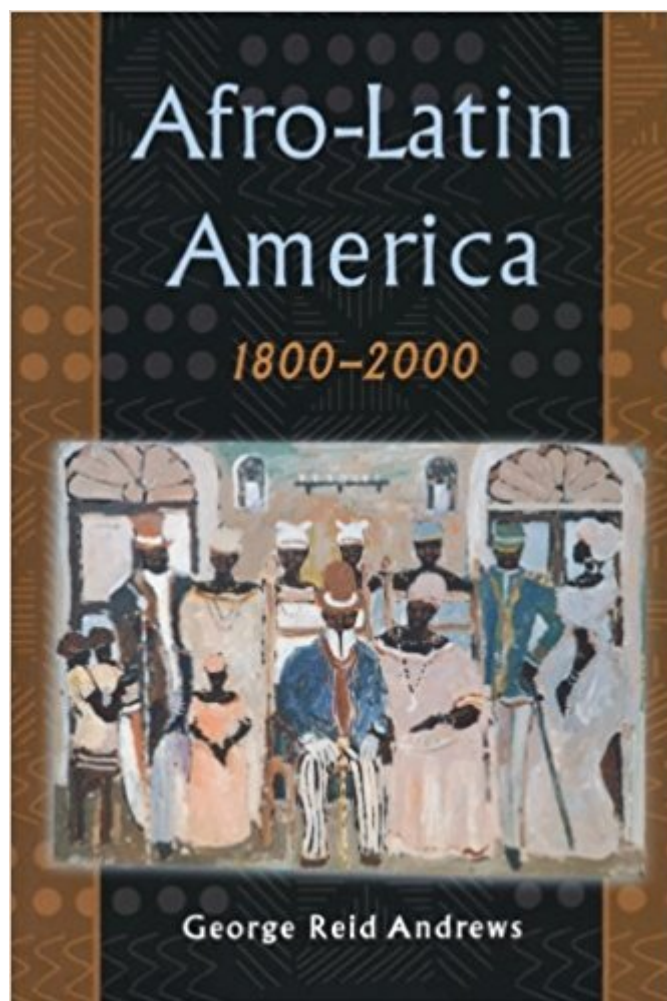


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Afro-Latin America, 1800-2000



Synopsis

While the rise and abolition of slavery and ongoing race relations are central themes of the history of the United States, the African diaspora actually had a far greater impact on Latin and Central America. More than ten times as many Africans came to Spanish and Portuguese America as the United States. In this, the first history of the African diaspora in Latin America from emancipation to the present, George Reid Andrews deftly synthesizes the history of people of African descent in every Latin American country from Mexico and the Caribbean to Argentina. He examines how African peoples and their descendants made their way from slavery to freedom and how they helped shape and responded to political, economic, and cultural changes in their societies. Individually and collectively they pursued the goals of freedom, equality, and citizenship through military service, political parties, civic organizations, labor unions, religious activity, and other avenues. Spanning two centuries, this tour de force should be read by anyone interested in Latin American history, the history of slavery, and the African diaspora, as well as the future of Latin America.

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Customer Reviews

"Do not be fooled by its essential readability; this book belongs on the same shelf as the venerable Cambridge general histories...Essential. All college collections."--J. Rosenthal, SUNY College at Oneonta
"Andrews' Afro-Latin American is a compelling historical narrative...Such a work is long overdue."--Dwame Dixon, Latin American Research Review
"The title and the text of the book may

be brief, but Reid Andrews' latest work is an impressively thorough survey of the experiences of Afro-Latin Americans from the independence era to the present. In 200 pages he places the experiences of the 'black' and 'brown' descendents of the area's slaves in the major political and economic developments of the time, and traces how they have both affected and been affected by those developments. Coherently presented and clearly written, this will probably remain the definitive overview of the history of modern Afro-Latin America for years to come."--The Americas

"Afro-Latin America is a deftly balanced and impressively nuanced study that is remarkable for its geographical span, covering the area (except for the non-Hispanic Caribbean) from Mexico to Argentina. This highly accessible, magisterially authoritative account fills a long-standing void in the bibliography for Latin American Studies, American Cultures and the history of the Americas in general. Insightful, intellectually provocative, and engagingly written, this book should find a wide audience among both specialists and non-specialists."--Franklin W. Knight, Johns Hopkins University

"George Reid Andrews's tour de force draws on a breath-taking range of scholarship published in and on Latin America to make a powerful argument about the contributions of blacks and mulattos to national and regional histories."--American Historical Review

"George Reid Andrews has drawn a rich array of scholarship into a splendid historical synthesis, upon which he builds his own innovative interpretation. Conveying the texture of lived experience for people of African descent in Latin America, while exploring the dynamics of historical change, this book is a superb accomplishment."--Rebecca J. Scott, University of Michigan

"Andrews has managed to rescue from what had traditionally been the shadows of Latin American historiography the modern history of Afro-Latins. By doing so he has started us on the needed road to a more comprehensive discussion of race and nation in the American hemisphere."--American Quarterly

George Reid Andrews is UCIS Research Professor of History at the University of Pittsburgh. He is the author of *The Afro-Argentines of Buenos Aires, 1800-1900* and *Blacks and Whites in São Paulo, Brazil, 1888-1988*.

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Eye opening!

thanks

One of the best sources of information on the anthropology in the region, Afro-Latin America 1800-2000 is a well written and detailed account of the experience, and influence, the African people have had in the former Spanish and Portuguese colonies. While Americans can often explain the course of African-American History in the United States, the experience of Africans in Latin America is often a mystery if not all together unheard of. An irony considering that this region now has the highest population of Africans outside of Africa itself. The strengths of the book are found in chapters 1, which covers the early days of slavery, and chapters 4 and 5 where Andrews explains how the African population experienced both a "whitening" and a "blackening" in terms of trying to understand and create an identity that was both acceptable to themselves and to the greater Caucasian and mixed population around them. The problem of course was where the lines could be drawn considering that unlike with the American experience where a dividing line could be easily found, the Afro-Latin slave existence was one of complexity in that slaves and free men and women could be seen at various different class and political levels in the region. The mixtures of Europeans, Native Americans, and Africans, giving birth to creation of a multiracial people, only made the issue more difficult. Blacks would find that they were discriminated against by those of mixed blood who themselves would also be discriminated against by those who were more European in their heritage. If anything, the question of whether or not "race" is a social or biological concept becomes more difficult to answer for those who support the latter in that the region has seen the greatest racial mixture in recent centuries. The cultural impact of the Africans was also felt culturally in aspects such as religion, music, and dance. Andrews goes into some depth explaining how the African culture was at first seen as "barbaric" by those of European descent and then, during the 20th century, became a form of popular nationalist expression. Capoeira, Candomble,

and Carnival are only three of the major cultural expressions that have roots in African tradition and belief. Africa is indeed very much alive in these modern forms of culture and the irony is again that European descendents have also adopted these as a form of identity. The core strengths of the book is focused on these subjects and it is unfortunate that more time was not given in covering them further in depth. Andrews could have spent an entire chapter alone on these subjects but instead left them to separate parts in separate chapters which was unfortunate considering that he at times focuses more on political and economic development. The African-Latin American experience is one that is more complex than that in the states and will be the source of continuing problems, and solutions, for the region. Afro-Latin America 1800-2000 is both a good introduction and continuing education for those who have an interest in the anthropology of the region.

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