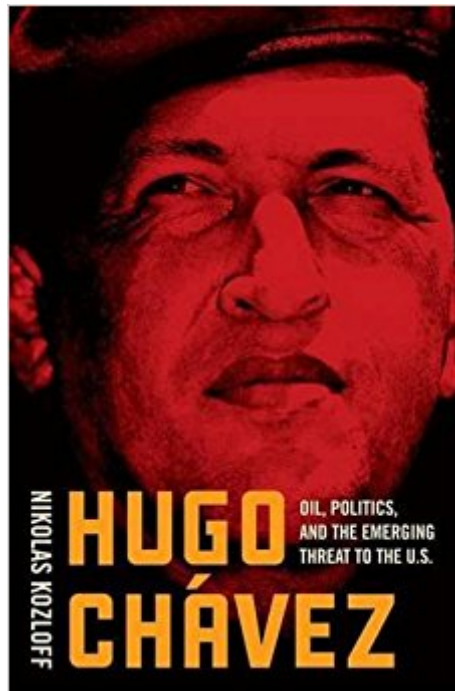




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Hugo ChÃavez: Oil, Politics, And The Challenge To The U.S.



Synopsis

This is the riveting and frightening story of ambitious, tempestuous and avowed anti-American Hugo ChÁvez, who is making waves through South America and being widely compared to Fidel Castro. Ex-paratrooper, outspoken socialist, and brash personality, ChÁvez is known for his stance against big business, fearless threats to the Bush administration, social reforms that have violently polarized his country, and claims that he will soon unite South America. As gas prices rise to unprecedented highs, Venezuela's importance surges as the fifth largest oil exporter in the world. Nikolas Kozloff's access to top advisors, members of the opposition, and leaders of ChÁvez's own political movement allow him to present a comprehensive portrait of ChÁvez as he runs for re-election and moves into the global spotlight.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Hugo Chavez has put Latin America back on the U.S. radar with his outspoken attacks on American imperialism and his leadership in forming economic ties among Latin American nations outside U.S. influence. To many in the southern hemisphere, he represents a welcome alternative to the U.S., whose efforts to heal the region's economic woes through the World Bank and the IMF have largely failed. In the northern hemisphere, he is often seen as a threat to free-trade agreements and democracy in the Americas. Kozloff, a senior research fellow for the Council on Hemispheric Affairs, tries to neutralize the latter image as he recounts recent Venezuelan history and analyzes Chavez's rise to power. Paying equal attention to Chavez as a man and as a political phenomenon, he inserts

slow-moving anecdotes among dense historical details, making for an uneven read. Kozloff's use of sources like the Nation, the New Left Review and the International Socialist Review, as well as his participation in the antiglobalization movement, also reveal a leftist bias toward Chavez. He offers little criticism of Chavez's policies or the nondemocratic means "a 1992 failed coup" through which he first garnered public favor, before winning office in a 1999 election and 2002 reelection. But while this bias might make for some one-sided storytelling at times, it also makes for a thoughtful, well-researched alternative to the majority of information available on Chavez in the English-speaking world. (Sept. 19) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

• Enables readers to understand the Chávez movement on its own terms while also making clear Chávez's larger significance in the current politics and possible future direction of Latin America. • Doug Yarrington, Colorado State University • "Nikolas Kozloff's fact-filled Hugo Chávez is a thought-provoking explanation of why people around the planet hail Venezuela's fiery leader as a hero. This is essential reading for all who want to understand modern global politics or are committed to creating a better world for our children." • John Perkins, author of the New York Times bestseller Confessions of an Economic Hit Man (2005) • "Is Hugo Chávez the Messiah? Is George W. Bush afraid of him? Is the taste of oil too sweet to give up? Where is Latin America going with the new generation of revoltosos? Nikolas Kozloff's sharp, provocative report offers the reader a clue to understanding the current redrawing of hemispheric power." • Ilan Stavans, author of The Hispanic Condition

Very interesting, full of intriguing book about Hugo Chavez. This book could be The thesis on the political movements in Latin America, particularly in Venezuela. Copyright impartially and cold in the book considered the socio-political aspects of life in Venezuela. Very interesting! Recommend this book to those who seek to get rid of the standard political "stamps" and see Venezuela this for what it is actually.

Provides an alternative view of Chavez from that of our government and the corporate media. Chavez was elected and re-elected democratically by the Venezuelan people with strong majorities. If you believe in democracy--which some on the right claim to do--that should also season your opinion of Chavez. Nobody says that you have to like Chavez, but try being a little more accurate in your use of terms like "dictator." I found the book to be fairly informative. The author's adulation of

Chavez was a little disconcerting at times. There is some degree of hagiography at work here. Also, the author does make some asides in his writing that really could be left out. The defeated conservative candidate for the Bolivian presidency is characterized as wearing a "red polo shirt." This is opposed to the native dress of the successful leftist candidate, who wears a more native costume. Some of these remarks could have been easily left out. Still, I agree with the author that globalization and US economic dominance of Latin America are not good things. The push for more regional autonomy for Latin America on the part of Chavez and other South American leadership makes a lot of sense in the long run. He who lives by Wall Street, quite literally, can die by Wall Street. "Fair trade" and justice for all. I also agree with the author that Chavez's attempts to alleviate the conditions of the Venezuelan poor are most admirable. His populist, "middle road" approach seems to me to make a great deal of sense. However, I would criticize the author for his seeming support of Chavez's position on supporting the growing of coca. If the coca were to be only used locally in Bolivia, Ecuador, etc. that is one thing. But this is the essential part of the multi-billion dollar cocaine trade out of Latin America. No US administration could fail to take actions against this trade. White liberal guilt should neither excuse or enable this trade. The production and promotion of cocaine is both criminal and morally bankrupt. I agree there need to be alternatives. But no one can sell me the line that this is the only activity that the poor of the Andes are capable of. If we cannot agree across political boundaries that hard drugs are not acceptable, I don't know what we can agree upon.

This is not a great book. It is extremely pro-Chavez. I really found some of the points overwhelming on trying to make him out to be such a great leader and all around guy. It did provide some insight into the former situation in Venezuela- but you were overwhelmed by the propaganda.

Hugo Chavez clearly is an alternative to free enterprise capitalism. This book enables one to understand Chavez background and what made him the man he is today. Every person should read this excellent biography (of sorts) and gain sufficient insight so as to make a sound personal decision about his time now in Venezuela.

This is a well written study of Chavez's rise and battle with American inspired/directed/financed efforts to destabilize his regime. Clearly, the author is sympathetic with the global efforts to resist IMF (i.e., US) hegemony and sees Chavez as a prime leader. Of course, most Americans blindly believe the lies that routinely emerge from our corrupt government sources, but Kozloff paints a

picture, perhaps sometimes too rosey, of Chavez's efforts to socialize his deeply-divided country. Maybe a little more discussion of Chavez's sometimes repressive methods (completely justified in my view when one considers how insidious American subversive efforts have been and still are) would have been warranted also. Though I despise Bush as much as any red-blooded American patriot should, I found Kozloff's constant references to how scared/terrified/concerned Bush and his gang would be by such and such an action of Chavez's to be off-putting and tediously redundant. I thought Kozloff should have devoted more space to Venezuela's dealings with OPEC since oil is part of the title and would have liked more on Chavez's foreign policy maneuverings outside Latin America, but obviously he decided to limit the size of the book. All in all, a sound and somewhat personal recounting.

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