

Manual Del Perfecto Idiota Latinoamericano

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Manual of the Perfect Latin American Idiot

Describes the mentality behind perpetual chaos in Latin American politics – Venezuela for instance

The introduction, written by novelist Mario Vargas Llosa, father of one of the authors, begins "To believe that we are poor because they are rich and vice versa, that the history is a successful conspiracy of the bad against the good in which *they* always win and we always lose."

It is a chronicle of self-pity and blaming others. Refusing to take responsibility for one's own plight. Refusing to acknowledge that some people are richer simply because they have more of the talents it takes to acquire wealth.

Chapter 1 – A Family Portrait

The political education of the perfect idiot, with its calculations and resentments, is a product of varied and confused ingredients. In the first place there's a lot of the Marxist Vulgate from modern universities. Marxism offers a simple explanation of history. It is all explained by class warfare. History progresses according to a set pattern (slavery, feudalism, capitalism, and socialism, the antecedent to really quality). The people responsible for our property are the sinister alliance of the bourgeoisie and imperialism.

Most of them bring together a collection of notions including the incorporation of national heroes such as Jose Martí, Sandino, Peron or some others, even including Che Guevara and Simon Bolivar. Somewhere in the mixture there are always historical resentments.

Chapter 2 – the family tree

the perfect idiot it is not somebody who pops up spontaneously, but as the product of generations going back two centuries to the declarations of independence from Spain. The new countries were almost immediately quite poor, in contrast with North America, which prospered after its break with Great Britain. The resentments were widespread..

Chapter 3 – The Idiots Bible

The authors go on about a book entitled "The Open Veins of Latin America" which blames first the Europeans and then the North Americans for seamlessly exploiting the riches of Latin America. This book is cited in chapter 13 once again. The thesis is the same – it's all their fault.

Chapter 4 – We're Poor – It's Their Fault

Opens in the same vein. "The underdevelopment of the poor countries is the historical product of the enrichment of the others. In the second instance, our poverty is due to the exploitation of which we have been the victims on the part of the rich countries of the planet"

Chapter 5 – The Cure That Kills

The poor look to the state, state socialism, to cure their poverty. It never works. There is a theory that somewhere there must be honest men who are dedicated to the well-being of their fellow man. However, throughout the history of government there have been very few instances of same. Moreover, though the authors do not mention it, other participants in government look at an honest man as a great threat and do everything they can to undermine him. I would not accuse Donald Trump of being an honest man, but the abuse that he has suffered at the hands of the establishment is illustrative. It is no different in Latin America.

Chapter 6 – Create Two, Three, 100 Vietnams

Many have a naïve belief that only a revolution can set things right. A study of the history of revolutions should reveal the fallacy. The next chapter goes on at length about the failure of the Cuban revolution. Since this book's publication in 1996, we have the vivid example of the so-called Bolivarian revolution led by Hugo Chavez and Nicholas Maduro in Venezuela.

The Latin American idiot never gives up. This reviewer has spent time in Nicaragua, which under the Sandinistas remains the second poorest country in the Americas. They absolutely refuse to concede that Chile prospered after Salvador Allende was thrown out, and that the people in the tiny island nation of Grenada still celebrate the ouster of their socialist dictator a few decades ago. Incidentally, the single documented success of American military intervention in Latin America that this reviewer can recall. Joe Metcalf, the admiral who led the effort, was extremely gratified to be invited back two decades later to receive a medal. Few American interventions are so successful.

Chapter 7 – Cuba: an old love that is neither forgotten nor abandoned

Cuba remains dirt poor. The people enjoy few freedoms. But the left absolutely cannot give up and admit failure. They continue to trumpet Cuba's advantages, such as universal education and healthcare. As ineffective and threadbare as they are.

The authors did not sugarcoat the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista, but they do note that Cuba was one of the wealthier countries in Latin America at the time of the 1959 revolution. As one indication, they report that there was a long list of applicants wanting to emigrate from Italy to Cuba at the time. Needless to say, they change their mind.

Chapter 8 – The Rifle And The Prayer Book

A chapter on liberation theology, the church putting it's hand in secular matters in Latin America.

Chapter 9 – Yankee go home

Picking on the Americans is always a good way to rally political support. The Americans are guilty of everything. The in this reviewer's experience, the see-ya (CIA) is a universal culprit. It is regrettable that the CIA is so often guilty as charged. But they are not guilty of everything.

Chapter 10 – What A Lovely Flag We Have

Patriotism is the last refuge of the scoundrel. However much Latin American countries may have in common, and however small their differences, they seem to squabble regularly. At the dawn of the atomic age Brazil and Argentina

both pursued nuclear programs to defend themselves against each other. This is absurd, among other things, because the populations in most Latin American countries were insufficient even to occupy the land that they had.

Chapter 11 – The Idiot Has Friends

There are lots of leftists in the developed world who agitate continually on behalf of the supposedly downtrodden in Latin America. See chapter 13 below for a list of books mostly written by such people.

Chapter 12 – Here Comes The Big Bad Wolf

The Latin American idiot depends on his favorite bogeyman, whatever they may be in however they may change form. It can be liberals in the rich countries, Christians, heads of state, economists, bishops in the church or anybody. He must have somebody to blame.

Chapter 13 – The 10 Books That Inspire The Latin American Idiot.

The authors do the reader a great service in citing the kinds of propaganda that the perfect Latin American idiot is likely to swallow whole. Here follows a Who's Who of leftist writers. I downloaded the Spanish version of "How To Read Donald Duck" in PDF format. It is a diatribe against Walt Disney and all of his creations. While one may lament the cultural imperialism of the United States, it seems to this reviewer to be motivated by money much more than any political consideration, and almost certainly was not encouraged by the United States government.

1. History will absolve me – Fidel Castro, 1953
2. The wretched of the earth – Frantz Fanon, 1961
3. The war of the guerrillas – Che Guevara, 1960
4. Revolution within the revolution – Régis Debray, 1967
5. The elemental concepts of historical materialism – Marta Harnecker, 1969
6. The one dimensional man – Herbert Marcuse, 1964
7. How to read Donald Duck – Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart, 1973
8. Dependency and development in Latin America. Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, 1969
9. Towards a theology of liberation – Gustavo Gutierrez, 1971
10. The open veins of Latin America – Eduardo Galeano, 1971

There are some factors that the authors did not consider. Native American culture was and remains extremely collectivist. In the great civilizations – Maya, Inca, and Aztec – property was held in common. Entrepreneurship would have been foreign to their nature. It does not seem surprising that capitalism has not done well in Latin America. Also unsurprising is the observation that it has done best in the South, Chile, Uruguay, and the southern provinces of Brazil which were settled by Europeans. Though this is not the place for it, I note that I have reviewed many authors who have written about the mentality of the Native Americans, both intellect and temperament. Suffice it to say that over the course of many millennia they evolved away from their common roots with Europeans and North Asians, and that they are simply different.