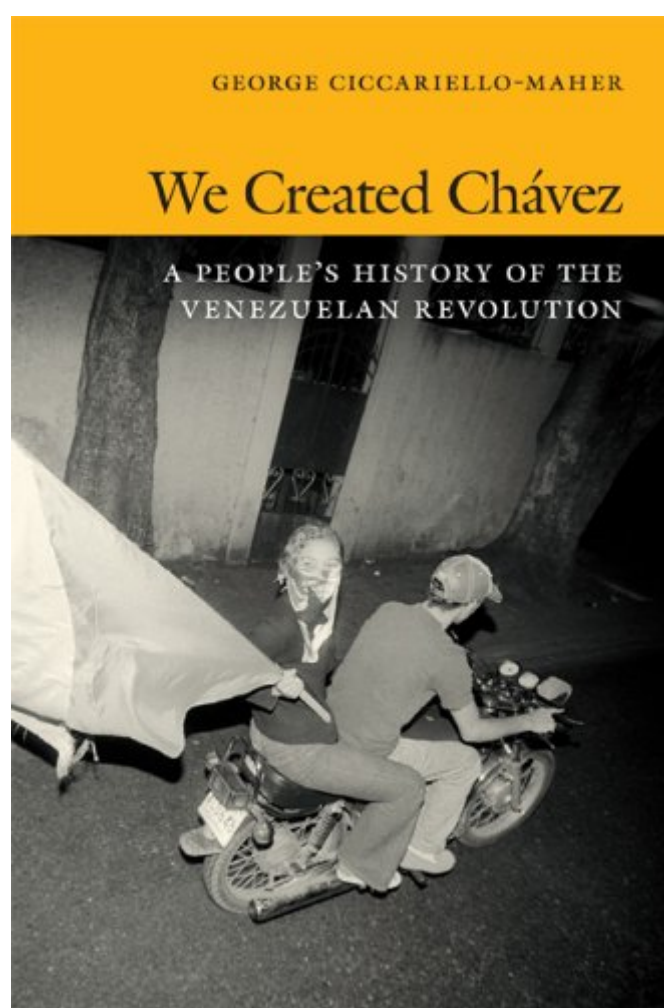


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We Created Chávez: A People's History Of The Venezuelan Revolution (e-Duke Books Scholarly Collection.)



Synopsis

Since being elected president in 1998, Hugo Chávez has become the face of contemporary Venezuela and, more broadly, anticapitalist revolution. George Ciccariello-Maher contends that this focus on Chávez has obscured the inner dynamics and historical development of the country's Bolivarian Revolution. In *We Created Chávez*, by examining social movements and revolutionary groups active before and during the Chávez era, Ciccariello-Maher provides a broader, more nuanced account of Chávez's rise to power and the years of activism that preceded it. Based on interviews with grassroots organizers, former guerrillas, members of neighborhood militias, and government officials, Ciccariello-Maher presents a new history of Venezuelan political activism, one told from below. Led by leftist guerrillas, women, Afro-Venezuelans, indigenous people, and students, the social movements he discusses have been struggling against corruption and repression since 1958. Ciccariello-Maher pays particular attention to the dynamic interplay between the Chávez government, revolutionary social movements, and the Venezuelan people, recasting the Bolivarian Revolution as a long-term and multifaceted process of political transformation.

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Customer Reviews

The title of the book captures its essence well. This is not another book about Chavez. It is a view of the revolution taking place in Venezuela from below, that is to say from the perspective of the grassroots people's movements that have been developing there for decades. These movements supported Chavez, but they didn't answer to him so much as they "created" him and this complex relationship which is never reported in the U.S. corporate media is what is the subject of this book. If you are interested in actually understanding the Venezuelan Revolution this is a good book for getting the necessary context.

I really quite enjoyed this book, I bought it because I am incredibly interested in the situation over in Venezuela, but am equally worried about distortion and possibly misrepresentations from sources such as the Bolivarian government and major media outlets. This book focuses on the people and movements that built into the revolution, and interviews many participants of the movements past and present, as well as painting a very useful image of why these things left Venezuela today, making an effort to prove that Chavez didn't create this movement, he merely seized upon a growing current and empowered it. Definitely worth the read to anyone interested in an impartial view of Venezuela, as both approving and dissenting views are shown, with neither being given precedence over the other. A very lovely book, all in all.

Really "locates" the struggles in Venezuela, and what we see is that the struggle for liberation extended far beyond Hugo Chavez, and at times challenged him, to go even farther. Excellent book! And a great read. It's why I'm confident that the struggle in Venezuela will go on long after Chavez' untimely death.

An important analysis of the bolivarian revolution as a possible avenue of struggle for the left - neither solely the marxist model of seizing the state through a vandgaard party nor the anarchist shunning of the state. I would have liked more attention to the militant barrio organizations where we begin. Also somebody needs to pass on the message to write in plain English. This read like a spruced up PhD thesis, which maybe it is. Still excellent, but probably unreadable if you haven't spent years in a certain kind of university setting.

Having lived under two "blessed elitism" communist governments that preceded the Chavez experiments, I can speak personally to the national misery that a specialized "Animal Farm" economy creates, with a class of favorited groveling supporters to whom gifts and stolen property are bequeathed, Eventually the population rises up and demands the country back. It's worse if the leader supplants the constitutional legal system with his own "executive" philosophy, "the class of pigs are more equal than other animals". The ongoing issue results from the jealousy of the underclass of communist intellectuals of the real thinkers. Class warfare isn't based on rich vs poor, but favoritism vs disenfranchised. Protest and you don't get food. It's also disingenuous to pretend all is well, since you never leave the fragrance of your elitist garden, to taste the scatology of the streets. Leftists surround themselves with like minds and scented lace hankies, so they don't have to see or smell the outside results of their egregious touch. Anti Midas rules. Communism-Myth busted! Au revoir Chaves, vis, Maduro! Lies only work with the three monkeys! No stars George. Maybe Maduro will give you a villa. Putin even realized capitalism made money! Oh! Didn't he tell you?

Given the amount of time spent plowing through this drivel, I can only give this book three sentences of review. You either have an understanding of the country and have lived there, or you speculate from a standpoint of political bias. This book is the latter.

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