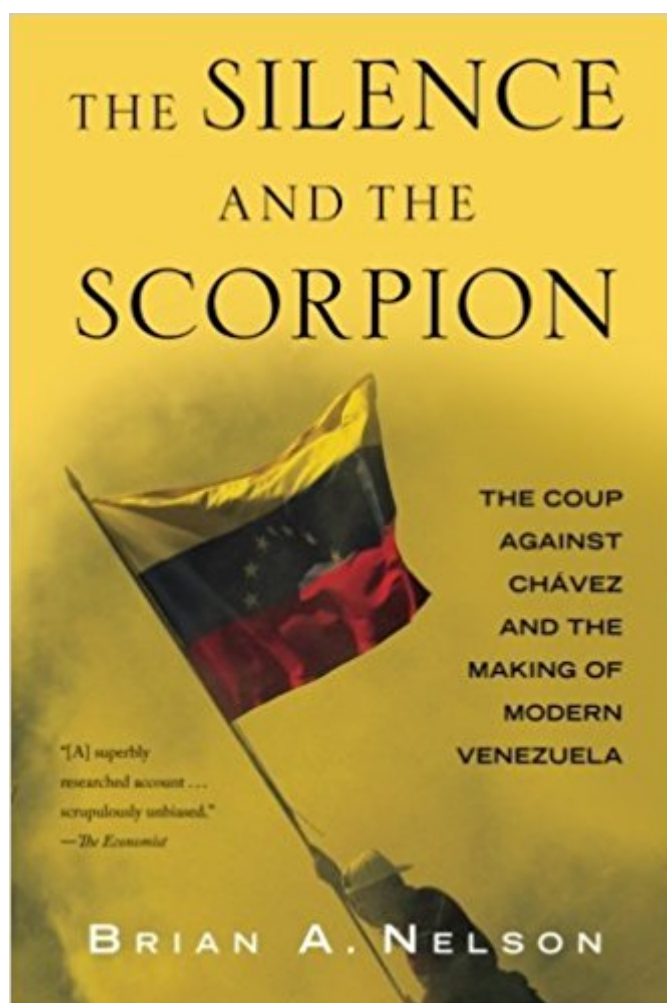


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The Silence And The Scorpion: The Coup Against Chavez And The Making Of Modern Venezuela



Synopsis

On April 11, 2002, nearly a million Venezuelans marched on the presidential palace to demand the resignation of Hugo Chávez. The opposition represented a cross-section of society furious with Chávez's economic policies, specifically his mishandling of Venezuelan oil. As the day progressed, the march turned violent, sparking a military revolt that led to the temporary ousting of Chávez. Over the ensuing turbulent seventy-two hours, Venezuelans would confront the deep divisions within their society and ultimately decide the best course for their country's and its oil's in the new century. Drawing on unprecedented reporting, Nelson renders a mesmerizing account of the coup. An Economist Book of the Year, *The Silence and the Scorpion* provides rich insight into the complexities of modern Venezuela.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Historian Nelson recreates the dramatic 2002 attempted coup against Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez, beginning with accounts of citizens who attended the million-person, violent protest that precipitated the three-day power vacuum. He moves to recounting the events from the perspectives of high-level officials, including Chávez himself, to demonstrate how the stories of ordinary chavista and anti-chavista citizens intertwine with the fates of officials in the highest levels of the Venezuelan government and military. Nelson takes readers from the streets to the halls of the presidential palace, from frightened journalists smuggling tapes of riots back to their stations to be put on the air to a terrified Chávez. For a fuller and fairer picture of the events, the book should be read in conjunction with other accounts of the coup, since Nelson is admittedly biased toward the military figures he interviewed. But his status as a foreigner familiar with the culture of Caracas and

an experienced journalist and academic gives him a unique vantage point from which to tell the very personal stories of those three days of chaos. (May) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Library Journal "fast-paced" & "engaging" • Kirkus "Nelson takes readers from the streets to the halls of the presidential palace, from frightened journalists smuggling tapes of riots back to their stations to be put on the air to a terrified Chávez. [H]is status as a foreigner familiar with the culture of Caracas and an experienced journalist and academic gives him a unique vantage point from which to tell the very personal stories of those three days of chaos." • Publishers Weekly "A must read for anyone seeking to get an unbiased and comprehensive account of the two most controversial days of the Chávez presidency." • "Nelson treats the April 11th events with hard-earned restraint, fairness, and an absence of the kind of confrontation and anger that has come to characterize the political debate in Venezuela." • Huffington Post "A very readable, providing wonderfully detailed firsthand accounts of the coup." • NACLA Report on the Americas "A compelling narrative shot through with vivid details and strewn with telling and yet all-but-forgotten pieces of the April Puzzle." • Caracas Chronicles Named one of the "Books of the Year" 2009 by The Economist "superbly researched" • "A compelling narrative" • "scrupulously unbiased" • "It should be read by all those who continue to believe that Mr. Chávez is a worthy champion of democracy and the oppressed." • The Economist "refreshingly impartial and objective" • "The 2002 coup gives the author a good handle to employ his impressive investigative and storytelling talents, and he succeeds in shedding new light on the complex questions facing Latin America's most polarize society." • "A welcome contribution to the burgeoning literature on Venezuela under the controversial rule of Hugo Chavez." • America Magazine "The events of the April 2002 Venezuelan coup to oust President Hugo Chavez are brought to light here in unparalleled investigative reporting by Nelson" • "His fascinating and harrowing account is part documentary, part eyewitness to history, yet always riveting." • "At times reading like fiction, his enjoyable text is the definitive account of Chavez's ouster and return, devoid of loyal or opposition rhetoric." • "Highly

recommended. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The book is excellent in almost all aspects. The sources are comprehensive. It depicts the history in a very thorough and systematic way. However, there is one flaw. In different sections, the text tends to favor one of the two sides apparently, which is understandable. Because the source of the text must have been from one of the two sides. But the author should have stated clearly from which source this information comes from so that the reader can have a general idea of which side this section is going to favor before starting reading.

This book is a great in-depth retelling of an event that is arguably one of the biggest and most controversial in the history of Latin America. I write this review as a native Venezuelan who has been looking for the truth about this event since Chavez's regime has covered up most of what has happened to save themselves from being charged for cruel acts against their own people- unarmed people who were marching peacefully towards Miraflores. Nelson gives a great account of this event and seems very unbiased-telling both sides of the story. I truly recommend this book to all.

GREAT BOOK, FROM COVER TO COVER. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN VENEZUELA AND WANT TO GET A FEEL OF WHAT IS HAPPENING , DONT MISS THE CHANCE TO READ THIS BOOK THE NAMES OF PEOPLE AND THE DESCRIPTION OF EVENTS IS PUT FORWARD IN A VERY CLEAR WAY.

This book it's an outstanding unbiased account of one of the most important events in recent Venezuelan history. By telling the stories of the participants (chavistas, guardsmen, generals, politicians, opposition leaders, etc.), Nelson creates a beautifully crafted collective story that better explains what really happened the 11 de abril.

I have never been to Venezuela and I know little about Venezuelan history. However, after reading this book, I feel like I know a little more. It was an easy and productive read. The first half of the book takes place on one fateful day in April 2002, when a protest rose up against the Chavez regime. The story focuses exclusively on individual injuries (both physical and psychic) of those "against" and "for" Chavez. These individual stories are told from the jarring perspective of his/hers/and oh, now back to Juan's cousin.... so it reads a bit like a choppy magazine article. While these individuals'

stories were interesting for a while, there are only so many ways to describe bullet holes, tear-stained faces, and trips in an ambulance. I found myself wondering, halfway through the book, "is the whole book going to be like this?" If so, I was ready to put it down. I peeked ahead. In fact, about forty percent of the way in, the book turns into a more cohesive narrative of history in the making, told from an aerial view. Though most writers do better with the specific, this particular author was actually at his best in assimilating larger perspectives, competing motives, and relaying history contextualized in the present. In short, I would recommend it.

Super informative

Incredibly detailed description of a set of events that have been terribly manipulated from both sides of the aisle. Read it now!!!

I live in Venezuela and lived through the coup that the book is about. I think the author gets to the real facts better than anyone because, although he knows Venezuela well, he writes about it and doesn't let what he knows interfere with his getting the real facts from a number of interviews. He comes over a little anti-Chavez but that is because anybody knowing the real facts could not excuse Chavez from his making the country worse than when he took over (unfortunately he was fairly elected). The real clincher is that the author writes in a style that reads as if were a novel--you can't wait to get to the next page to find out what happened.

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