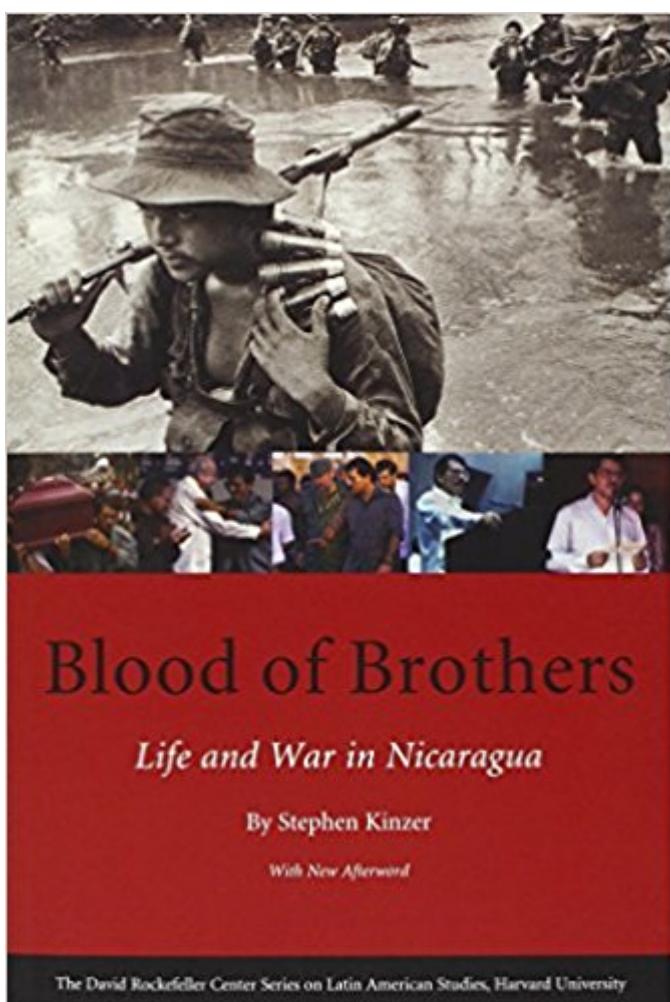


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# Blood Of Brothers: Life And War In Nicaragua, With New Afterword (Series On Latin American Studies)



## **Synopsis**

In 1976, at age twenty-five, Stephen Kinzer arrived in Nicaragua as a freelance journalist--and became a witness to history. He returned many times during the years that followed, becoming Latin America correspondent for the Boston Globe in 1981 and joining the foreign staff of the New York Times in 1983. That year he opened the New York Times Managua bureau, making that newspaper the first daily in America to maintain a full-time office in Nicaragua. Widely considered the best-connected journalist in Central America, Kinzer personally met and interviewed people at every level of the Somoza, Sandinistas and contra hierarchies, as well as dissidents, heads of state, and countless ordinary citizens throughout the region. *Blood of Brothers* is Kinzer's dramatic story of the centuries-old power struggle that burst into the headlines in 1979 with the overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship. It is a vibrant portrait of the Nicaraguan people and their volcanic land, a cultural history rich in poetry and bloodshed, baseball and insurrection.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

By the former New York Times Managua bureau chief, this is a well-written, information-rich survey of modern Nicaragua. Kinzer describes how Cesar Sandino's 1927-33 anti-U.S. campaign shaped the country's political development and inspired the overthrow of the Somoza regime in 1979. He analyzes the Reagan administration's "secret war" against the Sandinistas, and the deception that the contras existed only to interdict arms shipments to El Salvador. Kinzer relates many personal

stories of his interaction with Nicaraguans, and he includes the exciting tale of his on-the-spot discovery of a U.S.-supplied contra camp in Honduras--a front-page scoop. He traces the confrontation between the Catholic church and the junta, the peace initiative by Costa Rica's Oscar Arias, the negotiated settlement that more or less ended the conflict and the surprising electoral victory of Violeta Chamorro over Daniel Ortega in 1990. Kinzer concludes that the Sandinistas grossly underestimated the moral power of the Catholic bishops, that they lost significant support by mistreating the Miskito Indians, and that they mistakenly believed they could build a prosperous Nicaragua "without deferring to the principle of free enterprise." Photos. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Kinzer served in Central America first in the 1970s as a freelance journalist and later as a New York Times bureau chief in Managua (1983-89). An eyewitness to events, he interviewed members of the Somoza, Sandinista, and contra hierarchies. As a result, he provides a highly objective and balanced assessment of events that led to the fall of the Somoza government in 1979. Kinzer avoids ideological bias, but he does note that the Sandinistas came to power because "those most likely to shed blood are the most likely to triumph." Yet despite their many shortcomings, he concludes "the Sandinistas at least provided a basis upon which a genuine democracy could be built." An example of public affairs journalism at its best, his book will stand as the definitive study of Nicaragua in the turbulent 1980s. It belongs in every public and school library.- J.A. Rhodes, Luther Coll., Decorah, Ia. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is the chilling tale of the cycle of suffering and struggle that took place in Nicaragua over a span of a century - and the survival of its people throughout it all. Told passionately by a man who lived through some of the revolution and much of the contra war while on assignment for the New York Times, this book will grab your attention and hold it closely until the end. Kinzer is an amazing writer, and he brings the culture and the people of Nicaragua to life unlike any other author that I've read on the subject of this beautiful country, a country with so much potential and seemingly so much bad luck. I love Nicaragua and have visited many times. The beauty of the landscape, the relaxed and laid back lifestyle, and the kindness of the people is amazing. As a very patriotic American, though, I've always struggled to understand the politics, the state of their economy, and their beliefs, as it is so different from any I've ever known. This book, finally, pulls it all into perspective - I ordered it at the end of my last trip and I'm so glad that I did. It takes the bits and

pieces of information I've collected along the way and binds them together with details the author gained through research, interviews, and personal experience. It is the most comprehensive telling of the Nicaraguan history that I've found, a history which is so permeated by politics that to attempt to learn about it without the story of their politicians and their wars is simply to miss the entire point of it. My husband, who is Nicaraguan, and I have discussed the chapters as I've read them, finding answers to so many questions that we both had, big and small alike, (such as the advent of the plastic bags! as well as the reasons behind the war) and discovering new questions that we'll pursue independently. This book is an absolute gem to anyone who wants to learn more about Nicaragua. I could only wish for something as good to cover the last 20 years, as this book ends its coverage in the mid-90's. The version I purchased does come with a nice afterward that briefly sums up the 10 years after that point. I commend Kinzer for a generally neutral tone as he shares his love of Nicaragua, and his understanding of it, with us.

This book blew me away. I'm going on a mission trip to Nicaragua soon, so wanted to learn some of their history. This book is an incredible first-hand account of what it was like to live in Nicaragua during the tumultuous political upheavals of the 1980's. Although the book contains very detailed information about how events unfolded, the book is never boring. The author makes you feel as if you know the characters personally, largely because the author does get to know them personally. It's a very interesting account of why the communist government failed, of the exceedingly harmful effects that U.S. foreign policy had on Nicaragua, and of how, egged on by foreign powers, Nicaraguans tore their country apart fighting each other for power, leading them to now carry the unfortunate distinction of 2nd poorest country in the western hemisphere after Haiti. This is not a book written by someone from afar, but from someone who lived among the people, spoke their language, and cared deeply about them. I feel that, having read this book, my trip will be much more meaningful. Highly recommended.

I lived again the 80's in Nicaragua through Kinzer's writing. Some sort of catharsis I'd say. It was intense, sad and funny, to read and "see from above" what we nicaraguans lived in that last cold-war decade. I consider Kinzer's account of the story to be objective and very professional. Yes, you get to feel that he was not just a witness but somebody that lived the story not only as a reporter but as a human being. For instance, mentioning his use of a rocking chair at his house might seem a simple detail to many, but indeed embraces something with more significance, as balancing in such chair is kind of a ritual for nicaraguans, to enjoy and to meditate at the end of the

day. I can't deny I wish he had written more of his experiences, which I bet he had many, but that would have given at least another volume already considering this one is not a small book. Finally, his afterwards, although sad, remained loyal to reality: the Nicaraguan Revolution had a meaning and changed things in historical terms, but looking at today's reality, no doubt that Nicaragua deserved a better outcome.

Excellent, detailed review of events in Nicaragua at the time of the 1979 Revolution and the terrible decade of Contra wars that followed. Powerful indictment of US involvement, lies, and manipulation. An even-handed assessment of the Sandinista government: its limitations and internal struggles and blind spots, and the way that the deck was stacked against it horribly by right-wing neighbors (Argentina) and US "Cold Warriors". Book concludes with the end of the Contra wars. I wish for a sequel that would cover the 1990s and the return of Ortega in 2001 and what's happened since then!

I bought this book on a whim without any knowledge of the author or the subject matter and am so glad I did. I only wonder why I didn't read this book sooner. This book covers an important piece of American history that was conveniently not discussed in any history class I ever took. I gained a unique perspective on Latin America, the CIA, and how the US's foreign policy has shaped the region. I recommend this book to anyone who is interested in politics, espionage, and/or Latin cultures.

Nicaraguans have been trying to govern their own country since the late 1800's, but the U.S. keeps getting in the way. An important read which displays few heroes but several villains. By the end of the book, you don't know who to root for.

I had often heard of the war in Nicaragua but new little about it. I was surprised at the scale of the US' involvement and that they felt that this small and, in many ways, inconsequential country, was the key to holding back communism in the Americas. After reading this book it is hard not to laugh when the US sits on its high horse and declares that they support freedom around the world.

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