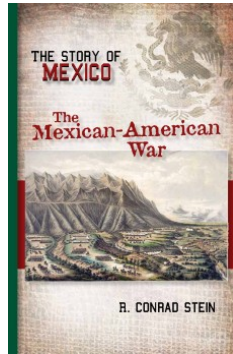
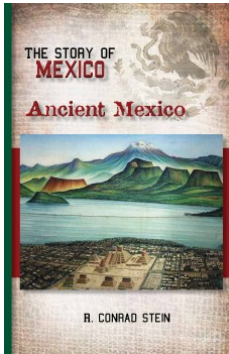


The Story of Mexico



School Library Journal

OCTOBER, 2011

STEIN, R. Conrad. *Ancient Mexico*.

ISBN 978-1-59935-161-2. LC 2010041379.

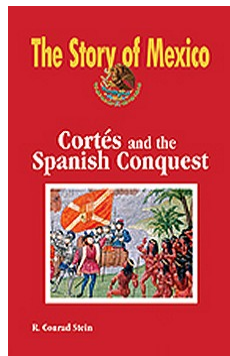
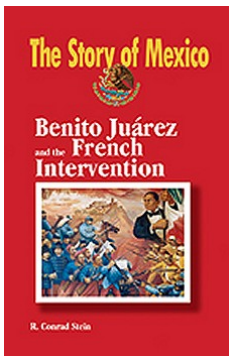
———. *The Mexican-American War*.

ISBN 978-1-59935-160-5. LC 2010041378.

ea vol: 144p. (The Story of Mexico Series). illus. maps. photos. reprints. bibliog. chron. index. notes. Web sites. CIP. Morgan Reynolds. 2011. PLB \$28.95.

Gr 8 Up—*Ancient Mexico* begins with speculation about when the Paleo-Indians arrived in the Americas and then highlights each major culture until the conquest of the Spanish conquistadors. *The Mexican-American War* starts with Texas declaring its independence from Mexico, the war itself, and then concludes

with the aftermath. The paragraphs are long and information rich. The text is punctuated with vibrant pictures, paintings, and political cartoons that help re-create history for readers. However, the writing style is more academic than lively, with sporadic quotes from historians. The specialized subject matter and in-depth examination of the topics restrict these titles to a narrow audience. Purchase only if you have an extensive Mexican history collection.—*Samantha Larsen Hastings, Riverton Library, UT*



School Library Journal

January, 2008

STEIN, R. Conrad. *Benito Juárez and the French Intervention*.

ISBN 978-1-59935-052-3. LC 2007016005.

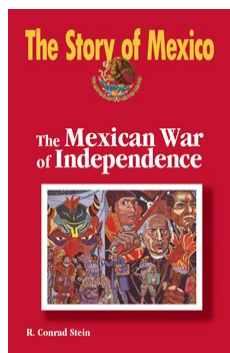
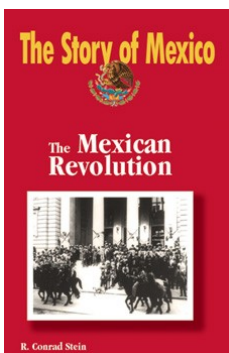
———. *Cortés and the Spanish Conquest*.

ISBN 978-1-59935-053-0. LC 2007016004.

ea vol: 160p. (The Story of Mexico Series). maps. photos. reprints. bibliog. chron. index. notes. Web sites. CIP. Morgan Reynolds. 2007. PLB \$27.95.

Gr 6 Up—These books provide detailed information in a readable format, and the lively writing style brings the events and people to life. Liberal use of quotes and sidebars give readers a taste of each time period, and colorful reproductions and photographs help to maintain interest. The first title tells the story of Juárez, a Zapotec Indian, and his rise to political leadership. Born

into poverty in 1806, he became Mexico's first Indian president, presiding over a country in turmoil. His dream of governing according to the Mexican Constitution was delayed by the French Intervention in 1863 when Napoleon III appointed Maximilian von Hapsburg emperor of Mexico. Juárez continued his program of reform when the French were driven out. Stein includes background information about 19th-century Mexico, discussing its status as a Spanish colony, its struggle for independence, and war with the United States. Cortés identifies the "encounter" between the Spanish and Aztecs as one that "would put the human character itself on trial." The author provides a look at both societies, tracing the Aztecs' rise to power and the Spaniards' interest in exploration. The Spanish conquest of the Aztecs, led by Hernando Cortés, is related in great depth, and the book ends with a discussion of its legacy. Two excellent introductions to Mexican history.—*Lana Miles, Jackson Elementary School, Rosenberg, TX*



School Library Journal

MARCH, 2008

STEIN, R. Conrad. *The Mexican Revolution*. 160p.

ISBN 978-1-59935-051-6. LC 2007022136.

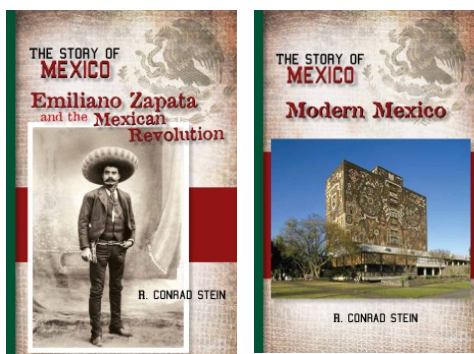
———. *The Mexican War of Independence*. 144p.

ISBN 978-1-59935-054-7. LC 2007022137.

ea vol: (The Story of Mexico Series). maps. photos. reprints. bibliog. chron. index. notes. Web sites. CIP. Morgan Reynolds. 2007. PLB \$27.95.

Gr 6 Up—Opening with Porfirio Díaz's presidency (beginning in 1876), *Revolution* explains how Indian land was expropriated and allotted to rich hacienda owners, describes resistance movements led by Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa, and details 10 years of political upheaval and violent uprisings (1910-1920), ending with Alvaro Obregón's election as president of Mexico.

The revolution's brutality and effects on the average peasant are emphasized throughout. Independence covers the years between 1521, when Hernando Cortés completed his conquest of the Aztec empire, and 1855, when Antonio Lopez Santa Anna was overthrown. The book provides excellent background information about three centuries of Spain's rule over Mexico. Of particular interest is the explanation of the racial hierarchy that played such an important role in fueling the desire for independence. Both volumes have a lively narrative style; the events come alive as interesting stories rather than listings of facts and dates. The texts incorporate numerous quotes that are cited in source notes. Pertinent illustrations, including photographs, historical paintings, and maps are sprinkled throughout. Boxed sections provide more detail about the topics. Two well-written and well-researched volumes.—*Sheilah Kosco, Bastrop Public Library, TX*



Booklist

The Story of Mexico Series

Stein organizes and clearly presents a great deal of information in these four volumes from his eight-part Story of Mexico series, begun in 2007. The series format features a chronological text supplemented with useful sidebars and brightened with color illustrations, including many photos, artifacts, and period artworks. Back matter includes a time line, source notes for the many quotes, a bibliography, and a list of websites. ***Ancient Mexico*** provides a historical survey of Mexico's early inhabitants, from the arrival of Paleo-Indians through civilizations such as the Olmecs, the Maya, the Toltecs, and the Aztecs. ***Emiliano Zapata*** offers the most unified narrative, tracing the life and impact of Zapata and his revolutionary movement. Besides spotlighting significant leaders and battles, ***Mexican-American War*** explains of the war's causes, its progress, and its aftermath in both countries. ***Modern Mexico*** looks at events in Mexico since 1920, focusing primarily on presidential administrations, economic problems, political unrest, and emigration. Closer editing would have removed the occasional minor clunker, while more plentiful and more detailed maps would have helped readers to understand the text better. But on the whole, the books offer very useful and quite readable surveys of significant periods in Mexico's history, an under-represented subject in American books for young people.