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Robert Ryal Miller's "Mexico: A History" is a reliable, readable survey history of Mexico from its pre-historic origins to the late 20th century. I have used the book as a text for a course on Mexican history for senior citizens. Almost unanimously the course participants have rated the book very highly.

Miller has done the general reading public a favor by offering a reliable survey history of Mexico of about 375 pages. Its convenient length enables the general reader to gain a better understanding of our southern neighbor about whom many of us know little though with whom we share a 2,000-mile border. There are excellent, much longer books or multi-volume books on Mexican history, but their length makes them too daunting and sometimes too scholarly for the first-time reader of Mexican history to pick up. If after reading a sound history book of Miller's size, the general reader is moved to delve further into Mexican history, he or she can turn to longer books, with a basis established to assimilate more readily the greater detail of a longer history. In my research, I have found only one other recently published survey history of Mexico of the same convenient length which is also historically reliable; while that book is readable as well, I felt it was a little more technical than Miller's and perhaps assumed the uninformed reader would be able to grasp some of the historical concepts more quickly than the experience in my course has indicated.

Miller's book could have been made even more readable and useful if each chapter had begun with a brief introduction of the content to follow in the particular chapter and concluded with a brief summary at the chapter's end. Within each chapter the book would have benefited from the insertion of topical headings when the text moved from one major event or theme to another. These simple editing techniques would have made it easier for the reader to absorb and organize in his or her mind the extensive factual information in each chapter.