

Bio

Jürgen Buchenau is Professor of History and Latin American Studies at UNC Charlotte. He completed his Ph.D. at UNC Chapel Hill in 1993. His research focuses on Mexico since the late 19th century, and especially the Mexican Revolution, political violence, U.S.-Mexican relations, business and economic history, immigration, national identity, and political culture. Buchenau is the author and/or editor of twelve books, including one in press. In addition, he has authored or co-authored 37 book chapters and articles in English, Spanish, and German.

Buchenau's research is interdisciplinary and multilingual and transcends the boundaries of political, economic, social, and cultural history. One of its primary concerns has been the global history of Mexico as a version of James Scott's "weapons of the weak"—an effort to forestall the overweening influence of the United States. Another has been to study Mexico as a target rather than source of immigrants; and a third probes the persistence of political violence long after the military phase of the revolution had ended. Buchenau is currently working on a book on U.S.-Mexican relations.

Buchenau's first monograph, *In the Shadow of the Giant: The Making of Mexico's Central America Policy, 1876-1930* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1996) combines international history with political culture. Written during a time of revolution and U.S. intervention in Central America, the book examines Mexican efforts to mitigate such intervention. The Mexican government has reconciled nationalism with the strictures of its geopolitical environment. Foreign policy has served an important domestic purpose, legitimizing an oligarchy in league with foreign investors. But it also made that oligarchy a leader in global discourses that sought to forestall imperialist military intervention and also advocated for an international capitalist system that distributed resources more fairly.

Tools of Progress: A German Merchant Clan in Mexico City, 1865-Present (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2004) studied the cultural and social history of an international family business. This work is a transnational history of a German merchant clan in Mexico City. Contextualized in the larger trends of migration, the history of capitalism, and Mexican nationalism, the book explains why Mexico, unlike Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, never saw large-scale immigration. It also offers a rare analysis of a mid-sized department store that once stood at the vanguard of modernization, only to be overshadowed by multinational corporations and shopping malls.

Buchenau's recent focus on the Mexican Revolution has resulted in three monographs and a co-authored synthesis. This work reappraises the Revolution by means of studying its winners, the "Sonoran Dynasty." The prize-winning *Plutarco Elías Calles and the Mexican Revolution* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007) revealed how the Sonorans distilled the revolutionary process into a party that governed without interruption from 1929 to 2000. The book analyzed populist leadership in Latin America and also a group of entrepreneurial military leaders who sought to remake Mexico in the image of the desert north. *The Last Caudillo: Alvaro Obregón and the Mexican Revolution* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011) studied a revolutionary general who rose from humble beginnings to become Mexico's preeminent politician. The book evaluates Obregón's personality cult as the primary macho hero of the revolution. The larger insights from these two books also informed a work of synthesis published by Duke University Press in 2013, a History Book Club selection co-authored with Gilbert M. Joseph. The capstone of this series is *The Sonoran Dynasty in Mexico: Revolution, Reform, and Repression* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, in press). This book studies the Sonoran group as a whole, including its lesser-known members. The work is the only comprehensive study of a dysfunctional and fractious group that has often been taken for

granted as the bedrock of the revolutionary regime that emerged from the bloodshed of the 1910s.

Buchenau is an accomplished grant writer and fundraiser, both for his own work and the organizations that he has served. He has contributed to almost USD 2,000,000 in federal grants at UNC Charlotte, including two prestigious fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities and several grants for the Latin American Studies program that he founded in the 2000s. In addition, he helped raise close to USD 3,800,000 in private donations. As the outgoing co-Executive Director of the Conference on Latin American History (CLAH), Buchenau helped attract more than \$40,000 for the general work of the organization and three new prizes, including one in progress.

Buchenau serves Latin Americanist organizations with verve and enthusiasm. Aside from the CLAH, which he has served for the past eleven years, he has also been president of the Southeastern Council of Latin American Studies, and the Latin American and Caribbean Section of the Southern Historical Association. He is also editor of *The Latin Americanist* and two book series. He has served LASA on both the Nominations Committee and the Development Committee.