



Bienville's Dilemma: A Historical Geography of New Orleans

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All New Orleans' glories, tragedies, contributions, and complexities can be traced back to the geographical dilemma Bienville confronted in 1718 when selecting the primary location of New Orleans. "Bienville's Dilemma" presents sixty-eight articles on the historical geography of New Orleans, covering the formation and foundation of the city, its urbanization and population, its "humanization" into a place of distinction, the manipulation of its environment, its devastation by Hurricane Katrina, and its ongoing recovery.

Bienville's Dilemma: A Historical Geography of New Orleans Details

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Author : Richard Campanella

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From Reader Review Bienville's Dilemma: A Historical Geography of New Orleans for online ebook

Redsteve says

Fascinating book. Although the format (collection of 2-10 page essays on a wide variety of subjects) make it easy to pick up, it also makes it hard to get through quickly.

Diana Jih says

some fun chapters on architecture.

Jules says

LA 911.763 CAM

Chris Beck says

A comprehensive book on all things New Orleans. Although a geographer, Campanella presents an extremely accessible and fascinating portrayal of New Orleans past, present, and future. Whether you love history, geography, food, architecture, wetlands loss/restoration, language, etc., everyone can find something they are personally invested in, as well as develop some new passions about other issues. A must read even if you are slightly intrigued by New Orleans.

Amphitrite66 says

Bloody wonderful. This book had me reading a history book for fun for the first time in years. Its essay format, which I at first thought would make it tedious, actually ended up helping its pace by invigorating my interest with each exploration of a new topic. This book has also inspired me to continue my reading in this area and I highly recommend this book to anyone, not just New Orleanians.

Sean Chick says

Writing style varies from compelling to aimless which really defines the book. It is an eccentric collection of articles, usually objective but sometimes lacking a strong but reasoned opinion. Campanella is at heart a debunker, so his stuff is either enlightening or downright annoying. In the end, this is a worthy book, but one strictly for people with a deep interest in New Orleans.

Elizabeth says

As seen at Acadian Books.

Drew says

New Orleans is in some sense geographically trivial -- you know why it is there, and you can't get lost, regardless of your state of inebriation. Nonetheless, it fascinates me -- there are traces of the past present that every other city seems to obliterate. New Orleans, oddly, seems much older than London -- though it is an order of magnitude younger, at the very least.

Some chapters may bore you -- and if you are a numbers and statistics kind of person, certain measurements will be left lacking -- but this is the one canonical book to have and read about New Orleans.

Doreen says

fabulously conceived and quite brilliantly written (for a geographer, hahaha), Bienville's Dilemma is astounding in both its scope, (covering physical, cultural, social, and political geographies/urban spaces of New Orleans) and its particularities. It's a scholarly work with populist roots. While its daunting 598 endnotes may be offputting to those who may equate archival research with dull prose, it compellingly portrays the diversity of the city's people, history, and events through its spectacular focus on the minutiae of everyday life in addition to cataclysmic events (physical/material and social) that have been seared into the city's history and its very landscape. the city is a palimpsest and Campanella painstakingly uncovers all of its layers, with the full knowledge that it will continue to generate new identities, influx populations, and despairing dilemmas, while continuing to carry the burdens of its history.
