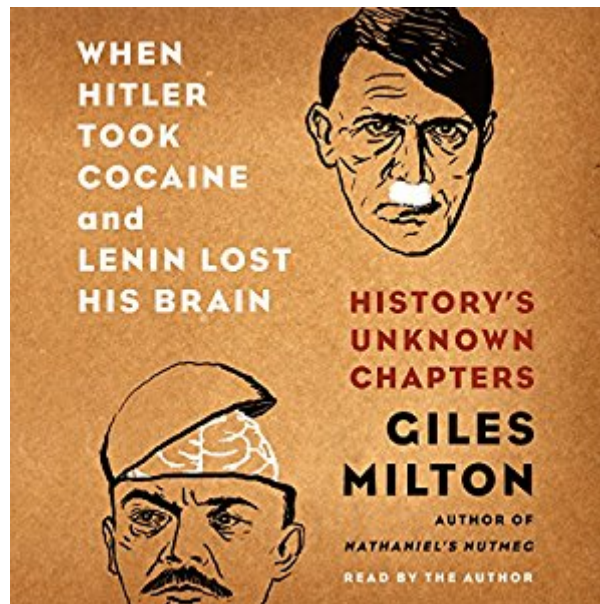


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# When Hitler Took Cocaine And Lenin Lost His Brain: History's Unknown Chapters



## Synopsis

Obscure and addictive true tales from history told by one of our most entertaining historians, Giles Milton. The first installment in Giles Milton's outrageously entertaining series, *History's Unknown Chapters*: Colorful and accessible, intelligent and illuminating, Milton shows his customary historical flair as he delves into the little-known stories from the past. There's the cook aboard the Titanic who pickled himself with whiskey and survived in the icy seas where most everyone else died. There's the man who survived the atomic bombs in both Hiroshima and Nagasaki. And there's many, many more. Covering everything from adventure, war, murder, and slavery to espionage, including the stories of the female Robinson Crusoe, Hitler's final hours, Japan's deadly balloon bomb, and the emperor of the United States, these tales deserve to be told.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I'm surprised this book got such great reviews, but I guess I should have read said reviews before purchasing as it would have told me what I needed to know or should have known...This IS a good book! Very interesting short stories, HOWEVER, "short" being the key word. Each story is only about 2 pages of very easy reading. I appreciated this to some extent, as I've had a hard time digging in to a book for fun lately (I'm an attorney). But, I guess I was just yearning for a bit more. I would have enjoyed this book more there were less stories, but more info presented on each story that was included. To the author's credit, there is a list for suggested further reading following each section (approx. 3 titles to pursue with regard to each story presented). This book would probably be appropriate for a high schooler, but I wouldn't recommend for much younger audiences, as most of

the stories have to do violence, death, and drugs!

I found this via the Mental Floss book recommendation bit in their magazine, (a periodical filled to the brim with nerd pr0n and brain candy) and suffice it to say it's filled with interesting historical anecdotes and stories that (if I were to guess) go off the beaten path and explore details potentially not covered by a lot of historical texts.

This book is disappointing. The writing is crisp and sometimes wryly amusing, but these footnotes to historical events and people are almost skeletal, 2 to 3 pages each. The selections seem to be based on the author's own interest in them, and some of them will be familiar to many readers. The title can serve as an example. Hitler did take cocaine, as part of an extensive and highly peculiar regimen prescribed and administered by his personal physician. Given the detail, it's surprising that Hitler survived until 1945, let alone managed to be somewhat effective as a leader. Lenin did indeed lose his brain: after his death, there was interest in examining the brain of this alleged genius, and his brain is preserved to this day sliced onto 30,000 glass slides (Lenin remains on display, his preserved body apparently still something of a tourist attraction despite the fact it's been nearly a century since his death. There are some odds and ends of interest. Agatha Christie vanished for 11 days in 1926, and had no memory of it when she was found in a spa, using the name of her husband's mistress (there's a novel there, if not already written!). Hitler had an English girlfriend, a sort of political groupie, with the unlikely name of Unity Valkyrie Mitford, an intriguing but sad story. Hitler has nephews living in the USA: Alois Hitler, Hitler's half brother, had a son with his Irish girlfriend, and this man moved to the USA and took the name of William Stuart Holston. Hitler's nephew served in World War 2 as an American soldier. He had three sons. A few others struck me as especially interesting. Hiroo Choda, a Japanese soldier, did not surrender until 1974, surviving on a small island in the Philippines. Ota Benga, a "pygmy" from the Congo, was installed in the Bronx Zoo's monkey house as an attraction; he was later given more freedom but the story ends sadly. Then there's Amelia Dyer, an English woman who in the 1890s took illegitimate babies from mothers wishing to escape the difficult social situation of unwed motherhood (Dyer would do so for a fee). She murdered the babies and pawned their clothes--and may have killed hundreds of babies. And there's Emperor Norton, self-proclaimed American Emperor (from 1859) who lived in San Francisco in bemused toleration until his reign ended with his death in 1880.

Giles Milton presents history's more obscure moments in **WHEN HITLER TOOK COCAINE AND**

LENIN LOST HIS BRAIN. In short-and-sweet chapters, Milton details some of HISTORY'S UNKNOWN CHAPTERS. A 2016 Picador/St. Martin's Press release, Milton's book should prove catnip for trivia buffs. This edition actually combines two of Milton's books first published in Great Britain: WHEN HITLER TOOK COCAINE and WHEN LENIN LOST HIS BRAIN. Among the subjects covered are Hitler's English "girlfriend," George Mallory's death on Mt. Everest, a kamikaze pilot who lived, Agatha Christie's disappearance, baby-killer Amelia Dyer, Alfred Loewenstein's mysterious death, Lenin's brain-less corpse, Japan's balloon attacks on the U. S. in World War II, England's master executioner Alfred Pierrepoint, the 'female Robinson Crusoe,' the last soldier killed in WW I, etc. I would have liked photographs of at least some of the people covered in the book but that's just me. In any case, history and trivia buffs will find much of interest in Milton's book. Though I've been reading similar books for decades, I learned a few new historic oddities. You can read the book from cover to cover or just pick a page at random and discover, for example, the horrible happenings on the not-so-good ship Zong. Recommended.

Really fun book with some weird and awesome factual stories. Each subject is a small chapter & easy to read. There's also a reference guide at the end, in case you'd like to do more research on a story.

This was an amusing and quick read. Some of the people and history was already familiar to me, but most were not. Almost every story brought a chuckle, but there were some that were definitely sad or just plain horrific. I want to delve deeper into some of the stories, such as that of Ada Blackjack. I look forward to reading the next installment in Mr. Milton's "History's Unknown Chapters".

This book was great. Short chapters about forgotten history (a lot of it wasn't really forgotten, like the last Japanese soldier or the story plane in the Andies, but still fun to read about). It was accessible and enjoyable to read, very well written but not too heavy. You only get the bare bones of the story, but that's enough in most cases. It's new to paperback and book one in a series. I highly recommend.

This book tells "the dirt" on people from history, that we thought we already knew. I loved this!

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