The history of coffee is a tale of romance and complexity, sometimes bitter, sometimes enlightened. Mark Pendergrast weaves this tale with the art of a master storyteller. From its legendary discovery in the ancient land of Abyssinia (now Ethiopia), coffee became a source of stimulus for new ideas, work, and social controversy. Traded throughout the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century, the curious beverage was brought to the hands of Pope Clement VIII by priests who wanted to ban it. He tasted and replied: Why, this Satan's drink is so delicious, it would be a pity to let the infide... A focused and juicy history of our last legal and socially acceptable drug–Wall Street Journal. Pendergrast's account satisfies because of its thoroughness... Pendergrast unearths coffee-based trade wars, health reports, and cafe cultures, bringing to light amusing treasures along the way. Mother Jones. Ask anyone in the coffee world and they will cite this book as a favorite... It gives a comprehensive understanding to the history and complexities of your favorite drink. The Kitchn. Uncommon Grounds is not only a good read but a vital one. Washington Monthly. The history of coffee is a tale of romance and complexity, sometimes bitter, sometimes enlightened. Mark Pendergrast weaves this tale with the art of a master storyteller. It attempts to show how increased coffee production and export, despite its contribution to the prosperity of Jimma, undermined the kingdom's autonomy and accelerated Haile Sellassie's drive for the creation of a centralized bureaucratic state. The annexation of Jimma occurred in 1932 during a political crisis in the kingdom, an event that I will discuss later. Few here at the World Bank dispute the idea that corruption is a serious problem, but the rift over Mr. Wolfowitz's approach has grown deep and bitter, according to more than a dozen bank officials interviewed recently. Uncommon Grounds book. Read 225 reviews from the world's largest community for readers. Uncommon Grounds tells the story of coffee from its discovery on a hill in ancient Abyssinia to the advent of Starbucks. 1. Transformed "our world" in the title. Really? The book references to Latin America are confined strictly to areas where the economics and marketing collided or coincided with American interests. Ethiopia, Kenya and other African coffee giants elicit passing mention at best. "A marketing and economic history of the coffee industry in the U.S." or something like it would be more apt. 2. It was very hard to find central themes or takeaways from a sweeping narrative.