



Seven Events That Made America America: And Proved That the Founding Fathers Were Right All Along

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A conservative historian examines some of the pivotal, yet often ignored, moments that shaped our history

All students of American history know the big events that dramatically shaped our country. The Civil War, Pearl Harbor, the assassination of John F. Kennedy, and 9/11 are just a few.

But there are other, less famous events that had an equally profound impact. Notable conservative historian Larry Schweikart takes an in- depth look at seven of these transformative moments and provides an analysis of how each of them spurred a trend that either confirmed or departed from the vision our Founding Fathers had for America. For instance, he shows how Martin Van Buren's creation of a national political party made it possible for Obama to get elected almost two centuries later and how Dwight Eisenhower's heart attack led to a war on red meat, during which the government took control over Americans' diets.

In his easy-to-read yet informative style, Schweikart will not only educate but also surprise readers into reevaluating our history.

Seven Events That Made America America: And Proved That the Founding Fathers Were Right All Along Details

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Author : Larry Schweikart

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Tom says

I really wanted to give this book more stars. My main issue is that I felt the author was expressing his personal opinions and using selected sources to prove his point. More to the point, he eluded to Fox news being one of the few non-biased news sources. At this point, I had to say no thank you to the Kool-Aid. However, I would highly recommend this book if you are part of a book club. Especially if you are a group with a mixed political background. It will either lead to exciting discussions with drastically various opinions being expressed, you will agree to disagree, or there will be an all-out brawl with the police needing to intervene.

Theresa says

Schweikart, a retired history professor, looks at seven events in American history that he feels have taken us down the wrong path to big government that meddles in people's lives. His chosen events were Martin Van Buren's focus on partisanism (does this sound familiar?), the Dred Scott decision, the Johnstown Flood, Dwight Eisenhower's heart attack, rock music, Reagan's waffling in the Middle East, and the liberal press of the Eastern establishment. The author's libertarian, conservative view of what government should be is at odds with today's reality. Parts of his argument were plausible but he veered too often into a shrill denunciation of how we went wrong. His assertion that Fox News was the only unbiased media source was not accurate for me. This book was written during Obama's first term so it would be interesting to see how his views have or have not changed in the last ten years.

Mars Smith says

Overview: The seven events that the author chose are outlined below.

1. Martin Van Buren's idea about political parties
2. The Dread Scott decision
3. The Johnstown flood
4. Eisenhower's heart attack
5. How rock n' roll penetrated the iron curtain
6. Ronald Regan trying to keep the peace
7. Obama's favorable media treatment

Pro: This piece of writing has quite a bit of supporting evidence and references to back up some of the claims presented. The writing is easy to follow and insightful.

Con: There is a conservative undertone throughout the book that makes some of the author's statements seem more bias. The title is a little misleading due to the events the author chose to include. The events Larry

Schweikart chose were not all events that "made America America". Most would criticize the fact that the author could have chosen more significant events to support his claims about what the founders believed to be right.

Who is this for? This book is meant for people searching for a quick overview on a few mentionable events.

Brian Morgan says

Author visits several events that over time have affected how America has evolved. One of the more interesting chapters references President Eisenhower's heart attack and how that event affect American diets even to this day. A very interesting read.

Amy says

What the title of this book should actually be: **Seven Events That Interested or Irritated The Author Enough To Write An Essay: With Random Commentary About The Founding Fathers.**

Extra star for some interesting information, particularly about communism and rock and roll, but overall a bit of a grab bag of political opinions and digs at things the author doesn't like.

Alix says

This book was a little difficult to get through -- not because the writing was slow, but because the opinions expressed made me roll my eyes and scoff a lot. I actually ended up skipping over whole parts of chapters because I just couldn't stomach the far-reaching conclusions Schweikart was making from historical events. Obviously, I have a different take on political events than the author (I am much more liberal in my thinking). My intent on reading this book was to try to better understand the conservative viewpoint. Unfortunately, my experiment failed; I still don't understand...

On a positive note, I would say that Schweikart does a relatively good job of making history readable. His conversational style was easy to follow, though there were a few times where the "proof" for a specific viewpoint was disjointed and far-reaching.

Melissa says

I didn't finish this. Maybe if I had the physical book I could have scanned it, but I had it on audio. I wanted more of a historical book that just gave the facts and wasn't one person's political views.

Dj says

The worst type of Political Bilge. With each chapter he goes farther and farther off the rails of presenting facts and into spouting vitriol against his chosen enemies of the public good. By the time I decided I couldn't finish this totally biased and wildly speculative work, he had blamed the Katrina disaster on the fact that New Orleans was a 'democrat' city, pointed out all the good that the Federal Government had done during that disaster, then said that they had mucked it all up. In the last chapter I started he was using every catch phrase possible to slam the government's involvement in health care and attempting to promote a healthier diet. All things considered, this book is not worth the printing cost and certainly should be filed under the category of author should consider the terms he uses for others as applying to himself. His 'pseudo-science' and 'nannyism' and 'fear mongering' are no better than those that he accuses of it, sometimes worse.

Should have realized that this book was going to be less than advertised when it presupposed that the Founding Fathers agreed on things. A somewhat unlikely historical view.

Gary says

The subject matter proved surprising in places (media bias; rock music as the destroyer of the Soviet Union; the 'war' on cholesterol and veganism...), but that just made this a better read than I was actually expecting.

The author is unashamedly conservative (but not exactly Libertarian), and that is good in the main, but in a few places it meant the author blew things out of proportion. He also shoehorned a number of topics into the narrative that didn't really belong there.

Still, an informative and enjoyable book on the whole.

Liked it.

Craig says

In this inciteful book, Schweikert identifies seven events which (all but number 5) have negatively impacted American life and started seemingly irreversible trends: (1) Martin Van Buren's focus on partisanism and resultant "big government"; (2) The Dred Scott decision, its destruction of the economy and hastening of the Civil War; (3) The Johnstown flood and the power of private compassion (now we have big government relief agencies which are costly and ineffective); (4) President Eisenhower's heart attack and ensuing government encroachment over matters of personal health (big government's dietary nannyism); (5) The advent of the "age of rock music" and its impact in bringing down the Iron Curtain; (6) President Reagan's equivocation in Beirut which emboldened the radical jihadists; and (7) The rise of the Liberal Press (Easter elitism) and its impact on national/state/local elections and political thought. The author examines each of these events/trends in light of how they might have been perceived by the Founding Fathers. He concludes with an eighth event/trend: the abuse of power by the courts in shaping legislation in contravention of the express language of the US Constitution. A sobering book and a great read.

Nathan Albright says

How you view this book will depend in large part on how much you agree with the author's libertarian perspective. There is no question that the author is firmly aware of his historical texts, but at the same time it is the author's interpretations of those texts that are not necessarily all that enjoyable to read. To be sure, the author's hostility to left-wing bias is music to my ears, but the author's libertarian rather than godly moral code means that this book is not quite in alignment with my own views, and in a book like this which is driven by commentary rather than historiography, opinion and worldview matter a great deal. I view this book, therefore, from a somewhat sympathetic but also somewhat critical viewpoint to the author's, which is a somewhat alienating but not very unusual place to be [1]. As has been the case previously with the author's work, I enjoyed this book more than I thought I would as a libertarian work and less than I thought I would as a morally conservative view, which means that this author probably finds himself somewhere around a conservatarian in his approach.

However the author identifies himself, this book consists of slightly more than 200 pages consisting of seven chapters that deal with seven events that are pivotal to the author. Most of them, to his credit, are events that are somewhat obscure to many people but have a great deal of importance, and only a few of them have had their bones picked clean by carrion-eating commentators. After an introduction the author introduces Martin Van Buren and his attempts to gain power and preserve Democratic rule by minimizing slavery and their spectacular lack of success in antebellum America (1), and its further repercussions on the increasing size of government. After that comes a critical view of the overreach of Dred Scott and its leading to the Panic of 1857 as well as the Civil War (2). This leads the author to praise private generosity in the aftermath of the Johnstown flood and similar disasters, pointing out quite reasonably that governments do not direct charity efforts, but people do (3). The author then moves on to a look at how Ike's heart troubles led to the sort of pseudoscientific nanny state that attempts to regulate diet and behavior for dubious and unproven reasons (4), scoring some points against the global warming myth in the process. The author then looks at how the libertarian nature of rock & roll music was ultimately hostile to authoritarian communism more than Western liberal democracy (5), points out the flaws of Reagan's peacekeeping and his show of weakness in then removing peacekeeping troops from the Lebanon quagmire (6), and closes the book with an acerbic view of liberal bias in the media (7).

Will you appreciate this book? That depends. It is obvious that readers fond of big government and the nanny state will not appreciate the author's perspective and approach, nor will they appreciate the obvious historical knowledge he comes with. Fortunately, most other audiences will find at least some aspects to appreciate, whether that includes a fair and balanced view of Fox News as being generally moderate rather than right-wing to conservative as it is often and mistakenly thought to be, or the author's humorous praise of the lack of radicalism of rock musicians, or the author's trenchant criticism of the bogus ideas about nutrition science current in American governmental agencies. I am not sure that I would appreciate a face-to-face conversation over some beef brisket with the author, but I can at least enjoy reading his books, and that is enough enjoyment for me.

[1] See, for example:

<https://edgeinducedcohesion.blog/2011...>

<https://edgeinducedcohesion.blog/2018...>

<https://edgeinducedcohesion.blog/2018...>

S says

The 1st 4 events were described well, but the author's conclusions at the end of each chapter seemed a bit contrived when he added his political views. The rock and roll chapter was well-written, though. The final chapter on the media liberal-bias totally omitted the elimination of the FCC's 1949 Fairness Doctrine (unofficially in 1986 (Reagan-era) & officially in 2011 (Obama-era))-- a serious error/omission in my opinion. The Fairness Doctrine required broadcast license holders to present controversial issues in a equitable, balanced, and honest way. Getting rid of this policy allowed media to present biased material with impunity.

Eric says

Probably ought to be required reading for every one of my Tea Party friends. Schweikart took a long view going all the way back to Van Buren to shed light on the how and why of the seeming inexorable growth of government. He makes the weak case (I need to read more) that the founders were on the right track in limiting the Supreme Court's power, but did not have quite the necessary foresight to identify the ultimate tyranny of judicial rule from the nation's highest bench. I would pose that even liberals and progressives might find friendly ground here.

BAM The Bibliomaniac says

Maybe it's just me, but it seems that the author is just enjoying getting his digs in. I'm not sure if I'm supposed to come away from each chapter feeling positive about my government or ashamed? Sometimes it even sounds a bit racially prejudicial?

The one section I found enthralling was about the rock and roll era. The birth, its effect on society not only in the US but all over the globe. If I could have isolated that chapter, I would have rated it more highly.

I think every student of politics, history, economics, etc could write a similar book with completely different events.

2017 Reading Challenge: red spine

Ryang says

Just a terrible book. Ideology over facts, again and again.
