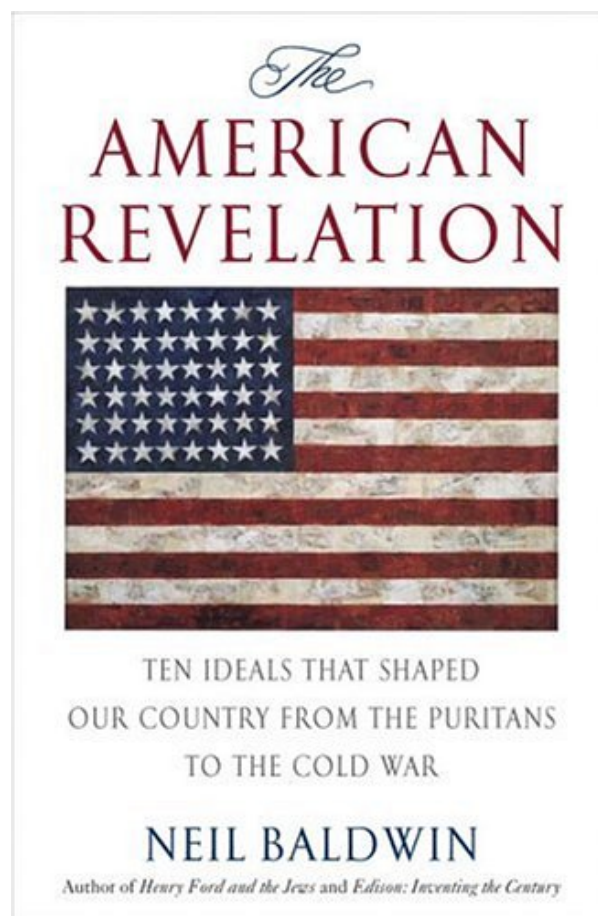


**THE AMERICAN REVELATION: TEN  
IDEALS THAT SHAPED OUR COUNTRY  
FROM THE PURITANS TO THE COLD WAR  
BY NEIL BALDWIN**



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NEIL BALDWIN

*Author of Henry Ford and the Jews and Edison: Inventing the Century*

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Neil Baldwin, one of the most exciting intellectual historians, has written extensively about the great thinkers and innovators who have shaped our unique American identity. In *THE AMERICAN REVELATION*, he turns his energies to the unfolding story of how the American spirit developed over 400 years.

This inspiring examination of the ideals that have grown to inform our national identity and of the figures who set the course for our evolving self image covers:

City on a Hill--John Winthrop--1630  
Common Sense--Thomas Paine--1776  
E pluribus unum--Pierre-Eugene Du Simitiere--1776  
Self Reliance--Ralph Waldo Emerson--1841  
Manifest Destiny--John L. O'Sullivan--1845  
Progress and Poverty--Henry George--1879  
The Sphere of Action--Jane Addams--1902  
The Melting Pot--Israel Zangwill--1908  
The Negro in Our History--Carter Woodson--1922  
The Marshall Plan--George C. Marshall--1947

Neil Baldwin writes of figures both familiar and forgotten in this work of popular history that seeks to illuminate and enliven the current debate about American's role in the world. Meticulously researched and entertainingly written, *THE AMERICAN REVELATION* will make all U.S. readers, regardless of their politics, be proud of our country's intellectual heritage and high-minded values and will reassert those ideals to the rest of the world.

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A Thought-Provoking Narrative

By Bookreporter

Americans love political discussion and debate. From colonial days when pamphlets and town meetings were the mechanism of discourse, to modern times when talk radio and political blogs stimulate discussion of important public issues, robust political debate is a crucial element of American life. For many, an important element of current debate centers on the historical perspective. From documents and speeches such as The Federalist Papers, George Washington's farewell address and Lincoln's second inaugural address, great respect is often given to the intellectual contributions of America's founding fathers. It is a rare day when the opinion pages of major print media or television commentators do not make reference to the written word of bygone centuries.

THE AMERICAN REVELATION: Ten Ideals That Shaped Our Country From the Puritans to the Cold War, by Neil Baldwin, is both a thought-provoking and thoughtful narrative of important examples of ideas that have shaped American thought, life, and our unique American identity. The ideas selected by the author pre-date the founding of the United States as a nation and traverse nearly four centuries of American life. By the author's own admission, they are not intended to be exhaustive. Rather, they are a selection, a few out of many ideas, concepts and phrases of American history and how they came to be part of the American lexicon.

Baldwin's list is neither political nor polemic. His first selection, "City on a Hill," the remarks of John Winthrop to the Massachusetts Bay Colonists in 1630, has been quoted by proponents of diverse political philosophies --- President Ronald Reagan and Governor Mario Cuomo, to name just two. Baldwin's discussion of The Marshall Plan, the American effort to rebuild a shattered European continent after World War II, is probably the finest example in American history of truly bi-partisan foreign policy in action. In each chapter Baldwin provides the reader with a brief biographical note of the author of an important contribution to American thought, the times in which the author lived, and the impact of the ideas on the American nation. In a nation that still fiercely debates the words and deeds of its founding fathers, it is important to stimulate debate about American values throughout the life of our country in order to understand what those values truly are.

It is Neil Baldwin's belief that our nation is currently suffering the consequences of a deeply divisive political debate. The pulse of 21st century America, he writes, "often sounds as if it is emanating from two separate heartbeats." Americans need to turn to core beliefs that can provide a unifying focus for our thoughts and our lives. There have been times in the life of our nation when such unifying thoughts were presented to the nation. They may have been, in the words of Thomas Paine, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry George, Jane Adams, or any of the ten sculptors of American thought whose words serve as the foundation of THE AMERICAN REVELATION. The perilous times in which we live demand an idealism that leads to a new definition of patriotism and national character. That critical goal begins with one citizen and one reader at a time.

--- Reviewed by Stuart Shiffman

6 of 7 people found the following review helpful.

Not a bad read



By Warner Todd Huston

The 10 ideas that shaped America is quite an important topic of conversation, really. Why DID we get this way, exactly? How did we come about? Why do we have the dichotomy of a nation founded by religions, but a government free of them? Why did we shun socialism when Europe embraced it? Unfortunately, after reading this book I did not feel that any questions were answered.

Neal Baldwin is easy to read, that much can surely be said. But each chapter was so divorced from the other as to leave the reader imagining that he were reading a simple volume of selected essays from various sources with no overriding theme. To be fair, Mr. Baldwin does warn that he didn't intend any overarching theme, but that sort of makes the book a bit hollow.

And, my biggest problem with this small tome is that he ignored the Founder's ideas of representative democracy leaving it out of the mix. These ideas were the bedrock of our nation without which we would not have had an America in the first place. I believe his second chapter should have been on the Declaration of Independence.

Also it would have helped to have some thread enlightening us as to how the preceding chapter foreshadowed the next. After all, enlightenment ( that of showing the reader what great ideas led Americans to today) was the goal of Mr. Baldwin's work.

Still, the book did lead me to seek out some other sources and that is valuable in and of itself.

So, I give it three stars. An interesting read, but not what it could have been.

2 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

ten interesting biographical essays

By A Customer

The premise of these ten biographical essays is to concentrate on individuals who brought "fundamental Americanism", values at a time in which our leaders prefer polarizing the people to consolidate power via the money mechanism needed for reelections. Readers may disagree on the choices (no presidents), which is part of the fun of this tome. For instance, this reviewer expected Lincoln as the influence of changing from state-centric to national-conscience, but instead he failed to make the cut and some that were selected I never heard of before. Historical buffs will enjoy reading about values of this country from the seventeenth century: John Winthrop; eighteenth century: Thomas Paine and Pierre Eugene Du Simitiere; nineteenth century: Ralph Waldo Emerson, John L. O'Sullivan, and Henry George; twentieth century: Jane Addams, Israel Zangwill, Carter G. Woodson, and George C. Marshall. Written somewhat like the required reading of an American History 101 course, Neil Baldwin presents a fascinating concept supported by his chosen ones who he argues lived the American ideal of individual freedom and rights.

Harriet Klausner

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