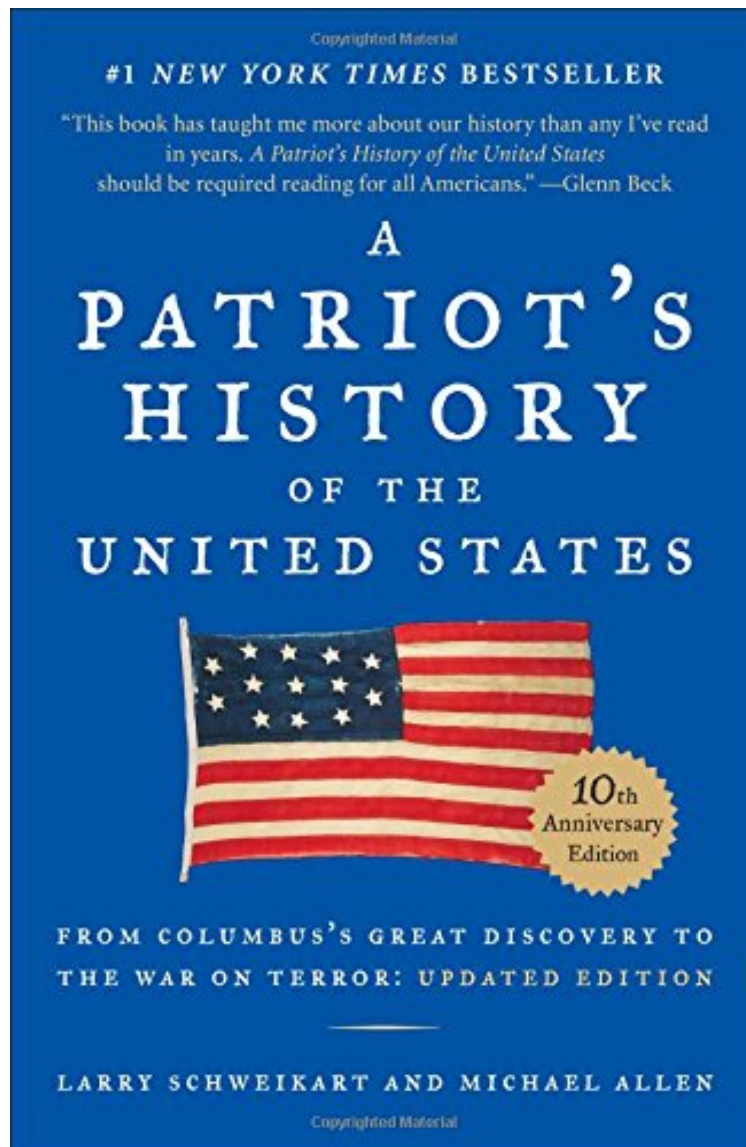


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A Patriot's History of the United States: From Columbus's Great Discovery to America's Age of Entitlement, Revised Edition

Larry Schweikart, Michael Patrick Allen
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The revised, 10th anniversary edition of the #1 New York Times bestseller *Over the Past Decade, A Patriots History of the United States* has become the definitive conservative history of our country, correcting the biases of historians and other intellectuals who downplay the greatness of Americas patriots. Professors Schweikart and Allen have now revised, updated, and expanded their book, which covers Americas long history with an appreciation for the values that made this nation uniquely successful.

In *A Patriots History of the United States*, Larry Schweikart and Michael Allen remind us what a few good individuals can do in just a few short centuries. A fluid account of America from the discovery of the Continent up to the present day. Brandon Miniter, *The Wall Street Journal* No recent American history challenges the conventional wisdom of academics as aggressively as Larry Schweikart and Michael Allens *A Patriots History of the United States*. Daniel J. Flynn, *Front Page Magazine* There are a thousand pleasant surprises and heartening reminders that underneath it all America remains a country of ideas, ideals, and optimism and no amount of revisionism can take that legacy away. John Coleman, *Humane Studies* A welcome, refreshing, and solid contribution to relearning what we have forgotten and remembering why this nation is good, and worth defending. Matthew Spalding, *National* Were the Puritans puritanical? Did the robber barons really rob anyone? What made the Great Depression so great? Historian Larry Schweikart sets the record straight. Marvin Olasky Any reader of Schweikart and Allens book will see immediately that it is a serious and substantive volume, based on a full recognition of the important secondary sources written by our major historians. Ronald Radosh, *Front Page Magazine* About the Author Larry Schweikart is a professor of history at the University of Dayton and the author of many other books, including *A Patriots History of the Modern World*. Michael Allen is a professor of history at the University of Washington, Tacoma. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. INTRODUCTION Is Americas past a tale of racism, sexism, and bigotry? Is it the story of the conquest and rape of a continent? Is U.S. history the story of white slave owners who perverted the electoral process for their own interests? Did America start with Columbus killing all the Indians, leap to Jim Crow laws and Rockefeller crushing the workers, then finally save itself with Franklin Roosevelts New Deal? The answers, of course, are no, no, no, and NO. One might never know this, however, by looking at almost any mainstream U.S. history textbook. Having taught American history in one form or another for close to sixty years between us, we are aware that, unfortunately, many students are berated with tales of the Founders as self-interested politicians and slaveholders, of the icons of American industry as robber-baron oppressors, and of every American foreign policy initiative as imperialistic and insensitive. At least Howard Zinns *A Peoples History of the United States* honestly represents its Marxist biases in the title! What is most amazing and refreshing is that the past usually speaks for itself. The evidence is there for telling the great story of the American past honestly with flaws, absolutely; with shortcomings, most definitely. But we think that an honest evaluation of the history of the United States must begin and end with the recognition that, compared to any other nation, Americas past is a bright and shining light. America was, and is, the city on the hill, the fountain of hope, the beacon of liberty. We utterly reject My country right or wrong what scholar wouldnt? But in the last thirty years, academics have taken an equally destructive approach: My country, always wrong! We reject that too. Instead, we remain convinced that if the story of Americas past is told fairly, the result cannot be anything but a deepened patriotism, a sense of awe at the obstacles overcome, the passion invested, the blood and tears spilled, and the nation that was built. An honest review of Americas past would note, among other observations, that the same Founders who owned slaves instituted numerous ways political and intellectual to ensure that slavery could not survive; that the concern over not just property rights, but all rights, so infused American life that laws often followed the practices of the common folk, rather than dictated to them; that even when the United States used her military power for dubious reasons, the ultimate result was to liberate people and bring a higher standard of living than before; that time and again Americas leaders have willingly shared power with those who had none, whether they were citizens of territories, former slaves, or disenfranchised women. And we could go on. The reason so many academics miss the real history of America is that they assume that ideas dont matter and that there is no such thing as virtue. They could not be more wrong. When John D. Rockefeller said, The common man must have kerosene and he must have it cheap, Rockefeller was already a wealthy man with no more to gain. When Grover Cleveland vetoed an insignificant seed corn bill, he knew it would hurt him politically, and that he would only win condemnation from the press and the people but the Constitution did not permit it, and he refused. Consider the scene more than two hundred years ago when President John Adams just voted out of office by the hated Republicans of

Thomas Jefferson mounted a carriage and left Washington even before the inauguration. There was no armed struggle. Not a musket ball was fired, nor a political opponent hanged. No Federalists marched with guns or knives in the streets. There was no guillotine. And just four years before that, in 1796, Adams had taken part in an equally momentous event when he won a razor-thin close election over Jefferson and, because of Senate rules, had to count his own contested ballots. When he came to the contested Georgia ballot, the great Massachusetts revolutionary, the Duke of Braintree, stopped counting. He sat down for a moment to allow Jefferson or his associates to make a challenge, and when he did not, Adams finished the tally, becoming president. Jefferson told confidants that he thought the ballots were indeed in dispute, but he would not wreck the country over a few pieces of paper. As Adams took the oath of office, he thought he heard Washington say, I am fairly out and you are fairly in! See which of us will be the happiest!! So much for protecting his own interests! Washington stepped down freely and enthusiastically, not at bayonet point. He walked away from power, as nearly each and every American president has done since. These giants knew that their actions of character mattered far more to the nation they were creating than mere temporary political positions. The ideas they fought for together in 1776 and debated in 1787 were paramount. And that is what American history is truly about: ideas. Ideas such as All men are created equal; the United States is the last, best hope of earth; and America is great, because it is good. Honor counted to founding patriots like Adams, Jefferson, Washington, and then later, Lincoln and Teddy Roosevelt. Character counted. Property was also important; no denying that, because with property came liberty. But virtue came first. Even J. P. Morgan, the epitome of the so-called robber baron, insisted that the first thing is character...before money or anything else. Money cannot buy it. It is not surprising, then, that so many left-wing historians miss the boat (and miss it, and miss it, and miss it to the point where they need a ferry schedule). They fail to understand what every colonial settler and every western pioneer understood: character was tied to a Christian tradition, which was then tied to liberty through a widespread acceptance of common law, and liberty to property preserved and protected by titles and deeds and, soon, by a free market. All four were needed for success, but character was the prerequisite because it put the law behind property agreements, and it set responsibility right next to liberty. And the surest way to ensure the presence of good character was to keep God at the center of one's life, community, and ultimately, nation. Separation of church and state meant freedom to worship, not freedom from worship. It went back to that link between liberty and responsibility, and no one could be taken seriously who was not responsible to God. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. They believed those words. As colonies became independent and as the nation grew, these ideas permeated the fabric of the founding documents. Despite pits of corruption that have pockmarked federal and state politics some of them quite deep and despite abuses of civil rights that were shocking, to say the least, the concept was deeply imbedded that only a virtuous nation could achieve the lofty goals set by the Founders. Over the long haul, the Republic required virtuous leaders to prosper. Yet virtue and character alone were not enough. It took competence, skill, and talent to build a nation. That's where property came in: with secure property rights, people from all over the globe flocked to America's shores. With secure property rights, anyone could become successful, from an immigrant Jew like Lionel Cohen and his famous Lionel toy trains to an Austrian bodybuilder-turned-millionaire actor and governor like Arnold Schwarzenegger. Carnegie arrived penniless; Ford's company went broke; and Lee Iacocca had to eat crow on national TV for his company's mistakes. Secure property rights not only made it possible for them all to succeed but, more important, established a climate of competition that rewarded skill, talent, and risk taking. Political skill was essential too. From 1850 to 1860 the United States was nearly rent in half by inept leaders, whereas an integrity vacuum nearly destroyed American foreign policy and shattered the economy in the decades of the 1960s and early 1970s. Moral, even pious, men have taken the nation to the brink of collapse because they lacked skill, and some of the most skilled politicians in the world: Henry Clay, Richard Nixon, Bill Clinton left legacies of frustration and corruption because their abilities were never wedded to character. Throughout much of the twentieth century, there was a subtle and, at times, obvious campaign to separate virtue from talent, to divide character from success. The latest in this line of attack is the emphasis on diversity that somehow merely having different skin shades or national origins makes America special. But it was not the color of the skin of people who came here that made them special, it was the content of their character. America remains a beacon of liberty, not merely because its institutions have generally remained strong, its citizens free, and its attitudes tolerant, but because it, among most of the developed world, still cries out as a nation, Character counts. Personal liberties in America are genuine because of the character of honest judges and attorneys who, for the most part, still make up the judiciary, and because of the personal integrity of large numbers of local, state, and national lawmakers. No society is free from corruption. The difference is that in America, corruption is viewed as the exception, not the rule. And when light is shown on it, corruption is viciously attacked. Freedom still attracts people to the fountain of hope that is America, but freedom alone is not enough. Without responsibility and virtue, freedom becomes a soggy anarchy, an incomplete licentiousness. This is what has made Americans different: their fusion of freedom and integrity endows Americans with their sense of right, often when no other nation in the world shares their perception. Yet that is as telling about other nations as it is our own; perhaps it is that as Americans, we alone remain committed to both the individual and the greater good, to personal freedoms and to public virtue, to human achievement and respect for the Almighty. Slavery was abolished because of the dual commitment to liberty and

virtue neither capable of standing without the other. Some crusades in the name of integrity have proven disastrous, including Prohibition. The most recent serious threats to both liberty and public virtue (abuse of the latter damages both) have come in the form of the modern environmental and consumer safety movements. Attempts to sue gun makers, paint manufacturers, tobacco companies, and even Microsoft for the public good have made distressingly steady advances, encroaching on Americans freedoms to eat fast foods, smoke, or modify their automobiles, not to mention start businesses or invest in existing firms without fear of retribution. By the early twenty-first century, a New York mayor had attempted to ban soft drinks over a certain size; San Francisco had waged a war on plastic bags; and elementary schools across the nation had prohibited everything from soccer balls to doing cartwheels all in the name of public safety. Many, particularly foreigners and especially Americas enemies, came to view this as weakness and sissification. The Founders each and every one of them would have been horrified at such intrusions on liberty, regardless of the virtue of the cause, not because they were elite white men, but because such actions in the name of the public good were simply wrong. It all goes back to character: the best way to ensure virtuous institutions (whether government, business, schools, or churches) was to populate them with people of virtue. Europe forgot this in the nineteenth century, or by World War I at the latest. Despite rigorous and punitive face-saving traditions in the Middle East or Asia, these twin principles of liberty and virtue have never been adopted. Only in America, where one was permitted to do almost anything, but expected to do the best thing, did these principles germinate. To a great extent, that is why, on March 4, 1801, John Adams would have thought of nothing other than to turn the White House over to his hated foe, without fanfare, self-pity, or complaint, and return to his everyday life away from politics. That is why, on the few occasions where very thin electoral margins produced no clear winner in the presidential race (such as 1824, 1876, 1888, 1960, and 2000), the losers (after some legal maneuvering, recounting of votes, and occasional whining) nevertheless stepped aside and congratulated the winner of a different party. Adams may have set a precedent, but in truth he would do nothing else. After all, he was a man of character.