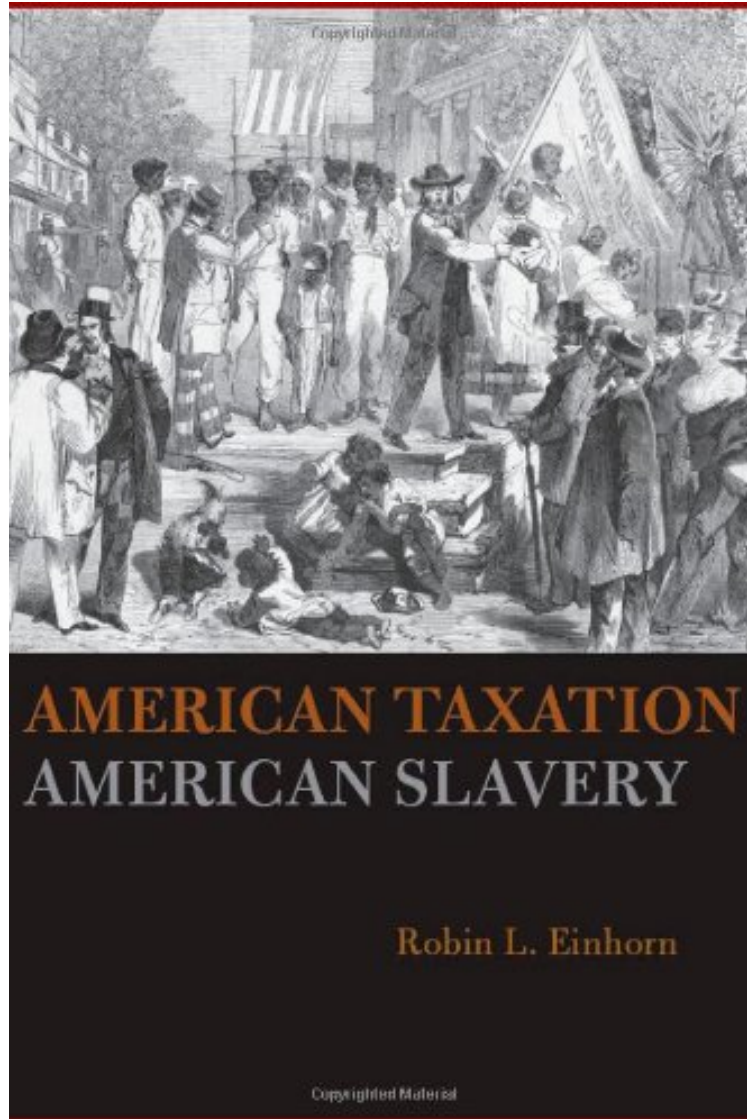


(Ebook free) American Taxation, American Slavery

# American Taxation, American Slavery

*Robin L. Einhorn*

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**Robin L. Einhorn : American Taxation, American Slavery** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised American Taxation, American Slavery:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Marvin L. Frieden excellent 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Complete, detailed, and breathless By Nathaniel Lane Einhorn's book is a complete, intricate, and thorough examination of slavery directly and indirectly shaped not just the American taxation system, but fundamental aspects of American federalism. A detailed "must" for tax scholars, historians, and those wanting to understand the evolution of American political economy. Wars necessitate taxes, and using breathless primary source

literature Einhorn takes us through the experiments of how early American colonies constructed tax systems to finance the Revolution. She paints a vivid economic picture of a colonial New England, steeped in the tradition of democratically building fiscal capacity, juxtaposed with a predatory, extractive Virginia. Einhorn lays out the endless debates about how early taxation policy navigated the interests of the slave-owning elite. From the revolution and beyond, Einhorn constructs a detailed account of how early politicians attempted to reconcile slavery in designing and funding the new federal government: from the debates around the Articles of Confederacy, the rise of early tariffs, the direct taxation compromises by Constitutional framers, to bitter political debates between Slave-owning Republicans and Northern Federalists. Stellar research and a provocative, yet endlessly researched, thesis. This book succeeds; one cannot dismiss the ways in which the political confrontation (or evasion) of slavery sculpted our country's institutions - especially the way we understand taxation. 5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Slavery is America's Original Sin By B. Weintraub This book brings forward original source materials and really gives the reader a great understanding of how mortal men created this country and how, sometimes, arguments and interests don't really change. It's astonishing, and to some degree laughable, to see the "trickle down" theory of economics being used by plantation owners. For example, Virginia and other southern states argued that slaves were really a financial burden to their owners; consequently, plantation owners should be assured of tax breaks and long term political power and influence so that -- they would say without even a smile -- slaves would benefit. Imagine then, how apoplectic they were when a northerner suggested that they end slavery so as to end their burden. When our founding fathers spoke of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," they meant to use a sensitive term for "slaves" so as not to offend possible supporters in England. Spinning words, you see, goes back a long time. How often did southern gentlemen talk about some of the evils of slavery but then lament about how their property wasn't ready to be set free. Slavery is, in short, the original sin of this country. This book shows how it permeated and twisted its roots and institutions. It's an example of how people battle over financial interests for many, many years. It's also an example of a book that is destined to become very important and well read.

For all the recent attention to the slaveholding of the founding fathers, we still know remarkably little about the influence of slavery on American politics. *American Taxation, American Slavery* tackles this problem in a new way. Rather than parsing the ideological pronouncements of charismatic slaveholders, it examines the concrete policy decisions that slaveholders and non-slaveholders made in the critical realm of taxation. The result is surprising that the enduring power of antigovernment rhetoric in the United States stems from the nation's history of slavery rather than its history of liberty. We are all familiar with the states rights arguments of proslavery politicians who wanted to keep the federal government weak and decentralized. But here Robin Einhorn shows the deep, broad, and continuous influence of slavery on this idea in American politics. From the earliest colonial times right up to the Civil War, slaveholding elites feared strong democratic government as a threat to the institution of slavery. *American Taxation, American Slavery* shows how their heated battles over taxation, the power to tax, and the distribution of tax burdens were rooted not in debates over personal liberty but rather in the rights of slaveholders to hold human beings as property. Along the way, Einhorn exposes the antidemocratic origins of the popular Jeffersonian rhetoric about weak government by showing that governments were actually more democratic and stronger where most people were free. A strikingly original look at the role of slavery in the making of the United States, *American Taxation, American Slavery* will prove essential to anyone interested in the history of American government and politics.

"[Einhorn] tells what might have been a complicated story in an engaging and accessible manner. It is her contention that slavery and the reaction to it to a great extent shaped the kind of nation we are today, because it shaped the kind of tax policies we constructed to fund the kind of government we got. . . . Required reading for anyone who ponders the impact of slavery on our lives today."