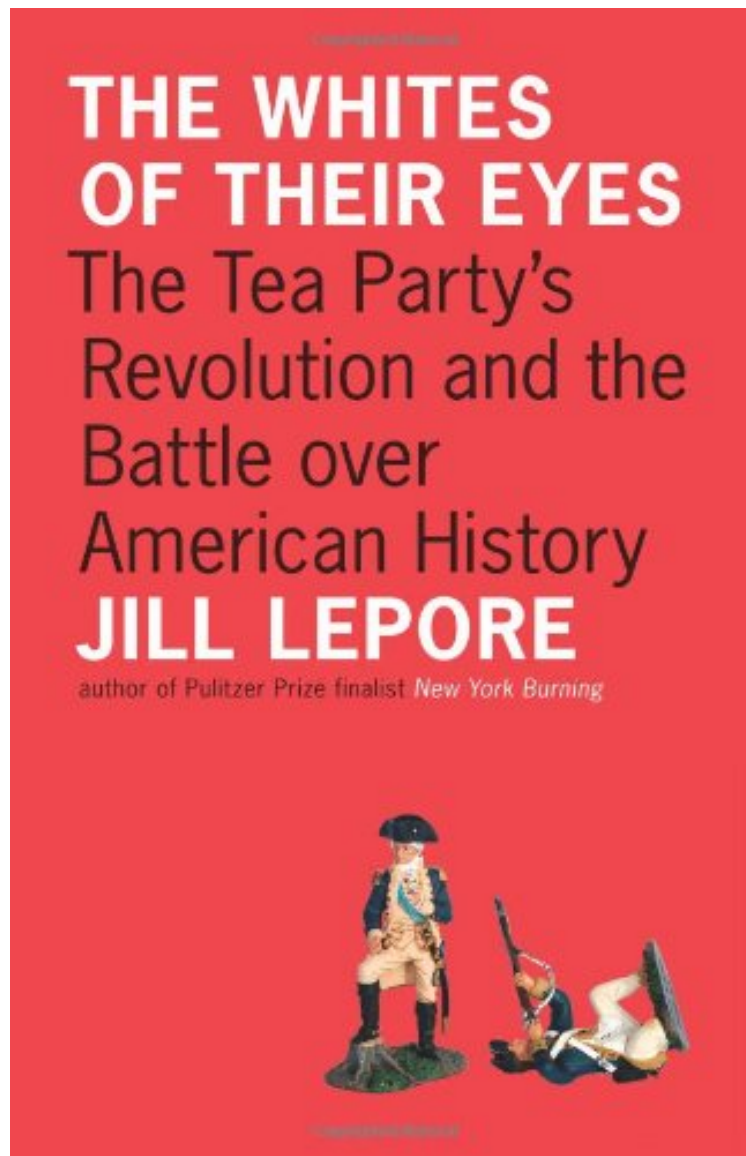


(Mobile ebook) The Whites of Their Eyes: The Tea Party's Revolution and the Battle over American History (The Public Square)

## The Whites of Their Eyes: The Tea Party's Revolution and the Battle over American History (The Public Square)

*Jill Lepore*

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**Jill Lepore : The Whites of Their Eyes: The Tea Party's Revolution and the Battle over American History (The Public Square)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Whites of Their Eyes: The Tea Party's Revolution and the Battle over American History (The Public Square):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fast Paced Political and Theoretical RantBy HenryDon't take the title of this review as me not liking the work; it was a fantastic and well researched book. So good and quick that I finished it within a day. Yet it does contain a very narrow scope as others have mentioned, extremely biased stance against the Tea Party, and it is a bit disjointed due to the book's organization and writing style. The bias alone meant, in my opinion, that this is not a scholarly work, instead it is as the review title implies, a very well written and researched political/theoretical rant. This 'rant' centers upon the false beliefs of the present day Tea Party which have a very fundamentalist view of the American Revolution and the Founding Fathers. This view, cannot be questioned or refuted and is on par with religious observance. In the author's opinion this is an unsubstantiated form of historiography which does not use primary evidence. She goes on to state that history goes in only one direction and that is forward. The Founding Fathers and the American Revolution have to be taken at face value and not applied to modern events or politics like the modern day Tea Partiers have done.All in all I really enjoyed reading this book and it made me smile on several occasions, yet it is not a true historical work in regards to scholarship, organization and writing style.10 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Enjoyable, Engaging ReadBy CustomerI enjoyed this book for many reasons.One, the voice with which this author wrote the book is informative, but light. She managed to make her point, providing great examples and justification, while using language that made the book accessible to non-historians.Second, I found the contrast between the 1970s and now informative. When I read in the summary that she was not only going to talk about the American Revolution, but also the American Bicentennial, I was skeptical on its inclusion. But, as I read the book, it became clear that the comparison between the American Bicentennial and the current Tea Party's use of American History was necessary to make the point of history fundamentalism. It also balanced the book's analysis of historical fundamentalism so as to make the book balanced. As a result, the book is neither anti-conservative, nor anti-progressive, but rather a defense of critical inquiry into history.Finally, it was nice revisit aspects of the American Revolution and read the participants own conflicting interpretation of the times they lived in. In this book, the founding fathers came down from the pedestal and showcased their humanity as opinionated men living during chaotic times.Overall, the book was enlightening, engaging, and informative. I plan to share this title with family and friends.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Test your FoxinessBy Richard E. HayesExcellent short discussion of current political hot air by a competent historian, unlike the bigmouths on cable and internet. Enjoyable linking of current arguments to American history. Refresh your knowledge of our real history, which has probably been corrupted somewhat by current babble.

Americans have always put the past to political ends. The Union laid claim to the Revolution--so did the Confederacy. Civil rights leaders said they were the true sons of liberty--so did Southern segregationists. This book tells the story of the centuries-long struggle over the meaning of the nation's founding, including the battle waged by the Tea Party, Glenn Beck, Sarah Palin, and evangelical Christians to "take back America." Jill Lepore, Harvard historian and New Yorker staff writer, offers a wry and bemused look at American history according to the far right, from the "rant heard round the world," which launched the Tea Party, to the Texas School Board's adoption of a social-studies curriculum that teaches that the United States was established as a Christian nation. Along the way, she provides rare insight into the eighteenth-century struggle for independence--the real one, that is. Lepore traces the roots of the far right's reactionary history to the bicentennial in the 1970s, when no one could agree on what story a divided nation should tell about its unruly beginnings. Behind the Tea Party's Revolution, she argues, lies a nostalgic and even heartbreaking yearning for an imagined past--a time less troubled by ambiguity, strife, and uncertainty--a yearning for an America that never was. *The Whites of Their Eyes* reveals that the far right has embraced a narrative about America's founding that is not only a fable but is also, finally, a variety of fundamentalism--anti-intellectual, antihistorical, and dangerously antipluralist.

Winner of the 2011 Gold Medal in History, Independent Publisher Book Awards One of Choice's Outstanding Academic Titles for 2011 Winner of the 2010 Bronze Medal Book of the Year Award in History, ForeWord s A New York Times Book Editors' Choice for 2010 One of U.S. News World Report's (online version) Top Debate Worthy Books of the Year for 2010 A Boston Authors Club Annual Awards Highly Recommended Book for 2011 Honorable Mention for the 2010 PROSE Award in U.S. History, Association of American Publishers"Jill Lepore, a historian of the American Revolution and a staff writer at *The New Yorker*, has written a brief but valuable book, *The Whites of Their Eyes: The Tea Party's Revolution and the Battle Over American History*, which combines her own interviews with Tea Partiers (mostly from her home state, Massachusetts) and her deep knowledge of the founders and of their view of the Constitution."--Alan Brinkley, *New York Times Book* "Throughout her book Lepore's implicit question remains always: Don't these Tea Party people realize how silly they are? They don't understand history; they need to learn that time moves forward. 'We cannot go back to the eighteenth century,' she says, 'and the Founding Fathers are not, in fact, here with us today.'"--Gordon S. Wood, *New York of Books*"Tackling the present, the near present, and the far-away past in one small volume, Lepore has not only penned an indictment of the Tea Party's crimes against history, she's also working in the tradition of Hofstadter, helping edge the academy closer to the public arena. And

remaining a card-carrying historian, churning out intricate studies like *New York Burning*, Lepore has continued to step outside the safe boundaries of the ivory tower. At the risk of being accused of dilettantism, she's even tried her hand at historical fiction, co-authoring *Blindspot* in 2008. Now she's given journalism a go, making the case that Lepore is a better reporter than any historian, and a better historian than any reporter."--Samuel P. Jacobs, *Daily Beast*"The Whites of Their Eyes isn't a screed of any kind, and the text is refreshingly free of ire. It is, instead, a warning shot across the bow. To tea-party activists of today, Ms. Lepore seems to be saying, 'Tighten up your game.' In its current iteration, the tea-party is a feat of storytelling. But in order to gain a foothold in American politics, it must aspire to more than that."--Molly Young, *Economist.com*"Lepore's graceful grasp of both history and reality is important. 'The past haunts us all,' Lepore writes. 'But time moves forward, not backward. Chronology is like gravity. Nothing falls up. We cannot go back to the eighteenth century, and the Founding Fathers are not, in fact, here with us today.'"--Martin F. Nolan, *San Francisco Chronicle*"For a number of years, the author has been contributing pieces to the *New Yorker* on American colonial history, pithy commentaries shaped by historical evidence and a storyteller's hand. Here she braids those essays together, which makes them more satisfying and meaningful than if they were merely collected in an anthology. . . . The author is not smug in her treatment of the Tea Partiers, but she refuses to allow them to kidnap and torture history so that it is reduced to fit their fundamentalist mold. . . . Learned, lively and shrewd."--Kirkus s (starred review)"In *The Whites of Their Eyes*, Lepore reviews the history of the American Revolution--in order to explore, and explode, the way the 21st-century Right uses that history. She criticizes history-according-to-the-Tea-Party on two levels. First, and unsurprisingly, she finds that the Tea Party's description of the past is simply incorrect at many turns. More interesting is Lepore's second criticism. In their asking the (unanswerable) question, 'What would the Founders do?', the Tea Party invites people to have a very strange relationship with the past: 'People who ask what the founders would do quite commonly declare that they know, they know, they just know what the founders would do, and, mostly, it comes to this: if only they could see us now, they would be rolling over in their graves. . . . We have failed to obey their sacred texts, holy writ,' Lepore writes provocatively. 'That's not history. It's not civil religion, the faith in democracy that binds Americans together. It's not originalism or even constitutionalism. That's fundamentalism.'"--Lauren Winner, *Books Culture*"*The Whites of Their Eyes* is a fascinating attempt to raise the level of US public policy debate. It is also a critique of the uses of history in politics and a brief, informative account of the ordinary people who lived at the time of the American Revolution. [It] is a valuable contribution to current discussions of public policy and should be read by anyone interested in serious political debate."--John Michael Senger, *ForeWord s*"In *The Whites of Their Eyes*, Lepore's liberal perspective is obvious although she largely sticks to history. Readers will find no expos of an 'astroturf' movement funded by billionaire libertarians. What they will find is a trenchant, lively and devastating meditation on the uses and abuses of American history, most recently by the tea partiers. . . . Lepore counters what she assails as 'historical fundamentalism' (which, in the words of a chapter title, places 'the past upon its throne') with rich, if roaming, portraits of an American Revolution that she clearly loves. Thus, the book will have enduring value beyond the upcoming election."--Steven P. Miller, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*"Lepore, a Harvard University historian and writer for the *New Yorker*, has a good ol' time shooting fish in a barrel. But by far the most interesting and biting parts of her story come not from cleaning up messy and false tea party tales of the olden days, nor from her parallel account of the leftist history promoted by activists during the nation's bicentennial in the 1970s. What Lepore does best is rescue forgotten people and moments from the Revolutionary era and remind us beautifully of the many-layered power of place. In some ways, this little book is not so much about the tea party and American history as about richly knowing a city, in this case Boston. To know a city through time, to look at a spot and know what once stood there is among the most intense--and often ironic--urban pleasures. Lepore conveys this beautifully."--Stephan Salisbury, *Philadelphia Inquirer*"Lepore's acerbic wit (and its accompanying soul, brevity) makes *The Whites of Their Eyes* (Princeton, 206 pages, \$19.95) a welcome change of pace from the 900-page biographies of George Washington now straining bookstore shelves across the country."--Matthew Buckingham, *Willamette Week*"Recommended as an engaging, well-informed picture of a complex society suffering under a repressive regime and the subject of often unbalanced debate about American policy."--Elizabeth Hayford, *Library Journal*"Writing with verve, wit, and careful attention to detail, Lepore systematically contrasts their use of Revolutionary imagery and ideas with documented facts. She provides a detailed yet disturbing portrait of a populist faction advocating devolution towards a society that would have excluded all of the Tea Party's own members. Yet, Lepore's goal is not to make this association look foolish, but to cast a critical light on all organizations, public as well as private, who misuse the past for their own selfish goals. For that reason alone, this is an important work for all Americans."--Choice"Lepore mounts an obvious argument, but does so in a way that is eminently readable, shows flashes of wit, and punctures with fact the magical thinking that she justly terms 'historical fundamentalism.' The book's accessible, sensible history of a period prone to wild misrepresentation is a valuable contribution, and Lepore has ably reinforced that contribution in her journalism for the *New Yorker* and the *New York Times*--such as her recent, pleasing attack on Paul Ryan's budgetary demagoguery."--Feisal Mohamed, *Huffington Post*"From the Inside Flap"Jill Lepore is a national treasure. There is no other writer so at home both as a trenchant scholar of American history and as an on-the-scene observer of our present-day follies. She etches the connection

between past and present with a wisdom, grace, and sparkle that makes this book even harder to put down--if that's possible--than her previous work."--Adam Hochschild, author of *Bury the Chains: Prophets and Rebels in the Fight to Free an Empire's Slaves*"No one writes about our Revolutionary history and its effects upon the shape of our culture and society today with more wit, verve, and sparkling intelligence than Jill Lepore. *The Whites of Their Eyes* offers the most compelling look we have so far at who we were and who we have become as a nation, and provides a cool and much needed context for the heated rhetoric of this 'new' reactionary moment."--Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Alphonse Fletcher University Professor, Harvard University"*The Whites of Their Eyes* shows Jill Lepore at her remarkable best--accessible, authoritative, and wise."--Jeffrey Toobin, author of *The Nine: Inside the Secret World of the Supreme Court*"Modern Tea Partiers have thrown facts overboard and recast the Revolution in their own image: white, Christian, and ultraconservative. Lepore demolishes the Tea Party's founding fable with deep scholarship and devastating wit."--Tony Horwitz, author of *Confederates in the Attic*"*The Whites of Their Eyes* offers a lesson in what history actually is and how it seems constantly to be used and abused. Lepore is a superb writer."--Eric Foner, author of *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877*"This book gives an informed account of the ways contemporary references to the Revolution ignore, distort, run roughshod over, yet somehow attempt seriously to evoke the events of the past. It nicely represents Lepore's distinctive genius as a historian."--Jack N. Rakove, author of *Original Meanings: Politics and Ideas in the Making of the Constitution*

From the Back Cover "Jill Lepore is a national treasure. There is no other writer so at home both as a trenchant scholar of American history and as an on-the-scene observer of our present-day follies. She etches the connection between past and present with a wisdom, grace, and sparkle that makes this book even harder to put down--if that's possible--than her previous work."--Adam Hochschild, author of *Bury the Chains: Prophets and Rebels in the Fight to Free an Empire's Slaves* "No one writes about our Revolutionary history and its effects upon the shape of our culture and society today with more wit, verve, and sparkling intelligence than Jill Lepore. *The Whites of Their Eyes* offers the most compelling look we have so far at who we were and who we have become as a nation, and provides a cool and much needed context for the heated rhetoric of this 'new' reactionary moment."--Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Alphonse Fletcher University Professor, Harvard University "*The Whites of Their Eyes* shows Jill Lepore at her remarkable best--accessible, authoritative, and wise."--Jeffrey Toobin, author of *The Nine: Inside the Secret World of the Supreme Court* "Modern Tea Partiers have thrown facts overboard and recast the Revolution in their own image: white, Christian, and ultraconservative. Lepore demolishes the Tea Party's founding fable with deep scholarship and devastating wit."--Tony Horwitz, author of *Confederates in the Attic* "*The Whites of Their Eyes* offers a lesson in what history actually is and how it seems constantly to be used and abused. Lepore is a superb writer."--Eric Foner, author of *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* "This book gives an informed account of the ways contemporary references to the Revolution ignore, distort, run roughshod over, yet somehow attempt seriously to evoke the events of the past. It nicely represents Lepore's distinctive genius as a historian."--Jack N. Rakove, author of *Original Meanings: Politics and Ideas in the Making of the Constitution*