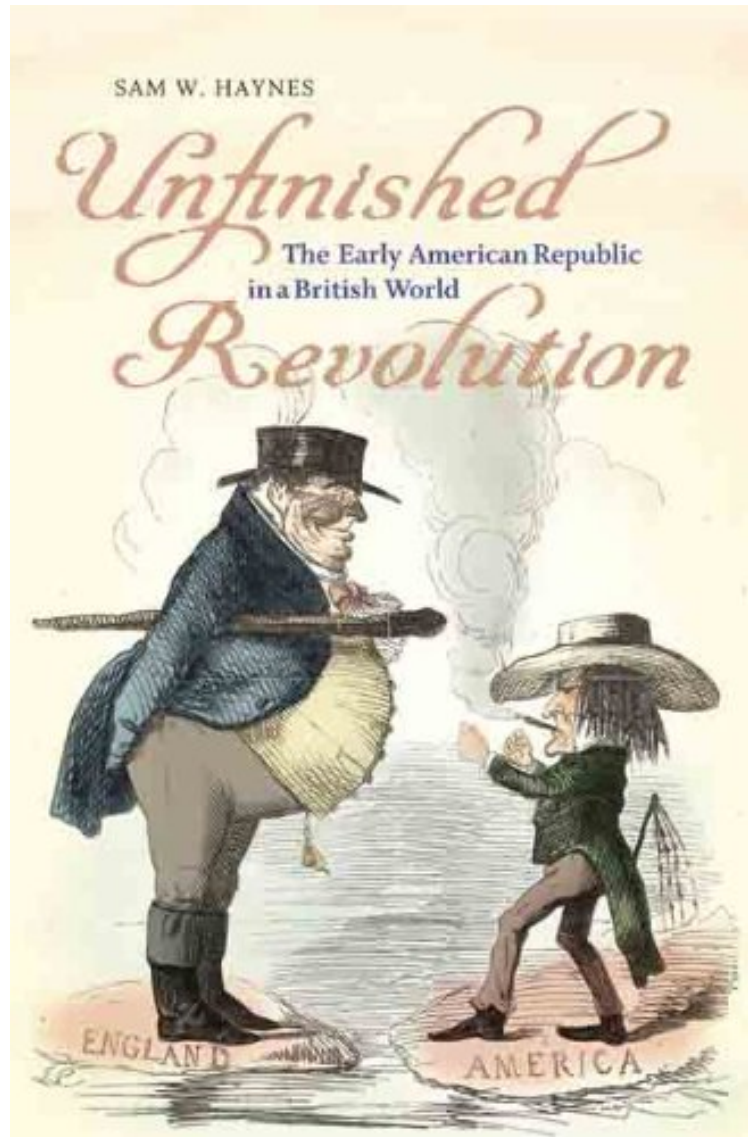


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Unfinished Revolution: The Early American Republic in a British World (Jeffersonian America)

Sam W. Haynes

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Sam W. Haynes : Unfinished Revolution: The Early American Republic in a British World (Jeffersonian America) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Unfinished Revolution: The Early American Republic in a British World (Jeffersonian America):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. the original cold warBy laolaohuMost Americans, if they think about

it at all, probably have a picture of us beating the British in the American Revolution, then promptly shaking hands with them, making up and living together happily ever after. But as any student of early American history soon comes to realize, this was not the case at all. Besides the fact that we fought a second war with them in 1812, we had an ongoing cold war with them that ran right up through the Civil War. Only we played the part of the Soviets and the British played our part. That is, they tried to contain us on every front. Particularly on the Western frontier, it was no secret that they wanted to keep us from expanding. In fact, although it is not covered in this book, many of our quarrels with the Western Indian tribes were rooted in British intrigues. Or at least so it appeared to our Western frontiersmen. This is a valuable book in that it fleshes out the details of that little known cold war, and presents much additional information about a conflict, not just political but cultural as well, which lasted nearly half a century. Of course, just as in our other cold war with the Soviets, this conflict tends to loom larger on paper than it probably was in reality. I mean, in your day to day existence, how often did you actually think about the Soviets? And so I suspect it was with the British. Sure, the conflict was always there, but probably not as overwhelmingly as this book will make it appear. Another point only hinted at in this text, is that just as with the Soviets, the actual threat was probably never as great as the threat we perceived. For the fact is, the British never had the resources or the political will (i.e. the support of the public back home) to really oppose us as fiercely as they liked to put on. A good companion piece, if you're interested in the British side, would be *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire* by Piers Brendon. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. *America the Insecure* By maria(gp) *Unfinished Revolution* tells the story of the United States during the so-called Jacksonian period. In addition to Old Hickory, all the familiar people of note are here, such as John Quincy Adams, Henry Clay and James K. Polk. So are many familiar events, such as the Bank War and the nullification crisis. But Haynes provides an ingredient largely missing from other books on this period; namely, the imperial power that continued to dominate Americans' thoughts and actions many years after independence. This book may not be for history "buffs," as another reviewer suggests, since the subject doesn't really lend itself to a linear narrative; instead, Haynes organizes the book topically, devoting separate chapters to theatre, literature, trade and banking, foreign policy, and so on. Still, the author's prose is largely free of academic jargon. This is a fresh take on early American history, one that rejects the idea that Americans always saw themselves as citizens of a nation that would dominate world events in the twentieth century. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. *Putting 19th century american politics into context* By S. Lawrenz *The relationship between England and the United States is one that has always fascinated me. Before reading "Unfinished Revolution," I previously read Kathleen Burk's "Old World, New World: Great Britain and America from the Beginning," which explores the United States' turbulent relationship with England from the 17th through 19th centuries. Her book was enlightening and helped put 19th century United States into context for me. So it was with this background that I dove into this book, which explores some of the same themes. Unfinished Revolution takes the exploration of those themes to a whole new depth, going a long way towards explaining a lot of political decisions various state and federal officials made in the early 19th century. Haynes quite convincingly puts forward the thesis that the United States was essentially a developing country that, until the Mexican war, had yet to find a cultural, political or economic self identity. Americans don't normally picture their country as a backwards hole in the mud, but essentially that's what the United States was in the early part of the 19th century. Breaking from Britain created a drive to be different, independent and not linked to British past. But the simple fact that much of United States culture and heritage was that of Britain generated a sort of inferiority complex that afflicted the country. The desperate need to self identify was a paradox that Americans could not solve, despite attempts to do so. Added to that, the US was a developing nation, lacking the infrastructure, culture and history of a more established European country. The need to be different and the drive to be recognized as something new and unique made American highly sensitive to interference and criticism from Britain. It also made American leaders paranoid about British intentions on the continent, so that American Manifest Destiny was less about American Imperialism and more about the drive to expand to protect the country against a shadowy "British threat." Haynes cites numerous examples in his mostly chronological review of American/British relations to show how American reacted and over-reacted and occasionally went completely crazy over perceived insults, political "conspiracies," and interference. While it is common for books about early American politics to reference the Anglophile and Anglophobic presidents and politicians, this book makes the reasons a lot more clear. The British were boogeyman and there was a lot of political capitol in linking your opponents to the country that everyone perceived as a threat to national sovereignty. The 1950's McCarthy era might be a good analogy of sorts. Haynes also makes the point that once Americans won the Mexican American war in the late 1840's, they gained a sense of cultural independence. Prior to the war, the British threat helped to politically unify the country in some ways by providing a common enemy. With the United State's new sense of independence, the British threat dissipated and suddenly Americans were forced to view the internal crisis's of the country as what they really were, rather than through a lens that assumed the British were behind everything. Internal divisions over slavery and states rights suddenly were out in the open with nothing to cover for them. The explanation of the United States as a developing country is more than plausible and in fact, quite simply helps put everything into the proper cultural context that helps explain the cultural perspective that early American leaders were coming from. Because of this, I think this book is sssential reading for*

anyone interested in early US political history. I highly recommend this book.

After the War of 1812 the United States remained a cultural and economic satellite of the world's most powerful empire. Though political independence had been won, John Bull intruded upon virtually every aspect of public life, from politics to economic development to literature to the performing arts. Many Americans resented their subordinate role in the transatlantic equation and, as earnest republicans, felt compelled to sever the ties that still connected the two nations. At the same time, the pull of Britain's centripetal orbit remained strong, so that Americans also harbored an unseemly, almost desperate need for validation from the nation that had given rise to their republic. The tensions inherent in this paradoxical relationship are the focus of *Unfinished Revolution*. Conflicted and complex, American attitudes toward Great Britain provided a framework through which citizens of the republic developed a clearer sense of their national identity. Moreover, an examination of the transatlantic relationship from an American perspective suggests that the United States may have had more in common with traditional developing nations than we have generally recognized. Writing from the vantage point of America's unrivaled global dominance, historians have tended to see in the young nation the superpower it would become. Haynes here argues that, for all its vaunted claims of distinctiveness and the soaring rhetoric of "manifest destiny," the young republic exhibited a set of anxieties not uncommon among nation-states that have emerged from long periods of colonial rule.

"*Unfinished Revolution* is an impressive reinterpretation of United States history between 1815 and 1850, built around the theme of American Anglophobia. In a time when the British Empire was the world's superpower, most Americans resented British condescension and feared British aims, even while many of them also hoped to replicate British industrialization, humanitarian reform, and literary accomplishments. Versatile and learned, Sam Haynes is helping U.S. history overcome its parochialism and become more global." (Daniel Walker Howe, Pulitzer Prizewinning author of *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848*) "This is one of those rare works that encourages readers to see the past in a wholly new way, to see totally unsuspected connections between developments in art and politics, to appreciate in a new light the role of cultural values and emotions as shaping forces in history.... This era of American history will never look the same again." (Steven Mintz, Columbia University, author of *Moralists and Modernizers: America's Pre-Civil War Reformers*) Sam W. Haynes' *Unfinished Revolution* takes the reader through familiar territory from an entirely different perspective. Haynes shows, very convincingly, that Great Britain remained a significant part of American history well after Andrew Jackson's great victory at New Orleans. (Lucas A. Powe, Jr., University of Texas Law School History Book Club) About the Author Sam W. Haynes is Professor in the Department of History and the Director of the Center for Greater Southwestern Studies at the University of Texas Arlington. (Lawrence Buell, Harvard University)