

American Democracy In Peril Chapter Summaries

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The Promise and the Peril of the Digital Age

Yale University Press

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • A leading political scientist examines the dramatic rise in violent extremism around the globe and sounds the alarm on the increasing likelihood of a second civil war in the United States “Like those who spoke up clearly about the dangers of global warming decades ago, Walter delivers a grave message that we ignore at our peril.”—David Remnick, *The New Yorker* Political violence rips apart several towns in southwest Texas. A far-right militia plots to kidnap the governor of Michigan and try her for treason. An armed mob of Trump supporters and conspiracy theorists storms the U.S. Capitol. Are these isolated incidents? Or is this the start of something bigger? Barbara F. Walter has spent her career studying civil conflict in places like Iraq, Ukraine, and Sri Lanka, but now she has become increasingly worried about her own country. Perhaps surprisingly, both autocracies and healthy democracies are largely immune from civil war; it’s the countries in the middle ground that are most vulnerable. And this is where more and more countries, including the United States, are finding themselves today. Over the last two decades, the number of active civil wars around the world has almost doubled. Walter reveals the warning signs—where wars tend to start, who initiates them, what triggers them—and why some countries tip over into conflict while others remain stable. Drawing on the latest international research and lessons from over twenty countries, Walter identifies the crucial risk factors, from democratic backsliding to factionalization and the politics of resentment. A civil war today won’t look like America in the 1860s, Russia in the 1920s, or Spain in the 1930s. It will begin with sporadic acts of violence and terror, accelerated by social media. It will sneak up on us and

leave us wondering how we could have been so blind. In this urgent and insightful book, Walter redefines civil war for a new age, providing the framework we need to confront the danger we now face—and the knowledge to stop it before it’s too late. Praise for *How Civil Wars Start* “It turns out that there is a discipline that you might call ‘civilwarology’—the study of the factors that lead to civil war. . . . Barbara F. Walter became a civilwarologist nearly a quarter of a century ago and her entry is evidently well-thumbed in the Rolodexes of the CIA and the U.S. State Department. In other words, she knows what she’s talking about—which makes this book rather scary.”—*The Times* (U.K.)

How Democratic Is the American Constitution?

UPNE

Looking at public policy debates in conventional terms—in terms of conflict between the left and the right—has grown increasingly cumbersome in an era where conservatives call themselves revolutionaries and liberals strike positively Burkean poses when it comes to reforming Social Security or Medicare. Through an examination of the libertarian worldview, once on the margins of American politics but now in the mainstream, William E. Hudson shows how it has attracted powerful political supporters and is promoted by a network of institutions and policy advocates dedicated to its ideals. *The Libertarian Illusion* offers a well researched, balanced, and systematic critique of libertarian policy proposals on both the conservative (taxation and fiscal policy, health care, social security, and business regulation) and liberal (abortion, stem cell research, and euthanasia) sides of the traditional political spectrum. Always engaging and provocative, Hudson hones in on the fundamental value differences that drive political debate, arguing that a more communitarian outlook offers solutions more likely to solve America’s policy problems. *Democracy in the Cracks and on the Margins* Cambridge University Press Drawing from extensive archival research, the book uncovers the American media system’s historical roots and normative foundations. It charts the rise

and fall of a forgotten media-reform movement to recover alternatives and paths not taken. *Power and Democracy in American History* CQ Press Winner of the Lillian Smith Book Award Winner of the Los Angeles Times Book Prize Finalist for the National Book Award *The Nation’s* “Most Valuable Book” “[A] vibrant intellectual history of the radical right.” —*The Atlantic* “This sixty-year campaign to make libertarianism mainstream and eventually take the government itself is at the heart of *Democracy in Chains*. . . . If you’re worried about what all this means for America’s future, you should be.” —NPR An explosive exposé of the right’s relentless campaign to eliminate unions, suppress voting, privatize public education, stop action on climate change, and alter the Constitution. Behind today’s headlines of billionaires taking over our government is a secretive political establishment with long, deep, and troubling roots. The capitalist radical right has been working not simply to change who rules, but to fundamentally alter the rules of democratic governance. But billionaires did not launch this movement; a white intellectual in the embattled Jim Crow South did. *Democracy in Chains* names its true architect—the Nobel Prize-winning political economist James McGill Buchanan—and dissects the operation he and his colleagues designed over six decades to alter every branch of government to disempower the majority. In a brilliant and engrossing narrative, Nancy MacLean shows how Buchanan forged his ideas about government in a last gasp attempt to preserve the white elite’s power in the wake of *Brown v. Board of Education*. In response to the widening of American democracy, he developed a brilliant, if diabolical, plan to undermine the ability of the majority to use its numbers to level the playing field between the rich and powerful and the rest of us. Corporate donors and their right-wing foundations were only too eager to support Buchanan’s work in teaching others how to divide America into “makers” and “takers.” And when a multibillionaire on a messianic mission to rewrite the social contract of the modern world, Charles Koch, discovered Buchanan, he created a vast, relentless, and multi-armed machine to carry out Buchanan’s strategy. Without Buchanan’s ideas and Koch’s money, the libertarian right would not have succeeded in its

stealth takeover of the Republican Party as a delivery mechanism. Now, with Mike Pence as Vice President, the cause has a longtime loyalist in the White House, not to mention a phalanx of Republicans in the House, the Senate, a majority of state governments, and the courts, all carrying out the plan. That plan includes harsher laws to undermine unions, privatizing everything from schools to health care and Social Security, and keeping as many of us as possible from voting. Based on ten years of unique research, *Democracy in Chains* tells a chilling story of right-wing academics and big money run amok. This revelatory work of scholarship is also a call to arms to protect the achievements of twentieth-century American self-government.

Seven Challenges to America's Future
CQ Press

A Washington Post and BookPage Best Nonfiction Book of 2021 From a Pulitzer Prize-winning historian, the powerful story of a fragile nation as it expands across a contested continent. In this beautifully written history of America's formative period, a preeminent historian upends the traditional story of a young nation confidently marching to its continent-spanning destiny. The newly constituted United States actually emerged as a fragile, internally divided union of states contending still with European empires and other independent republics on the North American continent. Native peoples sought to defend their homelands from the flood of American settlers through strategic alliances with the other continental powers. The system of American slavery grew increasingly powerful and expansive, its vigorous internal trade in Black Americans separating parents and children, husbands and wives. Bitter party divisions pitted elites favoring strong government against those, like Andrew Jackson, espousing a democratic populism for white men. Violence was both routine and organized: the United States invaded Canada, Florida, Texas, and much of Mexico, and forcibly removed most of the Native peoples living east of the Mississippi. At the end of the period the United States, its conquered territory reaching the Pacific, remained internally divided, with sectional animosities over slavery growing more intense. Taylor's elegant history of this tumultuous period offers indelible miniatures of key characters from Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth to Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Margaret Fuller. It captures the high-stakes political drama as Jackson and Adams, Clay, Calhoun, and Webster contend over slavery, the economy, Indian removal, and national

expansion. A ground-level account of American industrialization conveys the everyday lives of factory workers and immigrant families. And the immersive narrative puts us on the streets of Port-au-Prince, Mexico City, Quebec, and the Cherokee capital, New Echota. Absorbing and chilling, *American Republics* illuminates the continuities between our own social and political divisions and the events of this formative period.

The Year of Peril Cengage Learning

America is being conquered. Our Declaration of Independence has been relegated to history courses. Lulled by passivity, we take our inalienable rights for granted. Recognizing this mass complacency, a certain group recently obtained power in America. Under the guise of a war on terror and national security they are systematically undermining democracy and scrapping our Constitution. 'America in Peril' puts together a pervasive pattern of intrigue and deception. Starting with the characters that wiggled their way into the White House and conjured up a crisis to rally the country behind a wartime president, Aldridge paints a disturbing picture, delving into the decay of civil rights and showing how the government is not only keeping tabs on the populace but also steadily eroding humanitarian law. Two possible outcomes are presented--the path to martial law and dictatorship or a worldview that can save this country if enough perceptive people put it in motion. America is indeed in peril. The test we all face is profound. *Civil Society* Crown Forum

Spreading democracy abroad or protecting business at home: this book offers a new look at the history of the contest between isolationism and internationalism that is as current as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and as old as America itself, with profiles of the people, policies, and events that shaped the debate.

Ten Thousand Democracies Yale University Press

God is dead, but his presence lives on in politics. This is the problem of political theology: the way that theological ideas find their way into secular political institutions, particularly the sovereign state. In this intellectual tour-de-force, leading political theorist Saul Newman shows how political theology arose alongside secularism, and relates to the problem of legitimising power and authority in modernity. It is not about the power of religion so much as about the religion of power. Examining the current crisis of the liberal order, he argues that recent phenomena such as the rise of populism, the renewed demand for strong national sovereignty and the return of religious fundamentalism may be understood through this paradigm. He illustrates his argument through an exploration of themes such as sovereignty, democracy, economics, technology, ecological

catastrophe, messianism and the future of radical politics, engaging with thinkers ranging from Schmitt and Hobbes to Stirner, Foucault, and Agamben. This book will be a crucial text for all students, scholars and general readers interested in the meaning and significance of political theology for political theory.

A Defense of Truth Cambridge University Press

With the economic crisis, intense partisan gridlock, and social movements like the Tea Party and Occupy Wall Street, *American Democracy in Peril* encapsulates the tumultuous state of American politics more than ever. Hudson's provocative book offers a structured yet critical look at the functioning of the American political system. This new edition incorporates the far-ranging impact of the Obama presidency - and the polarization that has accompanied it - along with these key updates: New discussion of the barriers of the separation of powers system, including the tortured politics of health care reform, the threats of government shutdown over deficit reform, and the use of institutional vetoes to prevent economic stimulus measures New developments from the last election cycles, including changes in party politics, campaign funding, campaign media technologies and social media, and efforts at voter suppression Fresh examination of the financial deregulation that led to the crisis, the massive financial bailout, and rising economic inequality New insight regarding Obama's continuity with Bush-era national security practices from the use of secrecy to centralized executive control of policy.

How Democracies Die Broadway Books

Democracy is in peril and on the brink of extinction in the United States of America. There are many reasons why it has gotten to this point, but this book looks exclusively at the role Evangelical Christianity has played in the process. By infusing the Republican Party with its values, world view, and its vision for America, it has contributed to the divisiveness that has made it virtually impossible to govern. Our government is hopelessly crippled because of two different world views: one that is inherently racist and exclusionary where evidence doesn't matter and authoritarianism is favored, and the other that is more inclusive and progressive—where evidence matters, science is respected, and democracy is valued. It is difficult to find a common ground between these world views and get anything done for the country, making alternative means of governing more attractive to people throughout the world who are watching what is happening in America.

America in Peril Penguin

A guide for what citizen leaders and teachers must do to ensure that our democracy will last another century.

Challenging Growth, Markets, Inequality, and Resentment Brookings Institution Press
#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER •

The vital inside account of American democracy in its darkest hour, from the rise of autocracy unleashed by Trump to the January 6 insurrection, and a warning that those forces remain as potent as ever—from the congressman who led the first impeachment of Donald J. Trump “Engaging and informative . . . a manual for how to probe and question power, how to hold leaders accountable in a time of diminishing responsibility.”—The Washington Post

In the years leading up to the election of Donald Trump, Congressman Adam Schiff had already been sounding the alarm over the resurgence of autocracy around the world, and the threat this posed to the United States. But as he led the probe into Donald Trump’s Russia and Ukraine-related abuses of presidential power, Schiff came to the terrible conclusion that the principal threat to American democracy now came from within. In *Midnight in Washington*, Schiff argues that the Trump presidency has so weakened our institutions and compromised the Republican Party that the peril will last for years, requiring unprecedented vigilance against the growing and dangerous appeal of authoritarianism. The congressman chronicles step-by-step just how our democracy was put at such risk, and traces his own path to meeting the crisis—from serious prosecutor, to congressman with an expertise in national security and a reputation for bipartisanship, to liberal lightning rod, scourge of the right, and archenemy of a president. Schiff takes us inside his team of impeachment managers and their desperate defense of the Constitution amid the rise of a distinctly American brand of autocracy. Deepening our understanding of prominent public moments, Schiff reveals the private struggles, the internal conflicts, and the triumphs of courage that came with defending the republic against a lawless president—but also the slow surrender of people that he had worked with and admired to the dangerous immorality of a president engaged in an historic betrayal of his office. Schiff’s fight for democracy is one of the great dramas of our time, told by the man who became the president’s principal antagonist. It is a story that began with Trump but does not end with him, taking us through the disastrous culmination of the presidency and Schiff’s account of January 6, 2021, and how the antidemocratic forces Trump unleashed continue to define his party, making the future of democracy in America more uncertain than ever.

The Underpinnings of American Democracy

Penguin

American Democracy in Peril encapsulates the tumultuous state of American politics. By introducing the history of democratic theory in terms of four "models" of democracy, Hudson provides readers with a set of criteria against which to evaluate the challenges discussed later. This provocative book offers a structured yet critical examination of the American political system, designed to stimulate students to consider how the facts they learn about American politics relate to democratic ideals. This new edition incorporates the Trump Presidency and the polarization that has accompanied his leadership.

Suicide of the West Georgetown University Press

When the United States was born in 1776, Americans viewed the role of government as the protection of their individual rights, or liberty. At that time, and now again 200+ years later, the enemy of individual liberty is an intrusive and regulation obsessed government. Over time, the ideology of democracy--the idea that the role of government is to carry out the will of the people, has displaced the ideology of liberty. Holcombe narrates an account of the political history that transformed the fundamental principle of American government from liberty to democracy. And why that shift from the protection of liberty to democratic collectivism has serious and negative economic and political consequences.

American Democracy in Peril Crown

For over thirty years, *Latin American Politics and Development* has kept instructors and students abreast of current affairs and changes in Latin America. Now in its ninth edition, this definitive text has been updated throughout and features contributions from experts in the field, including twenty new and revised chapters on Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, and South America. The fully updated foundational section includes new chapters on political economy and U.S.-Latin American relations and covers the changing context of Latin American politics, the pattern of historical development, political culture, interest groups and political parties, government machinery, the role of the state and public policy, and the struggle for democracy. In addition to detailed country-by-country chapters, *Latin American Politics and Development* provides a comprehensive regional overview.

The Year of Peril CQ Press

Populism and authoritarian-populist parties have surged in the 21st century. In the United States, Donald Trump appears to have become the poster president for the surge. David M. Ricci, in this call to arms, thinks Trump is symptomatic of the changes that have caused a crisis among Americans - namely, mass economic and creative destruction: automation, outsourcing, deindustrialization, globalization, privatization, financialization, digitalization, and the rise

of temporary jobs - all breeding resentment. Rather than dwelling on symptoms, Ricci focuses on the root of our nation's problems. Thus, creative destruction, aiming at perpetual economic growth, encouraged by neoliberalism, creates the economic inequality that fuels resentment and leads to increased populism. Ricci urges political scientists to highlight this destruction meaningfully and substantively, to use empirical realism to put human beings back into politics. Ricci's sensible argument conveys a sense of political urgency, grappling with real-world problems and working to transform abstract speculations into tangible, useful tools. The result is a passionate book, important not only to political scientists, but to anyone who cares about public life.

The Peril and Politics of Radical Religion, Oil, and Borrowed Money in the 21st Century Brookings Institution Press

This fascinating chronicle of how the character of American society revealed itself under the duress of World War II "place(s) today's myriad social traumas and dislocations in perspective." -- George Will, *Washington Post*

The Second World War exists in the American historical imagination as a time of unity and optimism. In 1942, however, after a series of defeats in the Pacific and the struggle to establish a beachhead on the European front, America seemed to be on the brink of defeat and was beginning to splinter from within. Exploring this precarious moment, Tracy Campbell paints a portrait of the deep social, economic, and political fault lines that pitted factions of citizens against each other in the post-Pearl Harbor era, even as the nation mobilized, government-aided industrial infrastructure blossomed, and parents sent their sons off to war. This captivating look at how American society responded to the greatest stress experienced since the Civil War reveals the various ways, both good and bad, that the trauma of 1942 forced Americans to redefine their relationship with democracy in ways that continue to affect us today.

America in 1942 Brookings Institution Press

An urgent, historically-grounded take on the four major factors that undermine American democracy, and what we can do to address them. While many Americans despair of the current state of U.S. politics, most assume that our system of government and democracy itself are invulnerable to decay. Yet when we examine the past, we find that the United States has undergone repeated crises of democracy, from the earliest days of the republic to the present. In *Four Threats*,

Suzanne Mettler and Robert C. Lieberman explore five moments in history when democracy in the U.S. was under siege: the 1790s, the Civil War, the Gilded Age, the Depression, and Watergate. These episodes risked profound—even fatal—damage to the American democratic experiment. From this history, four distinct characteristics of disruption emerge. Political polarization, racism and nativism, economic inequality, and excessive executive power—alone or in combination—have threatened the survival of the republic, but it has survived—so far. What is unique, and alarming, about the present moment in American politics is that all four conditions exist. This convergence marks the contemporary era as a grave moment for democracy. But history provides a valuable repository from which we can draw lessons about how democracy was eventually strengthened—or weakened—in the past. By revisiting how earlier generations of Americans faced threats to the principles enshrined in the Constitution, we can see the promise and the peril that have led us to today and chart a path toward repairing our civic fabric and renewing democracy.

And How to Stop Them St. Martin's Press
Explains the political factors behind the failure of many developing country democracies to benefit from globalization.

The Triumph of Corporate Libertarianism and the Future of Media Reform Harvard University Press

Urged on by a powerful ideological and political movement, George W. Bush committed the United States to a quest for empire. American values and principles were universal, he asserted, and should guide the transformation of the world. Claes Ryn sees this drive for virtuous empire as the triumph of forces that in the last several decades acquired decisive influence in both the American parties, the foreign policy establishment, and the media. Public intellectuals like William Bennett, Charles Krauthammer, William Kristol, Michael Novak, Richard Perle, and Norman Podhoretz argued that the United States was an exceptional nation and should bring "democracy," "freedom," and "capitalism" to countries not yet enjoying them. Ryn finds the ideology of American empire strongly reminiscent of the French Jacobinism of the eighteenth century. He describes the drive for armed world hegemony as part of a larger ideological whole that both expresses and aggravates a crisis of democracy and, more generally, of American and Western civilization. America the Virtuous sees the new Jacobinism as symptomatic of America shedding an older sense of the need for restraints on power. Checks provided by the US Constitution have been greatly weakened with the erosion of traditional moral and other culture.