The Myth of American Individualism

The Protestant Origins of American Political Thought

BARRY ALAN SHAIN

The Myth Of American Individualism

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The Myth Of American Individualism:

The Myth of American Individualism Barry Alan Shain, 1996-08-25 Sharpening the debate over the values that formed America's founding political philosophy Barry Alan Shain challenges us to reconsider what early Americans meant when they used such basic political concepts as the public good liberty and slavery. We have too readily assumed he argues that eighteenth century Americans understood these and other terms in an individualistic manner However by exploring how these core elements of their political thought were employed in Revolutionary era sermons public documents newspaper editorials and political pamphlets Shain reveals a very different understanding one based on a reformed Protestant communalism In this context individual liberty was the freedom to order one s life in accord with the demanding ethical standards found in Scripture and confirmed by reason This was in keeping with Americans widespread acceptance of original sin and the related assumption that a well lived life was only possible in a tightly knit intrusive community made up of families congregations and local government bodies Shain concludes that Revolutionary era Americans defended a Protestant communal vision of human flourishing that stands in stark opposition to contemporary liberal individualism This overlooked component of the American political inheritance he further suggests demands examination because it alters the historical ground upon which contemporary political alternatives often seek legitimation and it facilitates our understanding of much of American history and of the foundational language still used in authoritative political documents The Myth of Rugged American Individualism Charles Austin Beard, 1932 The Roots of American Individualism Alex Zakaras, 2024-08-20 A panoramic history of American individualism from its nineteenth century origins to today s bitterly divided politics Individualism is a defining feature of American public life Its influence is pervasive today with liberals and conservatives alike promising to expand personal freedom and defend individual rights against unwanted intrusion be it from big government big corporations or intolerant majorities. The Roots of American Individualism traces the origins of individualist ideas to the turbulent political controversies of the Jacksonian era 1820 1850 and explores their enduring influence on American politics and culture Alex Zakaras plunges readers into the spirited and rancorous political debates of Andrew Jackson's America drawing on the stump speeches newspaper editorials magazine articles and sermons that captivated mass audiences and shaped partisan identities He shows how these debates popularized three powerful myths that celebrated the young nation as an exceptional land of liberty the myth of the independent proprietor the myth of the rights bearer and the myth of the self made man The Roots of American Individualism reveals how generations of politicians pundits and provocateurs have invoked these myths for competing political purposes Time and again the myths were used to determine who would enjoy equal rights and freedoms and who would not They also conjured up heavily idealized apolitical visions of social harmony and boundless opportunity typically centered on the free market that have distorted American political thought to this day The Cult of Individualism Aaron Barlow, 2013-08-27 American individualism It is the reason for

American success but it also tears the nation apart Why do Americans have so much trouble seeing eye to eye today Is this new Was there ever an American consensus The Cult of Individualism A History of an Enduring American Myth explores the rarely discussed cultural differences leading to today s seemingly intractable political divides After an examination of the various meanings of individualism in America author Aaron Barlow describes the progression and evolution of the concept from the 18th century on illuminating the wide division in Caucasian American culture that developed between the culture based on the ideals of the English Enlightenment and that of the Scots Irish Borderers The Borderer legacy generally explored only by students of Appalachian culture remains as pervasive and significant in contemporary American culture and politics as it is unfortunately overlooked It is from the Borderers that the Tea Party sprang along with many of the attitudes of the contemporary American right making it imperative that this culture be thoroughly explored the American Welfare System Brendon O'Connor, 2004 John Maynard Keynes once noted that Madmen in authority are distilling their frenzy from some academic scribbler of a few years back O Connor politics and public policy Griffith U Australia supports this observation in his study of the development of the American welfare system and the broader world of political language and rhetoric within which it has been shaped Studying welfare policy from Lyndon Johnson's liberal social agenda to Bill Clinton's ending welfare as we know it he divides the period and his book into three sections corresponding to welfare politics that conformed to liberal ideology the conservative backlash against liberalism and the forging of a conservative welfare system Annotation 2004 Book News Inc Portland OR booknews com The Myth of Michael Jordan in Popular Culture Tomasz Jacheć, 2024-03-18 This book examines the life and career of Michael Jordan one of the greatest athletes in the history of sports asking how he transcended his sport to become a canonical myth in popular culture Drawing on work in sport studies cultural studies sociology history business and media this book helps us to understand how myths are made in modern society and highlights the importance of myths in a post truth world It unpacks the underlying monomythical structure of the Jordan myth including the universality of the hero's journey and explores those features that are inherently American but that also carried Jordan to the status of a global superstar This book traces the contours of his career and looks at how the intersection of commercial interests media narratives and supreme athletic talent in a particular social political and historical context generated a myth that continues to resonate today long after the end of Jordan's playing career Drawing on original research and adding new theoretical depth to our understanding of Michael Jordan's place in popular culture this book is essential reading for anybody with an interest in the relationship between sport and wider The myths of American individualism and their effect on public goods Andrew Christian Grigsby, 1999 society The Politics of the American Dream C. Ghosh, 2012-12-28 The Politics of the American Dream analyzes the role of the American Dream in contemporary American political culture Utilizing analytic political theory Ghosh creates a unique picture of Dream Politics and shows the effect on the landscape of American politics The Myth of Empowerment Dana Becker, 2005-02 Her

power today her power is said to reside in her ability to relate to others or to take better care of herself so that she can take care of others Dana Becker argues that ideas like empowerment perpetuate the myth that many of the problems women have are medical rather than societal personal rather than political From mesmerism to psychotherapy to the Oprah Winfrey Show women have gleaned ideas about who they are as psychological beings Becker questions what women have had to

America After Tocqueville Harvey Mitchell,2006-11-02 America after Tocqueville complements Harvey Mitchell s previous book Individual Choice and the Structures of History Alexis de Tocqueville as Historian Reappraised 1996 This study draws on Democracy in America to study the condition of democracy in the United States in our own time Three aspects of Americanism inform Harvey Mitchell s book and cannot be separated from Tocqueville's consideration of the three races First he addresses tensions in the United States between ideas of equality and a political system that tries to keep it within bounds He turns to the relationship between this system and the dynamics of American capitalism and he analyses the criteria for inclusion and exclusion in American life Overall he asks if Americans have surrendered to what Tocqueville called the materialization of life if that compromise means their abandonment of their original spiritual quest and if they are on the way to a radical alienation from politics

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