

The Politically Incorrect Guide To American History

Thomas E. Woods



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Claiming that most textbooks and popular history books were written by biased left-wing writers and scholars, historian Thomas Woods offers this guide as an alternative to "the stale and predictable platitudes of mainstream texts." Covering the colonial era through the Clinton administration, Woods seeks to debunk some persistent myths about American history. For instance, he writes, the Puritans were not racists intent on stealing the Indians' lands, the Founding Fathers were not revolutionaries but conservatives in the true sense of the word, the American War Between the States (to even call it a civil war is inaccurate, Woods says) was not principally about slavery, Abraham Lincoln was no friend to the slaves, and FDR's New Deal policies actually made the Depression worse. He also covers a wide range of constitutional interpretations over the years, particularly regarding the First, Second, Ninth, and Tenth amendments, and continually makes the point that states' rights have been unlawfully trampled upon by the federal government since the early days of the republic. Though its title is more deliberately provocative than accurate, Woods' attack on what he sees as rampant liberal revisionism over the past 25 years proves to be an interesting platform for a book. He's as biased as those he rails against, of course, but he does provoke thought in an entertaining way even if he sometimes tries to pass off opinion as hard facts.

This quick and enjoyable read is packed with unfamiliar quotes, informative sidebars, iconoclastic viewpoints, and a list of books "you're not supposed to read." It is not a comprehensive or detailed study, but that is not its aim; instead, it offers ideas for further research and a challenge to readers to dig deeper and analyze some basic assumptions about American history--a worthy goal that Woods manages to reach. -

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