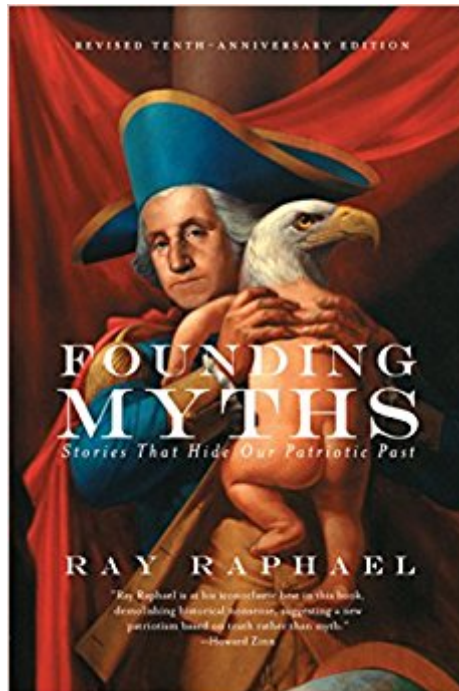




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Founding Myths: Stories That Hide Our Patriotic Past



Synopsis

First published ten years ago, award-winning historian Ray Raphael's *Founding Myths* has since established itself as a landmark of historical myth-busting. With Raphael's trademark wit and flair, *Founding Myths* exposed the errors and inventions in America's most cherished tales, from Paul Revere's famous ride to Patrick Henry's "Liberty or Death" speech. For the thousands who have been captivated by Raphael's eye-opening accounts, history has never been the same. In this revised tenth-anniversary edition, Raphael revisits the original myths and further explores their evolution over time, uncovering new stories and peeling back new layers of misinformation. This new edition also examines the highly politicized debates over America's past, as well as how our approach to history in school reinforces rather than corrects historical mistakes. A book that explores the truth behind the stories of the making of our nation • (National Public Radio), this revised edition of *Founding Myths* will be a welcome resource for anyone seeking to separate historical fact from fiction.

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Customer Reviews

Patrick Henry never said, "Give me liberty or give me death!" In fact, no record exists of what he said in his powerful call to arms of March 23, 1775. And Molly Pitcher never took her husband's place at a cannon after he fell at the Battle of Monmouth. Historian Raphael dissects these and 11 other myths of the American Revolution to uncover the truth of these famous events and the significance of their conversion into myth. These tales, argues Raphael, represent

19th-century ideals of "romantic individualism" more than the communitarian ideals of the revolutionary era. Raphael (A People's History of the American Revolution) continues in his populist vein by arguing that these myths, rather than encouraging patriotism and heroism, actually "take away our power," leaving us "in awe of superhuman stars" like Washington or Jefferson and "discouraging ordinary citizens from acting on their own behalf." This is arguable, but advocates of history as seen from below will find the author's point of view appealing. And all students of American history will find Raphael's correction of the historical record instructive and enjoyable. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

Adult/High School - If a high school history teacher were to ask his class when the Declaration of Independence was signed, he undoubtedly would hear a chorus call out, "July 4, 1776." But what percentage of students, or teachers for that matter, would know that as of August 1, only John Hancock had actually signed the document? And how many would know that at least 14 men who were not even in Philadelphia on July 4 are recorded in the Congressional Journal as signing it on that well-remembered date? But sign it they did, and what does it matter what the actual date was? Raphael thoroughly delineates the creation of the fictive July 4 signing, including intentional lies and omissions in the "official" Congressional Journal. The chief impetus behind this doctoring of history was simply to have a neat, unmistakable date for national celebration. The author goes on to expose numerous myths before, during, and after the Revolution revolving around Paul Revere's ride, Valley Forge, Patrick Henry's "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death" speech, the Battle of Yorktown, and several others. In each case, Raphael outlines the myth, reveals what really happened, and, most importantly, argues why we must move past historical nonsense so that a truer, more democratic national record can emerge. Academic historians have long known these truths. Raphael deserves praise for his efforts to have that knowledge trickle down to the rest of us. Toward that end, he offers a "Note to Teachers," including a Web site with grade-appropriate lesson plans. - Robert Saunderson, Berkeley Public Library, CA Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

the author seemed to be rambling on and often repeatedly addressed the same information. Actually reminded me of a high school paper where the student author needs to meet a page count so just throws in long sentences and fluff to get there.

Very education, but dry and long winded sometimes. I learned a lot but often felt as if I were reading a text book. It felt like some points were hammered in too many times. It felt like I learned the point and wanted to move on to a new one but the "lesson" wasn't over. I gave higher stars than the review sounds like because I think the educational value outweighs the book shortcomings.

Raphael is a historian in the Howard Zinn tradition: politically quite liberal, very readable, a fine story-teller. Here he debunks many people and events that live for us in cartoon-like mythology -- Paul Revere's ride, "Molly Pitcher", Sam Adams, the battles of Lexington and Concord, and more -- and tells the real stories which are invariably more interesting. I'd also strongly recommend his "The First American Revolution". Historians make much of the failed Shays's Rebellion in 1786; this book tells the story of the more important and much more successful rebellion in Massachusetts in late 1774-early 1775.

I found the book very interesting, intriguing and well documented. Working with my wife on her genealogy including pre revolutionary war relatives had already given us a head start and a heads up on some of the myths. However it is very helpful to see more documentation and support for the truth of what really happened.

An excellent examination of the true events of the founding of our nation. The reality makes it even more astounding that it all turned out so well..It shows that a little scepticism goes a long way to understanding history .It seems that not only do we shape events, but the events shape us..A very enlightening book that enforces appreciation for our country.

Read this for the first time when it came out some ten years ago. Should be required reading in high schools and universities. Though at times dull Raphael with his meticulous research paints a much richer story of Revolutionary America than contained in the standard myth presented by most schools today.

Better understanding of the actual events, timelines and significance to the revolution.Good companion reading to other revealing historical books.Written smoothly and easily understood.Helps educate the citizen to weed out the deception between government and the interaction of the people.

Thank you for this book it takes away many preconceived notions and old established stories of the Revolutionary War. Gets into the grit of the founding of this country. Much different than you have been lead to believe.

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