

Reaganland: America's Right Turn, 1976-1980



Reaganland: America's Right Turn 1976-1980

by Rick Perlstein

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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In the midst of the turmoil and uncertainty of the 1970s, a new political movement was taking shape in America. It was a movement that rejected the liberalism of the past and embraced a new conservatism that was based on free markets, limited government, and a strong national defense.

This movement was led by Ronald Reagan, a former actor and governor of California. Reagan's message of hope and optimism resonated with millions of Americans who were disillusioned with the status quo. In 1980, Reagan was elected president, and his election marked the beginning of a new era in American politics.

In *Reaganland*, Rick Perlstein tells the story of this conservative movement and its impact on American society. Perlstein argues that the Reagan Revolution was not simply a political phenomenon, but a cultural one as well. It was a time when the country embraced a new set of values and beliefs that would shape the course of American history for years to come.

Perlstein's book is a meticulously researched and richly detailed account of this transformative era. He draws on a wide range of sources, including interviews with key figures in the conservative movement, to create a vivid and compelling narrative. *Reaganland* is essential reading for anyone who wants to understand the roots of modern American conservatism.

The Conservative Movement

The conservative movement that emerged in the 1970s was a diverse coalition of individuals and groups with different backgrounds and beliefs. However, they were united by a shared commitment to free markets, limited government, and a strong national defense.

Some of the key figures in the conservative movement included:

- **Ronald Reagan:** The leader of the conservative movement and the 40th president of the United States.
- **Barry Goldwater:** A conservative senator from Arizona who ran for president in 1964.
- **William F. Buckley Jr.:** A conservative author and editor who founded the National Review.
- **Milton Friedman:** A Nobel Prize-winning economist who advocated for free markets and limited government.

- **Phyllis Schlafly:** A conservative activist who opposed the Equal Rights Amendment.

The conservative movement was also supported by a number of think tanks and organizations, such as the Heritage Foundation and the American Enterprise Institute. These organizations played a key role in developing and promoting conservative ideas.

The Reagan Revolution

Reagan's election in 1980 was a watershed moment in American politics. It marked the beginning of a new era of conservative dominance that would last for decades.

Reagan's presidency was marked by a number of significant changes, including:

- **Tax cuts:** Reagan signed into law a series of tax cuts that reduced the burden on businesses and individuals.
- **Deregulation:** Reagan rolled back a number of regulations on businesses, giving them more freedom to operate.
- **Increased military spending:** Reagan increased spending on the military, which helped to strengthen the country's defenses.
- **Social conservatism:** Reagan supported conservative social policies, such as opposition to abortion and same-sex marriage.

Reagan's policies had a profound impact on American society. They helped to create a more favorable environment for businesses and led to a period

of economic growth. They also helped to strengthen the country's military and promote conservative social values.

The Legacy of Reaganland

The Reagan Revolution had a lasting impact on American politics and society. The conservative movement that Reagan helped to lead remains a powerful force in American politics today.

Reagan's legacy is still debated today. Some argue that he was a great president who helped to restore America's greatness. Others argue that his policies led to increased inequality and social division.

Regardless of one's opinion of Reagan, there is no doubt that he was a transformative figure in American history. His presidency marked a turning point in American politics and helped to shape the course of the country for years to come.



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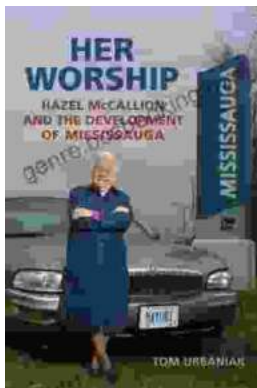
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