

1776-2026

AMERICA 250 READS FOR ADULTS

1776 by David McCullough

A gripping, boots-on-the-ground history of the American Revolution's most pivotal and precarious year. It unromanticizes the conflict by focusing on the freezing, ragtag Continental Army, George Washington's military struggles, and the sheer luck and perseverance required to survive

The Revolutionary: Samuel Adams by Stacy Schiff

A masterful, fast-paced biography of Founding Father Samuel Adams. It reveals him not just as the face of a popular beer brand, but as the brilliant mastermind, master propagandist, and political strategist who engineered the American Revolution.

Common Sense by Thomas Paine

Published by Thomas Paine in January 1776, Common Sense is a seminal pamphlet that made a passionate, persuasive case for American independence. Written in simple, accessible language, it urged colonists to reject British rule, abolish the monarchy, and establish an independent, republican form of self-government

The Civil War: A Narrative (3 book series) by Shelby Foote

A monumental, 1.2 million-word historical trilogy. It chronicles the American Civil War from Fort Sumter to Appomattox with the scope of an epic novel and the precision of deep historical research

Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln by Doris Kearns Goodwin

A monumental biography exploring how Lincoln's extraordinary empathy and leadership skills allowed him to unite a fractured nation.

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Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant by **Ulysses S. Grant**

The Personal Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant is a two-volume autobiography detailing the life and military career of the 18th U.S. President. Written while Grant was dying of throat cancer to save his family from bankruptcy, it remains a celebrated masterclass in American military literature

Grant by **Ron Chernow**

a sweeping 2017 biography that redefines the life and legacy of Ulysses S. Grant. The book chronicles his dramatic rise from a struggling businessman and accused alcoholic to the Civil War hero who saved the Union, and later, a remarkably progressive but scandal-plagued two-term president.

Myth America by **Kevin M. Kruse & Julian E. Zelizer**

The contributors debunk narratives that portray the New Deal and Great Society as failures, immigrants as hostile invaders, and feminists as anti-family warriors—among numerous other partisan lies. Based on a firm foundation of historical scholarship, their findings revitalize our understanding of American history.

A People's History of the United States by **Howard Zinn**

a landmark work of social history, chronicles American history from the bottom up, throwing out the official narrative taught in schools—with its emphasis on great men in high places—to focus on the street, the home, and the workplace.

Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee by **Dee Brown**

eloquent, meticulously documented account of the systematic destruction of American Indians during the second half of the nineteenth century.

The Stonewall Reader by **Jason Baumann**

The Stonewall Reader by Jason Baumann. Published in partnership with the New York Public Library, this collection provides firsthand diaries, letters, and early magazine articles from the movement's pivotal years.

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The Liberation Trilogy (3 book series) by Rick Atkinson

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize is a monumental trilogy about the liberation of Europe in World War II

Band of Brothers by Stephen E. Ambrose

Stephen E. Ambrose's classic New York Times bestseller and inspiration for the acclaimed HBO series about Easy Company, the ordinary men who became the World War II's most extraordinary soldiers at the frontlines of the war's most critical moments.

Embers of War by Fredrik Logevall

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize, this comprehensive account explores how the conflict began and why the U.S. chose to intervene following the French defeat.

Why We Can't Wait by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Martin Luther King's classic exploration of the events and forces behind the Civil Rights Movement—including his Letter from Birmingham Jail, April 16, 1963.

Reclaiming History: The Assassination of President John F. Kennedy by Vincent Bugliosi

The most comprehensive, exhaustive study of the assassination, written by the famous prosecutor. It dismantles nearly every conspiracy theory with decades of evidence

The Looming Tower by Lawrence Wright

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize and deeply explores the origins of al-Qaeda, the rise of Osama bin Laden, and the U.S. intelligence failures leading up to the attacks

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The January 6 Report by The January 6 Select Committee

The definitive account of January 6th and what led up to it, based on more than a year of investigation by nine members of Congress and committee staff

Regime Change: Inside the Imperial Presidency of Donald Trump by Maggie Haberman and Jonathan Swan

Written by two of the most deeply sourced journalists covering the 45th and 47th President, it provides an insider look at his unconstrained second presidency, the weaponization of the Justice Department, and his bold reshaping of American power.

Unthinkable: Trauma, Truth, and the Trials of American Democracy by Jamie Raskin

Raskin details the impeachment prosecution that led to a historic bipartisan vote on Trump's role in the attack against the government and discusses the dire threats American democracy faces. He gives a harrowing account of the events of Jan. 6 from inside the Capitol and

The Oath and the Office: A Guide to the Constitution for Future Presidents by Corey Brettschneider

a critically acclaimed 2018 book by constitutional scholar and Brown University political science professor Corey Brettschneider. It serves as both a manual for presidential aspirants and an accessible civics guide for everyday citizens to understand the powers and limitations of the presidency