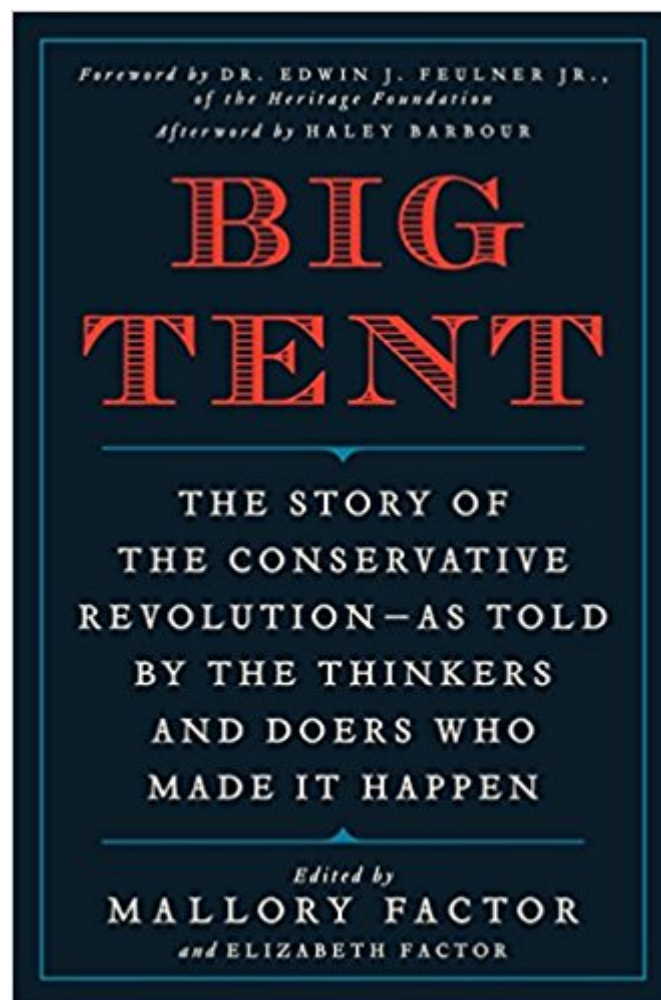




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# Big Tent: The Story Of The Conservative Revolution--As Told By The Thinkers And Doers Who Made It Happen



## Synopsis

Drawing from his comprehensive, star-studded course at the Citadel, Mallory Factor, the New York Times bestselling author of *Shadowbosses*, brings together a fascinating and diverse range of essays from leading figures and activists which explore and illuminate the conservative intellectual tradition in American politics. Ambitious in its breadth and depth, *The Big Tent* is a panoramic portrait of the intellectual history of the conservative movement. Some of the leading lights of the right offer an unparalleled introduction to conservative figures and ideas, from the Revolution to William F. Buckley; Barry Goldwater to the Reagan Revolution; Libertarianism to the War on Terror. Insightful and stimulating, *The Big Tent* is an outstanding survey of the movement over three centuries.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 464 pages

Publisher: Broadside Books (April 8, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 006229069X

ISBN-13: 978-0062290694

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1.4 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 25 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #329,652 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #151 in [Books > History >](#)

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## Customer Reviews

"[A] useful handbook for those looking to understand the roots of conservatism and the contours of the contemporary movement." --Kirkus Reviews "Big Tent is the definitive book on what it means to be conservative. An essential read for everyone who cares about the future of America. Covering all the angles and arguments, Big Tent is stunning and accessible. You will be surprised, as I was, by all you didn't know about the conservative movement." --Sean Hannity --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

Bestselling author, professor, and pundit Mallory Factor illuminates the conservative tradition in

American politics with essays from leading figures in the conservative movement. Ambitious in its breadth and depth, Big Tent provides a fresh and surprising treatment of the conservative movement as told by the leaders themselves. In this unique collection, which is based on his star-studded course at The Citadel, conservative leaders explain how the movement developed as a powerful force in American politics, how it functions now with a wide range of viewpoints, and where it is going in the future. The origin of conservative ideas—from their ancient roots to their English origins, from the American Revolution to William F. Buckley, Alexis de Tocqueville to Barry Goldwater, and libertarianism to neo-conservatism—are revealed and examined in this compelling volume. These illuminating essays include Newt Gingrich on the political ideas surrounding the American Revolution, Yaron Brook of the Ayn Rand Institute on the emergence of libertarianism, Ed Meese on the Reagan Revolution, David Keene of the NRA on Buckley-style "fusionism," Phyllis Schlafly on the rise of the religious right, Donald Rumsfeld on the Bush administration's "War on Terror," Rand Paul on the future of the conservative movement. Insightful and stimulating, Big Tent is an outstanding survey of the conservative movement from its most significant living figures.

Excellent introduction to various strands of conservative thought. Note: still reading it... Highlights:-- Alfred Regnery's "The Pillars of Conservatism". While much of it is quite familiar to those familiar with George Nash's definitive *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America Since 1945*, Regnery goes into some historical detail on the ancient/classical roots.-- David Norcross's "Edmund Burke and the Origins of Modern Conservatism."-- Michael Barone's essay on Alexis de Tocqueville.-- "New Deal Progressivism, the Jeffersonian Revival, and the Agrarian Tradition" by Burton W. Folsom is a real gem and my favorite so far.-- David Keene's essay on William F. Buckley, Jr.'s impact is not a lot new but interesting to read his perspective and journey within the conservative movement.-- Douglas Feith's "The Cold War, Anti-Communism, and Neoconservatism" is some pretty good background on the emergence of neo-conservatism and its influence on the foreign policy debate. The downside:-- "The Emergence of Libertarianism" by Yaron Brook is nothing but an Ayn Randian argument with some primer material on Hayek, Mises, and Friedman thrown in.-- Phyllis Schlafly's "Cultural Conservatism and the Religious Right" is, sad to say, little more than a lot of "This is what I did." Sad to say, for me, because I am a fan of Schlafly and her contributions but her perspective is very limited to the movement as a whole.-- Ed

Meese's book offers very little, except the occasional tidbit, that would be new to any halfway knowledgeable conservative. I've only gotten as far as Feith's essay so far. From a perusal of the rest of the book, though, it appears there are some more gems here.

Mallory Factor's compendium of essays is actually lectures, some without much editorial polish delivered by leading Conservative minds to students at The Citadel in South Carolina. It contains a few clunkers. But there is enough solid stuff here to make this book a good resource for those who want to soak in the origins, history, and many aims of the Conservative movement in the U.S. Why might this be a good read for 2016? Cut straight to the afterword, delivered by former Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour (the cover art of the Kindle edition says Barbour supplies the forward; that's a misprint). Suspend any judgment of Barbour's political record: here is 2-Party Politics 101. He examines the record to show why Republicans (or Democrats, if you prefer) must avoid creating litmus tests of ideological purity in order to win state and national elections. You can choose to read Barbour first, but his offering may resonate more deeply if you've considered some of the best essays that come before. Barbour, teasing out a theme other contributors hint at, explains why it is important for the Conservative movement to be a "big tent" in order to win at the polls. But there's a "big tent" irony: Barbour, who prepared his remarks well before the 2016 campaign, may have you re-thinking Donald Trump's candidacy (Is he really working for the Clintons? Well, turns out there's historical precedent for those sort of shenanigans.) Make no mistake; the Conservative "big tent" is not for everyone. So who is it for? Contributor Edward J. Feulner takes us back to William F. Buckley's efforts, when the National Review was brand new, to rally various strands of political theory that stood against New Dealism and other left-leaning philosophies, into a viable political and governing force. There were free market conservatives, social conservatives, fiscal conservatives, national defense conservatives, and constitutional conservatives whose overlapping yet unique objectives needed a common rallying point to develop into the unified movement that Buckley envisioned. Factor presents the essays in rough chronological order to highlight the progression of thought and historical events through time: eighteenth-century Irishman Edmund Burke; George Washington and the framers of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution; Friedrich Hayek, Russell Kirk and Ayn Rand; all paving the way for the patron saints of the modern U.S. Conservative movement:

Buckley. Goldwater. Reagan. The list of contributors combine the well-known: Newt Gingrich, Michael Barone, Phyllis Schlafly, Ed Meese, Ralph Reed, Rand Paul; with quieter scholars whose contributions drive home the power of America's conservative zen. But put the lineup in a room with wine and cheese, and you'll hear some substantial disagreements. It is a big tent. Among the most thought-provoking nuggets: Donald Rumsfeld's defense of George W. Bush's war on terror. It's fashionable for Americans of all political stripes to give Bush low marks on his presidency; Rumsfeld's argument in defense of George W.'s military and foreign policy initiatives are the most cogent you'll find. Those who think the military actions in Iraq and Afghanistan were mistakes will find a healthy challenge to their thought process here. The writer in me wishes a few of the essays were better edited to be presented as essays in a book. And a couple of the essays are just not up to snuff. But think of "Big Tent" as an old vinyl LP: You don't have to like every song on the album to make it a good addition to your collection.

I liked the format of this book. The fifteen chapters plus the Afterword were individual essays each writing about different aspects of what is conservative thinking. If they would read it, I believe it would open some minds that are liberal, The question is will they read it, probably not! Haley Barbour's Afterword helped to bring it all together. The only essay I had a problem with was by James Woolsey glib with unwarranted humor. But even with that I rate the book, five star.

A nice anthology of essays on what it means to be a political conservative from multiple perspectives of people I respect for the most part. Easy to read as each essay more or less stands alone. Some essays stood out from the others as being more insightful. I will refer back to these particular essays over time.

Awesome . . . contains one of the most easy to understand chapters on how radical Liberals gamed the system to dominate the political process. Explains why capitalism, free enterprise, and conservative principles lead to success and why Liberals just don't have a clue as they seek to destroy America!

This is a great book - highly recommended. Well organized, and nicely presented. I only wish that all

citizens would read it - they might understand what makes a free society so incredibly prosperous.

EXCELLENTE as a resource for the serious conservative, especially updating on 'modern conservatism' in the coming decade. And an encouraging word for all conservatives.

I wasn't sure what this book might be so I was glad to find it a very educational and interesting read. I would recommend it to both conservatives and independents.

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