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Liberal Fascism: The Secret History Of The American Left, From Mussolini To The Politics Of Change



Synopsis

Fierce, funny, and controversial, Jonah Goldberg's #1 New York Times bestseller traces fascism back to its surprising roots--in liberalism. "Fascists," "Brownshirts," "jackbooted stormtroopers" such are the insults typically hurled at conservatives by their liberal opponents. Calling someone a fascist is the fastest way to shut them up, defining their views as beyond the political pale. But who are the real fascists in our midst? Liberal Fascism offers a startling new perspective on the theories and practices that define fascist politics. Replacing conveniently manufactured myths with surprising and enlightening research, Jonah Goldberg reminds us that the original fascists were really on the left, and that liberals from Woodrow Wilson to FDR to Hillary Clinton have advocated policies and principles remarkably similar to those of Hitler's National Socialism and Mussolini's Fascism. Contrary to what most people think, the Nazis were ardent socialists (hence the term "National socialism"). They believed in free health care and guaranteed jobs. They confiscated inherited wealth and spent vast sums on public education. They purged the church from public policy, promoted a new form of pagan spirituality, and inserted the authority of the state into every nook and cranny of daily life. The Nazis declared war on smoking, supported abortion, euthanasia, and gun control. They loathed the free market, provided generous pensions for the elderly, and maintained a strict racial quota system in their universities where campus speech codes were all the rage. The Nazis led the world in organic farming and alternative medicine. Hitler was a strict vegetarian, and Himmler was an animal rights activist. Do these striking parallels mean that today's liberals are genocidal maniacs, intent on conquering the world and imposing a new racial order? Not at all. Yet it is hard to deny that modern progressivism and classical fascism shared the same intellectual roots. We often forget, for example, that Mussolini and Hitler had many admirers in the United States. W.E.B. Du Bois was inspired by Hitler's Germany, and Irving Berlin praised Mussolini in song. Many fascist tenets were espoused by American progressives like John Dewey and Woodrow Wilson, and FDR incorporated fascist policies in the New Deal. Fascism was an international movement that appeared in different forms in different countries, depending on the vagaries of national culture and temperament. In Germany, fascism appeared as genocidal racist nationalism. In America, it took a "friendlier," more liberal form. The modern heirs of this "friendly fascist" tradition include the New York Times, the Democratic Party, the Ivy League professoriate, and the liberals of Hollywood. The quintessential Liberal Fascist isn't an SS storm trooper; it is a female grade school teacher with an education degree from Brown or Swarthmore. These assertions may sound strange to modern ears, but that is because we have

forgotten what fascism is. In this angry, funny, smart, contentious book, Jonah Goldberg turns our preconceptions inside out and shows us the true meaning of Liberal Fascism.

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Customer Reviews

In this provocative and well-researched book, Goldberg probes modern liberalism's spooky origins in early 20th-century fascist politics. With chapter titles such as *Adolf Hitler: Man of the Left* and *Brave New Village: Hillary Clinton and the Meaning of Liberal Fascism*—Goldberg argues that fascism has always been a phenomenon of the left. This is Goldberg's first book, and he wisely curbs his wry *National Review* style. Goldberg's study of the conceptual overlap between fascism and ideas emanating from the environmental movement, Hollywood, the Democratic Party and what he calls other left-wing organs is shocking and hilarious. He lays low such lights of liberal history as Margaret Sanger, apparently a radical eugenicist, and JFK, whose cult of personality, according to Goldberg, reeks of fascist political theater. Much of this will be music to conservatives' ears, but other readers may be stopped cold by the parallels Goldberg draws between Nazi Germany and the New Deal. The book's tone suffers as it oscillates between revisionist historical analyses and the application of fascist themes to American popular culture; nonetheless, the controversial arc Goldberg draws from Mussolini to *The Matrix* is well-researched, seriously argued—and funny. (Jan. 8) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

“Brilliant, insightful, and important.” •New York

Sun “Well-researched, seriously argued, and funny.” •Publishers

Weekly “Bold and witty [Goldberg] makes a persuasive case that fascism was from the beginning a movement of the left.”

•New York Post “Jonah Goldberg is the first historian to detail the havoc this spin of all spins has played upon Western thought for the past seventy-five years, very much including the present moment.” •Tom Wolfe

This book is a great read and timely despite the fact it was written in 2008, almost 10 years before the rise of ANTIFA (the modern fascist group ironically calling themselves ANTIFA which is short for anti-fascists), and is more about the history of early 20th century progressive fascism than about today's fascists movements. Goldberg first details the rise of Mussolini's Fascist party and the common tactics shared by its socialists kin, Hitler's National Socialist party (the Nazis) and Stalin's Communist party. Goldberg then explains how progressives have, over the years, inaccurately (for the most part) redefined Fascism to be associated with the right despite its origins on the left. Next, Goldberg recounts some of the most Fascist administrations in American History including, President Wilson and FDR. Finally, Goldberg also impartially describes how even some people on the right have and continue to use fascist tactics, but to a much lesser degree.

Very difficult read...when I finish, I'll start again.

Great book!

Truth!

A must have.

Great

Great

Don't read this book if you are comfortable with your world view. This book will open your eyes to the neo fascists of the left. This is a substantial read -- not for the weak minded.

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