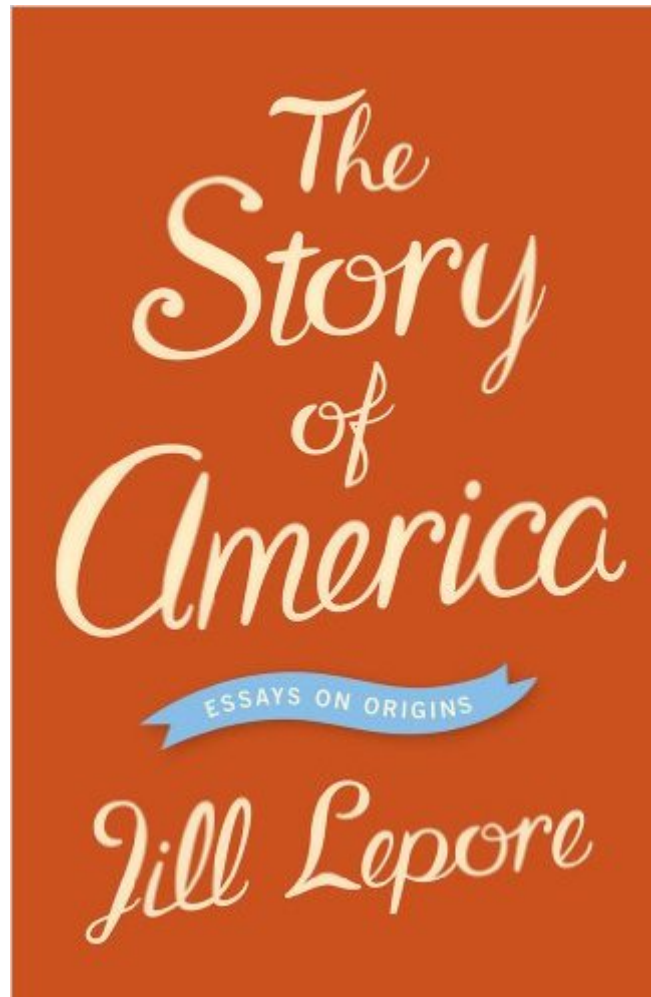


The book was found

The Story Of America: Essays On Origins



Synopsis

In *The Story of America*, Harvard historian and New Yorker staff writer Jill Lepore investigates American origin stories--from John Smith's account of the founding of Jamestown in 1607 to Barack Obama's 2009 inaugural address--to show how American democracy is bound up with the history of print. Over the centuries, Americans have read and written their way into a political culture of ink and type. Part civics primer, part cultural history, *The Story of America* excavates the origins of everything from the paper ballot and the Constitution to the I.O.U. and the dictionary. Along the way it presents fresh readings of Benjamin Franklin's *Way to Wealth*, Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*, "The Raven" by Edgar Allan Poe, and "Paul Revere's Ride" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, as well as histories of lesser-known genres, including biographies of presidents, novels of immigrants, and accounts of the Depression. From past to present, Lepore argues, Americans have wrestled with the idea of democracy by telling stories. In this thoughtful and provocative book, Lepore offers at once a history of origin stories and a meditation on storytelling itself.

Book Information

Paperback: 432 pages

Publisher: Princeton University Press; Reprint edition (October 27, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0691159599

ISBN-13: 978-0691159591

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 1 x 8.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (31 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #115,959 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #26 in Â Books > History >

Historical Study & Educational Resources > Essays #69 in Â Books > History > Historical Study & Educational Resources > Historiography #172 in Â Books > History > Americas > United States > Colonial Period

Customer Reviews

This is a marvelous, scholarly and completely accessible tour of American history, perceived via assorted documents, ideas and personalities. Topics, to name a few, include debtors prisons, Noah Webster, Inaugural speeches, biographies of George Washington and Charles Dickens' 1843 visit to America, The chapters are written with charm, authority and brio. The extensive endnotes are an added bonus, and every page of the book is fun to read.

What a delight to read! The book is worth every penny I paid. In fact, after buying the Kindle edition, I purchased a second, hard copy as a gift for a friend. I am an admirer of Lepore's scholarship and writing anyway--found her book on King Philip's War enormously useful as a teacher and scholar. These essays are less academic. They're quicker and lighter but have just enough historical heft to leave a thinking reader with something to muse on.

This book should be required reading in secondary and high school history classes. It gives a human perspective to our nation's historical turning points. The reader can understand the very human motives and reasons and blunders that are treated so dryly and one-dimensionally in the ordinary history textbooks.

Lepore's book was delightful, and after reading it in my Kindle I bought a hard copy to give my teen-age granddaughter because it is not like the boring surveys of American history one gets in high school. It is a set of interesting stories that might get her into the larger subject. Some pieces are a bit wandering, but they usually made me want to read more on that period or incident.

A delightful series of essays about the various ways we have written about and interpret our origins as a nation. I think she illustrates by means of a series of essays about significant writings in our history, and not always those one would expect, that we are what we have created from the literary imaginations of our people striving to bring the ideals of democracy, freedom, justice, and equality before the law to fruition in a rapidly changing world and a nation of changing political and social values. A very engaging study of how we have perceived ourselves and how those perceptions have passed into the public consciousness. I highly recommend it to anyone interested in American history.

This thoroughly enjoyable book is a collection of essays published previously in New Yorker magazine. It's a jumble of subjects that Lepore perhaps bumped into while professing at Harvard, then turned into articles for popular consumption in a venerable magazine. Her subjects vary widely: Edgar Allan Poe, the history of voting, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, debtor's prisons, Kit Carson, presentation of the U.S. in school plays, and others. Lepore did research on all of them and has her subjects in hand. She writes popular history drolly with a weakness for descriptive metaphors--both her own and others'. For example: In the pantheon of American "superhero" Founding Fathers, she

writes, Tom Paine is a lesser demigod, made use of only occasionally, like Aquaman. Another example: she quotes farmer/ex-Revolutionary soldier William Manning in the 1790s: "It [the Constitution] was made like a Fiddle, with but few Strings, but so that the ruling Majority could play any tune upon it they please." Her book is surprisingly free of the political bias seemingly a prerequisite for a person who 1) has a Ph.D. in American Studies, and 2) chairs the history department at Harvard. I scrutinize history books assiduously, just waiting for political nonsense to appear and ruin them so I can grind my teeth. I had nary an objection to Lepore's book. Want to read a well written, entertaining collection of informative historical essays? Here is one worth the price.

I purchased this as a Christmas gift for my high school granddaughter. She's a history buff. She has already read most of this book in the few days since she received it, and she tells me that she loves it. What caught my attention when selecting this book was the fact that it's a series of essays. So if you are the type of reader who doesn't want to get bogged down in a history book with long chapters and tons of footnotes, this may be a book for you.

[Download to continue reading...](#)

The Story of America: Essays on Origins Spawn: Origins Volume 1 (Spawn Origins Collection) The New Testament and the People of God/ Christian Origins and the Question of God, Vol.1 (Christian Origins and the Question of God (Paperback)) Consider the Lobster and Other Essays (Selected Essays) Why Tango: Essays on learning, dancing and living tango argentino (Tango Essays Book 1) John Muir : Nature Writings: The Story of My Boyhood and Youth; My First Summer in the Sierra; The Mountains of California; Stickeen; Essays (Library of America) The Counter-Revolution of 1776: Slave Resistance and the Origins of the United States of America Vindicating the Founders: Race, Sex, Class, and Justice in the Origins of America Witchcraft From the Inside: Origins of the Fastest Growing Religious Movement in America Batman: An Origin Story (DC Super Heroes Origins) The Hot Zone: The Terrifying True Story of the Origins of the Ebola Virus Diary of Herobrine: Origins (an unofficial Minecraft book) (The Herobrine Story Book 1) Analytic Philosophy in America: And Other Historical and Contemporary Essays The Essays of Warren Buffett: Lessons for Corporate America, Fourth Edition The Essays of Warren Buffett : Lessons for Corporate America What's the Story: Essays about art, theater and storytelling How to Tell a Story and Other Essays The Fracking Truth: America's Energy Revolution: America's Energy Revolution: the Inside, Untold Story Origins, Imitation, Conventions: Representation in the Visual Arts Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty

