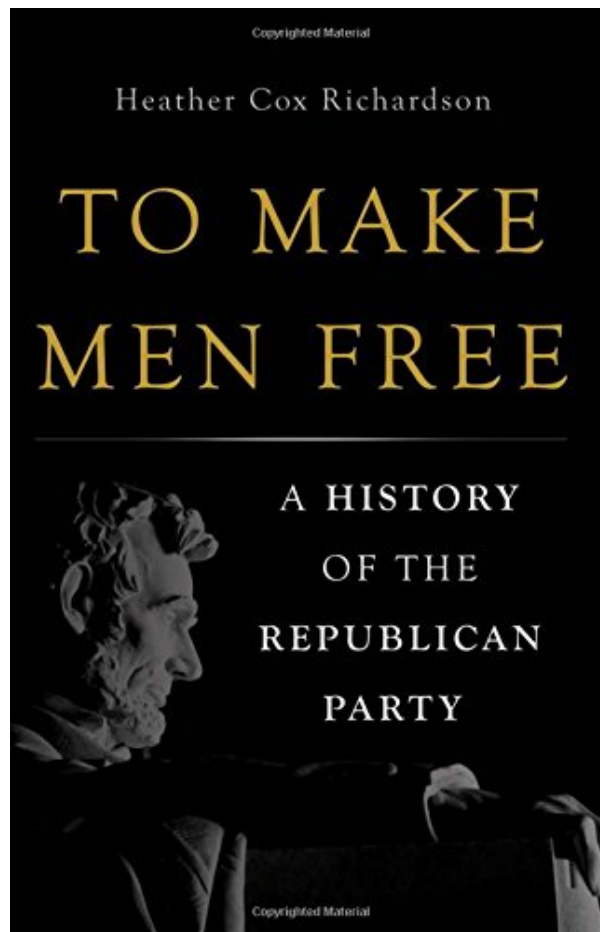


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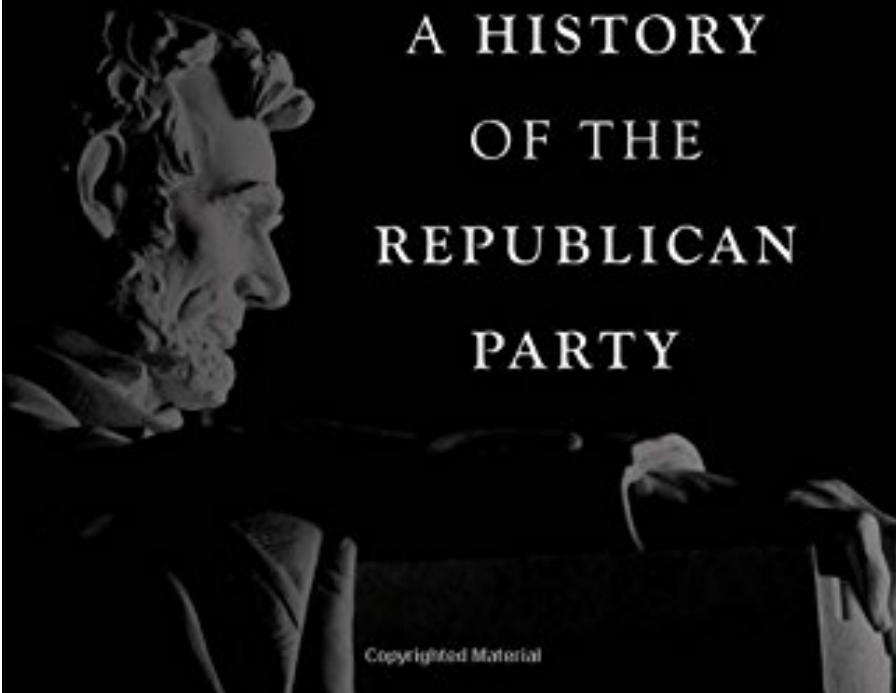


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In *To Make Men Free*, celebrated historian Heather Cox Richardson traces the shifting ideology of the Grand Old Party from the antebellum era to the Great Recession, showing how Republicans' ideological vacillations have had terrible repercussions for minorities, the middle class, and America at large. Expansive and authoritative, *To Make Men Free* explains how a relatively young party became America's greatest political hope—and, time and time again, its greatest disappointment.

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## Most helpful customer reviews

54 of 60 people found the following review helpful.

Insightful and Enjoyable 19th - 20th Century Political History

By Mary J. Evans

I found the book an eminently readable history of the Republican party -- from its birth prior to the Civil War, alliance with the nation's business elite in Gilded Age, reform under Teddy Roosevelt, corruption and loss of credibility in the 1920s and Great Depression, resurrection under Eisenhower, and the dominance of the party's conservative wing in the 1980-2010 era (marked by large increases in the nation's debt, unwillingness to police financial markets, and the Great Recession).

The author proposes that these cycles of reform and failure are linked with the tensions in American political philosophy between equal opportunity to pursue success (i.e., "all men are created equal"), right to private property, and racial / ethnic / religious competition within society. These tensions pull the Party through cycles of reform, corruption, over-reach, failure, and rebirth ... with powerful impacts on America's government and society.

The story is well researched and sourced, and filled with engaging texture and historical details. It combines an enjoyable story with historical analysis (without undue polemics). As a relatively even-handed treatment, it will be criticized by partisans of both the Left and Right -- and ultimately stand on the quality of its research, factual sources, and enjoyable prose.

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful.

Fair and balanced, but ultimately devastating to the modern GOP

By James F. Perry

Lincoln's Gettysburg Address redefined the country to include equality as a basic principle. His Republican Party, and the Republican Party of Teddy Roosevelt and Dwight Eisenhower, saw the security of the country as depending vitally on the good health, education, and prosperity of every American. That's what equality meant to them. This was not at all the view of the Southern slaveholders and monarchists, who saw the security of the country as depending vitally on the prosperity of the owners of most of the land. They saw the prosperity of the lower classes not as a bulwark against natural disaster and foreign invasion but as an internal threat to the privileges of the wealthy. Richardson's book offers by far the most understandable account of the tension between these two views that I have ever read. It is well-written, and offers 35 pages of citations for every significant claim.

15 of 18 people found the following review helpful.

Very well researched book about the Party of Lincoln- the Republican Party

By Mike D

Whatever one thinks of the Republican Party whether you're a Democrat, a Republican, a Green, etc... One wonders what how it turned from the Party of Lincoln to the Party of the Tea Party and crazies in 2014.

This book is similar to Geoffrey Kabaservice's books Rule and Ruin but Heather goes back to the party's origins in the 1850's where as Kabaservice's book focuses on the conservative takeover of the GOP in the 1960's. The Republican Party was originally a progressive party in it's origins that fought for the end of slavery in America, promoted civil rights to freed slaves and supporting immigrants. Something we don't see at all in today's Republican Party. The two wings of the party have fought each other at times but also worked together to help the country. I'm currently at the part around Theodore Roosevelt's Presidency.

Conservatives (as a warning) will not like this book as their movement and supporters are criticized heavily for not thinking of the common person, intolerance towards certain groups and purging out difference of opinions by labeling them as "RINO", not a "real conservative", etc...

For a good history book, I recommend this. Like Rule and Ruin, it is clear that Heather has done her homework and research on the party.

I think this book should be given to all Republicans to show how they can once again become a majority party despite what James Carville and Dylan Loewe will tell you of a permanent 40 year rule.

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