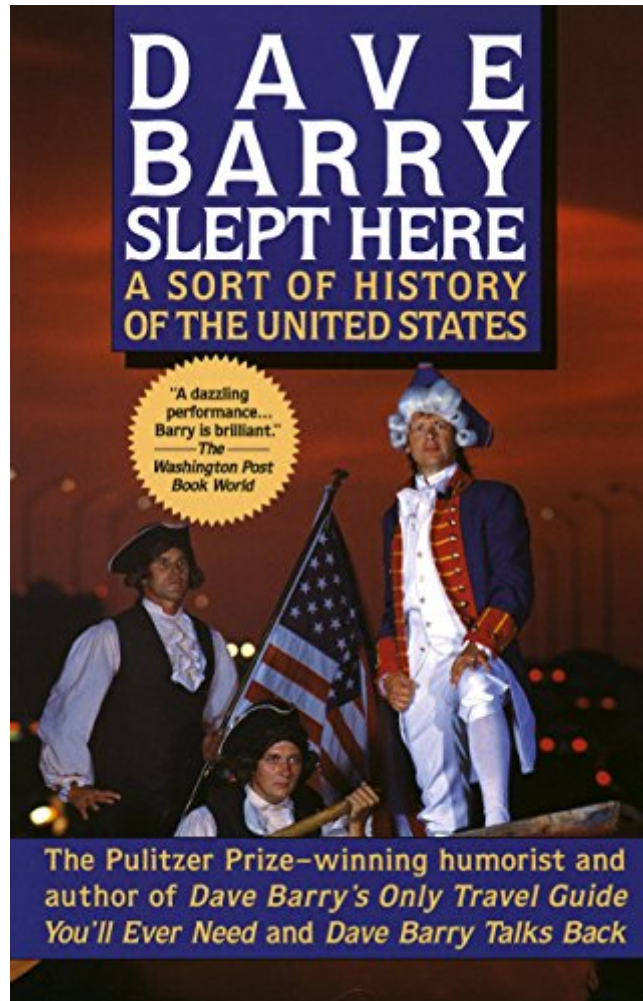


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Dave Barry Slept Here: A Sort Of History Of The United States



Synopsis

"Bary turns his formidable wit to the subject of American history, with a result reminiscent of the Reduced Shakespeare Company: The better you know the original, the funnier it gets." LOS ANGELES TIMES
This time Dave Barry's subject is history, the way it's never been told before. Every single momentous event and crucial moment is covered, including...The Birthing Contractions of a Nation; Kicking Some British Butt; The Fifties: Peace, Prosperity, Brain Death, right up through the scintillating Reagan-Bush years. If you love to laugh, and you love your country, this is the book you've been waiting for since 1776. Or at least since Super Bowl III. From the Trade Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Pulitzer Prize winning humor columnist Dave Barry set out to write a American history book that would be accessible to lay people. How did he accomplish this? For one thing, there are no dates to memorize, unlike the ones that menaced us in school. Or rather there is a single date (Oct. 8) for all important events, so chosen because it's his son's birthday. Another way, this book is different is that it has left out the dull parts of history. Therefore, the reader is spared having to wade through

tedious facts and figures that seem interchangeable and impossible to remember or care about. No, this book is bona fide funny. True to his promise, Barry adroitly gives us our history minus the really boring parts. He begins by explaining how America was "very different...no roads, no cities, no shopping malls, no Honda dealerships." He then progresses to Columbus's voyage with the three ships: the Ninja, the Pina Colada, and the Heidi Ho III. He is succinct when his narrative threatens to veer into dullness. For example, he sums up the "Decline of Spain," by saying "On Oct. 8, 1565, Spain declined." Presidential foibles, oddball interpretations of laws and amendments, amusing chapter headings (Deep International Doo Doo, The Seventies: A Relieved Nation Learns That It Does Not Actually Need a President, a running joke at the expense of Richard Nixon, plus creative use of quote marks make this a hilarious read. And as a bonus, he does not forget to mention the many important contributions made by women and minorities. Well, sort of.

For sheer gut busting laughs, this is the funniest book I've read. You do need some knowledge of American history to appreciate a lot of the satire, but it's a riot on any level. "Science Made Stupid" (not by Dave Barry) comes in a close second.

I bought this book years ago before a plane trip to Boston. I was glad I was on a prop plane that was very noisy, because I was laughing out loud and no one could hear me. This book is an absolute riot, even if you don't know American history well (although it's definitely funnier if you do). I used to have a large collection of Dave Barry's books and stopped collecting after his "Dave Barry Does Japan" flop, but this is easily the funniest of all of his books (and one of the books I kept). HIGHLY recommend.

Although American history is not a book, everyone and anyone who fancies themselves a buff on the subject should take the time to read Dave Barry's tome, which quite possibly remains the funniest book he has written to date. Barry's aim is to eliminate the "boring method" of eternally droning textbooks and replace it with a simplified system, in which every critical event occurs on October 8. (He arrived at this date after "considering many important factors, such as: (a) it is our son's birthday.") Although he confines his most piercing commentary to important leaders and key events, he is quick to point out from time to time that "many women and minorities were also making important contributions." Some of his running jokes fall flat after a while - after all, one can only laugh at the Hawley-Smoot Tariff so many times - but Barry has more than his fair share of payday moments; especially memorable are his thoughts on the Bill of Rights, the Great Depression, and

the 1950's. In true textbook fashion, Barry tops off the package with an array of outrageous footnotes and discussion questions (one example: "Did you ever see 'Attack of the Killer Tomatoes?' Explain.") Overall, this book is truly wonderful, one that you'll certainly pull out whenever you need a good belly laugh.

Dave Barry's "Dave Barry Slept Here" is a hilarious pseudo/satire-history of the United States. Anyone familiar with Dave Barry's wit from his columns will immediately recognize the same wit unleashed on so much of our history that we have heard, if not necessarily really learned, throughout our lives. Dave Barry writes like a high-school student - intentionally, of course. He attributes great advances to "technology," isn't interested in the Smoot-Hawley Tariff so he skips it because it sounds boring, and decides that every important event in American history happened on October 8th so that he doesn't have to remember any more dates (even the Fourth of July happened on October 8th, 1776). And he ends every chapter with hilarious "discussion questions" that are just as funny as the text. I've read and re-read this hilarious book, and it's great to just pick up and start reading in the middle whenever you need a good chuckle. Anyone who likes Dave Barry, enjoys American history, or is interested in what three-word sentence you can rearrange the letters in "Spiro Agnew" to spell (hint: the first word is "grow") should read this book and enjoy!

Dave Barry is irresistibly funny, especially when attacking America's most sacred institutions that no one has dared to mock before, such as Washington DC, fat people who watch NASCAR, and spam. Once again, Dave Barry courageously forges new territory in pointing out that US History textbooks teach kids nothing useful and put them all to sleep. So Dave Barry has decided to make history fun, interesting, and memorable by making it all up. What's most important is that he does the nation a tremendous service by pointing out on every second page that "women and minorities have made a profound and significant contribution to the development of the nation while being enslaved and forced to wear corsets (the minorities, not the women)." This is exactly the sort of political correctness that our shallow and useless youth need, and the author has selflessly done so in order to make sure that public schools will spend millions buying this book and force their students to memorize it. Thank goodness for American public education!

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