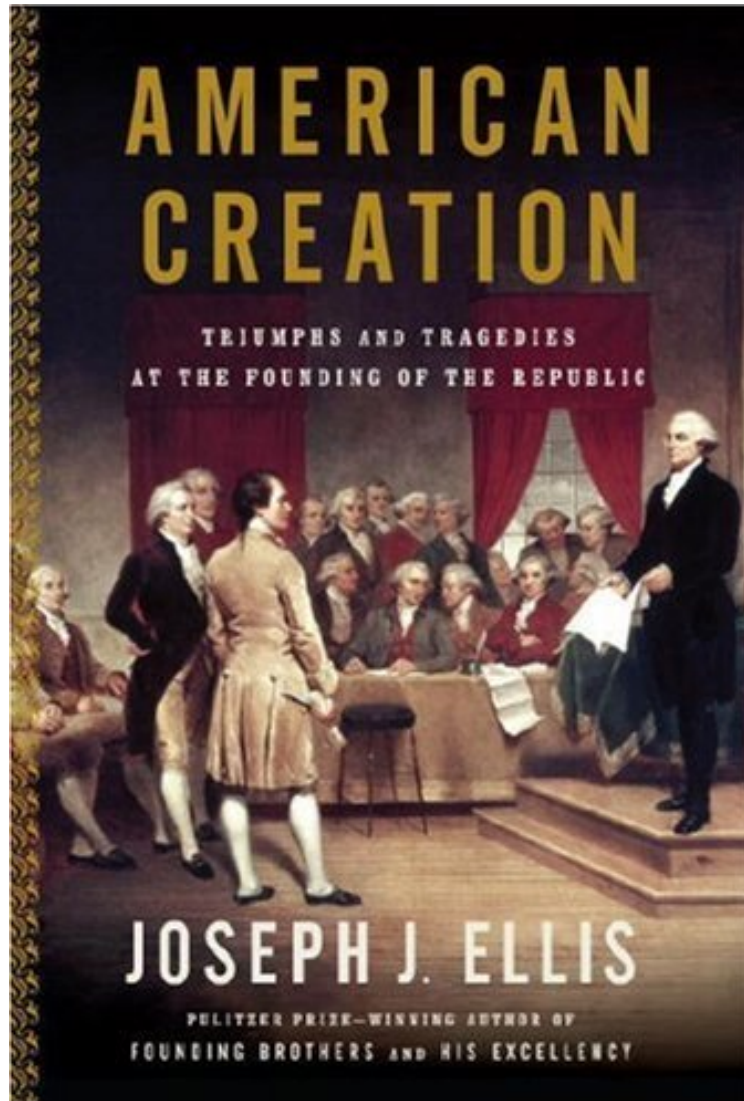


American Creation

Von Joseph J. Ellis

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Von Joseph J. Ellis : American Creation before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised American Creation:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Six Episodes that Shaped American HistoryVon Monika SimonFirst of all, it is probably good to say what "American Creation" by Joseph J. Ellis is not. It is not a history of the creation of the United States of America, nor does it provide the concise story of the first decades of American independence. Instead Joseph J. Ellis picked out six pivotal events of the first twenty-five years of American history and discusses them in detail and how the decisions taken then

have influenced their own time and the future. For this reason it is necessary to have some previous knowledge of this period of history (e.g. what 'Valley Forge' stands for or who the major players were) otherwise, I presume, the book will be very difficult to understand. The events described start with the build-up to the Declaration of Independence in 'The Year' and end with 'The Purchase' detailing the history of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. Another chapter, 'The Treaty' describes early, and ultimately doomed, efforts to achieve an accommodation with Native Americans. 'The Conspiracy' describes the development of the Republican Party, whose goals and fears of a too powerful federal government are surprisingly reminiscent of those of their modern day counterparts. 'The Winter' about Valley Forge and 'The Argument' about the writing of the constitution complete the book. Ellis discusses each subject in its own time and context. Often developments that in hindsight were considered triumphs were in fact ad hoc compromises or even regarded as catastrophes by the participants themselves. Ellis also shows that the people who were in the midst of these events were neither flawless heroes nor visionary geniuses, but men with strengths and flaws and for that all the more interesting. Nor are the darker sides of the times omitted, notably slavery, which would lead to the Civil War, and the relationship to native Americans and all its tragic consequences. As I am by now means an expert in this period of history (in fact this is the first serious book I read about it) I cannot judge the accuracy of the book's historical content. It is, however, very convincingly argued and I certainly enjoyed reading "American Creation", which is not only a very interesting but also a well-written book.

Kurzbeschreibung From the first shots fired at Lexington to the signing of the Declaration of Independence to the negotiations for the Louisiana Purchase, Joseph J. Ellis guides us through the decisive issues of the nation's founding, and illuminates the emerging philosophies, shifting alliances, and personal and political foibles of our now iconic leaders Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Hamilton, and Adams. He casts an incisive eye on the founders' achievements, arguing that the American Revolution was, paradoxically, an evolution and that part of what made it so extraordinary was the gradual pace at which it occurred. He explains how the idea of a strong federal government was eventually embraced by the American people, and details the emergence of the two-party system, which stands as the founders' most enduring legacy. Ellis is equally incisive about their failures, and he makes clear how their inability to abolish slavery and to reach a just settlement with the Native Americans has played an equally important role in shaping our national character. With eloquence and insight, Ellis strips the mythic veneer of the revolutionary generation to reveal men both human and inspired, possessed of both brilliance and blindness. American Creation is an audiobook that delineates an era of flawed greatness, at a time when understanding our origins is more important than ever. From the Trade Paperback edition. From Booklist *Starred * In a structure similar to his *Founding Brothers* (2000), which examined leading American revolutionaries at critical episodes, Ellis selects "certain propitious moments" from the American Revolution and early republic, dramatizes them, and analyzes their crucial ramifications for America's future. Those Ellis discusses, such as a sense of nationalism or the Founders' failure to constrain slavery, emerge as contingent developments. What Ellis emphasizes in this set of incisive narratives is the possibility that history could have taken some very different directions and that what occurred is unjustifiably endowed with inevitability. Subjects include the debate preceding the Declaration of Independence; the ordeal of Valley Forge; the beginning of the party system in the 1790s; and the Louisiana Purchase. Collectively they illuminate, argues Ellis, the Founders' anxieties about the constitutional nature, territorial extent, and permanence of the republic they were constructing. All the Founders had reservations about the nation-state that resulted. Their maneuvers to alter it, such as an effort by Washington's secretary of war to change Indian policy from dispossession to accommodation, crystallize in Ellis' outstanding acuity about the successes and failures of the Founders. A history bound for phenomenal popularity. Taylor, Gilbert *Pressestimmen* "Illuminating . . . Compelling . . . It is Mr. Ellis's achievement that he once again leaves us with a keen appreciation of the good fortune America had in having the right men in the right places at the right times." --Michiko Kakutani, *The New York Times* "Ellis is a storyteller, and a superb one too. He employs the same narrative technique he developed most successfully in *Founding Brothers*. Throughout there is the same captivating colloquial style for which he is famous, and the same clarity of exposition." --Gordon S. Wood, *New York of Books* "Joseph J. Ellis' *Founding Brothers* won the 2001 Pulitzer Prize in history. *American Creation* is at least its equal and perhaps its superior." --*Richmond Times-Dispatch* "Mr. Ellis humanizes the founding generation without tearing them down--a delicate operation in a politically charged time." --*The New York Sun* "He writes history as it should be: as a page-turner." --*Library Journal* "This subtle, brilliant examination puts Ellis among the finest of America's narrative historians." --*Publishers Weekly* "His books on early American history are national treasures." --Roger Bishop, *Bookpage*