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American Ways

A Behavioral History of the United States with Expectations for the Future

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Thesis of the Book

- “To both my non-American and American friends, I offer this history of the American people from the perspective of long-term trends in our national behavior, reflecting both material interests and ideals. These trends allow us to identify recurring themes in American history, to better understand how we got to where we are at the present, and to form well considered expectations for the future. We are very likely to see continued patterns of American behavior throughout the 21st century.” (p. 1)
- “History does not literally repeat itself, because the passing of time creates different circumstances; but what does repeat is human behavior. History is about long-term human behavior, and American history is about the persistent trends in how Americans typically act.” (p. 7)



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Principal Trend

Americans take great pride in their individual merits and rights, and they freely pursue their personal self-interests and ideals, often with impatience and sometimes with little regard for the rights of other individuals to do the same. (Chapter 3, p. 32)





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Principal Trend

Even with all the opportunities offered in America, not everyone works and thinks equally well or enjoys the same good luck, so not everyone achieves the same level of success. Fairness lies primarily with the equal rights of individuals to pursue opportunities, both those presented and those created, not with the results. The existence and the pursuit of opportunities have given most Americans a persistent optimism about the future, despite many frustrations and disappointments along the way.

(Chapter 3, p. 45)





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Principal Trend

Americans are risk takers and love to win, but they often have to try several times before they reach their goals. They can be very tenacious and stubborn as they hate to give up or give in. Americans admire those who keep on trying despite disappointments and setbacks, but they often condemn those who lose optimism about the future, quit trying, or simply expect others to provide for them. (Chapter 3, p. 54)





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Principal Trend

Americans can be very social and co-operative when they want to be. They love to voluntarily join and enjoy private communities. On the other hand, Americans may resent the demands made by public communities, except in times of crisis. (Chapter 4, p. 67)

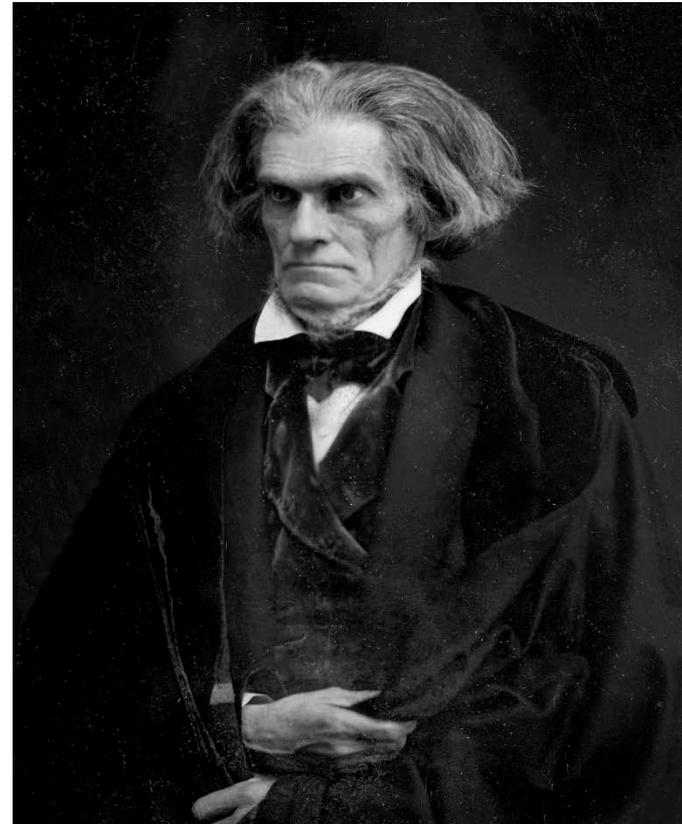




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Principal Trend

Americans find clever ways to combine their lofty ideals with their self-interests and self-satisfaction, and only rarely will they consciously pursue their ideals at the direct expense of their own well-being. (Chapter 5, p. 96)





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“...yet wanting outward means, to set things in that forwardness we desire, and to further the latter [the glory of God and honors of country] by the former [profit], I thought meet to offer both to consideration, hoping that where Religion and profit jump together (which is rare) in so honorable an action...it will encourage every honest man, either in person or purse, to set forward the same....”
Edward Winslow, 1624





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Principal Trend

When Americans cannot agree on conflicting ideals and interests, they resort to agreeing on a fair and equitable process to resolve their conflicts peacefully. Sometimes agreement on a process entails major compromises and the accommodation of bitter rivals. As seriously as Americans take processes to solve problems, however, there have been occasions when conflicts could not be resolved peacefully and have led to major acts of violence. (Chapter 6, p. 126)

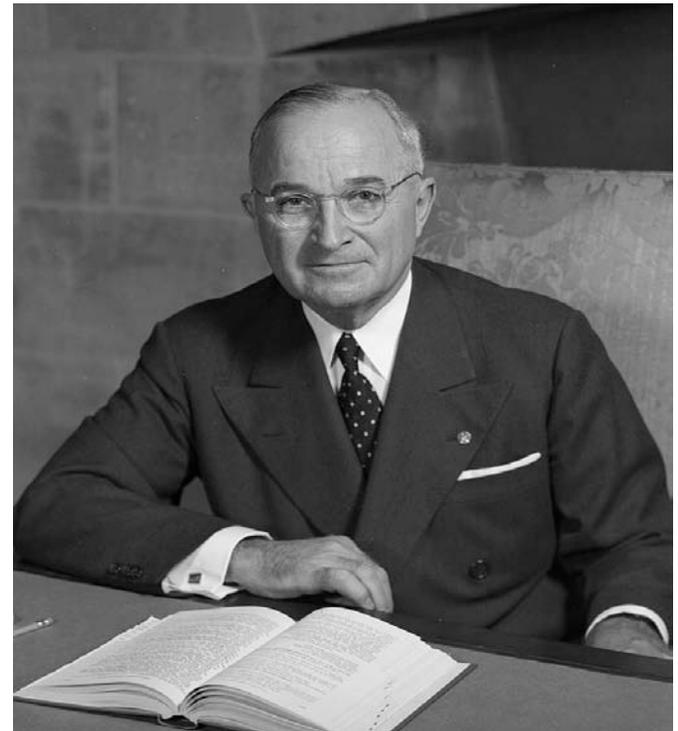




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Principal Trend

Americans view their relations with other countries as more or less extensions of their relations with each other, with typically compatible combinations of self-interests and ideals, so that American foreign policy often has more to do with domestic than with international politics. (Chapter 8, p. 187)





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Chapter 9: Challenges of the Future

1. Accepting Diversity Further
2. Strengthening Communities
3. Assuring the Fairness and Effectiveness of Processes
4. Managing Fear and Anger
5. Sustaining Opportunities



Chapter 9: Scenarios for 21st Century

1. Opportunities Expand with Many Individual Participants
2. Opportunities Stagnate with Emergence of Public Community Interests and Ideals
3. Opportunities Call for Cooperation of Individuals and Private and Public Communities
4. Few Opportunities Pursued by Few Individuals and Private Communities



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Next Steps for the Book

- Vetting of ideas and text to gain refinements and corrections
- Thorough proofreading, editing, and preparing manuscript to appear as a commercial-grade book
- Self-Publish as an e-book and paperback, most likely through Amazon.com (2016)
- Perhaps publish with an established book publisher



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- Futurist, management consultant, and program manager at the Battelle Memorial Institute in Columbus, Ohio, 1979-2006. Managed over 100 futuring and visioning projects for corporations, non-profits, and government agencies around the world.
- Active duty officer in the U.S. Air Force, 1973-1979
- Bachelor's degree from Miami University, Oxford, Ohio (1969) and M.A. and Ph.D. in history from The Ohio State University (1970 and 1972)
- Author of five books, including *Managing the Future: A Guide to Forecasting and Strategic Planning in the 21st Century* (2011) and 37 major journal articles and papers
- Member at-large of the State Board of Education in Ohio, 2003-2010.
- Adjunct faculty member in the MBA program at Franklin University, 2009-2014