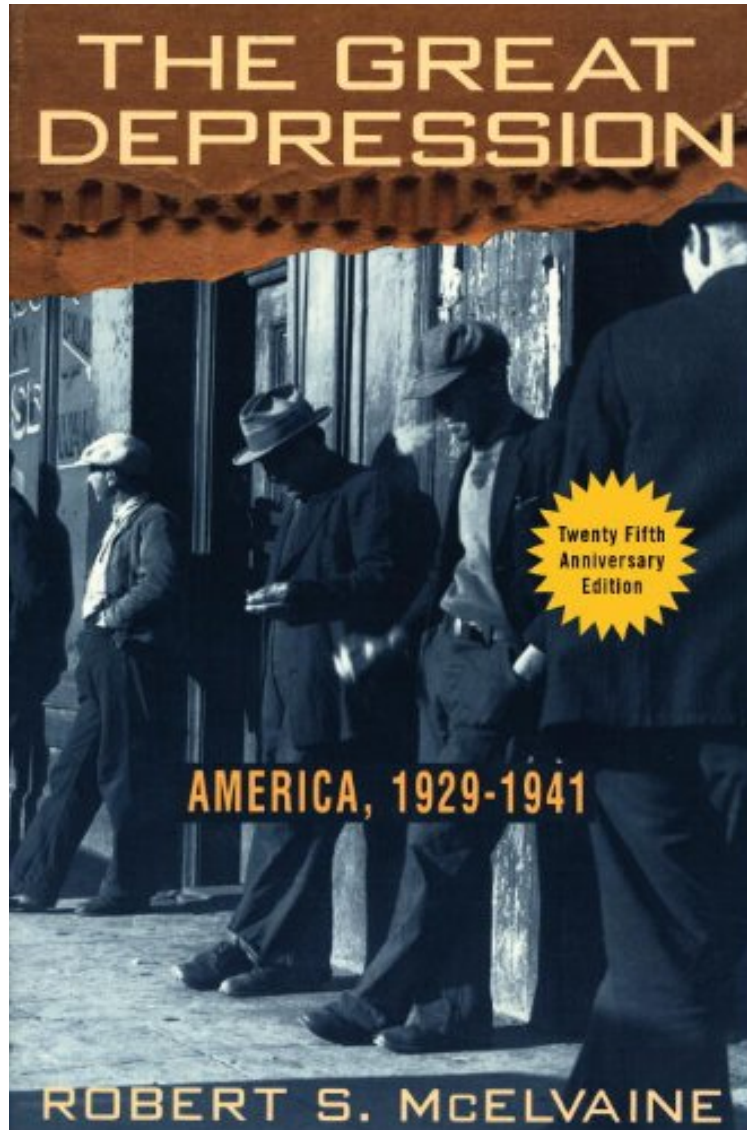


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The Great Depression: America 1929-1941

Robert S. McElvaine

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Robert S. McElvaine : The Great Depression: America 1929-1941 before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Great Depression: America 1929-1941:

14 of 15 people found the following review helpful. The Depression from the bottom-up By Gregory Block Having just read "The Forgotten Man" by Amity Shlaes, and "The Great Depression" by Robert McElvaine, back-to-back, I have the opportunity to compare how both authors treat this complex topic. What struck me is that Shlaes' approach seems to be "top-down" while McElvaine's approach is "bottom-up". McElvaine sprinkles into his text the correspondence from ordinary Americans to the Roosevelts; the language is rich, heartfelt, evocative, and infuses the text with a deep sense of melancholy. Shlaes focuses more on the major players, people in a position of power, thought leaders. Both authors

approach the topic of the New Deal from diametric economic and political camps. McElvaine's commentary is definitely biased toward a liberal belief in government. His swipes at President Reagan may seem anachronistic (I believe the book was published in the early eighties, and then re-published in the early nineties) so Reagan-bashing may have been more au courant at the time, but now it seems like cheap jabs. Fortunately, these remarks are not too distracting. Shlaes makes a strong case that the New Deal was coincident to the easing of the economic downturn, while McElvaine plays both sides - he attributes the New Deal as "saving capitalism" but as having little influence on ending the Depression. Both books emphasize the experimental nature of FDR's attempts at righting the economy, and ascribe much of the direction of the New Deal to political rather than economic forces. Both books are required reading for the student who wishes to understand how America changed from the Roaring Twenties to the Great Depression. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Craig O. Ashmore 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. History and the Great Depression By Donna K. Elliott The book is a long and tedious read, but there are many interesting historical overviews regarding the Great Depression. I used the book to help my granddaughter write a research paper for college.

One of the classic studies of the Great Depression, featuring a new introduction by the author with insights into the economic crises of 1929 and today. In the twenty-five years since its publication, critics and scholars have praised historian Robert McElvaine's sweeping and authoritative history of the Great Depression as one of the best and most readable studies of the era. Combining clear-eyed insight into the machinations of politicians and economists who struggled to revive the battered economy, personal stories from the average people who were hardest hit by an economic crisis beyond their control, and an evocative depiction of the popular culture of the decade, McElvaine paints an epic picture of an America brought to its knees; but also brought together by people's widely shared plight. In a new introduction, McElvaine draws striking parallels between the roots of the Great Depression and the economic meltdown that followed in the wake of the credit crisis of 2008. He also examines the resurgence of anti-regulation free market ideology, beginning in the Reagan era, and argues that some economists and politicians revised history and ignored the lessons of the Depression era. From the Trade Paperback edition.

New York Times Notable Book "It would be hard to find a fairer or more balanced account of how the American people and their leaders learned to grapple with their greatest economic crisis." —New York Times Book "A thorough work of scholarship, a lively story, and a highly original feat of analysis." —Business Week "This is essential reading." —Studs Terkel From the Trade Paperback edition. From the Inside Flap A perennial backlist performer. About the Author ROBERT S. MCELVAINE is Elizabeth Chisholm Professor of Arts and Letters and chair of the Department of History at Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi. He is the author of ten books and served as historical consultant for the PBS series The Great Depression. His writing appears frequently in such publications as the New York Times, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, and The Wall Street Journal, and he blogs on the Huffington Post.