



The True Patriot

Eric Liu , Nick Hanauer

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Over the course of a generation, patriotism in America has been hijacked by the right and abandoned by the left. But the principles and values of true patriotism – country above self, contribution above consumption, stewardship over exploitation, freedom with responsibility, purpose through sacrifice and service, pragmatism, a fair shot for all – are inherently progressive. The True Patriot, written in the pamphleteering style of Thomas Paine (Common Sense), challenges progressives to reclaim patriotism – and spells out just how to do it. This powerful and timely "little red book" combines a manifesto, a ten-principle plan, a model speech, and a moral code. Throughout, it weaves between the words of the authors and excerpts from foundational American texts and speeches, as well as a parade of iconic American images.

The True Patriot Details

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From Reader Review The True Patriot for online ebook

Tyler Hill says

A quick read, and engrossing little manifesto, though your mileage will vary depending on how much you agree with the politics and positions put forth in it. But, I'd highly recommend it for anyone who considers themselves a Progressive or Liberal (like me) who beleives that Patriotism is more than slapping an American flag on our car bumper, shouting "support the troops" while simultaneously engaging in selfish individualism.

Colin says

An awesome little book - booklet, really - containing a number of primary documents on what has made and what makes America great (quotes from the Declaration, Gettsburg address, Roosevelt's four freedoms, etc), thoughts on progressive patriotism, and ten principles of progressive patriotic values:

1. American exceptionalism
 2. Responsibility for the common good
 3. Equality of opportunity
 4. Patriotic capitalism
 5. Mutual obligation
 6. Service to Country
 7. Stewardship
 8. Common sense virtue
 9. Tolerance and common cause
 10. Pragmatism
-

Erika RS says

This slim volume -- the authors call it a pamphlet -- has as its goal to show that true patriotism is progressive, and the left has just as much claim to the term as the right.

This premise is intentionally provocative, but the content itself is reasonable and well thought out. The authors define their own view of what a progressive, morally founded patriotism would look like and, while I can quibble with the details, their vision far exceeds the milk sop that comes from the too-flexible seeming members of the left or the for-show morality common on the right.

I encourage you to read it for yourself. It's available free online^{[1][2]}, or if you prefer physical books, the printed version is an aesthetically pleasing physical item.

[1] <http://truepat.org/>

[2] <http://truepat.org/book/read>

Rebecca says

A fantastic book that really encouraged me to think about - what it is to be a patriot in our country. I have seen Eric speak and feel strongly he and the co-author do their best to tell the story of patriotism from both partisan angles. It was a quick read that left me wanting to have the conversation with others - what does patriotism mean to you?

Heather Denkmire says

If everyone in the country read this book, we might be able to hear each other. Though it's so clearly, openly, and honestly from the "progressive" tradition I can see the Libertarian types seizing up and not being able to process the content without resentment.

Sometimes it was "preaching to the choir," since I agreed with every word. But I think if liberals/progressives/confused people read it they'd understand how it's a powerful thing to love our country instead of feeling ashamed of us.

Ken Poirier says

this manifesto might be better titled the socialist patriot. it is definitely intended to bolster the resolve of the left rather than to convince the right of a change in ideology. if anything, this book seems to be an argument against the ideas of Ayn Rand's objectivism, though references conservatism as its counter agent. As with most manifestos, its intentions and goals are good but gets too swept up in ideology to make a convincing argument.

Elaine says

This was a good read. I will admit that I didn't agree 100% with everything... and there were even some big words used that I'd never seen before, so it was a little above my vocab level... LOL! But, I did enjoy the book--it was inspiring and I wish more people (politicians in particular) would give it a read and indulge in some self-reflection. You can actually read the book for free on their website: <http://truepat.org/bookreader>. They wrote the book as a pamphlet, so they really want to get their ideals out there. They do admit to being strong progressive liberals and Democrats. But, that considered, it's a mostly bipartisan, fair, fundamentalist approach, I think.

What I really liked was the foundational American quotes and excerpts from speeches. People don't write like that anymore. The speeches are beautiful. There's also a really nice photo essay of iconic American images in the middle. I got to thinking that maybe I'm not a true conservative as much as a fundamentalist. I really do wish we could get back to most of the basic truths and self-sacrificing mentality of putting the best interests of country and future generations before our own. I found it thought-provoking that the writers felt too many Americans are considering themselves consumers rather than patriots. I have often felt that we younger generations have been slowly poisoned with this attitude of entitlement, everyone for himself, who cares as long as I'm happy, gimme this and that now mentality--these writers hit those things on the head in

this mini book. These selfish attitudes are tearing the country apart.

As we stand still watching times get scarier and more difficult, the authors of this book challenge us to take action. They paint a pretty picture:

"Imagine the pride our children and their children will take in us, if we make the hard decisions today to restore American credibility around the world to strengthen the social fabric at home. Picture it: history books that describe these times--our moment--as the 'Pivot Generation,' the era when things could have gone bad and instead turned around, enduringly, for the good.

"We are Americans. By definition, we believe in something better. We can imagine it. Now we must demand it. And when we do, we will set this country firmly on the path to progress.

That, my friends, is the *true* meaning of patriotism."

They go on to provide questions to ask yourself to reflect upon *your own* level of true patriotism:

- What is your moral code and what are your guiding principles?
- What does patriotism mean to you, your friends, and your family?
- What can you do to demonstrate stewardship, contribution over consumption, mutual obligation or any other tenets of true American patriotism? Consider the ripple effect of these acts.
- What will you do to encourage, even become, the kind of public leaders that exemplify the spirit of true American patriotism?

I do recommend reading this little book. Read it before the election next month, educate yourself, choose the lesser of two evils running for president, and make your voices heard, not only on November 4th, but within your communities as well.

Nayan Nitesh says

The authors have done a good job of exhorting the citizens with a solid dose of patriotism. I agree with some other reviewers about The True Patriot being preachy at times. But the collection of excerpts from speeches and essays is absolutely splendid. And it did make me want to read more about how conservatives and liberals think and operate.

Cam Stone says

A most excellent pamphlet

Simply put, without guile or agenda, a call to action for all Americans, regardless of affiliation. Well worth the time to read!

Benson says

The timing for reading this book is obvious, but what is not so obvious is that this book is written by a couple

progressives who I don't easily identify with. I really liked the intent of the book and for the most part I thought the content was great as well. (Sometimes I think they took some shots at conservatives, but that's fine.)

Anyway, it's a quick little read (130 pages) and I think you'll appreciate the concept of the book: pull together some of the most inspiring words of America's leaders and from that foundation try and articulate what patriotism really is and how true patriots are guided by values and principles.

Anita says

The idea of there being a patriotism that is progressive in making life better for all is appealing. The book sort of felt like a pep session. I read it all, because it was short and because it does point in a direction I like. I am not rating it, because I thought the writing was pretty bad even though the authors seemed to be well motivated to encourage us toward not asking what our country can do for us but what we can do for our country. I did benefit from hearing where both liberals and conservatives could improve. So there is something to hear and think about here which is kind of dressed up and overdone, I think.

Thought_Criminal says

"The True Patriot" truly sucked balls.

Akbar says

I liked the premise- that patriotism is love of country and concern for its well-being, so dissent shouldn't be confused for disloyalty or weakness. However, the book got a little ahead of itself with its rhetoric. It's a call to arms for progressives, so it was bound to turn me off when I disagreed with any of its positions. I gave the book credit because it addressed a problem that has pushed the progressive movement to the fringe of society, and because it got me thinking about a few issues(see below). I docked it because I got bogged down by some of the details of their plan, and because it read like one of the great speeches of yore without ever having been a great speech of yore.

(below): I agree that the progressive notion of patriotism has been around since the revolution, and that it is a more authentic and productive interpretation of patriotism. I also agree with the notion that a person shouldn't be forgetful of the people around them that aren't as successful. A person shouldn't gauge his success by the amount of money he has made, but rather by the lives he has improved. I think one of the criticisms of the liberal or progressive movement today is that they have failed to balance the need for a social safety net with the need for a meritocracy. It boils down to this: You shouldn't be able to get something for nothing, but if you work hard you should be able to get enough.

Sean Blevins says

Part of my my New American Idealism, because I'm 100% committed to the ideal of "liberty and justice for all," and the proposition that all people are created equal and endowed with inalienable rights. These ideals and principles are central to my conception of what America can and should be. I reserve the right to be critical of this country, its citizens, and its leaders when it falls short of these ideals and when it acts contrary to these principles. This is not a lack of patriotism; it *is* patriotism.

This book emphasizes the common good and social responsibility. These are important ideas that are often left out of the conversation. At the very least, it's a useful starting point for lovers of justice and equality, the furtherance of which is the duty of every American.

Consider: in the Declaration of Independence, what did Jefferson say was the purpose of Government? I agree with Jefferson on this: the purpose of government is the safeguarding of human rights, and governments are just or unjust according to their attainment of these ends. It saddens and angers me that our conceptions of patriotism and what it means to be American have strayed so far.

Matt says

A refreshing pamphlet, in the style of "Common Sense," that liberates the notion of Patriotism from Neo-Conservative flag-waiving and chest-thumping, and asks us to embrace a new progressive patriotism as a means for restoring America's standing in the world and renewing our commitment to the ideals upon which the nation was founded.
