



Liberty for All

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Americans are increasingly dismayed with a broken political system and the big institutions they blame for a Darwinian economy (in which it's getting harder to get ahead). What they've lost sight of is the importance of self-reliance and personal initiative in every individual's quest for prosperity. *The Liberty Trap* pushes past the usual go-nowhere policy prescriptions to probe what ordinary people can do to build their own self-reliance and enhance their odds of success. In a wry and entertaining narrative, Rick Newman embarks on a quest to improve his own self-reliance by camping with "doomsday preppers," deconstructing the "rugged individualist" that politicians so often invoke, and detailing the ways we unnecessarily shackle ourselves. The result is a guide to enriching your prospects—and your life—by harnessing every freedom available.

Liberty for All Details

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Author : Rick Newman

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Emily says

This book was interesting to me and had a lot of good information.

I don't consider myself a conservative nor a liberal, but I started off looking for "the agenda" in this book. I found none. It did not come across as politically driven. Rather, the author spends a lot of time discussing what I would call almost in intellectual liberty, as well as financial liberty. We tend to look at our liberty as what laws allow us to do or don't allow us to do. The author's point here is more that we limit our own liberty daily without even thinking about it.

I recommend this book to anyone who is concerned about their own personal liberty, or the liberties of those around them.

I received a copy of this book for free through Goodreads First Reads.

Scott Haraburda says

Goodreads First Reads Giveaway Book.

Liberty For All: A Manifesto for Reclaiming Financial and Political Freedom is a book providing its readers a unique way to view America's freedoms. In a recent Gallup poll, the number of Americans dissatisfied with the freedom to choose what they do with their lives more than doubled in the past decade, ranking the U.S. 36th globally for freedom satisfaction and behind countries such as Cambodia, United Arab Emirates, and Uzbekistan. Perhaps it's based upon their perceptions of a failing economy and a corrupt government.

In this book, the author suggests that many of us have gotten caught up in a "*liberty trap*." He also explains that many feel entitled to their version of the "*American Dream*," which has come to represent improved fortunes, guaranteed advancement in the world, and owning a large comfortable home. In fact, most Americans have difficulty imagining how a free society would actually work, especially those comfortable living with an economic safety net of welfare, Social Security, and Medicare, programs early Americans lived without.

But, guaranteed entitlements weren't what America's freedoms originally meant, which was the freedom to pursue these things, not being given a comfortable life. The author provided several examples to explain his concepts, such as describing his weekend survival exercise in the Catskills with a group of New York City "*preppers*" to seek disaster survival skills. I even enjoyed his example of Apple's Steve Jobs and what enhanced his liberties, which wasn't isolation but that of location, other companies, and thinking about what could be (as opposed to what was).

The author, Rick Newman, who also wrote *Rebounders: How Winners Pivot from Setback to Success* in 2012, described several ways to improve ones liberties: build a community, live in a smaller world, life

within one's means, know one's vulnerabilities, and admit not knowing something. All of these were ways for us to overcome our dependence on things. In essence, the bottom line is that we should take responsibility for our lives and not rely upon others to support us.

Liberty For All is a must read for those who believe society isn't giving them the freedoms they are entitled to have, especially if they want to do something about it.

Russ says

He comes across as a curmudgeonly prat for most of the book. His best advice comes about 2/3 of the way in when he lists his new rules for success while deconstructing the old rules for success.

Gayle Gordon says

As another reviewer mentioned, I started out looking for the political angle in this book and realized that the author isn't coming from the left or right. It was refreshing to read someone who calls out BS on both sides and also praises what both sides are doing right. I found his writing style witty and entertaining, though he is writing about serious topics. I've long believed that self-reliance creates more freedom and opportunities, although not in an isolating kind of way. There are good suggestions in this book, such as concerning yourself with local issues and being involved in your community. I don't entirely agree with him that being concerned with national issues is more or less a waste of your time, or that subscribing to a particular political party stops you from thinking for yourself. I saw some paradoxes in the book, that maybe I'm just misunderstanding. The author spends quite a bit of time on self-reliance, but near the end talks about the value of being involved in the community. Of course, he never suggests a total go-it-alone type of self-reliance, just not reliance on matters that are out of your hands, such as what government can do for you. He also talks about mobility being so important in order to be able to go to where the opportunities are, then near the end suggests living in a smaller world. A lot of mobility would probably hinder the community-building and small world ideas. Where I do agree with him totally is living within your means. Unfortunately, some of us learned it a little late and now have some debt to dig out of. I sometimes felt, though, that he was talking to people who only think they are underprivileged, when really they are over-consuming. This really came through to me when he talked about some ways that we give up our self-reliance and mentioned taking the ski lifts at the resort or replacing all of their fancy gadgets with the new model every year. There are some people that didn't dig a hole for themselves, they were born into one. They might be consuming more than they produce, but what they are consuming are necessities and not the latest gadgets. I like the book, but it seems to be directed at whiners who put themselves into the "Liberty Trap" instead of the many people who really are stuck through no fault of their own.
