



# The Fractured Republic: Renewing America's Social Contract in the Age of Individualism

By Yuval Levin

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## **The Fractured Republic: Renewing America's Social Contract in the Age of Individualism** By Yuval Levin

Americans today are frustrated and anxious. Our economy is sluggish, and leaves workers insecure. Income inequality, cultural divisions, and political polarization increasingly pull us apart. Our governing institutions often seem paralyzed. And our politics has failed to rise to these challenges.

No wonder, then, that Americans--and the politicians who represent them--are overwhelmingly nostalgic for a better time. The Left looks back to the middle of the twentieth century, when unions were strong, large public programs promised to solve pressing social problems, and the movements for racial integration and sexual equality were advancing. The Right looks back to the Reagan Era, when deregulation and lower taxes spurred the economy, cultural traditionalism seemed resurgent, and America was confident and optimistic. Each side thinks returning to its golden age could solve America's problems.

In *The Fractured Republic*, Yuval Levin argues that this politics of nostalgia is failing twenty-first-century Americans. Both parties are blind to how America has changed over the past half century--as the large, consolidated institutions that once dominated our economy, politics, and culture have fragmented and become smaller, more diverse, and personalized. Individualism, dynamism, and liberalization have come at the cost of dwindling solidarity, cohesion, and social order. This has left us with more choices in every realm of life but less security, stability, and national unity.

Both our strengths and our weaknesses are therefore consequences of these changes. And the dysfunctions of our fragmented national life will need to be answered by the strengths of our decentralized, diverse, dynamic nation. Levin argues that this calls for a modernizing politics that avoids both radical individualism and a centralizing statism and instead revives the middle layers of society--families and communities, schools and churches, charities and associations, local governments and markets. Through them, we can achieve not a single solution to the problems of our age, but multiple and tailored answers fitted to the daunting range of challenges we face and suited to enable an

American revival.

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# The Fractured Republic: Renewing America's Social Contract in the Age of Individualism

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### Editorial Review

Review

**Chief Executive of HBO, Richard Plepler**

"...Yuval Levin's *The Fractured Republic*, which I hear is one of the smartest looks at how our current political landscape became such a mess."

***Washington Post***

"He explains the illusory appeal of nostalgia-driven politics in the United States, the kind that Trump stokes in coarse, simplistic terms. More important, he offers a path forward for the American right after this campaign, whether it is adjusting to life in Trump's America or coping again with another electoral setback."

***Washington Post*, Michael Gerson**

"Instead of desperately trying to go back in time to recover lost unity, Levin urges citizens to look forward — as well as downward, to improve the cultural patch around them. This future orientation may seem like an odd message for a conservative — and it is all the more powerful for coming from one. The goal is not to make America great... again. It is to make America great in a distinctly 21st-century way."

***Los Angeles Times*, Jonah Goldberg**

"[B]rilliant."

**Representative Paul Ryan, Speaker of the US House of Representatives**

"Yuval Levin is one of the most insightful and original thinkers of our time. In this book, he shows why conservatives are best-equipped to help Americans navigate this new and fragmented world we're in. This is required reading for anyone interested in saving the American Idea."

**Peggy Noonan, columnist, *The Wall Street Journal***

"Yuval Levin's thinking is serious, substantive, and deeply informed, yet his tone is always heartening and serene. His style itself is an element of his thought. *The Fractured Republic* helps us think clearly about this moment in the life of our country that almost refuses to be clearly understood. He finds solutions in the best of the American tradition. Our weaknesses, he says, are only the opposite side of our strengths. Anyone looking for a realistic source of hope will find it here."

**Jonathan Haidt, author of *The Righteous Mind***

"What on Earth has happened to our country? This is the question of the decade, and Levin offers the most compelling answer. His history and sociology are magisterial. Whatever your politics, after accompanying Levin on this grand tour, you'll leave behind failed partisan frameworks and see our recent past—and therefore our future—in a new and more hopeful light. This is the book America most needs to read in 2016."

### Politico 50 Reading List

***Wall Street Journal***

"Compelling.... Yuval Levin has written an incisive and irenic critique of contemporary American society, together with a series of reflections that offer a way forward without trafficking in the false hope of

'solutions.' That he has done so in fewer than 250 pages of clear, well-organized prose ought to make the book famous for a generation. Maybe, in time, we can stop asking why the former days were better than these."

***New York Times, David Brooks***

"There are just a few essential reads if you want to understand the American social and political landscape today.... Today, I'd add Yuval Levin's fantastic new book, *The Fractured Republic*.... I learned something new on every page."

***Financial Times***

"Should be required reading for all those trying to understand contemporary America."

***Economist***

"Mr. Levin has done conservatism a service by reining in nostalgia. His writing is precise, well-observed and witty in a sober sort of way."

***New York Times Book Review***

"Useful in helping us understand why conservative intellectuals have been so intensely opposed to Donald Trump."

***The Week***

"It's a testament to Levin's intelligence and (lamentably rare) commitment to civil debate about our nation's public life that his book is very much worth reading and pondering, despite the fact that it doesn't so much as mention the name of Donald Trump...[Levin's] distance from the anxieties of the present moment is actually a virtue, since it helps to provide us with much-needed perspective on the populist passions roiling the Republican Party and the nation... There is far more to Levin's historical analysis than my thumbnail sketch can convey. On almost every page that he devotes to elaborating on it, fair-minded readers from all points on the political spectrum will find fruitful provocations."

***Weekly Standard*, the "Must Reading" section**

"[This book] couldn't have come out at a better time... *The Fractured Republic* is half diagnosis and half prescription. And both halves are essential reading, especially as we contemplate what the current election means for our body politic."

***The Federalist*, John Stonestreet**

"Certainly, *The Fractured Republic* is not the first book to point to the collapse of the institutions of civil society, nor the first to call all who care to turn their focus locally to rebuilding our social lives together. But, it is among the most compelling cases and the timing is perfect. Hopefully, the realities of our cultural moment will feed a felt need, which is in fact a real need, to take his diagnosis and prescription seriously."

***The Federalist*, Gracy Olmstead**

"There are plenty of books out there trying to determine the root cause(s) of the pessimism and populism we've seen this election year. But Levin's contribution to the discussion is exceptional, and well worth the read... If you want to understand why our public discourse has gotten so messy and fractured—and if you want to help fix the problem—consider reading Levin's book this summer."

***The Federalist*, Jonah Goldberg**

"Yuval Levin is one of the most important conservative intellectuals of his generation, so his books are

worth reading almost regardless of the topic. But *The Fractured Republic* stands on its own as an indispensable piece of work.”

***The Federalist*, Ed Whelan**

“No matter their politics, all readers will both learn from and be challenged by Yuval's framework and insights.”

***New York Post***

“It does more to illuminate the depths of our contemporary political and social rut than anything I've read in years... the great power of *The Fractured Republic*, the most important book of 2016, comes from its diagnosis of our ills, not its proposed cure.”

***National Review***

“A rich, nuanced history of the last 70 years. It is a conceptually integrated guide for stepping back from the conventional conservative narrative—Fifties good, Sixties bad, Eighties good, Obama a disaster— and seeing afresh what has brought us to 2016... This marvelous book appears at the worst possible time. It is erudite at a moment when erudition is ridiculed; nuanced at a moment when simplistic idiocies win elections; motivated by a devotion to human flourishing at a moment when ‘human flourishing’ is calibrated in disposable income. But Levin deals in verities, and verities have a long shelf life. *The Fractured Republic* is an invaluable resource for understanding how America came to its present predicament and what must be done to rescue it.”

***American Conservative***

“An insightful, visionary book seeking a way forward for American politics through the ruins...[a] hugely important new book.”

***Commentary***

“Superb... *The Fractured Republic* is not a manual or blueprint for reform, and it does not offer a checklist of repairs to make America whole again. Instead, it merges a deep philosophic understanding of the American experiment and a conceptual analysis of American history into a practical basis from which we can examine contemporary American problems with crystalline clarity. Levin calls his book an ‘essay,’ and it provides the bracing shock of illumination that is the hallmark of all great essays.”

***Commentary***

“In a bleak political year, there comes a shaft of light in the form of an extraordinary new book, *The Fractured Republic*... [Levin] is among America's most important and humane conservative thinkers... Yuval Levin's brilliant new book offers social conservatives a more effective approach to social engagement not only because it's more positive but because it's more true, because it appeals to people on a deeper level, because offering people a healing grace and hope is what is likely to be especially attractive and powerful in this time of disorientation, distemper, and confusion.”

***City Journal***

“*The Fractured Republic* is exhilarating because Levin doesn't just demand that policymakers jettison nostalgia and come up with creative new approaches—he walks the walk, offering a model answer of his own... it's no small accomplishment that Levin manages to give readers a thorough diagnosis, a usable vocabulary, and a foundation to build from... Agree or disagree with Levin's prescription, he has made the need for a novel and aggressive course of treatment impossible to deny.”

***RealClearPolitics***

“In these precarious times, Yuval Levin's *The Fractured Republic: Renewing America's Social Contract in the Age of Individualism* arrives not a moment too soon. With a rare mix of public policy expertise, historical and social analysis, and political philosophy, it presents a deft diagnosis of our predicament and outlines a package of reforms that takes seriously American circumstances and American character.”

#### ***Newsmax***

“Characteristically brilliant... Thomas Sowell has usefully reminded us of the damage wrought by intellectuals. If more of them were like Yuval Levin, the country would be in better shape.”

#### ***American Thinker***

“Fascinating... The book is a well-written historical analysis of what has led to the fracturing of the nation. Thankfully, Levin does not resort to instant push-button solutions. Rather he recognizes the need to propose ways to mend and meld these fractures over the long term... an important commentary on the present state of disunity and polarization. Levin has the courage to talk about the politically incorrect principle of subsidiarity. His work frames the debate where it should be framed—around those institutions of moral formation that really matter.”

#### ***Time***

“What remains of conservatism? I'm tempted to say: only the nasty bits—nativism, isolationism, protectionism. But a broad swath of the Democratic Party is every bit as nasty. Bernie Sanders' supporters eschew nativism but adhere to the latter two isms, and socialism as well. For those of us unattached to either party, all these isms should be wasms—a point made with courage and insight by conservative thinker Yuval Levin in his new book, *The Fractured Republic*.”

#### **The Corner, *National Review's* blog**

“As original, illuminating, and incisive as you'd expect. If you want to understand this moment in our politics, you have to read it.”

#### ***Washington Post's* Acts of Faith blog**

“[An] important new book.”

#### ***National Review*, Online**

“Every American citizen and anyone who is concerned about the future of America should be reading two books this summer: Mary Eberstadt's *It's Dangerous to Believe* and Yuval Levin's *The Fractured Republic*. Both are accessible reads that should be welcomed by people of good will of all ideological stripes.”

#### ***Powerline***

“A brilliant analysis of the inability of both the left and the right to come to grips with the contemporary economic, social, and cultural reality.”

#### ***Kirkus Reviews***

“Refreshingly optimistic; in our diversity lies great strength, Levin writes, a strength that can be tapped once all the rancor is put aside. Highly recommended for readers of whatever political stripe.”

#### ***Karl Rove***

“An important book for conservatives... This may not be your typical beach book, but put it on your summer reading list if you're concerned about America's future and that of the conservative movement.”

#### **About the Author**



**Yuval Levin** is the editor of National Affairs and the Hertog Fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center. He is a contributing editor to *National Review* and the *Weekly Standard*, and his writings have appeared in numerous publications including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Commentary*, and others. He holds a PhD from the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago and has been a member of the White House domestic policy staff (under President George W. Bush) and a congressional staffer. He is the author, most recently, of *The Great Debate: Edmund Burke, Thomas Paine, and the Birth of Right and Left* (Basic, 2013). He lives in Maryland.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Ron Lauer:**

The book *The Fractured Republic: Renewing America's Social Contract in the Age of Individualism* give you a sense of feeling enjoy for your spare time. You can use to make your capable far more increase. Book can being your best friend when you getting anxiety or having big problem with the subject. If you can make reading a book *The Fractured Republic: Renewing America's Social Contract in the Age of Individualism* to become your habit, you can get much more advantages, like add your own capable, increase your knowledge about a few or all subjects. You can know everything if you like start and read a guide *The Fractured Republic: Renewing America's Social Contract in the Age of Individualism*. Kinds of book are several. It means that, science reserve or encyclopedia or others. So , how do you think about this book?

#### **Lucille Daulton:**

This *The Fractured Republic: Renewing America's Social Contract in the Age of Individualism* are reliable for you who want to become a successful person, why. The reason why of this *The Fractured Republic: Renewing America's Social Contract in the Age of Individualism* can be among the great books you must have is actually giving you more than just simple looking at food but feed you actually with information that perhaps will shock your before knowledge. This book will be handy, you can bring it everywhere and whenever your conditions throughout the e-book and printed versions. Beside that this *The Fractured Republic: Renewing America's Social Contract in the Age of Individualism* giving you an enormous of experience like rich vocabulary, giving you trial run of critical thinking that we know it useful in your day action. So , let's have it appreciate reading.

#### **Ruth Coleman:**

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**Mary Kidd:**

What is your hobby? Have you heard which question when you got college students? We believe that that query was given by teacher with their students. Many kinds of hobby, Every person has different hobby. And also you know that little person including reading or as studying become their hobby. You have to know that reading is very important as well as book as to be the issue. Book is important thing to include you knowledge, except your own personal teacher or lecturer. You discover good news or update concerning something by book. Amount types of books that can you choose to use be your object. One of them is this The Fractured Republic: Renewing America's Social Contract in the Age of Individualism.

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