



The Seventies: The Great Shift In American Culture, Society, And Politics

Bruce J. Schulman

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

The Seventies: The Great Shift In American Culture, Society, And Politics

Bruce J. Schulman

The Seventies: The Great Shift In American Culture, Society, And Politics Bruce J. Schulman

"A sprightly, neatly detailed and enlightening history...this is an important contribution to modern American social history and the literature of popular culture." (*Publishers Weekly*)

Sweeping away misconceptions about the "Me Decade," Bruce Schulman offers a fast-paced, wide-ranging, and brilliant examination of the political, cultural, social, and religious upheavals of the 1970s. Arguing that it was one of the most important of the postwar twentieth-century decades, despite its reputation as an eminently forgettable period, Schulman reconstructs public events and private lives, high culture and low, analyzing not only presidential politics and national policy but also the broader social and cultural experiences that transformed American life. Here are the names, faces, and movements that gave birth to the world we now live in—from Nixon and Carter to *The Godfather* and the Ramones; from Billie Jean King and Phyllis Schlafly to NOW and the ERA; from the Energy Crisis to *Roe v. Wade*. *The Seventies* is an astutely provocative reexamination of a misunderstood era.

The Seventies: The Great Shift In American Culture, Society, And Politics Details

Date : Published April 18th 2002 by Da Capo Press (first published 2001)

ISBN : 9780306811265

Author : Bruce J. Schulman

Format : Paperback 352 pages

Genre : History, Nonfiction, Politics, North American Hi..., American History, Cultural

 [Download The Seventies: The Great Shift In American Culture, Soc ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Seventies: The Great Shift In American Culture, S ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Seventies: The Great Shift In American Culture, Society, And Politics Bruce J. Schulman

From Reader Review The Seventies: The Great Shift In American Culture, Society, And Politics for online ebook

Peter Mcloughlin says

The seventies more than any other decade created the world most Americans live in today. Whether it be the growing inequality we are dealing with now or good things like the rights revolution, the women's movement and the environmental movement. It is the jumping off point of the culture wars and the new right. the modern republican party was totally transformed in this era paving the way for Ronald Reagan. A republican before the seventies (usually an eastern establishment type) would not recognize today's party. This decade shaped the culture in terms of a loosening up of mores to the classic films of the decade to Blockbuster Movies which dominate Hollywood today. The decade gave us punk rock, Rap, New wave , disco, heavy metal, a country music resurgence which are the main staples of popular music today. The under appreciated me decade dismissed with its frivolity of silly fashions and pet rocks is more influential on us than we give it credit for. See status updates for more details.

Laura says

Read this for a course, but it was very good. It's not a very long book, but it is densely packed with information. The way it is organized makes it both interesting and informative. The author dances between the sixties and the eighties, exploring the movements, people, and politics of the seventies.

Jessi says

I enjoyed this book. Schulman makes a convincing case for the transformative power of the seventies over American life- from the ascendancy of the Sunbelt region to the subversion of Richard Nixon. The parallels between the seventies and now are equally fascinating and depressing.

Les says

Schulman's wide-ranging work covers culture, society and politics in what he calls the long Seventies (1969-1984). His analysis of Nixon's subtle reduction the growth of government, Carter's many economic failures, and Reagan's cheerful boosterism of free markets and national defense are solid if not ground breaking. I particularly enjoyed his look at the anti-authoritarian attitudes in music and film. He outlines how the national culture, pushed by a sense of liberation, splintered into the identity politics we still have. The Seventies are easily lampooned as a lost decade full of cheesy pop culture, but many of the trends that began then (the rise of the right, the denigration of government and celebration of entrepreneurship, corporate entertainment, the Sunbelt's dominance) are still with us today.

Jeff says

I have a confession to make. I've been enlightened and now need to do some serious penance. Back in the 70s, I was a chauvinistic, misogynistic, homophobic racist. I must repent of my sins. I just thought I hated disco and liked good rock and roll music, but now, thanks to Mr. Shulman, I see the errors of my ways. Shulman points out how those who shunned disco were guilty of a host of society's evils. (73-75) Or maybe I'll just revert to my redneck and anti-elite ways and ask, "what do you expect from a professor in tweed at from the northeast?" Of course, in this way, I'm sounding a lot like Richard Nixon who hated the Northeastern elite! (24) Bruce Shulman teaches at Boston University.

Now, despite what you might think by my opening comments, I mostly enjoyed this book. Although I disagree with some of his comments on disco, and also felt that he looked disdainfully on the South, Shulman provides a good cultural and political history to that decade in which I came of age (I became a teenager just a few days into the decade and had a bachelor's degree slapped on my wall by its end).

The 70s is often seen as a lost decade, squeezed between the optimistic 60s and the opportunitistic 80s. Interestingly, as Shulman recalls, the 60s which had begun with the Kennedy Camelot ended with the widowed queen of Camelot (Jackie) marrying a rich Greek tycoon, twice her age. (4) Shulman strives to interpret several wide cultural shifts that occurred between the 1969 and 1984. In this work, he explores music, books, television and movies, economics and politics. Several things are happening. America loses a broad cultural consensus as the era of special interest groups begins to rise. Many of these are explored such as ethnic groups which not only included an interest in African-Americans (black power movements to the mini-series "Roots"), but also Hispanics, Italians, Irish, etc. In addition, the 70s saw women's issues rise to the forefront (remember the Rigby/King tennis match and the ERA), age groups (America began graying in the 70s and the elderly became a major political force in which Tip O'Neil referred to as the third-rail in American politics: Touch it and die!• [86]), and the gay rights movement. In addition, there were shifts in region. Shulman refers to the decade as the "Southernization of America." (256) There were also religious shifts. Although religion became more important, it also became more personal and less able to lift up a common vision for society. There were also great changes in the American economy. The era gave rise to the "rustbelt" as factories in the northern parts of the country closed. The inflation of the late 70s caused Americans to begin to use credit (why put off buying when it will cost more tomorrow). Also, due to regulation changes, Americans began to look at saving differently and investing became more important than savings (which were being eaten up by inflation). And finally, the era saw the end of the old liberalism in American politics which saw the government as a force for the good with certain obligations to help those unable to help themselves to a new era that bemoaned any government involvement. Shulman discusses the tie between government involvement and civil rights in the 60s and how it took the decade for a new conservative coalition to arise out of the old conservative coalition. Racial prejudices slid into the background as the new conservatives found other issues to excite their cause.

Although I took offense at Shulman's defense of disco, I must say that I think there is a lot to ponder in his view of the roles region, religion and race played in the shifts in American politics during this era. However, the nature of this book requires that it be very subjective and one could draw other conclusions (like I did with my opposition to disco). I do recommend this book for anyone interested in a trip down memory lane.

Randy says

I don't think I have encountered in recent memory a book so heavily lifted from other sources. There are over

50 pages dedicated just to the notes section. It was not what I had hoped it would be.

Jill Hutchinson says

I felt that this book was inconsistent in its approach to the overlooked decade of the 1970s. There were sections which were fascinating as we saw government morph into the age of Nixon, music evolve into punk and disco (now there are two conflicting styles!!!), and the flower power of the 1960s disappear for a more reality based culture. But the author had his own biases which I won't even try to outline and they affected the presentation of the material and made for sections that were painfully dry and pedantic.

It is not to say that this book is not important since it basically gives an overall view of the decade, regardless of what I felt were weaknesses. It was just a little disappointing.

Thomas M Brizendine says

The author's mostly liberal social and political opinions of the late sixties and eighties with a little commentary on the seventies. Playing fast and loose with the facts (one passage specifies an event that the author claims in the next sentence to have a result in the previous year) to 'prove' his opinions, this book fails at being a historical narrative. In fact, it is so far over into opinion vs fact I cannot bring myself to add it to a "History" bookshelf; it's more at home on my "Historical Fiction" shelf.

It focuses mostly on Nixon and Reagan using negative language whenever possible and only with a begrudging admission of facts that are simply too big to be glossed over. Carter is also highlighted in clumsy and disjointed attempts to elevate the memory of his presidency.

Don't get me wrong, the book does deal with some aspects of the seventies, but has major gaps and omissions. If you're looking for something dealing primarily with looking objectively back at the seventies, this book isn't for you.

Caitlin says

Got me back into non-fiction after a long hiatus. And totally explained my mother, which was nice.

Daniel says

This was a very readable survey of the 70s, which is notable particularly because it's such a difficult era to write about, though it should be prefaced with a warning that Schulman's own personal biases and assumptions invade perhaps a bit more than they should. Music is difficult to write about in an historical context (particularly music which is still comparatively recent), but Schulman's distaste for artists like Bowie, Pink Floyd and other similar icons is strange and misplaced, and reads as ahistorical in its context. There's also not much in the way of objectivity expressed when addressing the historical legacies of certain presidents, though perhaps that's difficult to avoid. All told, this was still a brisk and enjoyable read, and it

got to many of the issues at the heart of the 1970s.

Jackson Burnett says

The Seventies is written well enough to be popular history; it's researched and thoughtful enough to be a college textbook.

Author Bruce Schulman claims the 1970's were more influential than the 1960's and substantiates his argument. He shows how disparate events developed into trends that influenced the rest of the century. The book is engaging to read, both for its social and political history.

I give the book only four stars because the book underplays, I think, the effects of the Women's Movement and the predominant hedonism of the decade. I recommend the book to anyone interested in the 1970's.

Simon Purdue says

In Bruce Shulman's all-encompassing history of the forgotten decade of the 1970s, he sheds light on what was a defining era in American politics and society. Using primarily cultural sources Schulman's primary thesis suggests that the 1970s was an era in which the melting pot ideal finally gave way to a more centrifugal society, in which diversity was prioritised above integration and Americans found that their interests were better served within their separate spheres of identity rather than as a consummate whole. Groups ranging from African Americans, to the white working class, through to various Christian organisations and even the elderly, found that the fragmentation of society and ultimately a form of cultural separatism best served their interests. This essentially marked the end of the national unification project peddled during the War years, and started a 'turning inward, and the process of separation which many argue has led to the cultural divisions that define modern America. For the first time since the 1930s, Schulman argues, White ethnicity was revived and the concept of citizenship was once again given equal footing with heritage. America, Schulman suggests, was once again a culturally pluralist nation.

Furthermore, Schulman notes that the 1970s marked a significant shift in the geographical center of political power in the US, arguing that the rise of the sunbelt and the relative decline of the northeast and the Dixiecrat South saw the political spectrum shift rightwards and towards a new Republicanism that began under Nixon and would reach its pinnacle in the election of Regan. Schulman details the evolution of anti-government sentiment that led eventually to the tax revolt across the nation and the culmination of small government conservatism that dominated the early years of the 1980s. Schulman also unwittingly outlines the ways in which the shift in American culture and politics in the 1970s laid the groundwork on which Trumpism would rise almost half a century later, and although the author could not have been aware that the decade would have such a lasting and fundamental impact on the American political landscape, his book makes essential reading for anyone who wants to historicise and contextualize Trump's America.

All in all Schulman provides a fairly comprehensive history of the decade, but his 'standard text' has some large gaps which historians are only now beginning to fill, namely the rise of a new white nationalism in the 70s and the birth of the new far right counterculture. The movement was far from insignificant, and would later be responsible for some of the most jarring moments in modern American history (Waco, Ruby Ridge, and Oklahoma City to name but a few) and as such it does seem like a glaring and almost deliberate omission by the author. However Schuman's use of cultural sources and accessible language nonetheless make this an easy and informative read that sheds light on America's forgotten decade.

Gort says

Reprehenderit sunt iste quas libero et. Omnis soluta vitae ea eum eos dolorum quibusdam. Eaque omnis voluptatem aut et ut. Dolore repellendus occaecati.

M.L. Rio says

A decent read but a little unbalanced; popular culture is basically glossed in one chapter about music (and pretty much exclusively the disco/punk dichotomy), while there are several dense chapters of economic and political minutiae which become very dull very quickly. The chapters also seem to exist pretty much independently of one another, and apart from the cause/effect relationship between the rise of the Sunbelt and the rise of conservatism and a couple of odd paragraphs about the connection between Rambo and Ronald Reagan Schulman doesn't really bother to connect significant individual cultural movements (feminism, for example) with the larger ideological shifts of the nation. 2.5 but Goodreads still hasn't given us half stars, so I rounded up.

Amanda says

I wanted to learn more about the 70s from a political, social (non pop culture) perspective, and this book delivered. I enjoyed some chapters more than others, and it sometimes veered into dry territory but all told, I thought it was a succinct, broad view of the decade. The other thing I liked about it was its connection to the following decade - the author did a nice job of illustrating the impact the 70s had on the 80s and other long-term effects of a decade that is usually only remembered for disco, long gas lines and Nixon's resignation
