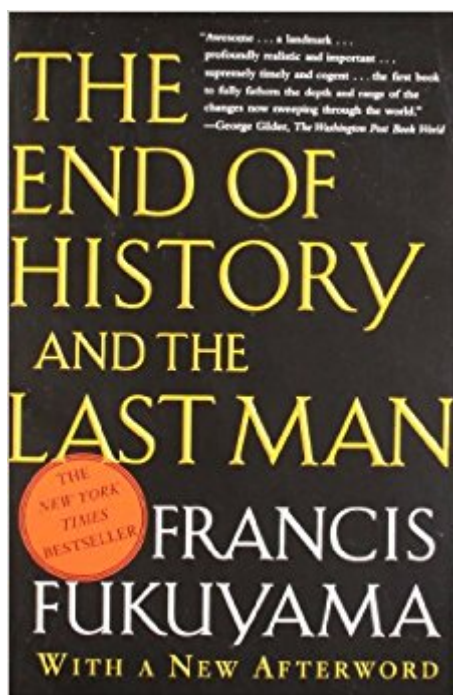


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# The End Of History And The Last Man



## Synopsis

Ever since its first publication in 1992, *The End of History and the Last Man* has provoked controversy and debate. Francis Fukuyama's prescient analysis of religious fundamentalism, politics, scientific progress, ethical codes, and war is as essential for a world fighting fundamentalist terrorists as it was for the end of the Cold War. Now updated with a new afterword, *The End of History and the Last Man* is a modern classic. Ever since its first publication in 1992, *The End of History and the Last Man* has provoked controversy and debate. Francis Fukuyama's prescient analysis of religious fundamentalism, politics, scientific progress, ethical codes, and war is as essential for a world fighting fundamentalist terrorists as it was for the end of the Cold War. Now updated with a new afterword, *The End of History and the Last Man* is a modern classic.

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## Customer Reviews

In a broad, ambitious work of political philosophy, a three-week PW bestseller in cloth, Fukuyama asserts that history is directional and that its endpoint is capitalist liberal democracy. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Fukuyama, then deputy director of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff, first presented this thesis in the foreign policy journal *National Interest* (Summer 1989), where it attracted worldwide attention. He argues that there is a positive direction to current history, demonstrated by the collapse of authoritarian regimes of right and left and their replacement (in many but not all cases)

by liberal governments. "A true global culture has emerged, centering around technologically driven economic growth and the capitalist social relations necessary to produce and sustain it." In the absence of viable alternatives to liberalism, history, conceived of as the clash of political ideologies, is at an end. We face instead the question of how to forge a rational global order that can accommodate humanity's restless desire for recognition without a return to chaos. Fukuyama's views conveniently present the international politics of the present administration. History disappears very early on in the narrative, to be replaced by abstract philosophy. This essay made into a book is pretentious and overblown, though it offers some grounds for speculation. Previewed in Prepub Alert, LJ 9/1/91.- David Keymer, SUNY Inst. of Technology, Utica Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is the book you must have read. The ideas are seminal. History may, in fact, have continued. Fukayama's ideas may, in fact, have proven wrong. Liberal democracy appears to be on the ropes at this writing. That does not detract from the value of what he wrote, and the lucidity of his presentation.

A well presented argument for why one can consider liberal democracy the end of history that is directional. However, I found it difficult to believe the argument for the directionality of history, based mainly on appeal to scientific method and technological advancement. The argument as to why liberal economies result in liberal democracies was even less convincing. Having said this it is a very interesting read that opens up many different avenues to explore. Indeed if, like me, you are not educated in social or political philosophy this is a great introduction to some of the great challenges of society today and to several of the great contributors to the underlying ideas of Anglo Saxon liberal democracy. An excellent book.

A deep and interesting analysis, which is still relevant after 25 years. All the processes marked in the book are still happening in front of our own eyes.

A classic. Must be read.

Good quality from seller, but the book is flawed despite being compelling to think about.

Francis Fukuyama's thesis, if I read this book rightly, is that democracy and capitalism are the

ultimate in political and economic systems for organizing human society. Democracy spreads power to the broadest base of humans in a given society and capitalism makes the most wealth available to the most people in any given society... or something like that. And thus we find ourselves at the end of history: What this means is that there is no further development possible which is what history is all about - progress toward the best possible economic and political structure for human life. The idea of "history" is more complex than simply recounting the names and dates of various persons, nations and events. It has to do with a purposeful progression of events to a specific goal and once that goal is attained we find ourselves at the end of history and the last man. That doesn't mean there won't be more generations born and that there won't be any more events. It means that, in Fukuyama's case, that what is left is the implementation of democracy and capitalism for more and more of the world's peoples. The question is, "Is that really all there is to the human journey?" Is democracy and capitalism really the goal towards which the universe has been driving for billions of years? For all intents and purposes, this book is Francis Fukuyama's eschatology! (Google it, or look it up in Wikipedia if you don't know what "eschatology" is). If you read this book, and I did find it a worthwhile thought provoking and readable read, then I recommend you read Jurgen Moltmann's "The Coming God" to discover the background for western "eschatological" thinking, and for a different view on what the end of history may mean. I like Moltmann's vision way over Fukuyama's.

Whatever its shortcomings in the hindsight of two decades, this book remains a masterwork of synthesis in political history, economy, and philosophy. The empty, quantitative abstractions of what goes by the name of "political science" in the academy today is put to shame by this study of the political animal. Americans remain in need of the rectifying account of human nature and human desire given here, which addresses major shortcomings in the ideological assumptions inherited by our right-wing economic liberals and left-wing social liberals alike. On a personal note, I would add that this book is one of the few, along with Plato's Republic, that utterly changed my life, by provoking and awakening radically interesting questions. It sent me on a rewarding intellectual journey since into the history of philosophy and science, and I assure it will do the same for you, if you give it a chance despite its critics and seriously consider the whole of the argument.

First pardon any simplifications in this review and take all of the review as a simplification. This isn't a simple book. It took me many chapters to see where Francis Fukuyama was going with this book. In some ways I think he could have condensed the whole thing down and gotten to the points of his argument more clearly. Yet, in the end, I learned something that will allow me to have more insight

into the human condition than before. This makes the book well worth the effort. One of the main points is that history has direction, in short: we get closer to a theoretical goal rather than just move through time doing things. I think he takes too many chapters in "proving" this but it is a basic foundation to the rest of the work. Another main point of the book is that democracy is the end of history. That in democracy society has found the best way to achieve the goal of history. What is the goal, a complex satisfaction of Thymos or, put way too simply, the ability to feel good about yourself. Now here I have a problem with thinking that this is the end of history simply because we haven't been at this stage long enough. I personally think that democracy came about because more people got more educated and we have along way to go in getting people educated. Therefore it is possible that a new system will be developed that will make democracy passe. The clarity I got out of this book was a language regarding human satisfaction that was better than I had before. It is complex, especially when you take it from one human to human society, but of great interest to anyone interested in knowing what can make things better. That's both in a macro ways, such as if you are Bill Gates or the President of the United States, or in micro ways such as if you are just running a small business or interacting with a circle of friends. All in all very, very well worth the time. Bill

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