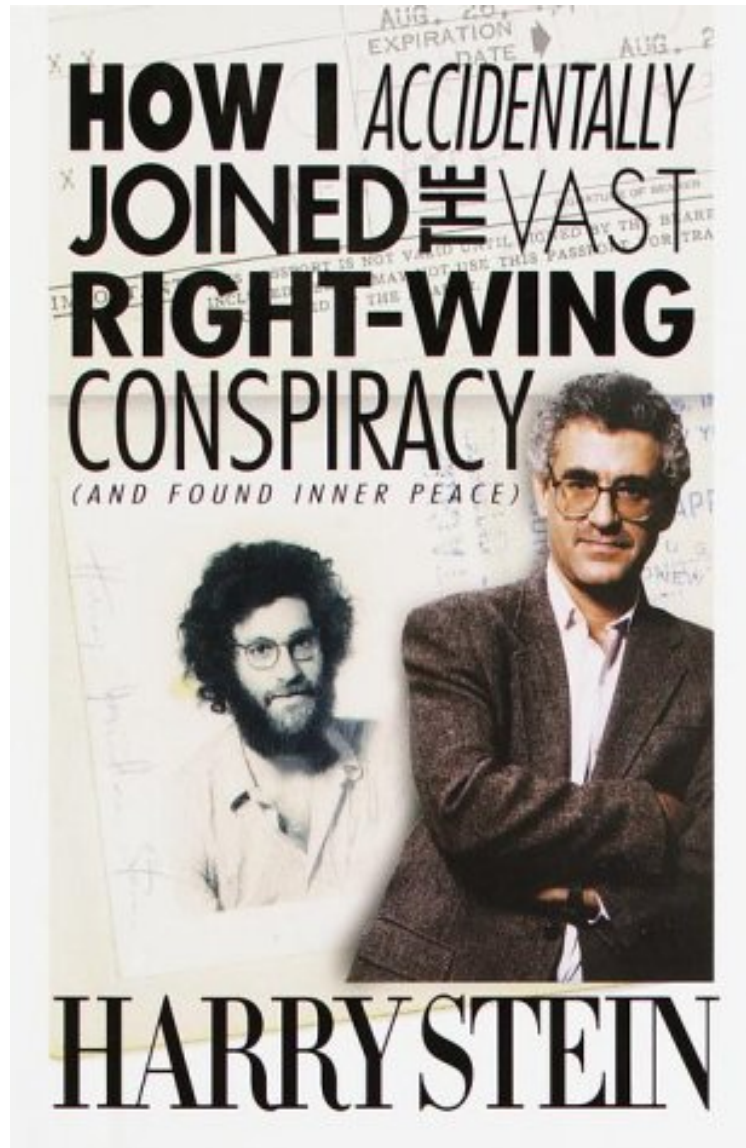


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## How I Accidentally Joined the Vast Right-Wing Conspiracy (and Found Inner Peace)

Harry Stein

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**Harry Stein : How I Accidentally Joined the Vast Right-Wing Conspiracy (and Found Inner Peace)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised How I Accidentally Joined the Vast Right-Wing Conspiracy (and Found Inner Peace):

14 of 20 people found the following review helpful. Metamorphosis from Liberal to ConservativeBy Letta MeinenThis

book is interesting when you see the change of the thinking of a died in the wool liberal of the 60's become a soft spoken conservative. He takes the reader through the years of his youth, college days and life living in France. His life was a free for all style, but leads you to believe he wasn't comfortable with it all. It was not until his marriage and children, did he understand that he wanted to be true to his wife. His views changed and wrote about his views about morality, the family and abortion. He riled up the feminist and the liberal news media when he wrote about his ideas. He drops names as if they are blast from a gun. The book is full of names of reporters, authors, news people, Hollywood and others in the circle of the press. This gets a little old, especially if you are not familiar with them. He does cover the Clinton years and his disappointment with his Presidency. I found this book a little difficult to read, no titled chapters and it seemed to ramble and jump around to many areas. It seems strange that you find more books by former 60's liberal who woke up one day or should we say grew up and became a conservative. 13 of 14 people found the following review helpful. Thoughtful, engaging, wry, and too short;-) By Lars Porsena Mr. Stein humorously recounts his transformation from being a member of the vanguard of the proletariat in the 1960's to a protector of traditional values by the late 1990's. Marriage and fatherhood have reoriented his views on feminism, multiculturalism, race, sex, abortion, entertainment and a host of other topics. This is all interlaced in a highly readable personal account of his journey from knee-jerk radical (his critics would emphasize the jerk) to his account of his 'outing' as a fascist (because of his views on childcare i.e., at home with mom). Beneath the humor lies some trenchant analysis of Newspeak media types (I scored 100% on his match the bloviating PC quote with the network anchor), and the general coarsening of contemporary America. Some of his most interesting observations concern the decline of the NY Times, the nation's paper of record, from the paragon of journalistic integrity, objectivity, and style to a PC rag. The editorials have always been reflexively left but the news and features were straight reporting. I thought I was the only one who thought the Times' news and feature articles have taken on the gaseous cant of the Nation. There's another book here, Harry- The Decline and Fall of the NY Times - what a pity. I hope Harry makes a pile of money with this book because the PC commissars of the literary and entertainment industry won't forget this kind of right deviationism. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars By Customer good read.

Bestselling author and renowned ethics columnist Harry Stein didn't start out conservative. But somewhere along the way, real life--and fatherhood--gave him pause. In this passionate and provocative memoir, Stein recounts his personal journey from '70's liberal to '90's conservative--a journey that began with a few troubling questions he couldn't even share with his friends. Now the truth is out--in this daring, brilliantly argued, often savagely funny work that is bound to resonate with many who have witnessed the social revolution of the past thirty years and questioned even some of its outcome. Even secretly. Harry Stein's left-liberal credentials were spotless. As a journalist in an industry populated by liberals, he carried the left-wing banner in his life and work. The transformation of Harry Stein began when he became a father. And nothing in his wildest dreams could have prepared him for what was to come.... First of all, the Right was beginning to sound right. Even worse, the Left was beginning to sound--and look--wrong. In a memoir both personal and political, Stein cuts through the distortions on both sides and shows how liberating it is to no longer have to pass as a correct thinker. Speaking to his peers and to his times, Stein fearlessly tackles such provocative topics as feminism, affirmative action, PC education, media, gay rights, and sexual McCarthyism. He tells what he really thinks of...sex, lies, and Bill Clinton...how his columns on Murphy Brown and day care were his personal "coming out"...the daily corruption of network news and big-time front pages...what has happened to a once-great newspaper, The New York Times. For those who dare to entertain questions--even privately--Stein offers a few tests: Choose the most biased network anchor (Pop Quiz, page 110). Learn who would have been most likely to give up his seat on a Titanic lifeboat...(see page 47). How far have academic standards fallen since the nineteenth century? Take the test on page 233. Could you pass today? Here are portraits in political courage--and cowardice. Unforgettable anecdotes about newsmakers Stein has known. It's all here and more in the witty, trenchant observations--and candid confessions--of a former liberal bound to incite, entertain, and maybe even change a few minds along the way. How to tell if you've joined the vast right-wing conspiracy: You hear someone talking about "morality" and you no longer instantly assume he must be a sexually repressed religious nut. You're actually relieved that your daughter plays with dolls and your son plays with guns. You sit all the way through Dead Man Walking and at the end still want the guy to be executed. Christmas season rolls around and it hits you there may be a religious connection. At your kids' back-to-school night, you are shocked to discover the only dead white male on your tenth-grader's reading list is Oscar Wilde. And by the end of the night you realize the only teacher who shares your values teaches phys ed. Much as you'd like to, you can't get yourself to believe that screwing around on one's wife is an addiction.

.com Conservatives aren't born--they evolve. And for Wall Street Journal ethics columnist Harry Stein--once vilified in The Village Voice as "a well-known asshole"--that evolution began with the birth of his daughter. But Stein's memoir on transforming from bleeding-heart liberal to someone who gets junk mail from Patrick Buchanan isn't a sappy tale of fatherhood; it's a witty, intelligent account of how one man began to think for himself. "I remember when I was called a fascist for the first time," Stein writes about a dinner conversation in which he sided with Dan Quayle

over the Murphy Brown/single-motherhood controversy. While alienating his left-leaning friends, Stein takes to task The New York Times, AIDS hysteria, men-hating feminists, and Bill Clinton, just to mention a few bastions of liberalism that contributed to his social makeover. As if to prove he didn't start out this way, Stein spends a great deal of time trying to convince the reader of his liberal roots. His wife, a former story editor for a major motion picture company, once belonged to a group called Women Against Right-Wing Scum. His sexual escapades as a single man (including a trip to a New York "swap" club) make up a whole chapter. He also writes of his admiration for Tennessee Williams (whom he once interviewed) as if to say, "See, I am not a homophobe." Contrary to another conservative stereotype, Stein manages to keep a sense of humor throughout the book, writing in a conversational, amused style. His quips and lists read more like naughty office e-mail than diatribes from an angry right-winger: No. 3 in the 12 Ways to Tell If You've Joined the Right-Wing Conspiracy: "You sit all the way through Dead Man Walking and at the end you STILL want the guy to be executed." Longtime conservatives and converts like Stein will find themselves nodding their heads in agreement. Others will simply get a good laugh. --Jodi Mailander Farrell

From Publishers Weekly

The journey from liberal to conservative chronicled here by Stein is a journey already described by others such as Norman Podhoretz and David Horowitz. Though thus predictable, Stein's account is nevertheless amusing. He relates personal anecdotes about growing up, raising children and relating to friends and colleagues, but also touches on current events, culminating in the sexual transgressions of Bill Clinton. The light tone and humorous prose eventually wear thin, however, and Stein sets up a straw man in his attacks on the Left. Essentially, Stein paints himself in his liberal days as a man with ideological blinders firmly in place, and he skewers liberals in general as if they all wore the same blinders. For example, in claiming that liberal psychology undermines personal responsibility by abjuring everyone from fault for everything, he presents an extremist position. Stein himself states at one point that extremists on both ends of the ideological spectrum deny "a fair hearing to alternative views on complex social issues"- yet he is guilty of the same error. (June) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Library Journal

A left-wing journalist/novelist becomes a right-wing dad. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.