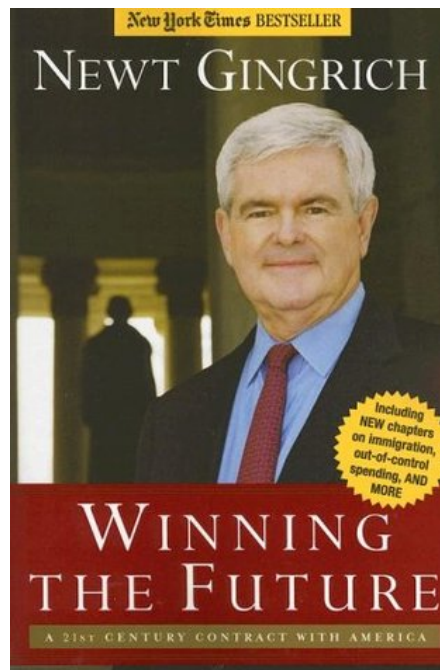




Winning the Future: A 21st Century Contract With America

Newt Gingrich

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According to former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, America currently faces five threats that could undermine, if not eliminate, the United States if immediate steps are not taken to correct them. The threats as he sees them are Islamic terrorists and rogue dictatorships armed with nuclear or biological weapons; the removal of God from American public life; a loss of patriotism and sense of America's history; a decline in economic supremacy because of poor science and math education; and the increasing budgetary burden of Social Security and Medicare. To tackle these problems, Gingrich offers his "21st Century Contract with America," which he outlines in great detail in this bold and thought-provoking book. His updated contract, which comes a decade after the original Republican Contract with America that marked the high point of Gingrich's national power, calls for a dramatically simplified tax code that favors savings and investment; government investment in science and technology, particularly regarding space, energy, and the environment; transforming Social Security into personal savings accounts; overhauling the civil justice system to reduce the burden of lawsuits; and updating the federal government, including the privatization of some functions, so that it moves at the speed and effectiveness of the information age. And that's just the beginning. He also calls for tripling the size of America's intelligence community, reforming its election system, developing a more intelligent health care system that creates jobs and increases quality of life, and balancing the federal budget.

Gingrich believes that this ambitious agenda can be accomplished, but only if it receives grassroots support. The entrenched political system, with its lobbyists, bloated bureaucracies, and the complicity of the media, is too self-serving to fix itself, he stresses. Concise and clearly presented, *Winning the Future* is long on specifics and short on rhetoric, and it succeeds as a springboard for political discourse. Gingrich's aim is clearly to inspire citizens to take responsibility for the country's direction by demanding more of their government and their leaders.

Winning the Future: A 21st Century Contract With America Details

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Paul says

I was disappointed in Mr. Newt's solutions. While he has some good ideas, most of them involved creating new government/private sector partnerships and not removing obstacles to allow the market to solve problems.

Jeffrey says

If you like Newt, you will love reading this book. If you don't like Newt, then you should read it anyway to understand where he is coming from.

Shea Mastison says

Newt Gingrich is probably one of the most intelligent, aspiring tyrants in American politics today. His remarkable ability to be the anchor of almost any think-tank; regardless of the topic, is amazing and all the excuse one should need to read any of his books.

Newt is an ideologue, a true politician of the age; which of course, is not a compliment. This book is his attempt to create a New Contract with America; and describe a bit about his religious and political philosophy.

Read only if you're a mindless right-winger; or a politics junkie.

Tricia says

This book sheds light on many of the internal workings of our Government. It points out failures and points to possible better options that we should be considering as Americans.

Tyler says

I decided to read this book in order to be better informed for the 2012 Republican Primaries in which Newt Gingrich is a major candidate. This book is filled with ideas on how to improve our government, economy, education, healthcare, energy, and solve many problems we face in America today. I found many/most of these ideas to be sound in logic and would support many of the changes he suggests. I particularly agree with his social security ideas and I was pleasantly surprised to agree with his moderate approach to environmental issues.

Unfortunately, I'm not nearly as confident in my support of Newt Gingrich the man and his leadership

qualities. I suppose time and the voters will have to decide if he gets another chance at high office.

Todd says

Gingrich lays out the challenges that he believes America faces and then provides a plan on how to attack those challenges. Areas of interest are terrorism, economic challenges, immigration and our legal system.

Blackbard says

Although some assumptions are made that are questionable, overall the book has a good approach to making government work better. As an example, Newt suggests moving a lot of the power back to the people as would be the case in a pure democracy, but that has been shown to be counterproductive. Unless the general population is willing to sacrifice their immediate gratification for long term success, then they will simply vote for those who will sacrifice the country as a whole for their local concerns. Another example is the assumption that as soon as we go to electronic health records and can reduce the fraud in the system, that those perpetrating the fraud won't simply find other ways to do it. Other than these types of assumptions however, there are many salient points that should be addressed and implemented to reduce our governmental bureaucracy.

Dan says

Mixed feelings on this book. There's no question that Gingrich is an intelligent and thoughtful man and writer. And much of what he analyzes in this book as what's wrong with our current political system is right on the money, as are many of his proposals, particularly those for the revamping of the legislative and judicial branches of our government, much of his foreign policy ideas, and, to some extent, his economic policy. Where he, or at least the book, fails for me is his revisionist history - none of it necessary as in every case where he used inaccurate or just plain false historical references there was no need to, as the true facts would have supported his case just as well, though perhaps without as much emotional impact. Too, there are some fundamental areas where I simply find his positions unacceptable, and interestingly, they fall in the areas where he relies on his religious faith rather than his intellect - in particular his push for America to be recognized as a Christian nation that tolerates other faiths, but does not accord them equal status, and, not surprisingly, his views on homosexuality and some other minority groups.

Lindsay says

Intelligent.

Barry Karschner says

Great Book about how to change our Country with specifics. He is a brilliant guy!

Runningfox says

This book should be read by any conservative,,It is in my opinion they way things should be but are not at this ntime...I would hope the president of the USA would read this book and take its words to heart and implement them into his way of thinking and lead by doing those things...

Bernard Doddema Jr says

I like the Newt. He's clear in his message. His American Revolution books are amazing! Besides that, the problems he outlines in the book are the exact same ones that I've been learning about watching Glenn Beck for the last few years. His solutions are not complex but will rock the Progressives on their heels and hopefully send them back to their hidey holes or root them out entirely.

I think his education plan needs to be taken seriously. Lots of time and energy has gone into this plan and it does offer a glimmer of hope. We need to realize that education just can't be only focused on our youth. We all need to train, retrain or update our "tools" to bring our country back to greatness.

His health plan makes alot of sense but some areas were gray to me. If it's not in plain speak to me, then someone might want to take a look at it again and further define their goals.

If Newt were running for President in 2012, I would take a serious look at him. In the meantime, I'll continue enjoying his books!

Mary says

I thought that this book was interesting. And I found that most of his ideas and policies I can get behind. But more often than nt, I feel like he falls short in his action to carry out these plans or often compromises when it actually comes to vote time.

Terry says

Newt is a very bright guy. While this book is a bit out of date, his ideas are brilliant. The country has taken a step in the wrong direction and partly due to the failure of so called conservatives to deliver with integrity. They did not. Newt calls for action! I liked it a lot!

Frederick Meekins says

Over a decade has elapsed since The Contract With America catapulted Newt Gingrich to the forefront of American political discussion and the Republican Party into control of both houses of Congress. No longer confined by the restraints of public office, the former Speaker of the House now seeks to update and expand

on this set of ideas in Winning The Future: A 21st Century Contract With America.

Unlike the original Contract With America which dealt primarily with political and legislative issues, Winning The Future applies the outlook inspiring the book's antecedent to a wider array of social and cultural concerns. Reflective of the personality of the author of both documents, Winning The Future is an eclectic synthesis of conservative commonsense, futuristic policy blather, and a reluctance to accept certain shortcomings inherent to human nature.

Winning The Future does a suburb job in examining the religious foundations of the United States. Gingrich uses his skill as an historian to trace recognition of this heritage from the Founding Fathers, through Abraham Lincoln, up to contemporary thinkers such as Samuel Huntington.

From there, Gingrich uses the issue of the role of religion in the United States as a springboard to discuss the need for judicial reform. Gingrich views the attack on religious freedom as evidence of how the judiciary has gotten out of control. Newt does this by pointing out a number of rulings from the infamous Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and the activist legal philosophies of radical jurists such as Europhile Sandra Day O'Connor. He also offers suggestions on how the courts might be reigned in such as by impeaching judges going beyond the scope of the Constitution on the grounds of violating the Good Behavior Clause or by simply abolishing rogue judgeships all together.

While a number of the proposals contained within the pages of Winning The Future are steeped in conservative commonsense realism, some of those characterized by futuristic speculation are just plain goofy. For example, Gingrich is under the impression that centralizing and computerizing all health records will lead to some kind of twenty-first century medical Renaissance.

But doesn't technology merely take on the characteristics and shortcomings of those employing it? A quack will always be a quack.

And this is to say nothing of the dangers and abuses that will result from further centralizing the most sensitive of information in a single place that will probably be administered by the government or as callous healthcare administrators. If my rights and well being are to be violated, those doing so should at least have to work to earn the opportunity.

Despite his many insights, at various points Gingrich exhibits a flawed understanding of human nature that will cause his well-intentioned proposals to flounder in a manner similar to the Great Society programs the former Congressman has spent much of his political career claiming to stand against. For example, Gingrich touts a program called Earning By Learning he established that paid to \$2.00 to children in public housing for every book they read.

While the costs of the program initially came out of Gringrich's own pocket, who's going to pick up the tab should the program go nationwide? Furthermore, why should such an entitlement be for the so-called underprivileged who already have access to the same reading material as everyone else but simply refuse to avail themselves of it?

Spending much of his time hobnobbing in elite government and media circles, Dr. Gingrich is also as mistaken about the nature of the immigrant hordes sweeping across America. Mired by his training as an historian, Gingrich assumes a model of immigration more fitting for the nineteenth century than the twenty-first.

Gingrich writes, "Nor am I concerned that a substantial number of new Americans are Hispanic. America has a long history of absorbing and blending people of many languages and backgrounds." But for the most part, the vast majority of immigrants at that time were already steeped in a common Northern European (primarily

Protestant) culture upon which American institutions were based.

Even more importantly, immigrants of that period wanted to be Americans and not to merely suckle off the supple federal teat while expressing nothing but contempt for the host nation gracious enough to even allow them into our midsts. If Gingrich finds Hispanics so charming, maybe they can pile into the house next door to his like they have in many middle class neighborhoods where they cram thirty of their kinsman and associates into a single family dwelling and have no qualms about guzzling booze on the public sidewalk.

Regardless of one's opinion of Newt Gingrich as either a conservative visionary seeking to plot America's course to the future, an egotistical fraud concerned for nothing but his own fame and fortune, or someone between the two extremes, Winning The Future will most definitely spark thought and discussion of the issues that will impact the nation in the coming years.

by Frederick Meekins
