

**Notes on
Dawn's Early Light
Book Author: Kevin D. Roberts PhD
Notes Author: William Gasarch**

I will refer to the author as *Kevin*.

Overall:

PROS:

1. Some of what he says is wrong with America he is right about.
2. He is absolutely fine with some policies that those in his own party would not like (he is for regulation in some cases).

CONS:

1. He is anti-vax which undermines some of his arguments. For example, he uses that Churches had to close during COVID as an example of government intrusion on religion. This is really bad because I really do want to hear how the government intrudes on religion.
2. He is a global warming skeptic without any argument for it.
3. He is anti-gay without any argument for it.
4. He is very one-sided. For example, he decries online censorship but seems to think its only on the left. Note that Trump has threatened to execute those who disagree with him.
5. He will make a gratuitous comment that undermines an argument. For example, he wants more funding for community colleges and trade schools. I agree. He says we have job shortages there. I will take his word for that. He says that a further benefit is that it will deprive the Ivy league schools of students. I doubt thats true, but that has nothing to do with the issue. If he wants to argue about how the Ivy League is destroying students minds with its leftist drivel, fine, but do that in context and not here.
6. He sometimes can't seem to make up his mind about government regulation. In the end he seems to only want to use regulation against liberals.

7. He thinks that Donald Trump will help enact the agenda intelligently. He is just wrong about that. More generally, he has a big blind spot with regard to The Donald being part of the problem, not part of the solution.
8. He never mentions Jan 6, slavery, the USAs treatment of Native Americans, actual racism, Trumps morality, or anything that will jeopardize his points.
9. He is actually anti-capitalist. If a private company choose to (say) have a clean-energy fund or a DEI program he objects. Its a private company. Let the invisible hand of the market guide what they do.
10. He seems to think there is a conspiracy of companies to do ESG and DEI. He never explains what they get out of it. And the above point- if they are private companies and they think its good for business then whats his problem, especially as a small-gov person.

1 The Conspiracy Against Nature

The BLM protests caused LOTS of damage. The California Wildfire caused LOTS of damage. He blames both on *The Uni-party* though more on the liberals. It is fair to ask whose fault all of this is. It is fair to question the reaction of the government.. However, he never mentions the following:

1. For BLM: Were the BLM grievances legit?
2. For the California Wildfires: What role does global warming plays?

He goes on to say that the real conflict in this country is *the party of creation* vs *the party of destruction*. To his credit, he does not just blame liberals. He also blames *wax museum conservatives*.

Page 3-4 is about when Europeans overthrew *all* traditional society. I think he is saying that the enlightenment threw out too much, such as traditional religion. He may have a point here, but he fails to mention just how oppressive traditional religion was in those days. So I charitably view what he says as *raising* a good question.

I thought he was going towards a Burkean view: Traditional wisdom has some value so do not dispense with it too quickly when pondering change. NO. Here is a direct quote from Page 4

*For America to flourish they [American Institutions] don't need to be reformed, **they need to be burned.** A nice start would be:*

Every Ivy League College, the FBI, the New York Times, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, The Department of Education, 80% of all "Catholic" higher education, BlackRock, The Loudoun County School System, the Boy Scouts of America, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the World Economic Forum, the Chinese Communist Party, and the National Endowment for Democracy.

I will comment on a few of these.

1. Every Ivy League College. If he wants to talk about how the Humanities departments are left-biased and how DEI is a sham, that is a discussion worth having. But what about the STEM fields and all the good they've done for the country over the last 50 years? Kevin is a climate change denier, so he might not like that part of STEM.
2. The FBI used to be a rather conservative organization. Is he mad because they politely asked Trump to give back those documents and when Trump didn't they had to ask him less politely? Is he mad because of Jan 6?
3. The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. A discussion of the PROS and CONS of their approach to COVID would be welcome. But Kevin is actually an anti-vaxer (later in the book) so he is not interested in such a discussion.
4. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. I looked them up.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gates_Foundation

They seem to mostly give grants to other nations to help them with Medical care and Farming. Whats not to like? I can guess a few aspects:

- (a) STD controls including HIV/AIDS.
- (b) Reproductive Health Care and Family Planning (Kevin is against abortion—I am not sure where he stands on birth control).

- (c) Agricultural Development—will these countries compete with our farmers?
- (d) They have teamed up with Hillary Clinton (and probably other liberals) and the World Economic Forum.
- (e) I can't tell if he is against what they give or who their friends are.

I point out that the Gates Foundation is private—it seems odd for a conservative to want to dictate to a rich person how to spend their money. To be fair, Kevin calls his movement *New Conservative* and often wants government intervention.

5. BlackRock Investments. I looked them up. There are a few thing he could object to:

- (a) They have ESG funds. Note that this is a private company that happens to believe in global warming and is trying to do something about it. Is that really objectionable?
- (b) After anti-gun protests BlackRock introduced two funds that would exclude gun manufacturers. Again- a private company so how can you object?
- (c) They have done business with China that might be shady but legal. This could be a valid complaint.
- (d) BlackRock has ties to the Federal reserve that might be illegal.

A list of people he doesn't like:

But here's the most uncomfortable truth of all: the parasites that have taken over so much of the country: pantsuited girlboss advertising executives, Skittle-haired they/them activists, soy-faced pajama-clad work-from-home HR apparatchiks, aderall-addicted dog-mom diversity consultants, nasally-voiced Ivy-League regulatory lawyers, obese George Soros-funded police abolitionist district attorneys, hipster trust fund socialists— are some of the least impressive people in the world.

1. Some of these are weirdly specific—why advertising executives? What does he have against pants-suits? Does he really think women should only wear dresses?

2. We can have an intelligent discussion about DEI and overregulation. and some of the other points he seems to be bringing up. But all of those negative adjectives make me not want to take him seriously. (Chris Hitchens did the same in his book.)
3. The George Soros comment is veiled (or not so veiled) anti-semitism.

Kevin claims that Reagan got America moving again. Again, this is a debate one could have (Mike would agree, Clyde would disagree).

Kevin says that America is in a Spiritual crisis but at first says its not a religious thing. However, later Kevin leans into Christianity. He also says that policy solutions are only part of the problem— but its hard to say how to fix a spiritual crisis.

Here is a list of problems we have:

Fentanyl overdoes, childhood gender mutilation, dead-end jobs, racial quotas, online censorship, grocery-store shelf shortages, open borders, religious persecution, violent carjacking, chronic shoplifting.

1. Childhood Gender Mutilation: We DO need more study of gender dysphoria. Later Kevin claims children are being taken away from their parents and forced to change gender, which is NOT true.
2. Dead-end jobs. This may get worse with AI. This is valid but this is one of many things where he is a fool to think that Donald Trump will do anything about it.
3. Online censorship. He is not referring to Donald Trump wanting to lock up anyone who speaks badly of him. Too bad. A intelligent discussion of left and right censorship (online and offline) would be welcome.
4. Open borders. This is a made up problem entirely. Immigrants are good for the country and do jobs Americans don't want to do. We are now seeing the problems with limiting immigration.
5. Religious persecution. I would like to have an intelligent discussion of this but later Kevin considers closing churches during COVID to be religious persecution. And again, he only cares about (imagined) persecution of Christians.

When the country was in good shape (post Reagan) it was appropriate to have free trade and less regulation (Clinton passed NAFTA and Welfare reform). But we are in a different time now.

I applaud Kevin for recognizing that times have changed and for criticizing *wax museum conservatives*. However, his solutions are at time loopy or non-existent, and the notion that Donald Trump, the Grifter-in-chief, will do anything about this in a competent way that makes sense is absurd.

2 Fighting Fire with Fire

Pat Buchanan's campaign for president recognized that America had a spiritual crisis. He lost but he was challenging the conservative out-dated orthodoxy of free trade and less government.

George H Bush wanted a new-world-order which meant sacrificing traditions and families to please the S & P 500. I applaud that he is bucking some of his party.

2.1 The Party of Creation Run on Gratitude

Tradition is not the worship of ashes but the preservation of fire Mahler.

This raises a good question: Which traditions should we keep, which should we modify, and which should we discard. Kevin never does that triage.

Kevin says:

Conservatives acknowledge that depend on what we have been given by God, by our country, by our forebear's, by our communities and home places.

Thats fine. Does Kevin not realize that Donald Trump is the opposite of all of this. He was born on third base and thinks he hit a triple. He has no gratitude. Loyalty only goes one way.

Kevin complains about some schools taking down pictures of George Washington (since he was a slave holder). On this I AGREE with him. However, I want to know what he thinks of taking down confederate war monuments. Here is my litmus test (due to Scott Aaronson). We give three examples of how this works.

1. George Washington: *Even though he had slaves he believed in the principles of freedom, he did not become a king, and he set this country in*

the right direction. The key is that there is a legitimate positive thing to say. Someone may still disagree, but that is the argument, do the PROS outweigh the CONS?

2. Nathan Bedford Forrest: *Even though he fought for the South in the civil war, had many slaves, and was an overt racist, this must be balanced with the following: he massacred many soldiers (especially black ones) and was later the first grand wizard of the KKK.* UH, is that really a *on the other hand* argument. NO. The only counter is that he had skills and acumen as a cavalry leader—but this is irrelevant to the argument.
3. Thomas Jefferson: *Even though he had many slaves and raped the teenager Sally Hemmings and later the adult Sally Hemmings, he wrote the declaration of independence, and was aware of the moral problems with slavery.*

None of this is in the book—but my point is, I am curious about Kevin’s opinion of, say, tearing down Nathan Forrest’s statue. Or renaming Mt McKinley.

Kevin mentions Edmond Burke positively which surprises me given my comments on the first chapter

2.2 The Permanent Things

Family Marriage between a man and a women and for life and lots of kids.

1. So why does he like thrice-divorced, brags-about-adultery Trump? He needs to confront this. One evangelical who is disappointed in his fellow evals liking Trump said *The evangelicals are NOT saying “he has his flaws but he will do what we want so we will hold our noses and vote for him” The evangelicals are HAPPY with him. Ecstatic.* Another evangelical who is disgusted with his fellow Evangelicals said *I think the entire evangelical community owes Bill Clinton an apology for criticizing his sexual morals.*
2. The declining birthrate in America and elsewhere has been because of much less teen pregnancy, and much less young women having kids which is bad for their health and life. Later in the book he claims that

there are many couples who want to have more kids but can't. He points to Hungary and other countries that have financial incentives to have kids. He says they have worked. The Economist says they have not. Or that they have been way too expensive. This could be the beginning of an intelligent discussion, but Kevin won't do that. Also, some women **regret** having kids, see

<https://www.cs.umd.edu/~gasarch/nokids.pdf>

3. Kevin does not mention gay couples here but it is implied that he is against Gay Marriage. One of the early arguments for Gay Marriage was by Andrew Sullivan, a gay conservative, arguing why gay marriage is a conservative position. I have an article that argues that gay marriage is GOOD for straight marriage in that kids see that marriage is normal and living together is less desirable. More about the book- if you want to say Gay Marriage is bad then what is the alternative? Civil Unions? In some countries that tried that straight people were attracted to the option since it meant less hassle if you divorce.

Faith The book says that religion is good (hmmm-is it true?) and that the Government should support any faith. Sabbath laws, support for religious schools. This is more of the starting point for an intelligent discussion. But he ends with *American society is rooted in Christian Faith—certainly public institutions should not establish anything offensive to Christian morals under the guises of “religious freedom” or “DEI”* What about things offensive to other faiths? The *Philadelphia Riots of 1844* was about which VERSION of the bible (Catholic or Protestant) to read in public school. Each thought of the other as offensive.

<https://www.au.org/the-latest/church-and-state/articles/a-history-of-violence>

Community This was fine- he values community where people help each other. The harder question is how much OUTSIDE help (e.g., government) do you need if things go really bad.

Work Men need work for human dignity (I do not know if he is leaving out women intentionally). Fine. But the last line is rather odd *In the Western tradition, a republican government [I DO NOT THINK HE MEANS THE PARTY] befitted only men who were masters of themselves, who were economically self-sufficient.*

What about women?

What about people who were born slaves or really poor- they would have a hard time

What about people who were born rich?

What about people who had Government jobs?

More generally, its really hard to be economically self-sufficient NOW and even THEN.

Nation Talks about the nation and the people working towards *the common good*. Then gives an example which is really bad: The archbishop of Canterbury crowning the King of England. The Royalty was for the good of the Royalty, not the common good.

2.3 Controlled Burn

Talks about how a forest sometimes needs a controlled burn to keep it healthy (e.g., to get rid of Dutch Elm Disease). Then that some parts of the government need that, but others need to be burned to the ground. Okay. This could be an interesting discussion about what parts of the government work and don't work and how to either reform or get rid of them.

Its not.

Here is a direct quote, not a paraphrase:

In 2020 COVID-19-like Dutch Elm disease, an import from East Asia made this abundantly clear. As Anthony Fauci's National Inst of Allergy and Infectious diseases (NAIAD) locked down the country, the churches that conservatives faithfully attended were helpless a federal bureaucrats locked down the doors.

My thoughts

1. Calling COVID-19 an import from East Asia is an odd way of putting it and is irrelevant to his point.
2. The question *was the lockdown needed* would be the start of an intelligent discussion. He is not going there.
3. He complains that the lockdown affected *churches that conservatives faithfully attended*. It affected *a lot more people than that*. Does he care that it affected other faiths? restaurants? other businesses?
4. The question *were churches unfairly targeted by lock downs, where as other businesses were not* would be the start of an interesting discussion.

Indeed, there may be some merit to the argument that choice of what to lockdown was not driven by health issues (Kevin much later makes the VALID point out that the BLM protests were NOT told to put on masks). So again, this could be the start of an intelligent discussion. And again, he is not going there.

5. COVID was one of the times we needed government to step in. SO this is a very odd choice of where he draws his line in the sand.

Here is more:

The last decade has been full of grim Inspector general reports of weaponized law enforcement at the senior levels of the FBI, of obscene waste and fraud in the United States war in Afghanistan, of corruption and incompetence in our surface navy, not to mention cover-ups of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church, the Boy Scouts, and (with Jefferey Epstein scandal) the upper reaches of the ruling elites.

My comments.

1. He is pointing out some of the problems our society has. GOOD.
2. He *does not* say that this is all the fault of liberals, though I suspect he thinks so.
3. It would be interesting to see which part or president does more of this.
4. Here is a contrast: The democrats weaponize the DOJ by seeing how much involvement Trump had in Jan 6, and all those documents he had at Margo Lago. The Republicans go after Hunter Biden. I think the republicans are far worse. But again, would be of interest to study that.
5. Does Kevin want to burn down the Catholic Church? Thats supposed to be one of the pillars of our society. What does he blame that on?
6. Jefferey Epstein. It would be unfair to laugh at this now since the book was written before Trump tried to suppress the Epstein files. However, in 2007 it was Alexander Acosta, a Republican (and later Trumps Sec of Labor) who gave Epstein a really generous plea deal. I wonder if the next edition of the book will quietly leave out the Jeff Epstein comment.

Another paragraph that sounds interesting but undermines itself:

... Boeing planes falling out of the sky, Harvard and Stanford presidents caught faking their research, real wages stagnating amid record profits, the imposition of rolling blackouts while politicians brag about renewable energy.

1. Boeing Plane: YES because the Boeing was sold to a company that cares more about short term profits. So does Kevin want to regulate them?
2. Harvard and Stanford. TRUE- on this one he is CORRECT.
3. Real wages stagnating. YES this is happening. But is your solution more gov regulation? a better social safety net? I doubt it. Later its tariff's but thats not really a good idea.
4. Renewable energy is the reason for rolling blackouts? I doubt this is true but if Kevin wants to claim it, he has to show SOME evidence for it. (Note the book has no footnotes or index.)

2.4 The Conspiracy Against Nature

In earlier parts he made analogs between forest management and policy-controlled burns, getting rid of parts of the gov that are bad. In this part he talks about actual forest policy. He blames environmentalists and bad policy for forest fires. He may well be right about the policy being bad, but this is to big a topic to just say its all the liberals fault and move on. It would be more helpful to say what we are doing WRONG and what to do RIGHT, but that would be an entire book. Plus, once again no mention of Global Warming's role.

He says that liberals are pessimists. Isn't Trump also a pessimist?

He says the book is unapologetic populist. There have been populists on the left in the past (Huey Long was one- he will come up later). I wonder if he would be such a fan of populism if the population was against his policies.

2.5 The Faith of my Fathers/Cajun Country

He tells his families story- they were immigrants from France who settled in New Orleans and kept their culture. He says that the phrase *nation of immigrants* also indicates that they LIKE their new land. Okay.

He seems to like pluralism and that his family could keep their traditions. This seems at odds with his general anti-immigrant position.

He accuses liberals of trying to destroy traditions. But his arguments here are very unclear.

2.6 Reagan The Creator

Reagan created the challenger space shuttle program and did not give up after one of them blew up.

Kevin needs to say more clearly why the space shuttle program was a good thing. His reasons are more philosophical than anything real. There may well be real reasons why it was a good thing but they are not articulated. Recall that manned space flight is far more expensive than unmanned but does not give back more useful information.

Also- What would Kevin think of Trumps devastating cuts to NSF, NIH. author says that Clinton downsized the program (probably true) but that its NOW going up again. Trump has talked about planting an American flag on the moon. Trump DID give NASA 9.9 million dollars. But again, one needs an intelligent debate about which science to fund and why. Variety is good since you never know whats going to be important (messenger RNA).

Throughout the book Kevin proposes some things that are expensive- like the space program. How to pay for them? Higher taxes? I doubt he would say that.

2.7 The Second American Revelation

The first revolution was against the British elites, and the second one will be against elites also.

Was the first one really against the elites, or was it American Elites replacing British Elites? (Howard Zinn has this hypothesis- later in the book Kevin does not like Howard Zinn but does not refute him either.)

These are reasonable points to bring up, but he does not do so.

And the current revolution is even worse- does he really think that Trump and Musk are not the new elites?

2.8 The New Conservative Movement

Old C movement: Social Traditionalism, Free enterprise, anticommunism

New C movement: Mom, Dad, Kids. So its a Family First Fusionism
This is cute but also trite.

He says the new C movement has to have a big tent. Really? His book is really small tent.

He again complains about divorce, not enough kids, and (this one is new) families not eating together. Again, look at your leader Trump. Also,

Families that do stick together struggle to make ends meet.

Agreed. Its not clear how he goes from these problems to his solutions and to supporting Trump who has no interest in these issues.

3 Family-First Fusionism

He recounts his rough family life, especially in 1983.

1. His parents got divorced. Here and later he is very much against divorce. This is *not* hypocritical—he has seen how bad divorce can be on families. He criticize people who say *Kids are resilient, they will be fine* and quotes Phil Donahue saying that. He is RIGHT about divorce being hard on kids. Neither here nor elsewhere does he ever mention Donald Trump or Ronald Reagan being divorced. Even his support for those two is not necessarily hypocritical but the silence is deafening. I want to know, and NOT as a GOTCHA moment, what he thinks of his heroes being divorced (especially Trump who cheated on all three of his wives). Also, I am curious to see what solutions he proposes to curb divorce.
2. He never says what he would do about divorce. Make it illegal? (This is Bill) One approach that was tried but didn't work: *Covenant Marriage*. In Arizona, Arkansas, and Louisiana you can get married in such a way that its harder to get divorced, so its more of a commitment. When this was first passed Clyde worried that couples when they FIRST get married would do it as a Cov marriage and later regret it. The opposite happened—only 1% of all marriages in those states are Cov marriages. This still leaves the question: What can the state do to make divorce less likely?
3. Kevin's family got government help—subsidized housing and free lunches at school. He is against government help now. Later he seems to be

against Federal help and wants instead state or local or just Church help. I'll address this later when he brings it up.

4. Kevin's brother got a hold of a gun and committed suicide. Quote from the subsection *Pain which Cannot Forget*

Even though it may have been an impulsive act, a catastrophe such as the suicide of my brother, Doug, was the product of years and years of cultural decay, lies, and neglect.

While I am sure this is true, the lack of any mention of gun control (e.g., *would not have helped because . . .* is, in a political book which later argues against gun control, is a deafening silence.

3.1 Family is the Foundation/The First Snake/NEPATiam

The book discusses the low birth rate. He repeats what he said in the chapter *The perm things*. I won't repeat my rebuttal. He proposes some solutions:

He talks about the housing crisis, blames demos and reps, and his solutions are the same ones from *Abundance* (he does mention their article in the Atlantic- their book may not have been written then). less regulation, make it easier to build and buy houses. Later in the chapter he acknowledges that liberals are coming around to how regulation has blocked their green plans. This is all quite reasonable.

And then, as usual, he says something that shows his true colors

For any individual household supported by a single income (normally the husbands, a second income would greatly contribute to purchasing better housing in a better neighborhood and better education for the kids. But as more and more women enter the workforce, it just contributes to bidding up the price of housing, child care, and education, higher still, leaving everyone worse off.

Does Kevin really think that people having MORE money (from a second income) causes prices to go up? I ask non-rhetorically. I don't think this is true (and Kevin has already given plenty of other reasons housing has gone up) but I willing to be convinced if he gave evidence. But he never gives evidence.

I suspect this is more of an excuse to get women out of the workforce, into the house, and having more babies.

He then looks at medical costs. He says we need less regulation there. He gives an example of a Trump Policy that brought down the cost of dialysis. This seems to be true (I wonder why Trump didn't brag about this one.) Here is article from a valid source:

<https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2019/7/10/20687507/trump-kidney-disease->

However, part of the big beautiful bill (passed after the book was written) undermines Trumps accomplishment. See

<https://www.kidney.org/news-stories/kidney-patient-action-guide-to-trump-s->

His main target in this subsection seems to be regulations. Here is one where Kevin may well be right:

A Heritage Foundation report Diversity University: DE Bloat in the Academy revealed that the Univ of Michigan was spending \$18.1 million on more than 163 DEI personal, almost six per hundred faculty members and more than twice the number of faculty teaching history.

While I am glad to find something that is probably true in this book it makes the rest even sadder- Kevin CAN give evidence of a problem but mostly chooses not to.

DEI is a valid target. If only Trump and Musk's approach to education had been to see where waste really was, what was working, what was not working, instead of just destroying the entire academy.

3.2 First Comes Love; When Comes Marriage

The book CORRECTLY points out how costs have gone up making it hard for families to make ends meet, which is hard on a marriage. Here is a quote:

The truth is changing regulatory demands and Uniparty managerial control exert much more influence over the markets for health care, new cars, new houses, child care, and education than do consumer choice. That's why when the Trump administration instituted policies that reversed globalization, lowered regulatory burden, and unleashed investment, the long stagnation of American working-class wages briefly lifted Bidenomics, rampant spending, and a crackdown on energy production have sent inflation soaring, dragging real wages back to pre-2015 levels.

1. Some sources on the web DO say that real wages went up under Trump:

<https://waysandmeans.house.gov/2020/10/07/trump-tax-cuts-results-part-three>

That from the ways and means committee so may be biased.

2. A journal called *The Conversation* argues that it did not:

<https://theconversation.com/real-pay-data-show-trumps-blue-collar-boom-is->

3. I would think that COVID would distort and affect any study of the issue.
4. Why would reversing globalization help? We have seen the damage of Tariffs (after the book came out).
5. That there was inflation under Biden is correct. I don't think Biden *cracked down on energy production* but I am willing to believe that if he gave some evidence.

A quote that blames both parties:

They (DC conservatives) won't stand up for reality of one-man one-women marriage, the reality that every child needs a mother and a father, or the reality that men and women want different things.

And they wring their hands when you talk about materially supporting working families, easing their burden, recognizing the real costs and difficulties of raising kids, supporting women who want to be house makers, or building and economy of stable jobs for marriageable men.

1. Kevin won't stand up for the reality of gay couples existing.
2. One can easily take his paragraph for supporting many liberal policies that he does not support: family leave act, subsidized child care, others. He needs a coherent economic policy and does not have one. He later talks a lot about tariffs but that has the problem of raising prices.

3.3 An Abundance Agenda for American Families

Some of this is from the Abundance book (Kevin DOES credit Klein and Thompson for an article on the topic—the book Abundance came out later).

Kevin claims that countries can reverse the birth dearth. Here is a quote:

What you see in countries that have increased the birth rate (Israel, Hungary, Georgia) is a combination of serious social family policy and a culture that cherishes children and upholds a mission of national renewal. . . . Today Hungary, the world's leader in family policy, spends up to 6 percent of its GDP on measures to encourage family formation and the raising of children.

But these policies, where they work, operate not by nudging parents but by changing the culture.

1. Later in the book (Page 72) he says that economic incentives do not work and more is needed—a wealthier society. It is hard so square helping families and the economy to weather economic storms and do well with his anti-gov stance.
2. See my comment under *The Permanent Things*.
3. I looked up the FACTS. Hungary's birth rate really did go from 1.2 to 1.6 from 2010 to 2020. But then it went down to 1.4. Here is an article from *The American Enterprise Institute* about this here:
<https://www.aei.org/op-eds/hungarys-government-is-trying-to-make-more-bab>
I'll just say its a complicated issue.
4. *The Economist* had articles on this. Their conclusion was that the amount of money Hungary (and other countries) are spending on raising the birthrate is much larger than any benefit they may get. To be fair, they are only looking the issue *economically*, whereas Kevin is looking at other issues as well (not clear what they are).
5. It is not at all clear how the government can change the culture, and even if it should. The book does give some ideas on this but they all end up being economic ideas.

3.4 The Second Snake: Culture Changing Technology

He is against Contraception. Really!

It's true that contraception gives families more control over when they have children. But the creators of the technologies wanted to go much further than controlling a natural process; they wanted everyone in our culture, regardless of their beliefs about contraception, that having kids is an optional individual choice instead of a social expectation or a transcendent gift.

1. I don't think the people who first thought about contraception thought that far ahead.
2. I think its a good think that having kids is NOT a given. In the old days it was an obligation.

3. Does he want to ban contraception? I doubt it.
4. Birthrates declined because people in a more advanced society do not need more farmhands to run the farm. That may be a bigger factor than contraception.
5. Kevin later claims that contraception made abortion rates go up, not down, since people see children as a choice. That would be interesting if true. It not:

<https://divisionofresearch.kaiserpermanente.org/contraception-aca/>

How can I take a book seriously if some of its facts can be debunked with a simple Google search?

3.5 Procreative Technologies/The Third Snake: Anti-family Propaganda

Keeper is a dating site aimed at being a marriage app- find someone to marry. I have read that online dating has begun to be more specialized, so this is one more of those. Does it work? I looked it up- it gets 4.5 stars out of 5, so thats a good sign. It uses AI.

The book suggests bringing back the sabbath as a day of rest and to not do work. I think he may have a very good point—life is too hectic and we may need a day off. But how to really do it? Some communities do it voluntarily. Blue laws are not mentioned, and I suspect they would not work.

Our culture and entertainment are anti-family, unwanted pregnancies, unhappy marriages. I HAVE noticed that (1) there are very few happy marriages on TV shows, and (2) couples sleeping together or living together before marriage is not just common, its incredibly non-controversial. On *Wheel of Fortune* they routinely have things like: *PAT: Steve, tell us who is rooting for you?*, *STEVE: My husband Bob who is in the audience* and this is again NON-controversial. (Oddly enough Pat Sajak is very conservative so I wonder what he thinks of Gay couples on his show.) SIDE NOTE: They also have inter-racial couples on both fiction shows and game shows, without anyone caring- I wonder when that tide changed.

Kevin seems to say this is an intentional plot:

Our elites are actively antagonistic to promoting normal family formation in the common culture (they don't want to "exclude" or "shame" anybody!), but of course they practice married parenting in their private lives.

1. AGREE that entertainment is anti the usual sort of 2-hetero people married with 2-3 or more kids.
2. That its a actual conspiracy is odd. It could just be that unhappy families are more interesting and the ratings are higher. He *does* object to the free market producing such stuff, and criticizes conservatives who worship the invisible hand of the market. But the usual problem—what to do about that?
3. That the elite live actually practice married parenting is odd since he seems to be criticizing them for doing what he considers the right thing. Also, I think he is wrong about that: In Hollywood there are MANY divorces and people living together (My Uncle Irwin is a Movie producer, married to his wife Margo for 66 years. Margo tells me that at parties she is the ONLY first wife. Everyone else is on their third wife at least. One counter: Alan Alda has been married for 67 years.)

3.6 Making a Home Is Real Work

He wants women to have the choice of working at home.

But having more women working isn't axiomatically good, because large numbers of women with kids at home prefer to support their own families as homemakers or to work part time (over 70 percent, according to one recent study from the Institute of Family Studies).

1. I reinterpret what he begins with as as an interesting question: *Is a society better off if women stay home raising the kids.*
2. So 70 percent of women with kids want to be homemakers. That is interesting if true.

A Gallup poll says that 56% want to stay at work

<https://news.gallup.com/poll/267737/record-high-women-prefer-working-homen.aspx>

I find it really bad that he sites facts that are debunked with one google search. However, ,that 34% want to be stay-at-home moms IS impressive and he should have gone with the truth.

3. The problem with using the *a large number of Americans want X* argument is that if later (or now in this case) *a large number of Americans do not want X* then you need to go along with that. In 1960 96% of Americans were against black-white marriage.
4. The pressure on women to work outside the house is social and economic. In the past the pressure to NOT work outside the house was social, economic, and LEGAL- for example, law schools could legally NOT take women.

Here are some of Kevin's thoughts

1. *The Left's approach to family policy is to pretend that women's work at home counts for nothing and should be actively discouraged, and so build policies that actively reward two-income households, and child care in state-regulated day cares.*

He is trying to solve a very hard problem. Lets say he is right and its better for society to have women as housewives. What about women who don't want to? What kind of policies would help this? I can think of one: a *paid* family leave act. Which republicans blocked. See next point.

2. *We also need to find regulations that trap women into coming back to work. Today the family and medical leave act (FMLA), punishes mothers who choose to leave the workforce afterwards, requiring them to pay back thousands of dollars of medicaid care premiums (whereas someone using FMLA for an injury has no such requirements)*

So he wants a better FMLA. So do democrats.

3. *... having a huge family is about valuing children in and of themselves above a more comfortable lifestyle.* He assumes that this is a good thing to do. He never says why.
4. Now my thought: There are women who don't want kids, women who can't have kids, families that really NEED the second income. He seems to ignore these important issues.

3.7 Creative Abundance over Nihilistic Decadence

The Heritage foundation has generous maternity-leave and paternity-leave policies. That is so WOKE :-). They are in a bind here:

1. They think that companies should be more family friendly.
2. They do not want the government interfering.

However, he does give examples of pro-family policies that some states have done:

1. 24 states have removed all sales taxes on disposable diapers.
2. Tennessee provides free diapers (a state medicaid program) for half a year.
3. Post-Dobbs, some states have expanded Medicaid to help needy pregnant mothers and babies.
4. Massachusetts introduced the first universal tax credit for children and other dependent family members, which has since been expanded with bipartisan support to remove the cap on the number of children it provides for. [That is so WOKE which is why it came from the communist state of Massachusetts.]
5. States are partnering with pregnancy resource centers. BUT, to quote the web *Pregnancy resource centers (PRCs), also known as crisis pregnancy centers (CPCs) and pro-life pregnancy centers, are anti-abortion nonprofit organizations that offer services like pregnancy tests and ultrasounds to dissuade pregnant individuals from choosing abortion. While they present themselves as legitimate healthcare facilities, they are often unregulated, not subject to medical standards or confidentiality laws, and lack legally obligated medical staff, according to organizations like the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG). These centers prioritize their anti-abortion agenda over evidence-based care, potentially providing misinformation and withholding comprehensive information about all reproductive options, including abortion, contraception, and adoption.*

I wonder if planned parenthood would do a better job.

6. He does criticize wax museum conservatives for only giving lip service to helping families.
7. State family tax credits for families. Isn't that the dreaded social engineering that conservatives usually object to? The book seems to mostly be against regulation and go spending unless its for families. That is *not* hypocritical, however he needs to say why this is an exception.

A general problem with the book is that his plans here require money but he never talks about raising taxes or closing tax loopholes to pay for it. The Big beautiful bill cut taxes even more.

Another question is: Do Americans actually want this?

4 Schools Should Teach Piety

His main point is that education has been destroyed in many ways. He has some points to make here that are reasonable and some that are not.

4.1 A Century Long Conspiracy

1. The book claims that John Dewey sought to change the educational system and quote Dewey as saying aspiring to *the fundamental method of social progress and reform*. I suspect thats true but I'm not sure if its bad.
2. Dewey and others made the case that *liberal arts and Western tradition were not useful to a modern industrial society and the school should instead focus on teaching methods and skills such as critical thinking and training in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)*. Once education has been emptied of anything substantive from the American tradition (in the name of mere technique), a new philosophy of moral formation could quietly take place.
 - (a) Yes, the liberal arts have had a diminished place. There are many factors here. (a) He says a conspiracy for social progress and reform. (b) More jobs in STEM. (c) A correction or perhaps over-correction for a very biased view of American History (Manifest Destiny is good, slaves were treated well, Lost Cause mythology,

we were on the right side of the Alamo—see my notes on the last chapter for more about that). What puzzles me is the book *Everything you learned in school is wrong* that we read for bookclub a while back says that schools STILL are whitewashed and shallow.

- (b) His description of Oregon schools: *Traditional US Civics accounts for only 1/6 of overall graduation requirements. The rest is taken up by modules in such areas as Ethnic studies, Tribal History, Genocide Studies, focusing on concept such as “identity” and “resistance” in which the teachers are instructed to “discuss incidents and types of oppression” making sure to “attend to trauma-informed and social emotional learning.” One student I spoke to said that in lieu of a traditional Freshman history class they did a yearlong seminar on the radical leftist historian Howard Zinn’s “A People’s History of the United States” This DOES seem problematic. Harvard has had the same problem with its core, or lack of a core.*
- (c) Kevin complains, and rightly so, about students wanting to take down a statue of George Washington (probably GW has slaves), but Kevin has not a word to say about confederate war statues which is a more interesting question. Kevin’s silence on this issue is deafening.
- (d) *Howard Zinn*—I got his book out of the library. There are some things I agree with, some things that I disagree with. However, he gives actual arguments and intelligent discussing, no ad hominem attacks, no tossing in irrelevant biased side comments, unlike this book. So if I want to read a book that I disagree with to get an intelligent opposing viewpoint, Howard Zinn’s book is far better than this book.

4.2 Rule 1: Tradition is Oppressive

This is one of the strangest sections of the book, as you will see.

He first recounts growing up in Louisiana as a Cajun.

1. Huey Long was the governor. He says that Huey Long was a progressive and used the anti-trust laws, but never says if that’s bad (that may be implied) or what the issue was. Later in the book Kevin wants to

somehow break up Google and other Liberal companies but does not want to use anti-trust laws. This is typical: He wants to do some things that only the Gov can do, but doesn't want to use the Gov. ANYWAY- not sure what Huey Long using Anti-Trust has to do with the Liberals thinking that tradition is oppressive.

2. Huey Long was hostile to Cajuns *He viewed our way of life as fundamentally backwards*. I wonder if Kevin values Hispanics that way. Native Americans? African Americans?
3. *The Louisiana Constitution of 1921 (overseen by state elites, including the Progressive governor) had banned Cajun French from being taught in the schools. Huey Long went a step further. [Huey Long made all of the textbooks English, not French]*

MY THOUGHT: Pat Buchanan, who Kevin admires, wanted to make English the OFFICIAL language of the United States:

Here is a video of Pat B's add when he was running for prez:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUgTDmD4vW4>

Here are two more articles about this.

<https://www.cnn.com/2000/ALLPOLITICS/stories/10/10/latimes.buchanan/index.html>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meatballs_\(advertisement\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meatballs_(advertisement))

NOTE: I had this thought BEFORE reading later on that same page.

4. Later on that same page he brings in Pat Buchanan as someone who would have been AGAINST banning French.

Pat Buchanan, writing 20 years ago, saw the Conditioners aimed to do to all of America what Huey Long and the Progressive movement had tried to do to the Cajuns. Of the cultural carnage wreaked by the Left's march through our institutions. Buchanan observed:

"Destroy the record of a people's past, leave it in ignorance of who its ancestors were and what they did, and one can fill the empty vessels of their souls with a new history, as in 1984. Dishonor or disgrace a nation's heroes, and you can demoralize it's people"

So if Hispanics want to keep their language, or Blacks want to remember the evils of slavery, then Pat B and Kevin R should support that. I

doubt they do. What about the Native Americans whose culture was obliterated and who were massacred and cheated *far more* than Kevin's comparatively minor problem of French not being allowed anymore.

Frankly, Kevin sounds WOKE here-wanting to keep his own culture rather than assimilate.

5. More generally, Kevin objects to the claim that Tradition is oppressive. But sometimes it is. He NEVER brings up that point.

4.3 Dishonor Your Parents/Rules of Nature/Free Ed

1. More complaints about the classical subjects being pushed out and also about Critical Race Theory. Not sure what that has to do with Dishonoring your parents. And again, NEVER does he mention slavery, the oppression of the Native Americans, anything where America looks bad. This undermines his argument. If Kevin wants to criticize CRT he should tell us what it is and why its so bad. Indeed—he may well have a good argument to make there, but he is interested in putting together a coherent argument.
2. Kevin then complains about Gender stuff. He seems to deny the existence of Gay people.
3. Here is a VALID point he makes: Some elite schools have been shut down since by being merit based they end up being discriminatory. That IS bad—they should not be shut down. Fair point.

His view of the classics seems limited:

Classical education steeps students in the great works of literature, philosophy, history, and science. Instead of CRT and Marxist Claptrap, children learn about Greece and Rome, William Shakespeare and the Renaissance, Jane Austen, Emily Dickinson, and the glory of the American Founding.

Nothing past 1900 is included. Was the American Founding that glorious?

I would update by including *Huckleberry Finn*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Catch 22*, and *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*.

I wonder if he thinks that Jane Austen and Emily Dickinson should have, instead of writing, had more children. Jane Austen never married and died at 41. Emily Dickinson never married and died at 55. I am NOT bringing this up as a GOTCHA moment. This reminds me of

- (a) When Ronald Reagan ran for president, Christians had to revise their view of divorce. To their credit, they have NOT used the divorce of John Kerry against him when he ran.
 - (b) When Sarah Palin ran for VP, Southern Baptists had a serious discussion of if they approve— they do not like women to be in power, but she would get them what they wanted. To their discredit they did attack Hillary Clinton just for being a woman.
 - (c) Clarence Thomas is in an inter-racial marriage? I wonder how the Proud Boys feel about that since Clarence is pro-Trump. I read online that some white supremacists are happy with Thomas on the court, though they think he just follows Scalia (that was a while back) so they don't credit him. I could not find anything about his inter-racial marriage.
 - (d) Thrice divorced adulterous Donald Trump seems to get a pass.
4. College Prep: He says that students only take AP courses since they count for credit for college and this is BAD since there is plenty of good stuff for which there is no AP course. I think he is correct here. (Discrete Math has no AP course).
5. More College Prep: He also complains about the content of the AP courses. Here he may be correct. Here is a quote that starts out good then undermines itself

The AP European History course has no use for the inconvenient centrality of Christianity, except for high lighting the rise of the liberal state out of the supposed Protestant and Catholic bloodletting of the Thirty Year War (what theologian William Cavanaugh calls “the myth of religious violence”).

Myth? Really? William Cavanaugh wrote a book with the title *The Myth of Religious Violence*.

I read about the book on the web. Its not as provocative as its title.

- (a) Before the enlightenment there was no clear distinction between Religious and Secular. Religion and secular were tied together that isolating Religion as causing violence does not make sense.
- (b) Secular views, like communism, also cause wars.

My counter arguments:

- (a) Christianity holds itself to a higher standard. It claims absolute morals which are true now and in the past. Hence the Inquisition, the crusades, the 30-year war are on them.
- (b) Anti-semitism was certainly motivated by religion.

Note that William Cavanaguh is NOT saying that the 30-year war was not violent. So Kevin is using a slight-of-hand here, as that is what he seems to be implying. Also note that Kevin has a PhD in History, so no excuse.

- 6. He is in favor of parents having a choice of where to send their kids to school. What about Islam-schools? Radical-Liberal Schools?
- 7. He blames *No Child Left Behind* and he might be right. However, he avoids telling us that it was championed by a Republican president George W Bush.

5 The Economy Should Serve the Country

This chapter is part Bernie Sanders, part deranged-maga, and part some policy ideas that may be good but seem at odds with Trump.

5.1 Globalist Capitalism and Socialism are the Same/Managerial Rev/New Road to Serfdom

- 1. In an earlier era American businessmen were loyal to America and to their community, they themselves had worked in the industry and had sympathy and understanding for their workers. Now they are all managers who only care about short-term earnings and disdain the workers.

Kevin mentions Rockefeller and DuPont and other Robber barons positively—this is a nostalgia for an age that never was. Later he agrees with Theodore Roosevelt breaking them up. He may be confused.

2. He complains about nepotism and crony capitalism. Later looking at his solutions one can deduce that he is against corporate welfare and other ways the government helps business.
3. When he tries to say that Global Cap is Socialism he babbles:

Behind the seemingly capitalism facade of global corporatism lies, simply, socialism. The most sophisticated model of socialism, including Schumpeter, have understood that some elements of classical socialism ideas, such as public ownership of the means of production and centralized economic planning by government boards, are incidental to its essence. What is important is its aspiration: the effectual control and micromanagement of production decisions to achieve social goals and re-engineer society.

The ends towards which socialism works have proven to be remarkably flexible, encompassing August Comte's scientific society Karl Marx's proletarian paradise Paul Ehrlich's demographic doomerism and AOC's Green New Deal. Socialism's polestar is its means: bureaucratic management oriented towards "rational" planning objectives decided upon by a technocratic elite perched on the commanding heights of society.

My response:

- (a) Socialism *is* when the gov owns the means of production. It is *not* about bureaucratic management oriented towards "rational" planning objectives. The sad thing here is that he may have a legit complaint here, but by calling it socialism he derails his own argument.
- (b) I think this is a case of taking something he does not like and Labeling it socialism.
- (c) I honestly wonder what he would think if the goals being worked for are one that he liked.
- (d) He later goes on an ANTI-DEI and ANTI-ESG rant without saying why either is bad. On DEI I probably agree with him but he never gives a coherent argument against it or even define what it

is (this is a problem with the entire book). On ESG I disagree with him since, call me a radial, I believe that global warming is happening.

- (e) Why would businessman intentionally push the Green New Deal or DEI or ESG? They would not.
- (f) Trump has arranged for the government to have 10% of intel. Bush bailed out companies. Nixon had wage and price controls. That all seems like socialism to me. Some of Obama's and Biden's policies might also be socialism, but they don't claim to be anti-big-gov.

5.2 The Managerial Rev Costs Are Invisible Because They Are Immeasurable

- 4. Complains on how GDP and other eco stats are measured and used. Here is a paragraph that is correct but biased

When the Chinese Comm. Party opens a Confucius Inst, GDP goes up. When a mom who wants to stay home can no longer afford to do so she joins the workforce, GDP goes up. When a municipal Gov. uses taxpayer money to house illegal immigrants in a hotel for months, GDP goes up. When a meth addict breaks a car window to steal camera equipment and the beleaguered photographer dips into savings to repair the the window and buy new equipment then GDP goes up. In fact, almost anytime spiritual decay in American life requires the government or private sector to do something that our culture and community once provided, GDP goes up.

He could have picked more neutral examples, but they would not have made his final point.

- 5. The stats are good but Americans don't feel good because the stats are measuring the wrong thing. THIS IS TRUE. But Donald Trump's firing the head of Labor Stats because he didn't like the numbers is a far better example. So is Trump just SAYING that inflation is down when its not. To be fair, the book was written before Trump took office.

6. Hard to start a small business with the gov helping big business. To his credit he does blame wax-museum conservatives for this. But his solutions later are pathetic to the task.

5.3 A Fake Economy Creates Weak People/Why Everything is Coordinated

1. He complains that the economy is no longer based on material things. But he later gives as an example of a good company, one that provides labor market data, so also not material things. Undermines his own point.
2. He complains about companies having to follow stupid HR rules and having to issue statements about the George Floyd Riots. He may have a point here, but see my next point.
3. For DEI and ESG and other things he doesn't like there is a clear distinction he never makes:
 - (a) If a company decides ON THEIR OWN that DEI is god (e.g., they notice there are many intelligent women who are not being hired because they are women, so they hire them, perhaps at a lower salary than they would men) he should NOT object to that. That is a company doing what it thinks it should do to make money. Trump and Musk seem to want to make it illegal for a PRIVATE company to do DEI stuff. That is against laissez-fair principles.
 - (b) If the GOVERNMENT imposes DEI requirements on its own agencies or on companies, that IS something to object to.
 - (c) A middle ground is, say, a company that gets grants from the government.
4. I might agree with him about the Government imposing DEI, but he would make a better argument if he clarifying the distinction.

I am reminded-of the following- some private companies think they will get more business if they say HAPPY HOLIDAY instead of MERRY CHRISTMAS. Yet FOX NEWS brings out the false *War on Christmas* narrative.

5. Objects to companies doing DEI and ESG and PRIDE MONTH all lockstep. Would he object if they all did Christian things lock step?
6. (This is throughout the book) He uses the word WOKE so much it seems to just mean things he does not like.
7. The following quote puzzles me

After decades of sending tens of billions of dollars to New York City Financiers with no strings attached, adding fuel to the fire of WOKE capital, last year the state of Florida instituted sweeping restrictions on state investment funds that are designed to protect the interests of everyday Floridians, especially by eliminating ESG investments.

I wonder if the first part is true, and if so, what does it have to do with ESG. This passage isn't so much wrong as incoherent.

5.4 A Revolutionary Response

1. Kevin says that the founders would have hated the current state of affairs. I wonder if we care what the founders would have liked or disliked. Thomas Jefferson was worried about the dead hand of history guiding the future.
2. Kevin gives an example of something the founders did hate: The British East India Company had complete control of the Tea market. But see next point.
3. He talks about the Boston Tea Party and gets it right, which most books do not. (Though his presentation is muddled) The colonists were protesting a DECREASE in Tariffs on Tea which was bad for local merchants.

This Schoolhouse Rock video shows what is commonly taught about the Boston Tea Party and its incorrect (Its a very short part of the song).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wv0Zs3g3qIo>

4. He mentions Teddy Roosevelt taking on corruption and anti-trust. This is correct. He seems to avoid two points

- (a) In an early chapter his complaint was that in an earlier era American Companies were PRO America, including the Robber Barons. Now he is against them.
- (b) Later in the book he is shy about using anti-trust. This is his usual dilemma: He wants to DO SOMETHING to make America work, but as a conservative he wants a small government. But see next point.
- (c) He DOES want stop trusts that are government protected. This is CORRECT and GOOD, no undermining here. But he doesn't quite know what to do about big corporations that are not protected by the government.

5.5 The Future of our Prosperity/The Ownership Society

1. *The best conservative approach towards Unions, government interference in business, and WOKE capitalism works towards one goal: The restoration of American Ownership in dynamic companies founded in real communities.*
 - (a) He should like Unions in that its a way for workers to get their fair share. There ARE arguments against them, but he does not make those arguments.
 - (b) Gov Interference in Business– some interference (e.g., Tariffs) he would like, some he wouldn't so for him this is to much of a broad stroke.
 - (c) What is WOKE Capitalism?
 - (d) American Ownership is a very hard to define concept now. There are foreign companies with factories in America, supporting American Jobs. Cars are now made from parts from different countries, so much so that Car companies are against th Trump Tariffs (prob against the tariffs on car PARTS but for the Tariffs on cars).
 - (e) Recently there was a Hyndai factory in GEORGIA that had 300 South Koreans there to help install stuff. Everything they were doing was legal. Even so ICE raided them and they will likely be going back to South Korea. This will COST Americans their

jobs. This might be Trump being petty since he doesn't like that the Rep Gov of Georgia, Brian Kemp, refused to find the votes for him to win in 2020.

- (f) What is a *real community*? I think he wants to go back to small towns where everyone knows your name. Nostalgia, perhaps for an era that never was, or never was as good as he paints it. Company towns were like that and were awful.
- 2. He claims that big companies only concerned with the bottom line have hampered innovation. He is probably right about that. But Tariffs also hamper innovation.
- 3. *For every Hillsdale College or Univ of Texas at Austin there were dozens of institutions coasting on huge subsidies in the form of student loans and credential inflation while failing to deliver a transformative education experience for their students. Many students waste their years in school and end up learning on the job anyway.*

That's why the Heritage Foundation recommended, in our Project 2025, that Congress pass legislation prohibiting automatic algorithmic filtering by educational level in hiring, at least for positions in which a professional degree isn't required by law (such as nurses, doctors, and structural engineers).

- (a) The first paragraph may well be true. However, the two examples he gives are odd. Hillsdale is a conservative christian liberal arts college. They rank 50th for liberal arts colleges (I do not know if that's good, but it might be). A contrast Haverford (which he does not mention) is a non-religious (even leftist) liberal arts college. It ranked 8th. He wants to equate Conservative Christian with Good School. One red flag from Wikipedia: *In October 2023, two female students sued the college after reporting instances of sexual assault from male students. They accused the college of performing a phony investigation and then blaming them for being raped.* Haverford has no such scandals.

The University of Texas at Austin is a fine school, but since they get state funding, I thought he wouldn't like that.

Hillsdale does not take federal funding and Haverford does.

- (b) Prohibit automatic filtering for education. I can easily imagine a liberal saying that since Blacks often don't have a college degree and having Kevin call it *WOKE*.
- (c) More seriously, isn't prohibiting filtering government interference with business? He should distinguish- if he says the GOVERNMENT should not filter or have requirements (he brings up that Day Care Workers need a college degree in Wash DC which he says is absurd and he is correct) he has a point, but for private business I'd be curious what he thinks. He does not make the distinction so I assume he thinks Private companies should be PROHIBITED from filtering on education. I wonder how he feels about filtering on RELIGION. I suspect he would be in favor of companies being allowed to do that (he mentions Christian Companies favorably in other parts of the book).
- (d) There is a movement to BAN having say if you ever served time in jail. Its called BAN THE BOX. I wonder how he would feel about that one?

4. *The federal gov spends more than \$100 billion per year subsidizing higher education but less than \$2 billion supporting non-college pathways. ...*

After decades of pushing every student to go to college, we now face a situation in which critical industrial and artisanal skills, not to mention the trades, are in shorter supply.

This is interesting if true. I do not know if its true. I also wonder how much AI and technology will make many of the jobs he is referring to obsolete. He wants the government to spend MORE on non-college pathways (I assume trade schools and small business loans). An intelligent discussion could be had on the value of college, bringing down the costs, the value of trade schools, and more gov support for them, and are they needed. He is not interested in an intelligent discussion. Oh well.

5. Kevin He seems to equate college with courses on ultra liberal interpretations of history and obscure courses (e.g., How the American Constitution was based on Native American Tribal ideas).

- (a) He seems to ignore STEM entirely.

- (b) He exaggerates the extend to which schools are to politically left. An intelligent discussion could be had about this. He is not interested in that.
 - (c) He never mentions slavery or the destruction of the Native Americans or anything bad about America.
6. Kevin: *Entrepreneurs will find ways to use AI to outsource and automate many bureaucratic and admin functions. We need to ensure that our regulatory framework allows them to do so, that the Uni-party doesn't use regulation to protect make-work HR jobs and impose WOKE commissars throughout the corporate economy (the current status quote). Preserving open-source AI not controlled by WOKE companies is especially critical for our time.*

This is very muddled.

- (a) WOKE is, as usual, undefined.
- (b) The AI will be programmed to be WOKE so why is this a win?
- (c) Lots of jobs may be destroyed by AI. Including Trade jobs and others that he cherishes so much. The question of *Which jobs WILL AI replace? Which jobs SHOULD AI replace? What is governments role in this?* is a very important one that requires an intelligent discussion. More than usual he is not interested in that conversation and picks at a very small (perhaps zero) aspect of it.
- (d) If he wants to complain that HR jobs are make-work, he has a point. To bad its lost in his other babble.

5.6 Make Ownership Great Again

- (a) (Bill) I had heard that the 2008 recession was caused by a loosening of financial regulations and that the Dodd-Franks bill, which was passed because of the recession, would help fix that. I have no idea if this is true. He claims that the DF bill hurts small business. I have no idea if this is true. He wants to exempt small business from many regulations. This may be a good idea. It may also be a good idea to look at some regulations and see which ones you want to dump.

- (b) Kevin: *Personally, I think unionization is not the right answer: in almost all every case, something like a worker's council could do the same job.* He should say WHY he doesn't like unions (there ARE real reasons he could point to). I looked up Worker's Councils

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Workers%27_council

and I think they only work for small businesses. An intelligent discussion needs to be had about this. Here I think he might be interested in that.

- (c) (This is Bill) A very hard question for a capitalist society is what to do about companies that legally squeeze out the competition? Anti-Trust law would seem to be an answer, but he is muddled and biased on that:

I am skeptical about the use of antitrust powers to micromanage the "right" amount of competition. [Bill-I respect that opinion and may agree with it, but what should be done then?]. But I am not skeptical about their proper-use, as envisioned by Teddy Roosevelt: To rein in globalist corporatism that threatens the republic [Teddy Roosevelt was concerned with the Robber Barons who Kevin seemed to think were TRUE AMERICANS in an earlier part of the book.] Uniparty managers, modeling themselves on the East India Company, pursue scale to destroy local competitors and then prostitute themselves to the Deep State to avoid accountability to the American public for the destruction they cause to American Families and communities. [A problem with the entire book is thinking that the Uniparty is that Unified or powerful-some of what is happening to America is the result of unchecked capitalism.] Burning down companies such as Google and BlackRock by breaking them up will be good for America [What happened to your skeptical use of micromanaging?]

He began with a good point, slide into conspiracies, and then ends with only wanting to break up companies he does not like.

I looked up Black Rock-

- i. They are in favor of ESG (investing in Green products)
- ii. They are in favor of DEI.
- iii. They have close ties to China which George Soros said *is a*

tragic mistake that would damage National Security.

iv. Has ties to the Federal Reserve.

The first 2 points—its a private company and I do not see any HARM in ESG or DEI. The last 2 points are valid gripes against them. So I can see why he has legit gripes with them (the second two). Even so, is there any conservative company that he would want to break up. This all requires an intelligent discussion that he is not interested in having.

7. *Corporations can no longer have their cake and eat it, too, lecturing Americans about WOKENess and bossing around their small business suppliers and customers, all the while manufacturing their wares in smog-ridden Communist China.*

WOKENess and smog-ridden seem irrelevant to his point.

6 Freedom Requires Order

I actually agree with much of this chapter though, as usual, the silence on some points is deafening.

He talks about how we need order and uses the LA Riots (following Rodney King) and the George Foreman riots as examples. What about the Jan 6 insurrection (never mentioned in the entire book)? Lynchings of black people in the south (to be fair that was a long time ago)? White supremacists beating up gays and blacks (to be fair that was on a smaller scale). He also objects to the WOKE capitalists approving of these riots, and of the BLM marches being allowed to not wear masks during COVID whereas others had to.

There are some valid points here (as in my parenthesis) but also omissions.

As his first example of the need for order he uses a *movie about events that did not happen*. Talking about the movie *The Man who Shot Liberty Valence* he writes

[Jimmy] Stewart understands that if “Liberty” is let loose without law, a society will be unjust and anarchically. He starts learning to use his Second Amendment rights, and— well, you’ll have to watch it to find out what happens next.

That sounds like the basis for a parody YouTube clip, where cowboys in a movie from the 1800's talk about their second amendment rights rather than talk about practicing how to shoot.

(Page 134) He tells a long story that I won't quote here about Prot C in 2018 San Francisco that doubled the business tax—the money was supposed to be used for *Homeless services*. It was supported by Marc Benifoff, a business man, because he thought it would help him by hurting his competition. It had very bad consequences. The whole story is probably true and is indeed awful.

Page 131: In his complains about Gavin Newsom being soft on crime (which may be correct) he talks about restrictive gun control laws and says

To make matters worse, as chronicled in Zach Smith and Charles D Stimsons expose "Rogue Prosecutor: How Radical Soros Lawyers Are Destroying America's Communities", California is now run by George Soros-backed progressive prosecutors such as LA DA George Gascon, whose city saw property crime increase by a whopping 49% during his previous tenure in the same post in San Francisco.

This is a valid critique. However, he just had to throw in the anti-semitic dog whistle term *George Soros*. He will mention Soros two more times, on pages 135 and 139, to remind me again that Gascon is a *Soros-backed DA*. Thats three anti-semitic dog whistles in one book. It makes me now want to take him seriously.

6.1 Learning Helplessness

1. He talks about how when terrorists are captured they are deprived of things and learn to be helpless, which makes them talk. This is part of enhanced interrogation. He does not say if this is good or bad. He goes on to say that ordinary American citizens are being taught to be helpless. Odd analogy but the point that American's are being taught to be helpless may be true. I thought he was going to talk about over dependence on Government. But see next point.
2. *Today, the Uniparty is applying these same psychological torture techniques not to radical jihadists but to the population of law-abiding everyday Americans. This torture method is the rampant violence and petty crime. It's the state forcing experimental vaccines into people's arms, lest they lose their jobs or business and schools for months on*

end and to huff through itchy masks. It's the smug despotism of tellings parents that schools are going to trans their kids whether they like it or not, or Child Services will take them away. Its the sexual humiliation of forcing teenage girls to change in the same locker room as biological men and of making their parents let it happen.

- (a) COVID again? That is a terrible example since it really was a health crisis, made worse by the anti-vax movement. And again, one can do a scientific study about the effectiveness of masks or lock downs. On vaccines the evidence is quite clear. But he is not interested in an intelligent discussion.
 - (b) The state is NOT telling parents to trans their kids. In fact, quite the opposite, some states are BANNING any kind of treatment for gender-issues. It IS possible that some kids are transitioning and shouldn't be-fine- lets do studies on gender-issues. OH, Can't because those funds were cut.
 - (c) Trans people in Locker rooms is a rare issue but it is a valid issue.
3. He then talks about the shooting in Uvalde where the police where incompetent and the parents and others were not allowed to help out. The police being incompetent is an issue. The parents not being allowed to storm the place- not sure about that. This happened in TEXAS. Gee, he doesn't blast their DA as being Soros-backed.

6.2 Fighting Back

1. Fight homelessness by making it illegal. The book *Abundance* had much better ideas about that.
2. Katrina-he does not mention that a Republican, George W Bush was prez at the time. He suggests that local communities can do better with disasters. I am skeptical.
3. This is not in the book but worth a mention: The following is a true sequence of events
 - (a) North Carolina has hurricanes and needs help.
 - (b) The Biden administration sends FEMA.

- (c) Republicans spread rumors that FEMA will take away their homes.
- (d) NC homeowners threaten FEMA workers with guns, so they leave.
- (e) Republican leaders complain that FEMA does not help republicans..

6.3 The Guarantor of All Other Liberties

This is the usual stuff about how the Second Amendment- the right to bear arms (as opposed to the right to arm bears) guarantees all of our other liberties since it keeps the government in check.

I agree with this. With Trump sending ICE troops and others into cities, with masks on (so NOW they like masks!), and trying to prevent people from voting (no more mail-in), its good to know that all of those second amendment people who own guns recognize the danger and will protect us.

Kevin repeats the lie that Biden sold us out to the Taliban when it was Trump who made the deal. Biden then felt he had to honor it.

6.4 Cultivating Order

Kevin: *We're going to put into place district attorney's who enforce the law*

1. In Trumps first term he cut the FBI's budget dedicated to tracking white supremacists who commit violence.
2. Jan 6
3. In Trumps current term his AG is going after people who he doesn't like.

7 There's No Freedom Without the Frontier

1. The American Frontier offered people a chance to excel and challenged them.
2. He leaves out any mention of the massacre of the Indians.
3. He leaves out any mention of how the Government actually was needed to conquer the frontier.

4. There is a notion that the frontier is closed. He challenges this by talking about business innovation and space. Good Point. I wonder what he would think of the right-wing-meme that we never landed on the moon.
5. He complains that people in California look to inner space rather than outer space. The following passage starts to make this point, but then gives an example that undermines his point.

Kevin: *For every would-be astronaut exploring outer space, there was a pyschnonaut of “inner space” looking to conquer the frontiers of human consciousness: Eastern yogis, Pentecostal preachers, Esalen seminar leaders, New Age gurus, LSD chemists. It’s no coincidence that Steve Jobs living in an LSD-soaked orchard commune, chose an apple with a bite out of it as his companies symbol “And ye shall be god’s, knowing good and evil.*

- (a) Looking into yourself is not necc. bad.
- (b) I am surprised Kevin includes Pentecostal preachers.
- (c) Steve Jobs lead Apple-a very successful company. Is this supposed to be an example of why its bad to look into yourself? I think Kevin wanted to take a shot at communes, hippies, and Steve Jobs, but he jammed it into this passage.

7.1 The False Frontier: The Internet

1. Kevin quotes (in order to refute) the following from John Perry Barlow’s 1996 manifesto “A Declaration of the independence of Cyberspace”
Cyperspace does not lie within your borders. ... Ours is a world that is both everywhere and nowhere, but it is not where border live.

Kevin objects since the buildings and stuff ARE somewhere. Who controls the internet matters. He point to two examples of the internet having real-world effects

- (a) *As seen in the US Government’s keeping Twitter online to fuel protests against the Iranian government or supplying Ukraine with battlefield internet via Elon Musk’s starlink, being able to turn it*

on and off is a powerful geopolitical tool. Correct. I wonder if he approves or not.

- (b) *The Deep state's proximity to the internet has made it not only easy but positively convenient for NSA programs such as MUSCULAR to scoop up the entire data flow of companies such as Yahoo! and Google.* He later does say that he objects. To his credit and my surprise he *does not* blame the liberals. He just says that its bad.
- (c) Kevin thinks being drawn away from a real frontier Americans *will be tempted towards electing not a violent tyrant but an infantilizing guardian.* I thought he would talk about people looking at their phones and screens and ignoring whats around them. He does not. And it looks like Trump is both a violent tyrant and an infantilizing guardian.
- (d) Kevin makes a leap to *Either the people of the USA will rise up and reclaim the American Frontier, and burn down the fences enclosing us, or the Uniparty will slaughter us, replacing us with a diverse array of foreigners, cyborgs, and hive mind bureaucrats extolling the virtues of "our sacred democracy."*

7.2 The 1st, 2nd, 3rd temptation: Convenience, Safety, Immaturity

I thought this would be about how we give away private information just for discounts and convenience, but it was not.

1. The Deep state and corporations work together and share data on Americans and this is bad. TRUE.
2. *Thanks to the brave work of the Republicans leading the House of Reps' select subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Fed Gov, we are just beginning to see the scope of the problem.* No mention of how Trump has weaponized the government. To be fair, no mention of Biden either.
3. Kevin (as usual) gives a lot of space to an example that undermines his point. He complains that the *Hunter Biden Laptop* story was censored. Compare the following: (1) The harassment of Hunter Biden by

the Republicans even though no evidence is found, (2) A story about Hunter Biden's laptop that was obtained illegally is suppressed.

4. He claims that whenever something goes wrong people clamor for the government to *do something* and this can lead to too much gov. That's a good point. He then uses as an example the Canadian Truck Drivers who refused to get vaccinated and protested by blocking traffic. Again, a really bad example of what might have been an interesting discussion. The question of when government should intervene can be discussed intelligently. He's not interested in that.

5. Trump has bailed out farmers harmed by his own policy (in his first term) and has now had the government buy 10% of intel (I've seen articles about republicans calling Trump a Socialist). I wonder what Kevin would make of that.

6. *In 2022 the FBI sent a SWAT team to arrest pro-life activist Mark Houck at his home, pointing guns at his wife and seven kids (he was acquitted).* This is TRUE and helps to make Kevin's point. He did leave out what Mark H was accused of. The story is murky but he seems to have either (a) assaulted a volunteer reproductive health clinic escort, or (b) shoved a volunteer reproductive health clinic escort. There is a law, Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) that makes impeding people from getting an abortion illegal. So it is likely that Mark H broke the law. But it does not sound like you need a SWAT team.

<https://www.witf.org/2022/11/07/how-conservative-media-and-republican-politicians-are-trying-to-silence-pro-life-activists/>

Mark H and the rep media say there were dozens of agents. There were four.

7. *In 2023 FBI agents raided and shot dead Craig Robertson, an overweight 75 year old crank, after he posted violent memes about president Biden*

This seems to be true, though the violent memes were death threats. Even so, being shot was not warranted

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2023/aug/10/craig-robertson-biden-assault>

8. The last two points are interesting and I didn't know them and perhaps the left wing lame-stream media did keep them from me. However, the

Trump admin has unleashed violence on Wash DC and ICE agents across the country. So this is a general gov problem.

7.3 Total Control

More complaints about DEI that I might agree with if they were more coherent and less personal.

7.4 Back to the Frontier

He tells us about Palmer Luckey who was fired from Facebook because he donated \$10,000 to the Donald Trump Campaign. He later sued and got \$100 million.

His point is that Conservatives are discriminated against. This is undermined in that (a) his grievance was addressed, and (b) Trump wants to charge the following people with treason:

1. *Former Prez Barak Obama (2025)*

Formal Charges: Politicized Intelligence about Russian Interference in 2016 election.

Real Reason: Barak is everything Trump wants to be- respected, admired. And of course Barak IS guilty of a PWB (President While Black).

2. *Miles Taylor and Christopher Krebs*

Formal Charges: Not clear

What Trump Did: Stripped them of their security clearances.

Real Reason: They were critical of his leadership.

3. *General Mark Milley (2023)*

Formal Charge: Calling the Chinese. He DID do this. Here is the context: The Chinese had bad intel that Trump was going to do a first strike against them. Mark M may have averted WW III by calming them down. He may have done things outside the chain of command. However, the Sec of Defense, Christopher Miller, was involved with these events.

Real Reason: Trump was mad since the events made it seem like he DID want to attack China.

4. *Comcast/NBC News (2023)*

Formal Charge: Their news coverage is Treasonous.

Real Reason: Their news coverage is anti-Trump

5. *James Comey and the FBI (2023 but also earlier)*

For the Russia investigation.

6. *Joe Biden (2020)*

Formal Charge: Spying on the Trump campaign.

Real Reason: Beating Trump in 2020.

7. *Democrats (2018)*

For not clapping at his state of the Union address.

8. *Former Special Council Jack Smith*

Formal Charge: Violating the Hatch Act which limits a fed employees partisan activities. Even if true, not treason.

Real Reason: Smith brought 2 Fed indictments against Trump. the Hatch Act.

9. *Senator Adam Schiff (2019)*

Formal Charge: Trump demanded the FBI investigate mortgage fraud allegations. Trump also complained that they helped bring the impeachment over Ukraine.

Real Reason: The impeachment over Ukraine.

10. *Former Veep Mike Pence*

Formal Charge: I don't know

Real Reason: Not supporting Trumps attempt to steal the election on Jan 6.

11. *Former AG Bill Barr*

Formal Charge: I don't know

Real Reason: Not supporting Trumps claim that the election was fraudulent.

7.5 Reasserting the Principles/Reclaiming the Power

1. Lots on federalism-bad, localism-good. Kevin complains about the red tape that Space X has encountered from the Environmental protection agency. These complaints may well be valid. But Kevin does not mention that Space X needed Federal funds to get started.
2. Kevin: *Lawyers and policy makers in the New Conservative Movement need to interrogate every single authority claimed by the admin state to discern what is a valid and needful use of federal powers and what is an unconstitutional and unenforceable infringement on our endless frontier federalism. This process should not be just a casual chitchat but rather a body cavity, strip-search, enhanced interrogation. So unlike perhaps some of the 1990s conservatives, I don't want to drown the government. I want to waterboard it.*
 - (a) The first part of this statement sounds like he is making an honest attempt to see what WORKS and DOES NOT WORK in government. But the last sentence indicates that he is eXtremely biased going in. Elon Musk proved the point by not doing a careful study and just doing a casual chitchat to decide that lots of what the gov did was bad.
 - (b) The bias is bad in two ways. I illustrate why bias is bad and how to avoid it with three examples.
 - i. I quote an old blog post of mine *Imagine that the CATO Institute (a Libertarian think tank) did an honest study of gun control. (a) they find that gun control reduces crime—would they publish it?, (b) they find that gun control increases crime—they would publish but because of the known bias nobody would believe them.* My point: you really have to go into these studied unbiased and accept the conclusion. So DO NOT have the CATO institute do a study- have an honest third party.

- ii. The Republicans insisted on a recount in Arizona. They did it. They found that Biden still won. They DID NOT accept that. They STILL claimed the election was stolen.
 - iii. A future example: RFK Jr will soon do a study that SHOWS that vaccines cause autism.
- (c) He gives good examples of government overreach. His story about a kids lemonade stand being regulated is true (I looked it up). Farmers selling their wares to neighbors are also regulated. But he does not have an intelligent discussion of when the gov should step in. There have been real cases of tainted food (radioactive shrimp is a recent one). If the answer is to only step in after the fact—that may be to late. (He does seem to want NO regulation of small business but YES regulation on large businesses, so that IS the start of an intelligent conversation.)

7.6 Reining in the Deep State

He gives several examples of the government abusing their power, which I assume are correct (I checked some of them). He DOES NOT do this in a partisan way. Here is a quote that I agree with with regard to the Trump admin so I wonder if he would

... Congress needs to rein in the weaponization and politicization of federal law enforcement by providing better direct oversight of the FBI, instead of letting the agency hide behind the skirts of the dept of justice.

8 We're Not an Empire

This is the least partisan chapter of the book. That's because foreign policy does not have clear partisan issues. There have been far left and far right people who are isolationists.

8.1 WOKE Imperialism/Enlargement/The Foreign Policy Blob

1. He is an isolationist. *Then New Conservative movement must reject the WOKE imperialism that has characterized our post-Cold War for-*

eign policy, renew our emaciated military forces, and restore our traditional America First approach to global statesmanship devoted to preserving the United State' liberty and independence and leading primarily through friendship, free commerce, and our own virtuous example.

- (a) The phrase *WOKE imperialism* seems odd. I thought he meant that we shouldn't do nation-building. But the next section of the book titled *WOKE Imperialism* talks about how Ukraine, during its war, made Gay Marriage legal. So I don't know what *WOKE Imperialism* is. Perhaps imposing our values on another country? But what if they were values he approves of? He does not clarify any of this.
 - (b) Does he know that *America First* is (a) a movement against us going into WW II which was part-honest-isolationism an part-anti-semitism, and (b) a dog whistle to anti-semitism.
 - (c) Ignoring my first two points the statement is reasonable but I wonder how we should deal with, say, the Ukraine war. His answers later are very weak.
2. He gives a pretty good history of the Military post-Cold war: there were no threats to our way of life (even 9-11 didn't change that- Al Quada is nowhere near as much of a threat as the USSR was) and we could have withdrawn somewhat from the word, but we didn't. He seems to AGREE with some of what we did (expand NATO). He is against the free trade treaties but that seems like a DIFFERENT TOPIC. He seems to talk about military engagement and Free Trade interchangeably.
 3. To be fair there is one issue where free trade and military stuff may be in the same conversation: China. He does not like our free trade with them, which enables them to build up their military. And worse-they are beating us economically because they cheat on their treaties. There is some truth to that, though (as usual) the issue is more complex than he says.
 4. Post Cold-War the majority of Americans and even politicians wanted to be less involved with the world militarily. But minority of two usually-opposed groups pushed us into Foreign engagement: liberal

internationalists who wanted to defend *the liberal order* and neoconservatives.

5. (Bill) The question of when to intervene in a conflict IS a hard one.
(Bill) Here is a list of wars the US has been involved with post-cold-war and my comments on them. The wars are from these website:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_wars_involving_the_United_States_in_the_20th_century

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_wars_involving_the_United_States_in_the_21st_century

The comments are mine.

I rate each war as

GOOD: We won and the final result was good

I may add DK for Don't Know if I am not sure of my answer.

MIXED: We won but the final result is mixed

BAD: We lost. If it a good cause I may add that.

SMALL: Not really a war. I may also add GOOD or BAD

ONGOING: To early to tell. I may also add GOOD or BAD which applies to us being there.

Kevin's main complaint is that we should not be in these wars at all, independent of if we win or lose.

1990-2000:

- (a) 1990-Gulf war I. George HW Bush. Wikipedia says its a win. Iraq was clear aggressor. We had a clear objective and achieved it. GOOD
- (b) 1991-2003. No Fly Zone over Iraq. George HW Bush, Bill Clinton, George W Bush. Wikipedia says USA won. Wikipedia says its a win. I'm less happy since we had to go into Iraq again and its still a mess. MIXED.
- (c) 1992-1995. Somali Civil War Round 1. George HW Bush, Bill Clinton. Wikipedia says Somali won (is that good or bad) and that the UN Mandate saved close to 100,000 lives. BUT Civil War is still going on. BAD.

- (d) 1992-1995. Bosnia and Herzegovina. George HW Bush, Bill Clinton. Wikipedia says US Victory. NATO has achieved military and peacekeeping activities. Wikipedia says we won. GOOD (this one surprised me).
- (e) 1994-1995. Intervention in Haiti. Bill Clinton. We restored democratically elected president Jean-Bertrand Ariside. But he was toppled later. So was it worth it? MIXED.
- (f) 1995-1996. The third Taiwan Strait Crisis (I don't know what the first two were) Bill Clinton. Not really a war. China was mad that America hosted the prez of Taiwan so China conducted large scale military exercises. So we did the same. Then tensions were de-escalated. This hardly seems like a war. Kevin might approve of this one since he hates China. SMALL-GOOD.
- (g) 1998. Monrovia Crisis. Bill Clinton. Liberia. Very limited- The US embassy was attacked and American Defended it. Some of the rebels were killed which lead to the second Liberian civil war which lead to the deaths of 50,000 people. Our role here is so limited that I don't think this counts. SMALL-MIXED. Short term objectives achieved but long term was terrible. Not sure how much the two are connected.
- (h) 1999. NATO intervention in the Kosovo War. Bill Clinton. NATO won. Lots of bombing, lots of civilian deaths, but the ethnic cleansing of Albanians was stopped. MIXED.

2001-present

- (a) 2001-2021. Afghan War. George W Bush, Barak Obama, Donald Trump, Joe Biden. Complete disaster for America. BAD.
- (b) 2002-present. US Intervention in Yemen. George W Bush, Barak Obama, Donald Trump, Joe Biden, Donald Trump Lots of drone strikes, 1500 dead. To what end? To help the brutal dictatorship but oil-rich Saudis? I ask non-rhetorically. ONGOING-BAD.
- (c) 2002-2017 Operation Freedom Eagle (Philippines). George W Bush, Barak Obama, Donald Trump. American victory-Substantial reduction in terrorist groups GOOD-DK.

- (d) 2003-2011 Iraq War. George W Bush, Barack Obama. A mess for them and for us. BAD.
- (e) 2003. Intervention in Iraq-Kurd conflict. George W Bush. The US ended an Islamic Incursion. SMALL-GOOD.
- (f) 2004-2018. US intervention in a war in Northwest Pakistan. George W Bush, Barack Obama, Donald Trump. Drone strikes on Jihadists in Pakistan. MIXED. Seems to have worked but also killed many civilians.
- (g) 2007-present. Second US intervention in the Somali Civil War. George W Bush, Barack Obama, Donald Trump, Joe Biden, Donald Trump. ONGOING-BAD.
- (h) 2009-2016. Operation Ocean Shield (Somali Pirates). Barack Obama. SMALL-GOOD.
- (i) 2011. International Intervention in Libya. Wikipedia calls is a victory since we overthrew Qaddafi, but there was a civil war in Libya in 2014. MIXED.
- (j) 2011-2017. Against the Lord's Resistance Army in Central Africa which is an extremist Christian group. Wikipedia calls is a win. The major activities were stamped out but there are still some minor ones. GOOD-DK.
- (k) 2013-2024. Us Military Intervention in Niger. Obama, Trump, Biden. BAD.
- (l) 2014-2021. US led intervention in Iraq. Wikipedia says its a win. Killed lots of jihadists. Iraq government regains control-but is that good? MIXED.
- (m) 2014-present. Syria Civil War Obama, Trump, Biden, Trump. MIXED-we won but need to wait and see what new Gov does.
- (n) 2015-present. Saudi-led intervention in Yemeni Civil War. Obama, Trump, Biden, Trump. ONGOING-BAD.
- (o) 2015-2019. US Intervention in Libya. Obama, Trump. Wikipedia says a win. Thousands of Jihadists in Libya killed. Troops Withdrawn. GOOD.
- (p) 2020. Nigerian hostage rescue. Trump. Wikipedia says US won. Six of the Seven bad guys killed. Seems to small to count. SMALL-GOOD.

- (q) 2022-present. Ukraine War Biden, Trump. Only money and arms, no people. To early to tell. But this one has a very definite aggressor so its justified. ONGOING-GOOD cause.
- (r) 2023-present. Operation Prosperity Garden. Biden, Trump. Middle East. On going so hard to tell. ONGOING.
- (s) 2024-present. Gaza War. Biden, Trump. To early to tell. ONGOING-BAD. This will set the cause of Mideast peace back ... forever.
- (t) 2024-present. Israel-Hezbollah conflict. Biden, Trump. ONGOING-BAD. The middle east is always a mess.
- (u) 2025-present. Iran-Israel war. Trump. ONGOING-BAD.

Of the 29 wars I ranked 9 as being GOOD. Of those 9, 4 were small, 2 were DK, and 1 is ONGOING, though I still stand by them as GOOD.

I list them all in brief:

1990-Gulf war I.

1992-1995. Bosnia and Herzegovina.

1995-1996. The third Taiwan Strait Crisis. (SMALL)

2002-2017 Operation Freedom Eagle (Philippines). (DK)

2003. Intervention in Iraq-Kurd conflict. (SMALL)

2009-2016. Operation Ocean Shield (Somali Pirates).(SMALL)

2015-2019. US Intervention in Libya.

2020. Nigerian hostage rescue. (SMALL)

2022-present. Ukraine War (ONGOING)

On this point Kevin has a good point. I was surprised we've been involved in 29 wars which is a lot!

8.2 Hindsight/Hollow Forces

1. To Kevin's credit he says he was for Gulf War 2 and he was WRONG. (Andrew Sullivan, another Conservative, also admits he was wrong and wrote an entire book just on that. However, the two would not get along since Andrew Sullivan is gay and early on made the conservative case for Gay Marriage).

2. Kevin should wonder what points of view he holds now will he regret later. I suspect he will regret supporting Trump since Trump either doesn't agree him, or is to inept to do policies the Kevin wants.
3. Kevin never mentions Gulf War I.
4. He quotes Fareed Zakaria and I agree with the quote: *William F Buckley once remarked that the defining element of conservatism is realism—realism about the limits of state power, the nature of human beings and societies, the complexity of international life. Yet many conservatives [necons] who believe the state can do nothing right at home think that it can do nothing wrong abroad. (If things go badly, why, more money, bigger bombs and ground troops will straighten it out.) Many who are scornful of social engineering at home seem sure it will work beyond our borders.*
5. He quotes *The Sharon Statement (1960)* and agrees with it: *That American Foreign Policy must be judged by this criterion: Does it serve the just interests of the United States?*

The Sharon statement was the founding statement of principles for Young Americans for Freedom. The inaugural meeting of the group was in Buckley's childhood home in Sharon, Connecticut, hence the name. Two year later Tom Hayden had *The Port Huron Statement* as a response. It would be interesting to read both and see how they held up over time. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sharon_Statement

- (a) The Young Americans for Freedom were anti-communist and I suspect supported the Vietnam war and other wars. This is NOT hypocrisy, but it does raise the point that it can be hard to tell what's in America's interest.
- (b) Sometimes it is hard to tell. For example, if NAFTA makes South America better economically then we will have less immigrants coming from there which Kevin would approve of. But this is a long term idea that might not work.
- (c) It was in America's interest to declare war on Mexico and take their land (the Mexican-American war). Other policies were also good for America but objectively immoral.

- (d) Does this lead to a *might makes right* policy, both militarily and with trade?
 - (e) My view: We need to consider our own interests, short term and long term and morally, carefully. So the statement is too simple, but is a good starting point.
6. Kevin says that our military is over-stretched and that's probably true. And then his WOKE-tick comes out: *Ensconced in sinecures where they [American Military Decision makers] where they earn half a million dollars a year (or more) to cheerleaders for the WOKE Empire.*
 7. Other countries cashed in the peace dividend from the end of the Cold War but we didn't.
 8. Too many military projects are badly thought out and/or canceled. So the money we are spending is being wasted. He seems to mind BOTH that we shouldn't be spending it at all AND that we are spending it badly.

8.3 Returning to America First Statesmanship

1. *Foreign entanglements and disunity at home go hand in hand.* This is probably right but he undermines his own point with an absurd example: He points to Democrats who call Putin an *evil genius* and Republicans who are now *pro Russia*. This is not a case of *both-side-ism* since Putin really is *evil* and there is no good reason to be pro-Russia.
2. *We must vigilantly restrain foreign influences. The more we are involved in other countries, the more influence they will have, that can lead to corruption.* This may be correct, though the biggest example of this is Trump and Tariffs.
3. *The essence of strategy is the alignment of means and ends. The wars we fund are crushing us—look at the deficit.* Counter: Trump's tax cuts also contribute to the debt. Kevin refers to *GOP budget hawks* but I think they are mythical.
4. *Friendship and commerce are the best means of promoting the United States Statesmanship.* That sounds so WOKE.

Some interesting history (paraphrase): Kevin says that before WW II the USA was NOT isolationist—we traded a lot with other countries, accepted immigrants, and our Navy roamed the world (I wonder if Kevin would approve of all of that). But the following sentence is odd:

The United States intervened periodically when its interests or citizens were threatened, principally in the Western Hemisphere but also against the Barbary Pirates, to open trade with Japan, and to secure needed Pacific coaling stations.

I am surprised he mentions opening trade with Japan since that was done partially by military force, not *Friendship*.

<https://history.state.gov/milestones/1830-1860/opening-to-japan>

5. One point- he doesn't seem to ever say whether entering WW II was a good idea. His hero Pat Buchanan explicitly says that we should not have entered WW II

<https://richardlangworth.com/buchanan-unnecessary-war>

I do not dismiss this viewpoint out of hand.

- (a) One reason why WW II is remembered as a good war is because WE WON.
- (b) Another reason is The Holocaust. But that is not why we entered it.
- (c) If we had never entered it then what would have happened? Would Germany eventually attack us or would we have a cold-war-type peace with them.

6. *Statesmanship demands cultivated virtue*

Kevin invokes George Washington here and elsewhere as warning about being entangled in foreign conflicts. I do not find this argument compelling since the world is very different from what it was in the early 1800's.

Kevin says that places like Harvard's JFK school of government brain-wash their students into thinking America can fix any problem abroad. He may be right about that. He earlier said that Necons (Republicans) have the same view so this is not a partisan point.

8.4 Ukraine and Reagan's Real Legacy of Statesmanship

1. Kevin begins by saying that the initial support of Ukraine was good and reasonable.
2. Kevin criticize that Biden had no real endgame and no strategy beyond giving them money and arms. While this may be true, I'm not sure what the endgame could have been.
3. And then it all falls apart: *In the spirit of Ronald Reagan the Peacemaker, even as the United States continues to support the Ukraine cause, we must begin earnest negotiations with the Russians to try to find a peaceful settlement for the wider region. Any settlement will surely be a painful compromise (the bywords of any true statesman, one the neocons are allergic to). It will require pushing our European allies to do far more for Europe's defense. But the alternatives are unending war, substantial escalation and wider war, or the collapse of one of the states involved (which would unleash horrors). I know what the Gipper would have sought.*

Putin has shown time and time again that he is not interested in a peaceful settlement. He even turned down a generous one that Trump offered.

Trump has shown time and time again that he is a terrible negotiator—giving away stuff to Putin even before negotiations begin.

The above quote says nothing about tougher sanctions on Russia.

4. WOKE-Tick: *So under our [Kevin's] new paradigm (really a return to our principles) our initial military aid for Ukraine might have looked basically the same, even if the foreign aid budget for the WOKE governance in Ukraine would have been redirected to accountability and counter-corruption efforts.*

8.5 The Problem of the Pacific

Seems to have a set of valid complaints

1. *The White house (Biden) asked for \$60 billion more for Ukraine, \$14 billion more for Israel, \$14 billion more for border security, and a paltry*

\$7 billion for the broader Indo-Pacific theater—only \$2 billion linked in any meaningful way to deterring China.

2. Lots of stuff about waste in the Military.
3. Erosion of our defense industrial base.

8.6 Sacrifice

He talks about how are men in the military sacrifice and die. True.

Quote:

The American people were encouraged by their leaders to shop at the mall while some families made the ultimate sacrifice. That wasn't just bad policy; it was a spiritual attack more deadly than anything Al-Qaeda could cook up. It was a direct assault on our republican character and system of self-government.

He does not mention that he is referring to George W Bush, a republican.

8.7 Gratitude

This is about Buckley's call for a national service program so that young people can give back to this country and learn the value of service (non-military).

That sounds so WOKE.

9 We Can't Coexist Without Communist China

9.1 The Mandate of Heaven

10 Elites Must Serve the Nation

11 The Dawn's Early Light

I am skipping to the very last section which is really absurd

11.1 The Alamo

I first quote my notes on **The War That Forged a Nation: Why the Civil War Still Matters** by James McPherson. Note that James McPherson is a respected historian and not a *radical leftist historian* like Howard Zinn.

Mexico won its ind from Spain in 1821. (Read elsewhere: This was done by War, but not the usual sort. It was more of a sequence of uprisings from 1810 to 1821). Mexico invited Americans to settle in the sparsely populated area now called Texas. Conflict of Ideas Mexico had outlawed slavery, but the Americans brought their slaves with them. There were other issues as well: Americans did not obey land-rights laws. In 1836 the Americans declared Texas Ind. Texas petitioned America to annex them (I find this unusual—usually when a country annexes another, the annexed-country doesn't like it.) Texas entered the USA as a Slave State.

(Back to Bill) So clearly America was on the wrong side of the war: the USA was the aggressor and the main issue was that the Americans in Texas wanted to have slavery.

The battle of the Alamo was during this war. America lost that battle, but the slogan *Remember the Alamo* became a rallying cry for Americans to support the war.

Kevin has a PhD in History. So you would think he knows this and has learned that the childish myth (Davey, Dave Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier!) that America was on the morally right side is incorrect.

The last section of the book is about the Alamo and the struggles we face now. Here is a quote

Crockett could have despaired [when at the Alamo and it looked hopeless]. ... He could have counted up the Mexican soldiers and the horses and cannons and decided that the Texas cause was surely lost. But he didn't.

He didn't despair, not because he anticipated some miraculous rescue but because he believed in the justice of his cause even if he didn't live to see it. Knowing that he faced certain death, he was nonetheless full of hope.

⋮

There is a time for writing and reading—and a time to put down the books and go fight like hell to take back our country and build our future. Taking his stand at he Alamo, Crockett wrote his last entry before putting aside his diary forever to help guard the walls. They'll be my last words too:

“No time for memorandums now. Go ahead! Liberty and Independence

forever!”

Kevin does not seem to realize that Davy Crockett was on the wrong side morally. Kevin may still think that getting Texas was good for the USA (it was!) but he totally ignores the moral issues. That would be acceptable except for the fact that he is all about morality.