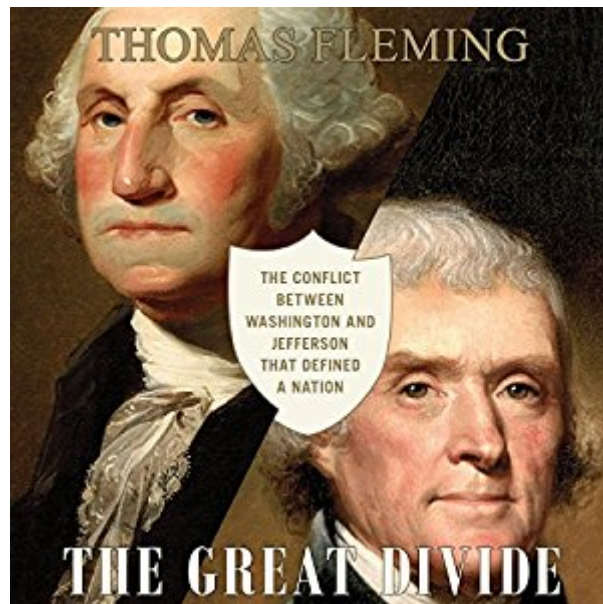


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The Great Divide: The Conflict Between Washington And Jefferson That Defined A Nation



Synopsis

History tends to cast the early years of America in a glow of camaraderie when there were, in fact, many conflicts between the Founding Fathers - none more important than the one between George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. Their disagreement centered on the highest, most original public office created by the Constitutional Convention: the presidency. It also involved the nation's foreign policy, the role of merchants and farmers in a republic, and the durability of the union. At its root were two sharply different visions of the nation's future. Acclaimed historian Thomas Fleming examines how the differing characters and leadership styles of Washington and Jefferson shaped two opposing views of the presidency - and the nation. This clash profoundly influenced the next two centuries of America's history and persists in the present day.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 16 hours and 22 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Audible Studios

Audible.com Release Date: March 17, 2015

Language: English

ASIN: B00SVY2I2A

Best Sellers Rank: #86 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Politics & Current Events > Political History & Theory #87 in Books > Law > Legal Theory & Systems > Non-US Legal Systems #91 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Political Science > Comparative Politics

Customer Reviews

According to this book by Thomas Fleming, there were many conflicts between the Founding Fathers about the role of government in the United States of America, and the most important of these was between George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, respectively the first and third presidents of the United States of America, had very different views of the role of government and specifically of the presidency. In the introduction to this book, Mr Fleming writes that: "Washington was first, last and always a realist", while "Jefferson tended to see men and events through the lense of a pervasive idealism." How did these differences in character and leadership style impact on the government of the fledgling nation,

and do those differences still have an impact on the present? What is the role of government and how should presidential power be exercised? Mr Fleming provides a detailed examination of the differences in leadership style between Washington and Jefferson, as well as the different experiences which they each brought to the presidency. Before I read this book, I knew that Washington was the general who led the colonies to freedom during the American War of Independence and was unanimously elected as the first President. I knew that Thomas Jefferson was the principal author of the Declaration of Independence, had served as the United States Minister to France and as the first United States Secretary of State under President Washington before becoming the third president. I knew very little about either the fact or causes of the political differences between them. In this book, Mr Fleming explains the development of the Constitution, which followed the Articles of Confederation approved by the Second Continental Congress.

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