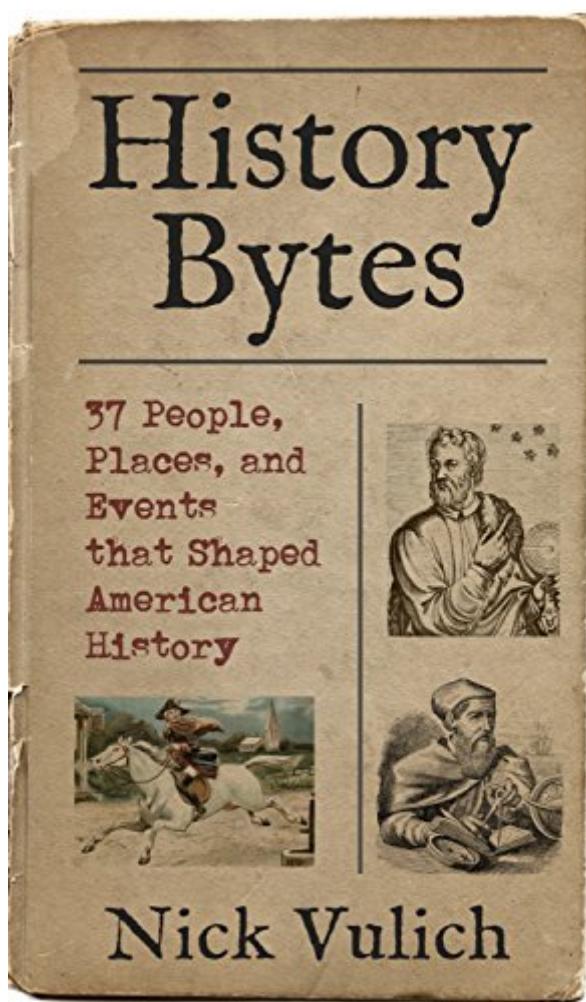


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# History Bytes: 37 People, Places, And Events That Shaped American History



## Synopsis

Don't like history? You're probably reading the wrong books. Read this book, and you're gonna think, wow! Why didn't somebody tell me that? American history is full of strange paradoxes, and that's what makes it so interesting. The truth is much of what we learn about history is a series of little white lies that over time have grown into tall tales. Why doesn't everyone know the Boston Massacre wasn't really a massacre? Subsequent testimony proved the soldiers fired in self-defense. The King Street riot was started by a group of four street thugs who got their rocks off attacking lone British soldiers. Sam Adams and Paul Revere twisted it into a massacre. And, if you think the Boston Tea Party was a response to British taxes that raised the price of tea in the colonies, think again. The Tea Act of 1773 actually reduced the price of tea paid by the colonists. The people hurt by the Tea Act were the smugglers. The lower price of tea undercut their business, and ensured that the East India Company would have a monopoly on tea. The South Carolina Nullification Congress of 1832 was a harbinger of things to come. The question was if a state disagrees with a federal law, does it have the right to nullify it, and disregard that law? Vice-president John C. Calhoun argued state's rights superseded federal laws. President Andrew Jackson believed to his dying day that Calhoun was a damned traitor, and that he should have strung him up from the nearest branch. The Black Hawk War was a mix-up of frontier madness, mayhem, and murder. Illinois Governor John Reynolds called out the militia and raised thousands of volunteer troops. General Winfield Scott marched his regulars half way across the country to Fort Armstrong at Rock Island. Lieutenant Colonel Zachary Taylor led a group of infantrymen in the fighting. In the end, it was a massacre that nearly wiped out the Sac tribe. In the fall of 1845 President Polk offered Mexico five million dollars if they would recognize the Southwestern Boundary of Texas at the Rio Grande. When Mexico refused his offer Polk decided to force the issue. He sent General Zachary Taylor and 3,000 troops to Corpus Christi, Texas. In March of 1846 General Taylor moved his forces into the disputed territory between the Rio Grande and Nueces Rivers. Soon after that, Mexico was provoked into a war with the United States. It has been said that James Buchanan was a weak, timid, old man • who didn't do anything to prevent the Southern states from seceding. Some historians have even gone so far as to declare Buchanan was an accessory after the fact. • He was a president, Southern sympathizer, and traitor. But, was he? Imagine what it would be like to wake up, flip on the morning news, and discover Bradley Cooper or Ashton Kutcher assassinated President Obama. That's what happened in 1865. People were shocked when they learned John Wilkes Booth killed President Lincoln. Booth was one of the most popular actors of his day. He was young, just twenty-six years

old, considered one of the most attractive men in America. At the time he killed Lincoln, Booth was pulling down \$20,000 a year as an actor (that's roughly \$300,000 in 2015 money). And, yet "he sacrificed it all for his political beliefs. What was going on in the mind of John Wilkes Booth? I could tell you more, but you get the idea. Things aren't always what they appear to be. There are two sides to every story. All that stuff your teacher told you in school "it may, or may not be true. Read this book, and decide for yourself which version you should believe.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

As with many truncated, off the cuff, spur of the moment book reviews that litter the Internet these days, History Bytes, by Nick Vulich, tends to either get played up way too high, or summarily trounced out of hand. When writing any review it is never my intention to go to either extreme (sort of how history itself definitely should NOT be written), so despite any and all detractors (or even the folks who've actually opined that this book should be "required reading" in our nation's schools), I think it deserves at least four out of five stars. Now, is History Bytes, as some have arguably

observed, not a "real" history book? Probably not. It's most likely not university thesis material, but then not all "real" history books are as succinct, accessible, and easy to read as this one definitely is, either. So even though the author may not come off as being the preeminent history professor that every kid (young or old) really ought to have in school, it's not like he hasn't accomplished something better than average with this particular book about "historical bytes." Yes, the writing could have been more highly polished, or could have simply been more fleshed out. And sure, there are a few of the usual eBook style typos and all that jazz that really is easy enough to overlook, but I still found reading History Bytes to be an intensely interesting, and even fun experience. What Mr. Vulich does best here, is to take a considerable collection of somewhat disparate, though certainly important events in the history of the United States, and put them into an almost Reader's Digest type of format.

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