

The R Document

Irving Wallace

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Before the Patriot Act, there was . . . The R Document

As crime and violence threaten to engulf America, the President proposes a daring new amendment to the Constitution, allowing the Bill of Rights to be suspended during times of national emergency.

To its supporters the 35th Amendment is the only way to keep America from sliding into chaos. Its opponents see the Amendment as an outright attack on freedom.

Christopher Collins, the newly-appointed Attorney General, has reservations about the Amendment, but feels confident that it would not be abused in the way its more hysterical opponents fear. Then a deathbed confession from his predecessor warns him to beware of something called "The R Document".

What is The R Document, and what does it have to do with the proposed 35th Amendment? As state after state ratifies the Amendment, pushing it ever closer to becoming the law of the land, Collins must get to the bottom of an unimaginable conspiracy--before time runs out for the fundamental liberties of all Americans.

First published in 1976, Irving Wallace's bestselling thriller is more timely than ever before.

The R Document Details

Date : Published May 2nd 2006 by Tom Doherty Associates (first published 1976)

ISBN: 9780765354471 Author: Irving Wallace

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From Reader Review The R Document for online ebook

Nandakishore Varma says

There was a time when I was a fan of Irving Wallace, and the type of thrillers he produced. I read this during that time, in the early eighties, and was enthralled. It is the story of a proposed amendment to the US constitution, to suspend the Bill of Rights during times of "national emergency". This was originally published the year after Indira Gandhi declared a national emergency in India, so I think Wallace got the idea from there.

It is taut, fast-paced and the denouement is appropriately satisfying. But please don't show this book to the Trump administration - it might give them practical ideas. And in reality, there may not be any happy endings.

Supriyo Chaudhuri says

I wanted to take a break from reading and hence picked up this Irving Wallace book from the 70s. Of course, the plot looks well-worn - were there not so many movies around the always endangered American freedom - and dated too, as no one hacks emails but rather send technicians to bug phones etc. Yet, this is one of those books I couldn't drop till I finished - and one I could read on Tube Journeys and even in the rush hour train on my way back home. And, frankly, I knew where the story was going - one always knows with those books - and yet, this was never predictable. Every time one could see a possible resolution, it ended in disappointment, ending in a completely unpredictable, though somewhat fantastical, fashion. I am now completely refreshed and go back to reading social history of Victorian England.

Nick says

Perhaps the best Irving Wallace novel I've ever read. Well worth trying out.

ChrisGA says

40years old but very timely...

Shari Scott says

Yup...I read it again. And this time it was impossible to read without comparisons to the political environment we are in today. All too plausible unfortunately.

Jimmy says

Irving Wallace, along with Robert Ludlum and a few others in the 1960s, 70s and 80s, had the knack for producing best-selling, compelling, page-turners, often about hot-button social or political issues. Idly scanning a friend's bookshelf recently, I found myself pulling out "The R Document" and perusing the first few pages. Of course, I was immediately engrossed and had to see it through to the end.

On the one hand, these political thrillers should not be underestimated. Their authors' skills with regard to story, structure, pacing, and immediate access to their characters minds and motivations, make the best of these novels deserving of success, even admiration. (and envy from lesser-known authors)

On the other hand, the plots strain credibility and logic more often than not, everything is spelled out for the reader, with little left to the imagination, and the characters are ultimately one dimensional, black and white, lacking in human complexity. Plus, in Irving Wallace's case, the required sex scenes of this genre are beyond his abilities. "Their coupling was long and frenzied," he informs us, and that's about as "hot" as things get. Later on, our hero is shocked when it is revealed that his wife might have participated in "nude sex orgies." (Are there any other kind?)

But Wallace is not out to titillate us, he means to warn us, even frighten us, about what can happen when societal fear, of rampant crime in this case, leads to proposals by some hardliners in our government, to sacrifice our precious rights for the benefits of law and order, until all rights are superceded by emergency measures. He shows us how easily this can happen if you and I are not vigilant.

The director of the FBI wants to enforce these special measures, the Attorney-General is not so sure. The US population is divided, but as murders and other chicanery and dirty tricks mount, especially for those who oppose this new amendment, it becomes crucial to discover the contents of the mysterious "R Document" which might expose what the proposers really have in mind.

This post-Watergate tale from 1976 has parallels to recent history when, during the Bush administration, it seemed that any dissent against war or other measures, was quashed and crushed and labeled unpatriotic, where careers were destroyed and lying was justified. As in 1976, so in 2006. Irving Wallace had a serious purpose in mind: to educate the general public about our hard won rights, where they originated, and how easily they could disappear. That lesson is relevant in any decade.

Kruti says

I particularly find this author books intriguing. The subjects that he has taken up are very good. Even story being a fiction, he has always taken the scenarios of his period as a backdrop and weaved a beautiful story from it. Having read some of his famous books before, I had a lot of expectation from this book and the book has come to my expectations. Very nicely he has portrayed how the acts could be modified and take away the rights of the people. Though the act when seen through the naked eye could never indicate to be dangerous. But how people for their needs manipulate and interpret it in different ways to meet their ends.

Loved the book and I would suggest people to read this.

Luellen Gilmore says

If you want to read a very scary book, this is it. It is not scary as in vampires and other paranormal stuff. This is scary in that it can happen and is happening right now. For anyone who values freedom, this book is a must read.

Thom says

My good friend Dean put this on a list of "10 books that influenced" him. What I found here was a history lesson wrapped in a thriller and decorated with cautionary notes. The antagonist was strong; the protagonist was weak but in the end made powerful connections. I found the history lesson solid and the thriller compelling - I finished the book in two days. Written in the 70s when the crime rate was higher than today, an updated version would probably fight terrorism... Patriot Act, anyone? Overall a very good read.

Jerry says

Though political thrillers aren't usually my thing, I enjoyed this one. The plot was rather convoluted, the heroes were admirable, and the villain utterly despicable.

KARTHIK B says

HIS BEST!!!

Donn Lorber says

Written in 1976 it's a chilling tale of FBI planning to take over the country by undoing the Bill of Rights. Crime and fear are the motivators, seems very relevant in 2018. It's a great testament to the need to protect individual freedom and free expression

Mari Pacheco says

Foi extremamente bizarro ler um livro de 1978 com um enredo tão extremamente relevante atualmente, em pleno 2018. Me senti em um episódio de Arquivo X (*I Want to Believe!*), mas exatamente por isso, que recomendo que você procure por essa joia rara naquele sebo amigo: é mesmo impressionante. Não quero estragar a surpresa, mas vou te contar que o enredo trata de uma conspiração para adulterar a imprensa e conseguir apoio público para uma aprovação de lei que, basicamente, transformava uma democracia em um governo autoritário, com direito a, inclusive, campos de concentração.

Como eu disse, bizarro.

Leiam e me contem se também traçaram os paralelos ou eu que estou assistindo muitos documentários de teoria da conspiração...

Edith says

Si bien el anterior libro que leí me gustó la exploración de una cultura diferente a los ojos de personas muy distintas entre si, esta historia de conspiración no tiene la suficiente profundización. Existe una reflexión pero no pasa de ello.

Me prestaron otros dos libros físicos de este autor, así que seguiré pero ya sin tanta curiosidad porque creo que tiene un patrón muy claro de escritura. No me esperan muchas más sorpresas. Espero equivocarme.

Roger says

Four and 1/2 stars. Good political thriller, consistently kept me turning the pages all the way through. Author gives just enough legal background about the constitution to make the plot and motives clear without getting into boring lectures.

It follows a young, naive Attorney General learning the amendment backed by his president and FBI director is a dangerous attack on the constitution, and gradually getting entangled in the battle to stop it's ratification to the point lives are at stake and his own family endangered.

The only reasons it's not 5 stars is the author lets his bias show at least once, and again in a skewed way, attributing conservative arguments to "liberals" and liberal arguments to "conservatives," but this was written 40 years ago and the connotations of the labels have changed. Also the villain is a little to stereotypical in his blatant villainy.

None of this detracted from the enjoyment of the novel, which is suspenseful throughout. The author skillfully keeps it interesting and realistic while moving the story forward.