



The Heart of the Declaration: The Founders' Case for an Activist Government (The Lewis Walpole Series in Eighteenth-Century Culture and History)

Steve Pincus

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An eye-opening, meticulously researched new perspective on the influences that shaped the Founders as well as the nation's founding document

From one election cycle to the next, a defining question continues to divide the country's political parties: Should the government play a major or a minor role in the lives of American citizens? The Declaration of Independence has long been invoked as a philosophical treatise in favor of limited government. Yet the bulk of the document is a discussion of policy, in which the Founders outlined the failures of the British imperial government. Above all, they declared, the British state since 1760 had done *too little* to promote the prosperity of its American subjects. Looking beyond the Declaration's frequently cited opening paragraphs, Steve Pincus reveals how the document is actually a blueprint for a government with extensive powers to promote and protect the people's welfare. By examining the Declaration in the context of British imperial debates, Pincus offers a nuanced portrait of the Founders' intentions with profound political implications for today.

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