

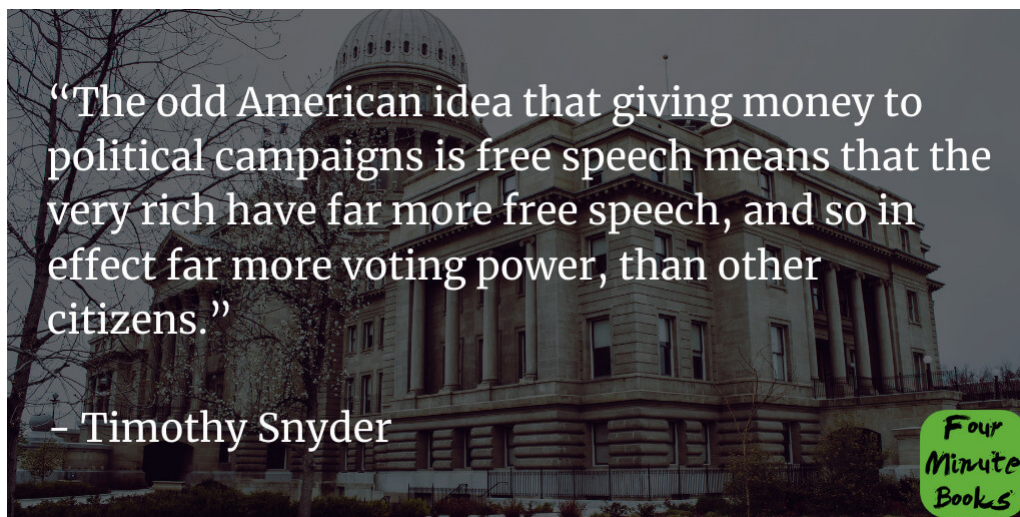
# On Tyranny Summary



**1-Sentence-Summary:** *On Tyranny* makes you more vigilant of the warning signs of oppression by identifying it's political nature, how to protect yourself and society, and what you can do to resist dangerous leadership.

**Read in:** 4 minutes

**Favorite quote from the author:**



Up until recently, Americans mostly believed that the future would continue to bring progress. Far behind were the times of Fascism, Nazism, and Communism. Now they were enlightened and working toward a globalized, prosperous society. It was almost like they believed history could move in just one direction: toward democracy and reason.

But letting our guard down meant clearing the way for some of the problems of history to return. Many believe our trend toward authoritarianism signals tyranny could be on the horizon once again. So what can be done about it? Luckily, we have history to look at to help us learn to identify tyranny and stay away from it.

In his book *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, historian Timothy Snyder gives a comprehensive guide on how to resist and survive in America's current growing climate of authoritarianism. He expertly makes connections between events of the last 100 years and now. He will help you recognize the warning signs of a deteriorating democracy and teach you how to protect yourself from dangerous political leaders.

Here are the 3 lessons from the book that stand out the most:

1. Elevate yourself and your mind above the political noise that makes people stupid by reading books and avoiding the news.
2. Nurture the community around you by destroying social barriers.
3. Social media and the internet make it easier for you to unintentionally limit your freedoms by giving up your privacy, so be vigilant.

Are you ready to learn all about tyrants and how to resist them? Let's go!

## **Lesson 1: Avoid the news and read more books if you want to be smarter than the masses that succumb to political agendas.**

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Sometimes it's hard to avoid the constant noise of the political ads and slogans around us, particularly during election time. Their catchy slogans are meant to get caught in our heads. To avoid getting sucked into the groupthink, Snyder encourages you to seek out ways to find and express your own ideas.

One of the best ways to think for yourself is to turn off the media and read books instead. No, he's not suggesting you avoid the internet completely, but make sure you get diverse and reliable sources of information if you do get it online.

**If all you do is listen to one source or listen to what the mainstream media has to say only, you will hear exactly what politicians want you to hear.**

Books are the best way to go if you want to think for yourself and get truly informed. They can offer more context as well as show you the gray areas that mainstream media will not. They can help you experience how other people live, which will help you be more well-rounded. Even a fiction book will help you think about ideas you may not normally consider.

## **Lesson 2: Take apart social barriers in your community if you want to keep it alive and well.**

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Connections with the people around us give us our humanity. Too often we walk through our day to day activities looking only at devices and not at each other. Making eye contact makes you a connected part of the community.

**When communities are divided, tyranny can isolate and distract us with social barriers.** We can resist this by taking down these barriers and bringing together a diverse group of people who can think together.

In short, we can resist tyranny by bringing different social circles together. Poland was finally able to resist Communism when the Solidarity labor movement pulled together a diverse coalition of people.

The Communist regime successfully turned workers against protesting students in 1968. In 1970, when these workers were on strike, they were violently suppressed. It took until 1976 when the intellectuals and workers finally banded together to make change in the government.

The alliance grew stronger until 1980 when the workers were on strike again, but this time they had students, lawyers, and other workers on their side. Soon, they were 10 million strong. They were able to regain seats in the government and this marked the beginning of an end of the communist regime in Poland. Soon after, eastern Europe and the Soviet Union followed suit.

### **Lesson 3: Watch out for the ways social media and the internet get you to give up your freedoms.**

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We all know someone who over-shares on Facebook. They post wherever they are and what they're doing at all times, and often they don't have any privacy settings so the whole world can see what they're up to. It's scary. But in truth, all of us give up a little bit of our personal freedom when we share details of our lives online.

**If you really think about it, the less control you have over who has access to your life's details, the more personal freedom you are relinquishing.** No matter who has access to it, we all need to protect what's ours. Once someone has access to it, our rights we consider inherent can be taken away.

We know hacking can be a major problem and invasion of privacy. Just think of the 2016 presidential election, where Clinton campaign emails were hacked. It threw the election into chaos and it made matters worse that the media treated as if it was just any other news. It also served as a huge distraction.

The media preys on our affinity for gossip and conspiracies. Research shows people tend to be more interested in conspiracy theories than concrete facts about politics. It's a huge problem because it distracts us from truly important political issues.

Snyder encourages us all to protect our freedoms by securing our privacy online. So check for malware and spend less time online and more time face to face. This way you can make sure tyrannical regimes don't have your personal data as ammunition.

### **On Tyranny Review**

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I didn't like On Tyranny very much, but that doesn't mean that you won't enjoy it! I'm not the biggest fan of history or politics and felt like it had way too much of an agenda for my taste. It's important to be aware of the topics this book brings up, though, and if you're into history then you'll probably like it better than I did.

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## **Who would I recommend the *On Tyranny* summary to?**

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The 35-year-old activist, the 19-year-old who thinks they might want to study political science, and anyone that would like some ideas on how to fight back against oppressive governments.