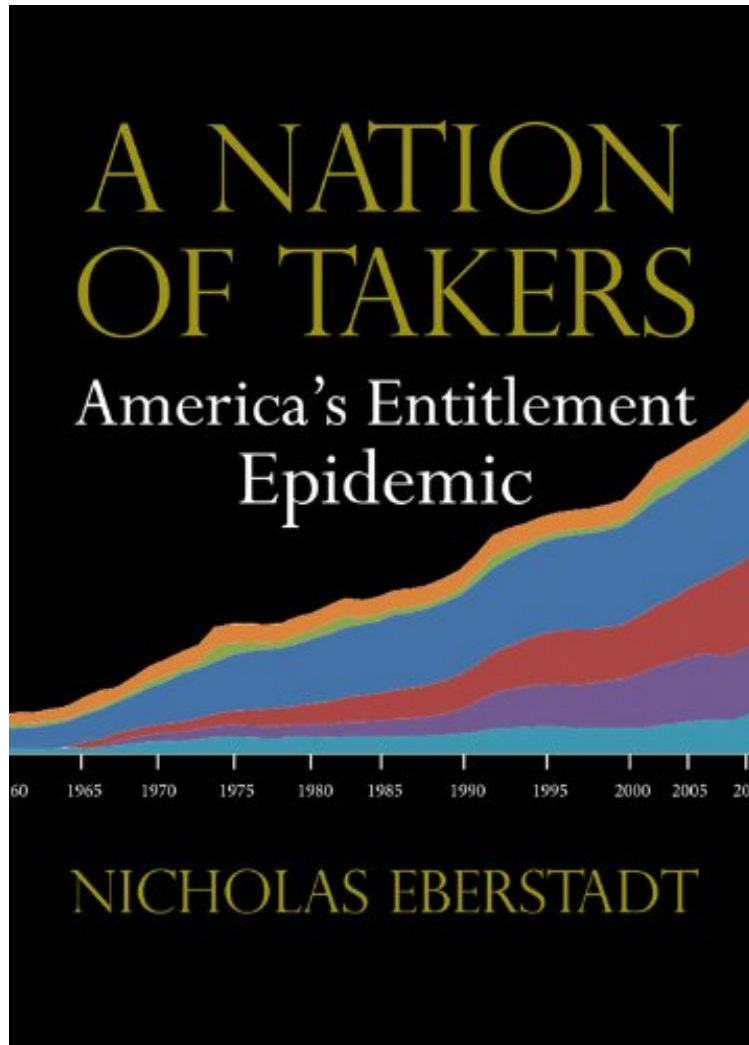


(Ebook free) A Nation of Takers: America's Entitlement Epidemic (New threats to freedom series)

## A Nation of Takers: America's Entitlement Epidemic (New threats to freedom series)

Nicholas Eberstadt

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**Nicholas Eberstadt : A Nation of Takers: America's Entitlement Epidemic (New threats to freedom series)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Nation of Takers: America's Entitlement Epidemic (New threats to freedom series):

12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Worthwhile content on a critical subject, but highly-reader-unfriendly packaging (paperback) By Paul I share author Eberstadt's point of view, that entitlements are a time bomb that will need to be drastically modified else they'll blow up the nation's future (i.e. make later generations live lives of privation compared to ours -- and curse us for it [I'm 66]). And the book is a fairly good review of the subject, mostly at the top level of overall budgets for entitlements in comparison to GDP (and their changes over the last five

decades). There's one exception: The explosion in the use of Social Security's disability Insurance [DI] program is discussed in more detail and, naturally enough, follows immediately upon a section titled "The Male Flight from Work in the Entitlement Society." One point, in particular, sticks in my mind: "[T]he proclivity to rely upon government disability payments today is at least as much a 'white thing' as a tendency for any other American group." This conclusion (pp. 53 -55) is based upon the demography of regions that have high DI use compared to ones that don't. Eberstadt works at the American Enterprise Institute, and his views are consistent with that. The book also contains few-page-response sections from William Galston and Yuval Levin. Galston is at the Brookings Institution, and he politely disagrees with Eberstadt's theme that the huge surge in use of entitlements directly reflects a degradation in the civic character of American society. I come down on Eberstadt's side, but Galston's demurral is definitely worth considering. (Levin's remarks, largely in accord with Eberstadt's viewpoint, are tantalizingly interesting but too terse for me to fully understand what he's saying.) I don't think this product is worth five stars, because I think it needed further polishing. There are quite a few typos, and many of the charts (graphs) are indifferently labeled, so it can be a chore to figure out just what they're telling us. Why not four stars then? Because the paperback is a highly-reader-unfriendly package for this chart-laden material. The book is five inches by seven inches, so it's understandable that each chart takes up a whole page. But this means that one usually has to flip back and forth several pages to see the chart and read the corresponding discussion -- highly distracting and inconvenient! So somebody made a bad choice in going for this layout, but they may have done it to disguise the fact that this "book" is really more of a middling-length essay -- in a larger format, it would be obviously "skinny," and perhaps \$8.45 would seem a bit much for what you get. 8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Really thorough (if not terrifying) financial assessment of the US government entitlement system. By Bayard B. Really thorough (if not terrifying) financial and statistical account of the US entitlement system (primarily health care, retirement, and disability programs). It's a fairly balanced politically bipartisan critique of what the US government is doing. The authors' biggest attack is on the present generation of entitlement recipients ("takers") who are financing their largesse by borrowing huge amounts of money via Federal government deficit spending and thereby forcing the next (and even future unborn) generations to pay for it. The author points out that these entitlement programs are the result of both Republican and Democratic political actions. There are also three chapters at the end with critiques or at least somewhat different viewpoints of the author's assessments. 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. No matter how you name them, there are two ... By JLH No matter how you name them, there are two major groups in America today. They are those that work, pay their taxes and try to help others and those that do not work, do not pay taxes and are the victims to be taken care of by the other group. One of Eberstadt's major points is that this cannot continue endlessly, especially if the percentage of people in the first group continues to increase, while the providers continue to shrink in numbers. There is no free lunch - the price will have to be paid.

In *A Nation of Takers: America's Entitlement Epidemic*, one of our country's foremost demographers, Nicholas Eberstadt, details the exponential growth in entitlement spending over the past fifty years. As he notes, in 1960, entitlement payments accounted for well under a third of the federal government's total outlays. Today, entitlement spending accounts for a full two-thirds of the federal budget. Drawing on an impressive array of data and employing a range of easy-to-read, four color charts, Eberstadt shows the unchecked spiral of spending on a range of entitlements, everything from Medicare to disability payments. But Eberstadt does not just chart the astonishing growth of entitlement spending, he also details the enormous economic and cultural costs of this epidemic. He powerfully argues that while this spending certainly drains our federal coffers, it also has a very real, long-lasting, negative impact on the character of our citizens.

About the Author Nicholas Eberstadt, a political economist and a demographer by training, holds the Henry Wendt Chair in Political Economy at American Enterprise Institute. He is also a senior adviser to the National Board of Asian Research, a member of the visiting committee at the Harvard School of Public Health, and a member of the Global Leadership Council at the World Economic Forum. He researches and writes extensively on economic development, foreign aid, global health, demographics, and poverty.