

**Book Review: *Libertarian Autobiographies:  
Moving Toward Freedom in Today's World.*  
Edited by Jo Ann Cavallo and Walter E. Block. Palgrave Macmillan, 2023**

*Robert W. McGee*

Fayetteville State University  
1200 Murchison Road  
Fayetteville NC 28301, USA

*e-mail:* bob414@hotmail.com  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6355-288X>

When I first became exposed to the libertarian philosophy in the late 1960s there were only a few libertarian philosophers who were currently cranking out the philosophy. Walter Block and Murray Rothbard come to mind, as well as Leonard Read. A few years later I became aware of the existence of Hans-Hermann Hoppe. And of course Ludwig von Mises and Bettina Bien Greaves. I was fortunate enough to meet them all over the years. I even got to co-author with two of them.

Since then, the number of libertarians who have become active in publishing has increased dramatically. Jo Ann Cavallo and Walter E. Block have done an excellent job of assembling the autobiographies of many of the most prominent libertarian philosophers, economists, historians and sociologists. Department chairs and deans could use this volume as a recruitment tool if they need to add a professor to their faculty to increase intellectual diversity on their campus. What these authors have to say has become increasingly important in recent years, as much of the world seems to be descending into various forms of totalitarianism. The authors in this volume provide alternatives to much of the current intellectual thinking.

Every one of the autobiographies is interesting. Many of them are inspirational. Some of the individuals lived under tyrannical governments at some period in their life, which makes their escape to freedom even more impressive, as their life experiences propelled them to tell their story.

There is a joke that if you have 10 libertarians in the same room they will have 12 different opinions. That is true of the contents of this book. Although they can all claim the label “libertarian,” they disagree on some issues, and they come from diverse backgrounds. Some are anarchists; others are not. Some are atheists or agnostics. Others belong to or affiliate with several religions. Some have switched their religious views over the years. Many of them started out as something other than libertarian and have changed their economic and political views as they learned how to think logically.

The structure of the book makes for easy reading. The chapters do not follow each other like a novel or textbook, so there is no need to start at the beginning. You can start by picking the chapters of the authors you have read, heard of or perhaps met and proceed from there. I hesitate to say this book is “mandatory” reading because libertarians cringe at the mention of that word, so I will just say that you should place this book at the top of your list of things to read and leave it at that.