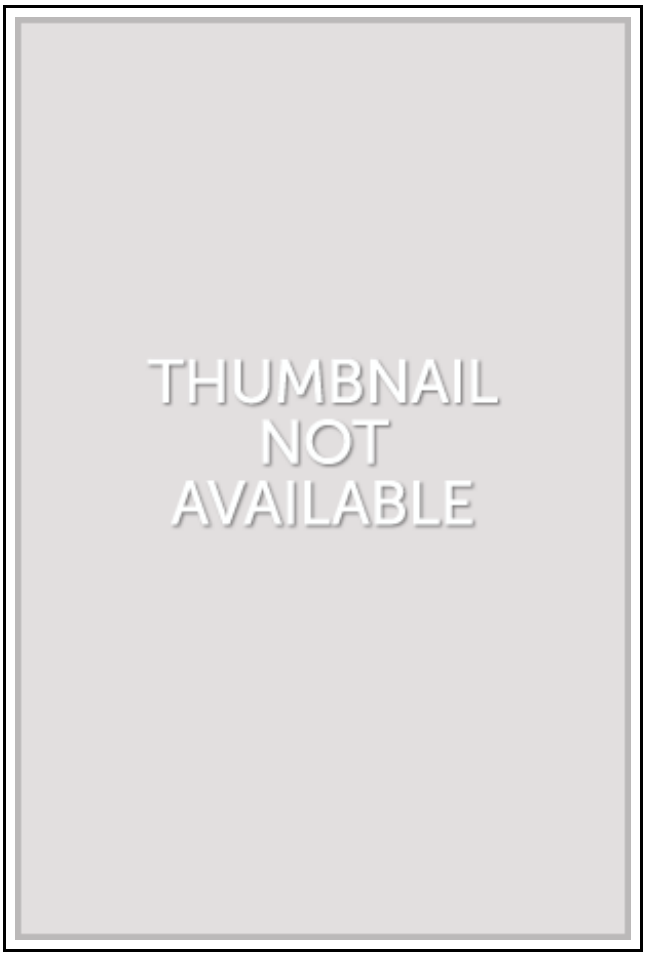
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Reviews

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A RENEGADE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES: HOW DRUNKS, DELINQUENTS, AND OTHER OUTCASTS MADE AMERICA

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Simon & Schuster Ltd. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, A Renegade History of the United States: How Drunks, Delinquents, and Other Outcasts Made America, Thaddeus Russell, In this groundbreaking book, noted historian Thaddeus Russell tells a new and surprising story about the origins of American freedom. Rather than crediting the standard textbook icons, Russell demonstrates that it was those on the fringes of society whose subversive lifestyles helped legitimize the taboo and made America the land of the free. In vivid portraits of renegades and their 'respectable' adversaries, Russell shows that the nation's history has been driven by clashes between those interested in preserving social order and those more interested in pursuing their own desires - insiders versus outsiders, good citizens versus bad. The more these accidental revolutionaries existed, resisted, and persevered, the more receptive society became to change. Russell brilliantly and vibrantly argues that it was history's iconoclasts who established many of our most cherished liberties. Russell finds these pioneers of personal freedom in the places that usually go unexamined - saloons and speakeasies, brothels and gambling halls, and even behind the Iron Curtain. He introduces a fascinating array of antiheroes: drunken workers who created the weekend; prostitutes who set the precedent for women's liberation; criminals who pioneered racial integration and brazen homosexuals who broke open America's sexual culture. This is not history that can be found in textbooks - it is a highly original and provocative portrayal of the American past as it has never been written before.

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