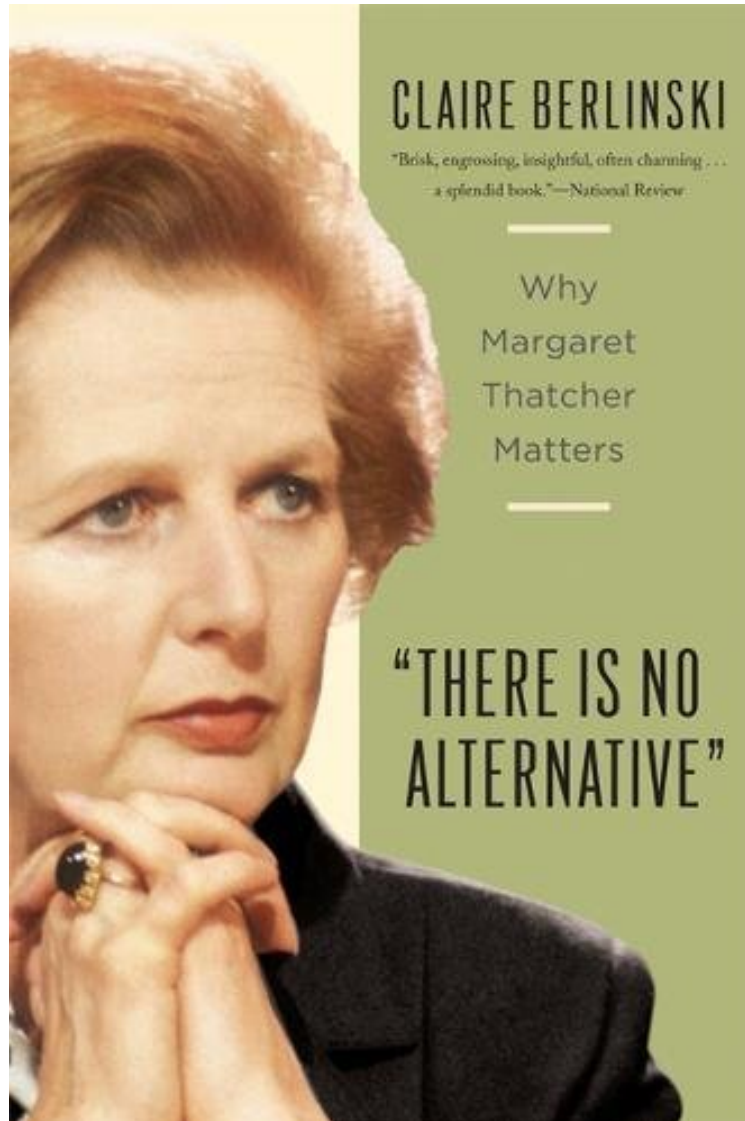


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## There Is No Alternative: Why Margaret Thatcher Matters

*Claire Berlinski*

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**Claire Berlinski : There Is No Alternative: Why Margaret Thatcher Matters** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised There Is No Alternative: Why Margaret Thatcher Matters:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Iron Solid - This Bio Matters By Robert Lipsitz Berlinski has provided any fan of Thatcher, British History, the 70's and 80s, Politics, or Economics an engaging, intriguing, and fun narrative regarding one of the seminal figures of the 20th century. Focusing on the transformative episodes of her

Prime Ministership:-Her strategic planning culminating in her rise to power-Victory in the Falklands War-Victory over the trade unions-Victory over British decline and economic insignificance bordering on basket case status-Victory over the the Soviet Union-And interspaced through it all, Thatcher's quieter but no less impressive victories over a pervasive welfare statism mindset, chauvinism, and her quite liberal and frequently doubtful fellow 'conservatives'. Berlinski gives us witty analysis, the best anecdotes, the key players in their vernacular (with translation when needed) and even an economic lesson or two thrown in but never dull or esoteric.No socialist Berlinski (she emphatically states it through the book) yet she consistently and fairly addresses both (and occasionally three) sides of the story. As an American I'll never understand the class structure, regions, attitudes and colloquialisms of Britain but thanks to Berlinski's impartial pen I feel I have gained a balanced perspective of the conservative vs. labour vs. liberal vs. and marxist rationale circa 1976-1990 as they vied for control of Britain. That Thatcher could masterfully navigate that rich landscape, complicated cultural and ideological milieus to successfully right her foundering ship of state and return HMS Great Britain from the shoals to deep water glory ranks her with only Churchill in Britain and Washington and Lincoln in America in the Pantheon of Great Statesman since the American Revolution. Further consider how the Left in England (via political parties, popular culture and media) still revile her as a testament to what she was up against... Yes Margaret Thatcher was truly a woman who mattered.Clearly Berlinski matters too for providing us this compelling reality in such an easy and enjoyable read.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Explains the Importance of the Iron LadyBy JMGraberJrClaire Berlinski writes an amazing book on Margaret Thatcher's time as prime minister. The book follows in great detail how she conducted her policies and why they were important to save Britain. Berlinski also writes about Thatcher's character and her early life, which help explain why she matters today. Berlinski gives us several transcripts of speeches made by Thatcher, her allies, and opponents. She interviews several people affected by her and the policies she created including businessmen, coal workers, Conservative politicians, and Labour politicians (including Neil Kinnock, the opposition leader to Thatcher's government). Transitions to free market economies from socialist economies are not easy, but they were necessary for the well being of Britain and Berlinski explains why. She goes through Thatcher's foreign policy initiatives including taking back the Falklands (an important move to increase British pride) and her work with President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev during the Cold War (she helped bridge the gap and make them do business). Quite an informative read.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The Thatcher yearsBy Johan BergerClaire Berlinski has made good use of her connections inside British academia and has dug up much information on 'thatcherism' and the former PM that nobody has heard of nor read..CB visits nearly every source connected to MT's career as Prime Minister and most of her interviewees vent the full gamut of emotion about Mrs T - from admiration and total agreement in all things Thatcher down to sheer anger or even fury.. Visits to the 'clubbable' politicians in London are balanced off with visits to the 1984 coalminers in Yorkshire just as are talks with the head at Balliol College with collaborators of her philosophy outside her inner circle.. Her most striking feature - immense courage in adversity - is shown in detailed letters, speeches and addenda readily shown as the pages fly by for the reader.. The 1970s had brought Britain to its knees and neither the Heath govt. nor those of Wilson and Callahan had shown the courage and know-how as to a political course between dictatorship and democracy in dealing with the nation's problems.. MT was the right person to tackle the conundrum of workers' rights gone astray and civil life to go on inside a British legacy of freedom! Her views on the European Union as it progressed toward ossification is especially interesting, pace her speech at Bruges, Belgium in 1978..CB has assembled all relevant threads to understanding the phenomenon of MT. Thatcher's critics told the author on many occasions that Britain's economic transition was inevitable, but 'she did not plan for it' - precisely the point. If the government plans the economy, it is no longer free---(CB: There Is No Alternative, p. 154, Basic Books, 2008)

Great Britain in the 1970s appeared to be in terminal declineungovernable, an economic train wreck, and rapidly headed for global irrelevance. Three decades later, it is the richest and most influential country in Europe, and Margaret Thatcher is the reason. The preternaturally determined Thatcher rose from nothing, seized control of Britain's Conservative party, and took a sledgehammer to the nation's postwar socialist consensus. She proved that socialism could be reversed, inspiring a global free-market revolution. Simultaneously exploiting every politically useful aspect of her femininity and defying every conventional expectation of women in power, Thatcher crushed her enemies with a calculated ruthlessness that stunned the British public and without doubt caused immense collateral damage.Ultimately, however, Claire Berlinski agrees with Thatcher: There was no alternative. Berlinski explains what Thatcher did, why it matters, and how she got away with it in this vivid and immensely readable portrait of one of the towering figures of the twentieth century.

General Brent Scowcroft, author of America and the WorldClaire Berlinski's insight into Margaret Thatcher's character makes this book fascinating, and her intellectual seriousness and rigor make it compelling. It is a perfect marriage of author and subject: Berlinski's Thatcher is painfully real and human, yet simultaneously larger-than-life.