



# The March of Folly: From Troy to Vietnam

By Barbara W. Tuchman

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**Pulitzer Prize–winning historian Barbara W. Tuchman, author of the World War I masterpiece *The Guns of August*, grapples with her boldest subject: the pervasive presence, through the ages, of failure, mismanagement, and delusion in government.**

Drawing on a comprehensive array of examples, from Montezuma’s senseless surrender of his empire in 1520 to Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor, Barbara W. Tuchman defines folly as the pursuit by government of policies contrary to their own interests, despite the availability of feasible alternatives. In brilliant detail, Tuchman illuminates four decisive turning points in history that illustrate the very heights of folly: the Trojan War, the breakup of the Holy See provoked by the Renaissance popes, the loss of the American colonies by Britain’s George III, and the United States’ own persistent mistakes in Vietnam. Throughout *The March of Folly*, Tuchman’s incomparable talent for animating the people, places, and events of history is on spectacular display.

## **Praise for *The March of Folly***

“A glittering narrative . . . a moral [book] on the crimes and follies of governments and the misfortunes the governed suffer in consequence.”—*The New York Times Book Review*

“An admirable survey . . . I haven’t read a more relevant book in years.”—**John Kenneth Galbraith**, *The Boston Sunday Globe*

“A superb chronicle . . . a masterly examination.”—*Chicago Sun-Times*

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

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#### From the Publisher

Barbara Tuchman defines folly as "Pursuit of Policy Contrary to Self-Interest." In **THE MARCH OF FOLLY**, Tuchman examines 4 conflicts: The Trojan Horse, The Protestant Secession, The American Revolution, and The American War in Vietnam. In each example an alternative course of action was available, the actions were endorsed by a group, not just an individual leader, and the actions were perceived as counter productive in their own time. Many individuals are guilty of folly (Tuchman also calls this woodenheadedness), but when governments persist in folly, their actions can adversely affect thousands, even millions of lives. Folly is a child of power. "The power to command frequently causes failure to think."(p.32). **THE MARCH OF FOLLY** may not be as well known as **A DISTANT MIRROR** and **THE GUNS OF AUGUST**, but it is my favorite of her works. I heartily recommend it to any Tuchman fans who have not yet discovered it.

Randy Hickernell  
Ballantine sales rep

#### From the Inside Flap

Twice a winner of the Pulitzer Prize, author Barbara Tuchman now tackles the pervasive presence of folly in governments through the ages. Defining folly as the pursuit by governments of policies contrary to their own interests, despite the availability of feasible alternatives, Tuchman details four decisive turning points in history that illustrate the very heights of folly in government: the Trojan War, the breakup of the Holy See provoked by the Renaissance Popes, the loss of the American colonies by Britain's George III, and the United States' persistent folly in Vietnam. **THE MARCH OF FOLLY** brings the people, places, and events of history magnificently alive for today's reader.

### Users Review

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#### **Christy Brodersen:**

Why don't make it to become your habit? Right now, try to prepare your time to do the important action, like looking for your favorite book and reading a book. Beside you can solve your short lived problem; you can add your knowledge by the guide entitled **The March of Folly: From Troy to Vietnam**. Try to stumble through book **The March of Folly: From Troy to Vietnam** as your pal. It means that it can to get your friend when you sense alone and beside that of course make you smarter than in the past. Yeah, it is very fortunated

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