



# Founding Fictions (Albma Rhetoric Cult & Soc Crit)

*Jennifer R. Mercieca*

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Part political history, part rhetorical criticism, *Founding Fictions* is an extended analysis of how Americans imagined themselves as citizens between 1764 and 1845. It critically re-interrogates our fundamental assumptions about a government based upon the will of the people, with profound implications for our ability to assess democracy today.

*Founding Fictions* develops the concept of a “political fiction,” or a narrative that people tell about their own political theories, and analyzes how republican and democratic fictions positioned American citizens as either romantic heroes, tragic victims, or ironic partisans. By re-telling the stories that Americans have told themselves about citizenship, Mercieca highlights an important contradiction in American political theory and practice: that national stability and active citizen participation are perceived as fundamentally at odds.

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