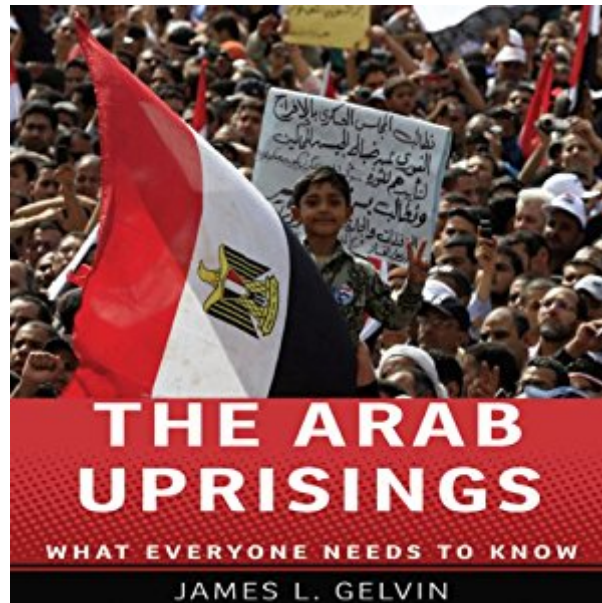


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# The Arab Uprisings: What Everyone Needs To Know



## Synopsis

Beginning in December 2010 popular revolt swept through the Middle East, shocking the world and ushering in a period of unprecedented unrest. Protestors took to the streets to demand greater freedom, democracy, human rights, social justice, and regime change. What caused these uprisings? What is their significance? And what are their likely consequences? In an engaging question-and-answer format, *The Arab Uprisings* explores all aspects of the revolutionary protests that have rocked the Middle East. Historian James Gelvin begins with an overview - What sparked the Arab uprisings? Where did the demands for democracy and human rights come from? How appropriate is the phrase Arab Spring? - before turning to specific countries around the region. He looks at such topics as the role of youth, labor, and religious groups in Tunisia and Egypt and discusses why the military turned against rulers in both countries. Exploring the uprisings in Libya and Yemen, Gelvin explains why these two states are considered "weak", why that status is important for understanding the upheavals there, and why outside powers intervened in Libya but not in Yemen. Next, Gelvin compares two cases that defied expectations: Algeria, which experts assumed would experience a major upheaval after Egypt's, and Syria, which experts failed to foresee. He then looks at the monarchies of Morocco, Jordan, and the Gulf, exploring the commonalities and differences of protest movements in each. The final chapter discusses the implications of the uprisings. What do they mean for the United States? For Iran? Has al-Qaeda been strengthened or weakened? What effects have the uprisings had on the Israel-Palestine conflict? What conclusions might we draw from the uprisings so far? For anyone wishing to understand the dramatic events in the Middle East, *The Arab Uprisings* is the place to turn.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

James Gelvin's "Arab Uprisings" is a must read if you've been trying to follow the events unfolding in the Middle East. I have tried to keep up with the "where" and "why" of each rebellion and/or revolution, but the sheer numbers often made it confusing that often left me with more questions than answers. Gelvin's book was what I was looking for. It sheds light on the historical, political, and cultural aspects that each country has undergone by linking the various uprisings in the differing states (such as Tunisia and Egypt, Libya and Yemen, Algeria and Syria, and the monarchies). The book is clearly written, and the Q & A format makes for an easy but substantive read. Each answer reads like a mini-essay, and I particularly enjoyed the answers to "Where did the phrase 'Arab Spring' come from?", "How appropriate is it to describe events in the Arab world?", "What are the ten biggest myths about the Egyptian uprising?", and "Was Qaddafi crazy or crazy like a fox?" The author obviously knows his history as well as the contemporary issues confronting the region. (His "Modern Middle East" and "Israel/Palestine Conflict" are also must reads.) The last section of "Arab Uprisings" is illuminating in showing the impact of the uprisings on both the American and Iranian positions in the region, on the Israel-Palestine Conflict, and on al-Qaeda. I cannot recommend this book highly enough. Gelvin fulfills his promise with the book's sub-title, "What Everyone Needs to Know," because I walked away having a greater understanding of what's going on in the Middle East. I now can watch the continuing unfolding of events with both the information and confidence that the author has provided.

The Arab Uprisings: what everyone needs to know is a must-read for anyone interested in gaining an understanding of the "Arab Spring" of 2011. Written in a question-and-answer format, Galvin clearly explains the causes of the revolutions that swept the Arab world, drawing parallels between nations and clarifying the complex interplay of economics, demographics and politics in the political change that is still unfolding. The book begins with a brief primer on the Arab world - the cultural similarities and the broad economic and political climate of the region before the uprisings began. Galvin then argues that the revolutions were the result of four factors: economic promises made by the regimes to their people that fell apart, a "youth bulge", food crises and political brittleness of their autocracies. While there are some variations, these four themes are revisited as the revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen and Libya and Syria are explored in detail. The final

chapter, in which Galvin fields questions about the "long view" of the Arab Spring is a bit odd, the questions more along the lines of political science than history. To his credit, Galvin reminds readers that these events are still unfolding, writing, "The moral of the story (of the uprisings) is that historical analogies do not explain and do not instruct, although for historians and history geeks their entertainment value cannot be overestimated." Similar questions about the role and impact of American foreign policy in fomenting the Arab Spring and what the implications of the uprisings are for the United States are similarly swatted away, and rightfully so, I think. While events are still being played out regarding the effects of the spring of 2011, this is an outstanding primer on the subject - rich in detail and clearly and simply written. Highly recommended for anyone interested in the region or recent events there.

I have class next semester and I bought this book earlier because I'm an international student and it comes with audio and that will help me to improve my English language. For those who are not native speakers, I recommend them to read about the Arab revolution from many books in order to get clear information. I think this book mentions the writer's thoughts as well. - If you are interested to have this book, please compare it with real life in Arab countries. - The audio saves your time if you are only interested to listen. - If you have a Kindle device, please pay for the E-book first, then the audio because it is cheaper after you buy the e-book. - If your first language is not English, I give you a high recommendation to pay for it with audio to improve your language.

This is a great book for readers who want a better understanding of an increasingly important part of the world. It is an easy read, well organized, and informative. I highly recommend it and plan to read it again.

First off, I feel I have to disclose that Galvin is actually my professor. Normally, I'd be concerned about creating a biased review, but the book is so well-written that the fact that I am in his lecture periods has little bearing. The book is written in question-answer form, allowing for clear, straight-to-the-point answers. Galvin avoids "fluff" and answers the questions in the same conversational manner he uses during lecture that engages his students (and the reader). I found the book easy to get through while providing the information expected of it. It truly is a great read; it is simple to understand but not lacking in necessary information.

This book was obviously written very soon after these events occurred, so it is interesting to look at

the events that occurred and what the contributing factors were. This book gives a much fuller explanation of the uprisings and why and how they escalated.

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