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Behold, America American Dream **Reprogramming the American Dream** *Chasing the American Dream* **American Dream America's Dream** *An American Dream* *The American Dream and the Power of Wealth* *Outsourcing the American Dream* **The American Dream Happiness for All?** Behold, America **The American Dream** American Dreams **The Try The Betrayal of the American Dream** **Black Ethnics The Challenge of the American Dream** *Free Time Considering Class* **The Epic of America** *What We Mean by the American Dream* **The American Dream and the Public Schools** **Prisoners of the American Dream** **The American Dream: HisStory in the Making** **Baseball and the American Dream** The American Dream? **Cynicism and the Evolution of the American Dream** **Realizing the American Dream** Nurturing the American Dream **The Rise and Fall of the American Dream** **In the Shadow of the American Dream** **The American Dream of Success** **The American Dream and the Popular Novel** **The Myth of the American Dream** Celebrity Culture and the American Dream *The Image* **Projecting the End of the American Dream** **The American Dream Is Not Dead** **Financing the American Dream**

The scholars included in this collection sought to indicate more contemporary working definitions for the expression "American Dream", or rather Dreams. The multidisciplinary selections come

from many countries and represent scholars from different backgrounds. They reflect the current developments and approaches in the field of US Studies and we hope to help broaden the scope of programs in higher education institutions. The chapters are thematically organized in two sections: “Initial Dialogues” and “Comparative Dialogues.” The first one comprises essays that set the foundations for our discussions and intends to familiarize newcomers with the theme. The second section extends the possibilities of working comparatively with the American Dreams and a number of other interdisciplinary fields of interest for US Studies programs. Populists on both sides of the political aisle routinely announce that the American Dream is dead. According to them, the game has been rigged by elites, workers can’t get ahead, wages have been stagnant for decades, and the middle class is dying. Michael R. Strain, director of economic policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute, disputes this rhetoric as both wrong and dangerous. In this succinctly argued volume, he shows that, on measures of economic opportunity and quality of life, there has never been a better time to be alive in America. He backs his argument with overwhelming—and underreported—data to show how the facts favor realistic optimism. He warns, however, that the false prophets of populism pose a serious danger to our current and future prosperity. Their policies would leave workers worse off. And their erroneous claim that the American Dream is dead could discourage people from taking advantage of real opportunities to better their lives. If enough people start to believe the Dream is dead, they could, in effect, kill it. To prevent this self-fulfilling prophecy, Strain’s book is urgent reading for anyone feeling the pull of the populists. E. J. Dionne and Henry Olsen provide spirited responses to Strain’s argument. What does America stand for in the twenty-first century? Behold, America confronts this urgent question by looking at the story behind two of the most contentious phrases in the American political playbook: the

'American dream' and 'America first'. What do these phrases tell us about America's idea of itself? What does it mean to put America first, and what exactly are Americans supposed to be dreaming of - personal wealth, public power, racial equality, political refuge, individual freedoms? What happens when these values collide? 'America first' and the 'American dream' were born nearly a century ago and instantly tangled over capitalism, democracy and race. Invoked most recently in Donald Trump's presidential campaign, they came to embody opposing views in the battle to define the soul of the nation. Behold, America recounts the unknown history of these two expressions using the voices that helped shape that debate, from Capitol Hill to the newsroom of the New York Times, students to senators, dreamers to dissenters. As America struggles again to project a shared vision, to itself and to the world, Sarah Churchwell argues that the meanings and history of these terms need to be understood afresh so that the true spirit of America can be reclaimed. Insightful and revelatory, Behold, America overturns everything we thought we knew about the American dream, America first and the battle for the identity of modern America. What is it that separates the doers, leaders, and success stories among us from the dreamers, also-rans, and wannabes? To bestselling author James P. Owen, it's all about having The Try—the quality of giving 110 percent to the task or challenge at hand. In The Try—a dozen true stories of ordinary people who've done extraordinary things across varied fields of endeavor—Owen reveals The Try as a character trait that can be forged in several ways. Some of those profiled are driven by a childhood dream or longheld ambition. Others are fueled by someone else's belief in them, an unwavering belief in themselves, or the urge to pit themselves against daunting odds. Still others find The Try in a life-changing moment when they hit rock bottom or come face-to-face with failure. What all high achievers have in common, Owen believes, is a blend of inner drive, focus, and determination that pushes

them to pursue their goals relentlessly, confronting every obstacle, and never, ever giving up. His insightful profiles bring to life new scientific evidence that effort trumps ability. In other words, how much you can achieve depends not on how smart or talented you may be, but instead on the quality of your efforts and how much you try. Owen provides inspiration that will strike a chord with anyone who has a lofty goal, a deep personal ambition, or a major challenge to face. By connecting the dots in this collection of stories, he also delivers practical “how to” advice for those who want to cultivate The Try in themselves, or to encourage someone else on the road to realizing his or her full potential. Owen’s conclusion: “If you’ve got The Try, anything is possible. All it takes...is all you’ve got.” The Declaration of Independence states that all people are endowed with certain unalienable rights, and that among these is the pursuit of happiness. But is happiness equally available to everyone in America today? How about elsewhere in the world? Carol Graham draws on cutting-edge research linking income inequality with well-being to show how the widening prosperity gap has led to rising inequality in people's beliefs, hopes, and aspirations. For the United States and other developed countries, the high costs of being poor are most evident not in material deprivation but rather in stress, insecurity, and lack of hope. The result is an optimism gap between rich and poor that, if left unchecked, could lead to an increasingly divided society. Graham reveals how people who do not believe in their own futures are unlikely to invest in them, and how the consequences can range from job instability and poor education to greater mortality rates, failed marriages, and higher rates of incarceration. She describes how the optimism gap is reflected in the very words people use--the wealthy use words that reflect knowledge acquisition and healthy behaviors, while the words of the poor reflect desperation, short-term outlooks, and patchwork solutions. She also explains why the least optimistic people in America are poor whites, not poor

blacks or Hispanics. Happiness for All? highlights the importance of well-being measures in identifying and monitoring trends in life satisfaction and optimism--and misery and despair--and demonstrates how hope and happiness can lead to improved economic outcomes. The United States has been epitomized as a land of opportunity, where hard work and skill can bring personal success and economic well-being. The American Dream has captured the imagination of people from all walks of life, and to many, it represents the heart and soul of the country. But there is another, darker side to the bargain that America strikes with its people -- it is the price we pay for our individual pursuit of the American Dream. That price can be found in the economic hardship present in the lives of millions of Americans. In Chasing the American Dream, leading social scientists Mark Robert Rank, Thomas A. Hirschl, and Kirk A. Foster provide a new and innovative look into a curious dynamic -- the tension between the promise of economic opportunities and rewards and the amount of turmoil that Americans encounter in their quest for those rewards. The authors explore questions such as: -What percentage of Americans achieve affluence, and how much income mobility do we actually have? -Are most Americans able to own a home, and at what age? -How is it that nearly 80 percent of us will experience significant economic insecurity at some point between ages 25 and 60? -How can access to the American Dream be increased? Combining personal interviews with dozens of Americans and a longitudinal study covering 40 years of income data, the authors tell the story of the American Dream and reveal a number of surprises. The risk of economic vulnerability has increased substantially over the past four decades, and the American Dream is becoming harder to reach and harder to keep. Yet for most Americans, the Dream lies not in wealth, but in economic security, pursuing one's passions, and looking toward the future. Chasing the American Dream provides us with a new understanding into the dynamics that shape our

fortunes and a deeper insight into the importance of the American Dream for the future of the country. NURTURING THE AMERICAN DREAM Have you ever wondered why so many people struggle to make ends meet, while a few [rich] people earn lots of money? Do you ever wonder what the #AmericanDream is, and what you can do to achieve it? Education is THE KEY to success (i.e. mastery) in any field of your choice. Financial Education is THE KEY to your Financial Success. This book series is absolutely a must-read, insightful blueprint. It will provide you with the nitty-gritty information on the economy, how it works, and what you must do to reach your highest potential and achieve the #AmericanDream through problem-solving and creating value. Prepare to be inspired to Think BIG, dream even BIGGER, and #BELIEVE that if you can dream it, you [yes, #YOU] can make it happen. This title, originally published in 1985, examines conceptions of success and the good life expressed in bestselling novels - ranging from historical sagas and spy thrillers to more serious works by Updike, Bellows, Steinbeck and Mailer - published from 1945 to 1975. Using these popular books as cultural evidence, Elizabeth Long argues that the meaning of the American dream has changed dramatically, but in a more complex fashion than has been recognised by that country's most prominent social critics. Her study presents a challenge to prevailing social-scientific views of contemporary American culture, and represents, both in theory and method, an important contribution to the study of culture and social criticism. Outsourcing the American Dream addresses an interesting paradox: in a time of unprecedented prosperity, why have millions of Americans lost faith in their ability to prosper? Why do millions of Americans fail to achieve financial abundance in a nation where unlimited economic opportunity abounds? Today's business environment is chaotic, to say the least - continually shifting political and social conditions, market dislocations, rapid technological obsolescence, and turbulent international

competition. The most common response to such fragmentary business patterns has been corporate downsizing. Numerous corporations have indiscriminately cut layers of management and technical expertise to reduce corporate costs, strengthen share price, or take advantage of technological advances. In *Outsourcing the American Dream*, the author argues the number one reason for all business failures in America is the lack of bold, decisive, and visionary leadership in business and government. Based on his first-hand experience and research, *Outsourcing the American Dream* explores the often devastating consequences of corporate mismanagement and downsizing; offers innovative solutions for leaders in business and government; and candidly discusses the individual's own responsibility for job security and career satisfaction. *Outsourcing the American Dream* offers something for anyone seeking to take control of his or her own life and destiny. Examines the formidable challenges facing the middle class, calling for fundamental changes while surveying the extent of the problem and identifying the people and agencies most responsible. A fascinating look at how America's favorite sport has both reflected and shaped social, economic, and The Rise and Fall of the American Dream discusses internal and external challenges America faces if we hope to survive as a nation. It's a warning of what is to come should we continue to ignore what God intended for our Christian land. Dr. White graduated from Chaminade University, Honolulu, Hawaii with a Bachelor's Degree in General Studies (Major area of concentration: General Psychology) while on active duty in the United States Navy. After retiring from the Navy, he earned his graduate degree, Masters of Ministry in Christian Counseling and Doctorate from Bethany Bible College and Theological Seminary located in, Dothan Alabama. While on active duty in the Navy, he worked as a Case Manager for children who had been sexually abused for three years. He now provides seminars on "A proactive approach in parenting". Among other duty stations, Dr. White

spent fourteen years on four different submarines during the Cold War and a combat tour in Vietnam. After his naval career, Dr. White became a Corrections Officer for Orange County Florida. Working in one of America's largest Correctional Facilities for thirteen years, he became acquainted with people such as Ted Bundy, the notorious serial killer. Dr. White is also the author of "Consider This" and is currently working on his third book. The American Dream and the Public Schools examines issues that have excited and divided Americans for years, including desegregation, school funding, testing, vouchers, bilingual education, and ability grouping. While these are all separate problems, much of the contention over them comes down to the same thing--an apparent conflict between policies designed to promote each student's ability to succeed and those designed to insure the good of all students or the nation as a whole. The authors show how policies to promote individual success too often benefit only those already privileged by race or class, and often conflict with policies that are intended to benefit everyone. They propose a framework that builds on our nation's rapidly changing population in order to help Americans get past acrimonious debates about schooling. Their goal is to make public education work better so that all children can succeed. In contemporary America, the racial wealth gap is growing, with families transmitting race and class inequalities from generation to generation. Yet Americans continue to hold deep-rooted beliefs in the principles of individualism, equal opportunity, and meritocracy. Education, the "Great Equalizer," is supposed to level the playing field, ensuring that every child—regardless of family of origin—gets an equal chance at success. Drawing on in-depth interviews with 200 black and white families, The American Dream and the Power of Wealth starkly reveals the enormous extent to which parents defend their beliefs in the values that lie at the heart of the American Dream. Yet the way wealth is acquired and the way it is used categorically puts children from

different families on vastly different educational trajectories, leaving them with uneven sets of opportunities. Has the "American Dream" become an unrealistic utopian fantasy, or have we simply forgotten what we are working for? In his topical book, *Free Time*, Benjamin Kline Hunnicutt examines the way that progress, once defined as more of the good things in life as well as more free time to enjoy them, has come to be understood only as economic growth and more work, forevermore. Hunnicutt provides an incisive intellectual, cultural, and political history of the original "American Dream" from the colonial days to the present. Taking his cue from Walt Whitman's "higher progress," he follows the traces of that dream, cataloging the myriad voices that prepared for and lived in an opening "realm of freedom." *Free Time* reminds Americans of the forgotten, best part of the "American Dream"—that more and more of our lives might be lived freely, with an enriching family life, with more time to enjoy nature, friendship, and the adventures of the mind and of the spirit. "Lyrical [and] haunting, América's liberating epiphany will have readers . . . on their feet and cheering." — Washington Post

Deftly written and fiercely resilient, *América's Dream* explores the ever-shifting definition of what it means to be American and exemplifies the spirit of every immigrant who has dared to realize the American dream. América Gonzalez is a hotel housekeeper on Vieques, an island off the coast of Puerto Rico, cleaning up after wealthy foreigners who don't look her in the eye. Her alcoholic mother resents her; her married boyfriend, Correa, beats her; and their fourteen-year-old daughter thinks life would be better anywhere but with América. So when América is offered the chance to work as a live-in housekeeper and nanny for a family in Westchester, New York, she takes it as a sign to finally make the escape she's been longing for. Yet, even as América revels in the comparative luxury of her new life—daring to care about a man other than Correa—she is faced with the disquieting realization that no matter what she does, she can never really escape her

past. Originally published in 1931 by Little, Brown, and Company. Few artists in the late twentieth century have captured the emotional, sexual, and political chaos of urban life like David Wojnarowicz. In *The Shadow of the American Dream* chronicles Wojnarowicz's life from age seventeen until his AIDS-related death at thirty-seven, and draws on his experiences at the margins of American society. After his HIV+ diagnosis Wojnarowicz engaged in highly public debates about health care, homophobia, and censorship, creating deeply political art even as he became a target for the right wing. Doron Taussig invites us to question the American Dream. Did you earn what you have? Did everyone else? The American Dream is built on the idea that Americans end up roughly where we deserve to be in our working lives based on our efforts and abilities; in other words, the United States is supposed to be a meritocracy. When Americans think and talk about our lives, we grapple with this idea, asking how a person got to where he or she is and whether he or she earned it. In *What We Mean by the American Dream*, Taussig tries to find out how we answer those questions. Weaving together interviews with Americans from many walks of life—as well as stories told in the US media about prominent figures from politics, sports, and business—*What We Mean by the American Dream* investigates how we think about whether an individual deserves an opportunity, job, termination, paycheck, or fortune. Taussig looks into the fabric of American life to explore how various people, including dairy farmers, police officers, dancers, teachers, computer technicians, students, store clerks, the unemployed, homemakers, and even drug dealers got to where they are today and whether they earned it or not. Taussig's frank assessment of the state of the US workforce and its dreams allows him to truly and meaningfully ask the question that underpins so many of our political debates and personal frustrations: Did you earn it? By doing so, he sheds new light on what we mean by—and how we can deliver on—the American Dream of today. In an age where

racial and ethnic identity intersect, intertwine, and interact in increasingly complex ways, *Black Ethnics: Race, Immigration, and the Pursuit of the American Dream* offers a superb and rigorous analysis of black politics and coalitions in the post-Civil Rights era. Using an original survey of a New York City labor population and multiple national data sources, author Christina M. Greer explores the political significance of ethnicity for new immigrant and native-born blacks. *Black Ethnics* concludes that racial and ethnic identities affect the ways in which black ethnic groups conceptualize their possibilities for advancement and placement within the American polity. The ethnic and racial dual identity for blacks leads to significant distinctions in political behavior, feelings of incorporation, and policy choices in ways not previously theorized. The steady immigration of black populations from Africa and the Caribbean over the past few decades has fundamentally changed the racial, ethnic, and political landscape in the U.S. An important question for social scientists is how these 'new' blacks will behave politically in the US. Should we expect new black immigrants to orient themselves to politics in the same manner as native Blacks? Will the different histories of the new immigrants and native-born blacks lead to different political orientations and behavior, and perhaps to political tensions and conflict among black ethnic groups residing in America? And to what extent will this new population fracture the black coalition inside of the Democratic party? With increases in immigration of black ethnic populations in the U.S., the political, social, and economic integration processes of black immigrants does not completely echo that of native-born American blacks. The emergent complexity of black intra-racial identity and negotiations within the American polity raise new questions about black political incorporation, assimilation, acceptance, and fulfillment of the American Dream. By comparing Afro-Caribbean and African groups to native-born blacks, this book develops a more nuanced and accurate understanding of the 'new black

America' in the twenty-first century. Lastly, *Black Ethnics* explores how foreign-born blacks create new ways of defining and understanding black politics and coalitions in the post-Civil Rights era. In this wild battering ram of a novel, which was originally published to vast controversy in 1965, Norman Mailer creates a character who might be a fictional precursor of the philosopher-killer he would later profile in *The Executioner's Song*. As Stephen Rojack, a decorated war hero and former congressman who murders his wife in a fashionable New York City high-rise, runs amok through the city in which he was once a privileged citizen, Mailer peels away the layers of our social norms to reveal a world of pure appetite and relentless cruelty. One part Nietzsche, one part de Sade, and one part Charlie Parker, *An American Dream* grabs the reader by the throat and refuses to let go. Praise for *An American Dream* "Perhaps the only serious New York novel since *The Great Gatsby*."—Joan Didion, *National Review* "A devil's encyclopedia of our secret visions and desires . . . the expression of a devastatingly alive and original creative mind."—*Life* "A work of fierce concentration . . . perfectly, and often brilliantly, realistic [with] a pattern of remarkable imaginative coherence and intensity."—Harper's "At once violent, educated, and cool . . . This is our history as Hawthorne might have written it."—Commentary Praise for Norman Mailer "[Norman Mailer] loomed over American letters longer and larger than any other writer of his generation."—*The New York Times* "A writer of the greatest and most reckless talent."—*The New Yorker* "Mailer is indispensable, an American treasure."—*The Washington Post* "A devastatingly alive and original creative mind."—*Life* "Mailer is fierce, courageous, and reckless and nearly everything he writes has sections of headlong brilliance."—*The New York Review of Books* "The largest mind and imagination [in modern] American literature . . . Unlike just about every American writer since Henry James, Mailer has managed to grow and become richer in wisdom with each new

book.”—Chicago Tribune “Mailer is a master of his craft. His language carries you through the story like a leaf on a stream.”—The Cincinnati Post

The American Dream is at once an inspiring account of a young man's journey from defendant to defense attorney, a window into the inner workings of one of Miami's most notorious drug rings, and a chilling portrait of the streets that America's poverty-stricken youth call home. The hood is an addiction. An addiction that pulls as seductively and fiercely as the drugs hustled on its streets. Living in it is a daily exercise in survival. Raised impoverished in the streets of Miami, David Lee Windecher was only eleven years old when he was arrested for shoplifting. It didn't seem like a big deal at the time, deciding to take what he believed he deserved. But, that was the beginning for David. That was the day he started thinking like a hustler. He could stop waiting for the scales to tip in his favor. He could stop going without. He could take what life denied him. And he did. For the next seven years, David fought bitterly against his circumstances at the side of his gang-affiliate brothers. It began with selling dope to help his family eat, but quickly spiraled into the dark, seductive life of violence, drugs, money, and notoriety. David lost himself to the game. Before he turned eighteen, David built and masterminded a crime ring, was arrested thirteen times, and fought daily wars against rival gangs and dirty cops. Despite the gravity of his actions, deep inside David an idealistic boy dreamed of becoming an attorney and fighting for justice despite race. He was just waiting for someone to believe he existed. Affluence, autonomy, safety, and power—the central values of the American dream. But are they compatible with Jesus' command to love our neighbor as ourselves? In essays grouped around these four values, D. L. Mayfield asks us to pay attention to the ways they shape our own choices, and the ways those choices affect our neighbors. In this definitive work, two-time Pulitzer finalist Jason DeParle, author of *A Good Provider Is One Who Leaves*, cuts between the mean streets of Milwaukee and the corridors of

Washington to produce a masterpiece of literary journalism. At the heart of the story are three cousins whose different lives follow similar trajectories. Leaving welfare, Angie puts her heart in her work. Jewell bets on an imprisoned man. Opal guards a tragic secret that threatens her kids and her life. DeParle traces their family history back six generations to slavery and weaves poor people, politicians, reformers, and rogues into a spellbinding epic. With a vivid sense of humanity, DeParle demonstrates that although we live in a country where anyone can make it, generation after generation some families don't. To read *American Dream* is to understand why. In the 21st century hardly any aspects of human existence are left unexplored by postmodern theories and discourses of subjectivity and individuality, of hybridity and identity, of race, gender and ethnicity. Conspicuous, however, among these critical inquiries is the relatively little attention devoted to the category of class. This absence is particularly alarming at a time when neo-liberalism and post-capitalism feed on cultural fragmentation and ideological relativism. The contributions in *Considering Class: Essays on the Discourse of the American Dream* address the (dys)functional position of class in American socio-political and cultural reality from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. While it is open to debate whether class is more resistant to being relativized than other categories, there is increasing recognition that class remains a critical category with the potential to transcend the rifts and divisions that run along lines of race, ethnicity and gender, and with the potential to reconfigure the current American political landscape. The 'American Dream' is a phrase that has become an essential component of the American experience, a phrase that, once entered into the national lexicon, has come to define our nation's identity, underlying nearly every aspect of our lives. And since the birth of the founding document of our nation, the Declaration of Independence, the idea of 'The American Dream' has become a pervasive and frequently

deconstructed theme within the canon of American literature. "Native rural Virginian and now Chief technology officer at Microsoft, Kevin Scott, discusses the future of AI and how it can be realistically used to promote growth even as the job landscape shifts"-- *Celebrity Culture and the American Dream, Second Edition* considers how major economic and historical factors shaped the nature of celebrity culture as we know it today, retaining the first edition's examples from the first celebrity fan magazines of 1911 to the present and expanding to include updated examples and additional discussion on the role of the internet and social media in today's celebrity culture. Equally important, the book explains how and why the story of Hollywood celebrities matters, sociologically speaking, to an understanding of American society, to the changing nature of the American Dream, and to the relation between class and culture. This book is an ideal addition to courses on inequalities, celebrity culture, media, and cultural studies. In this definitive work, two-time Pulitzer finalist Jason DeParle, author of *A Good Provider Is One Who Leaves*, cuts between the mean streets of Milwaukee and the corridors of Washington to produce a masterpiece of literary journalism. At the heart of the story are three cousins whose different lives follow similar trajectories. Leaving welfare, Angie puts her heart in her work. Jewell bets on an imprisoned man. Opal guards a tragic secret that threatens her kids and her life. DeParle traces their family history back six generations to slavery and weaves poor people, politicians, reformers, and rogues into a spellbinding epic. With a vivid sense of humanity, DeParle demonstrates that although we live in a country where anyone can make it, generation after generation some families don't. To read *American Dream* is to understand why. As a child growing up in Malaysia, Shing Yin Khor had two very different ideas of what "America" meant. The first looked a lot like Hollywood, full of beautiful people and sunlight and freeways. The second looked more like *The Grapes of Wrath* - a nightmare landscape filled with

impoverished people, broken-down cars, barren landscapes, and broken dreams. Those contrasting ideas have stuck with Shing ever since, even now that she lives and works in LA. The American Dream? A Journey on Route 66 is Shing's attempt to find what she can of both of these Americas on a solo journey (small adventure-dog included) across the entire expanse of that iconic road, beginning in Santa Monica and ending up Chicago. And what begins as a road trip ends up as something more like a pilgrimage in search of an American landscape that seems forever shifting, forever out of place. A brilliant and comprehensive study of class struggle in the United States Prisoners of the American Dream is Mike Davis's brilliant exegesis of a persistent and major analytical problem for Marxist historians and political economists: Why has the world's most industrially advanced nation never spawned a mass party of the working class? This series of essays surveys the history of the American bourgeois democratic revolution from its Jacksonian beginnings to the rise of the New Right and the re-election of Ronald Reagan, concluding with some bracing thoughts on the prospects for progressive politics in the United States. Once there was a golden age of American thrift, when citizens lived sensibly within their means and worked hard to stay out of debt. The growing availability of credit in this century, however, has brought those days to an end--undermining traditional moral virtues such as prudence, diligence, and the delay of gratification while encouraging reckless consumerism. Or so we commonly believe. In this engaging and thought-provoking book, Lendol Calder shows that this conception of the past is in fact a myth. Calder presents the first book-length social and cultural history of the rise of consumer credit in America. He focuses on the years between 1890 and 1940, when the legal, institutional, and moral bases of today's consumer credit were established, and in an epilogue takes the story up to the present. He draws on a wide variety of sources--including personal diaries and letters, government and business records, newspapers,

advertisements, movies, and the words of such figures as Benjamin Franklin, Mark Twain, and P. T. Barnum--to show that debt has always been with us. He vigorously challenges the idea that consumer credit has eroded traditional values. Instead, he argues, monthly payments have imposed strict, externally reinforced disciplines on consumers, making the culture of consumption less a playground for hedonists than an extension of what Max Weber called the "iron cage" of disciplined rationality and hard work. Throughout, Calder keeps in clear view the human face of credit relations. He re-creates the Dickensian world of nineteenth-century pawnbrokers, takes us into the dingy backstairs offices of loan sharks, into small-town shops and New York department stores, and explains who resorted to which types of credit and why. He also traces the evolving moral status of consumer credit, showing how it changed from a widespread but morally dubious practice into an almost universal and generally accepted practice by World War II. Combining clear, rigorous arguments with a colorful, narrative style, *Financing the American Dream* will attract a wide range of academic and general readers and change how we understand one of the most important and overlooked aspects of American social and economic life. Putting a recognizable face on contemporary American cynicism This provocative book reveals how Hollywood films reflect our deepest fears and anxieties as a country, often recording our political beliefs and cultural conditions while underscoring the darker side of the American way of life. Long before the war in Iraq and the economic crises of the early 21st century, Hollywood has depicted a grim view of life in the United States, one that belies the prosperity and abundance of the so-called American Dream. While the country emerged from World War II as a world power, collectively our sense of security had been threatened. The result is a cinematic body of work that has America's decline and ruin as a central theme. The author draws from popular films across all genres and six decades to illustrate

how the political climate of the times influenced their creation. *Projecting the End of the American Dream: Hollywood's Visions of U.S. Decline* combines film history, social history, and political history to reveal important themes in the unfolding American narrative. Discussions focus on a wide variety of films, including *Rambo*, *Planet of the Apes*, and *Easy Rider*. A Smithsonian Magazine Best History Book of 2018 *The unknown history of two ideas crucial to the struggle over what America stands for* In *Behold, America*, Sarah Churchwell offers a surprising account of twentieth-century Americans' fierce battle for the nation's soul. It follows the stories of two phrases--the "American dream" and "America First"--that once embodied opposing visions for America. Starting as a Republican motto before becoming a hugely influential isolationist slogan during World War I, America First was always closely linked with authoritarianism and white supremacy. The American dream, meanwhile, initially represented a broad vision of democratic and economic equality. Churchwell traces these notions through the 1920s boom, the Depression, and the rise of fascism at home and abroad, laying bare the persistent appeal of demagoguery in America and showing us how it was resisted. At a time when many ask what America's future holds, *Behold, America* is a revelatory, unvarnished portrait of where we have been.