

# The American Dream A Cultural History Summary

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**The American Dream in the 21st Century** - Sandra Hanson  
2011-06-17

"The diversity of contributions--from historians, political scientists, sociologists, and a pollster--distinguish The American Dream in the 21st Century from many other books on the topic. The multi-disciplinary focus is especially useful, as chapters provide cultural interpretations of Americans' attitudes toward the American Dream through the lenses of race, gender, religion and ethics."--Arne L. Kalleberg, Kenan Distinguished Professor of Sociology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

**Americans and the California Dream, 1850-1915** - Kevin Starr  
1986-12-04

Examining California's formative years, this innovative study seeks to discover the origins of the California dream and the social, psychological, and symbolic impact it has had not only on Californians but also on the rest

of the country.

Spreading the American Dream - Emily S. Rosenberg 1982  
Studies the development of the American economy and society as well as the influence of this development on foreign relations and the spreading of the American culture

I Was Their American Dream - Malaka Gharib 2019-04-30  
"A portrait of growing up in America, and a portrait of family, that pulls off the feat of being both intimately specific and deeply universal at the same time. I adored this book."--Jonny Sun "[A] high-spirited graphical memoir . . . Gharib's wisdom about the power and limits of racial identity is evident in the way she draws."--NPR WINNER OF THE ARAB AMERICAN BOOK AWARD • NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY NPR • The New York Public Library • Kirkus Reviews I Was Their American Dream is at once a coming-of-age story and a reminder of the thousands of immigrants who come to America in search

for a better life for themselves and their children. The daughter of parents with unfulfilled dreams themselves, Malaka navigated her childhood chasing her parents' ideals, learning to code-switch between her family's Filipino and Egyptian customs, adapting to white culture to fit in, crushing on skater boys, and trying to understand the tension between holding onto cultural values and trying to be an all-American kid. Malaka Gharib's triumphant graphic memoir brings to life her teenage antics and illuminates earnest questions about identity and culture, while providing thoughtful insight into the lives of modern immigrants and the generation of millennial children they raised. Malaka's story is a heartfelt tribute to the American immigrants who have invested their future in the promise of the American dream. Praise for *I Was Their American Dream* "In this time when immigration is such a hot topic, Malaka Gharib puts an engaging human face on the issue. . . . The push and pull first-generation kids feel is portrayed with humor and love, especially humor. . . . Gharib pokes fun at all of the cultures she lives in, able to see each of them with an outsider's wry eye, while appreciating them with an insider's close experience. . . . The question of 'What are you?' has never been answered with so much charm."—Marissa Moss, *New York Journal of Books*

"Forthright and funny, Gharib fiercely claims her own American dream."—Booklist "Thoughtful and relatable, this touching account should be shared across generations."— *Library Journal* "This charming graphic memoir riffs on the joys and challenges of developing a unique ethnic identity."— *Publishers Weekly*

**Expanding the American Dream** - Barbara M. Kelly  
1993-01-01

Much has been written about the housing policies of the

Depression and the Postwar period. Much less has been written of the houses built as a result of these policies, or the lives of the families who lived in them. Using the houses of Levittown, Long Island, as cultural artifacts, this book examines the relationship between the government-sponsored, mass-produced housing built after World War II, the families who lived in it, and the society that fostered it. Beginning with the basic four-room, slab-based Cape Cods and Ranches, Levittown homeowners invested time and effort, barter and money in the expansion and redesign of their houses. The author shows how this gradual process has altered the socioeconomic nature of the community as well, bringing Levittown fully into the mainstream of middle-class America. This book works on several levels. For planners, it offers a reassessment of the housing policies of the 1940s and '50s, suggesting that important lessons remain to be learned from the Levittown experience. For historians, it offers new insights into the nature of the suburbanization process that followed World War II. And for those who wish to understand the subtle workings of their own domestic space within their lives, it offers food for speculation.

**The Complacent Class** - Tyler Cowen 2017-02-28

Examines the trend of Americans away from the traditionally mobile, risk-accepting, and adaptable tendencies that defined them for much of recent history, and toward stagnation and comfort, and how this development has the potential to make future changes more disruptive. --Publisher's description.

**U.S. History** - P. Scott Corbett 2017-12-19

Published by OpenStax College, U.S. History covers the breadth of the chronological history of the United

States and also provides the necessary depth to ensure the course is manageable for instructors and students alike. U.S. History is designed to meet the scope and sequence requirements of most courses. The authors introduce key forces and major developments that together form the American experience, with particular attention paid to considering issues of race, class and gender. The text provides a balanced approach to U.S. history, considering the people, events and ideas that have shaped the United States from both the top down (politics, economics, diplomacy) and bottom up (eyewitness accounts, lived experience).

Bugsy Siegel - Michael Shnayerson 2021

The story of the notorious Jewish gangster who ascended from impoverished beginnings to the glittering Las Vegas strip "[A] brisk-reading chronicle of Siegel's life and crimes."—Tom Nolan, Wall Street Journal "Fast-paced and absorbing. . . . With a keen eye for the amusing, and humanizing detail, [Shnayerson] enlivens the traditional rise-and-fall narrative."—Jenna Weissman Joselit, New York Times Book Review In a brief life that led to a violent end, Benjamin "Bugsy" Siegel (1906–1947) rose from desperate poverty to ill-gotten riches, from an early-twentieth-century family of Ukrainian Jewish immigrants on the Lower East Side to a kingdom of his own making in Las Vegas. In this captivating portrait, author Michael Shnayerson sets out not to absolve Bugsy Siegel but rather to understand him in all his complexity. Through the 1920s, 1930s, and most of the 1940s, Bugsy Siegel and his longtime partner in crime Meyer Lansky engaged in innumerable acts of violence. As World War II came to an end, Siegel saw the potential for a huge, elegant casino resort in the sands of Las Vegas. Jewish gangsters built nearly all of the Vegas

casinos that followed. Then, one by one, they disappeared. Siegel's story laces through a larger, generational story of eastern European Jewish immigrants in the early- to mid-twentieth century.

**The American Dream in Vietnamese** - Nhi T. Lieu 2011  
Fantasy, desire, and community in Vietnamese American popular culture.

**Portrait of America** - Jerrold Hirsch 2004-07-21

How well do we know our country? Whom do we include when we use the word "American"? These are not just contemporary issues but recurring questions Americans have asked themselves throughout their history--and questions that were addressed when, in 1935, the Roosevelt administration created the Federal Writers' Project (FWP) under the aegis of the Works Progress Administration. Although the immediate context of the FWP was work relief, national FWP officials developed programs that spoke to much larger and longer-standing debates over the nature of American identity and culture and the very definition of who was an American. Hirsch reviews the founding of the FWP and the significance of its American Guide series, considering the choices made by administrators who wanted to celebrate diversity as a positive aspect of American cultural identity. In his exploration of the FWP's other writings, Hirsch discusses the project's pioneering use of oral history in interviews with ordinary southerners, ex-slaves, ethnic minorities, and industrial workers. He also examines congressional critics of the FWP vision; the occasional opposition of local Federal Writers, especially in the South; and how the FWP's vision changed in response to the challenge of World War II. In the course of this study, Hirsch raises thought-provoking questions about the relationships between

diversity and unity, government and culture, and, ultimately, culture and democracy.

**Born Losers** - Scott A Sandage 2009-06-30

This is a pioneering work of American cultural history, which connects everyday attitudes and anxieties about failure to lofty ideals of individualism and salesmanship of self. Sandage's storytelling will resonate with all of us as it brings to life forgotten men and women who wrestled with The Loser--the label and the experience--in the days when American capitalism was building a nation of winners.

**Between the World and Me** - Ta-Nehisi Coates 2015-07-28

Disclaimer: This is an independent and unofficial addition to *Between the World and Me*, meant to enhance your experience of the original book. If you have not yet bought the original copy, make sure to purchase it before buying this unofficial summary. SPECIAL OFFER \$2.99 (Regularly priced: \$3.99) *Between the World and Me* was published in 2014 after the highly public and racist acts of law enforcement agents against blacks. The events that followed was a racist fueled terrorist act in Charleston, South Carolina. Ta-Nehisi's book talks about racial issues surrounding America and his personal experiences growing up around these issues. There is a residual skeletal outline that surrounds the travesties and effects of the kingdom serial and racial issues surrounding contemporary America. This book is written as a long personal narrative and letter written to his fourteen year old son who is going to grow up within the confines of a racist and prejudiced system. This review offers a detailed summary of the main themes of the book, followed by an analysis. Ta-Nehisi Coates is known as the forefront author in regards to racial issues. He is known for his previous books and is known for writing

in several famous publication. He graduated from Howard University. Read more... Download your copy today! for a limited time discount of only \$2.99! Available on PC, Mac, smart phone, tablet or Kindle device. (c) 2015 All Rights Reserved

**After the Ivory Tower Falls** - Will Bunch 2022-08-02

From Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Will Bunch, the epic untold story of college—the great political and cultural fault line of American life "This book is simply terrific." —Heather Cox Richardson, publisher of the "Letters from an American" Substack "Ambitious and engrossing." —New York Times Book Review "A must-read." —Nancy MacLean, author of *Democracy in Chains* Today there are two Americas, separate and unequal, one educated and one not. And these two tribes—the resentful “non-college” crowd and their diploma-bearing yet increasingly disillusioned adversaries—seem on the brink of a civil war. The strongest determinant of whether a voter was likely to support Donald Trump in 2016 was whether or not they attended college, and the degree of loathing they reported feeling toward the so-called “knowledge economy of clustered, educated elites. Somewhere in the winding last half-century of the United States, the quest for a college diploma devolved from being proof of America’s commitment to learning, science, and social mobility into a kind of Hunger Games contest to the death. That quest has infuriated both the millions who got shut out and millions who got into deep debt to stay afloat. In *After the Ivory Tower Falls*, award-winning journalist Will Bunch embarks on a deeply reported journey to the heart of the American Dream. That journey begins in Gambier, Ohio, home to affluent, liberal Kenyon College, a tiny speck of Democratic blue amidst the vast red swath of white, post-industrial,

rural midwestern America. To understand “the college question,” there is no better entry point than Gambier, where a world-class institution caters to elite students amidst a sea of economic despair. From there, Bunch traces the history of college in the U.S., from the landmark GI Bill through the culture wars of the 60’s and 70’s, which found their start on college campuses. We see how resentment of college-educated elites morphed into a rejection of knowledge itself—and how the explosion in student loan debt fueled major social movements like Occupy Wall Street. Bunch then takes a question we need to ask all over again—what, and who, is college even for?—and pushes it into the 21st century by proposing a new model that works for all Americans. The sum total is a stunning work of journalism, one that lays bare the root of our political, cultural, and economic division—and charts a path forward for America.

*Between the World and Me* - Ta-Nehisi Coates 2015-07-14  
#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • NATIONAL BOOK AWARD WINNER • NAMED ONE OF TIME’S TEN BEST NONFICTION BOOKS OF THE DECADE • PULITZER PRIZE FINALIST • NATIONAL BOOK CRITICS CIRCLE AWARD FINALIST • ONE OF OPRAH’S “BOOKS THAT HELP ME THROUGH” • NOW AN HBO ORIGINAL SPECIAL EVENT Hailed by Toni Morrison as “required reading,” a bold and personal literary exploration of America’s racial history by “the most important essayist in a generation and a writer who changed the national political conversation about race” (Rolling Stone) NAMED ONE OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL BOOKS OF THE DECADE BY CNN • NAMED ONE OF PASTE’S BEST MEMOIRS OF THE DECADE • NAMED ONE OF THE TEN BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY The New York Times Book Review • O: The Oprah Magazine • The Washington Post • People • Entertainment Weekly • Vogue • Los Angeles Times • San Francisco Chronicle • Chicago

Tribune • New York • Newsday • Library Journal • Publishers Weekly In a profound work that pivots from the biggest questions about American history and ideals to the most intimate concerns of a father for his son, Ta-Nehisi Coates offers a powerful new framework for understanding our nation’s history and current crisis. Americans have built an empire on the idea of “race,” a falsehood that damages us all but falls most heavily on the bodies of black women and men—bodies exploited through slavery and segregation, and, today, threatened, locked up, and murdered out of all proportion. What is it like to inhabit a black body and find a way to live within it? And how can we all honestly reckon with this fraught history and free ourselves from its burden?

*Between the World and Me* is Ta-Nehisi Coates’s attempt to answer these questions in a letter to his adolescent son. Coates shares with his son—and readers—the story of his awakening to the truth about his place in the world through a series of revelatory experiences, from Howard University to Civil War battlefields, from the South Side of Chicago to Paris, from his childhood home to the living rooms of mothers whose children’s lives were taken as American plunder. Beautifully woven from personal narrative, reimagined history, and fresh, emotionally charged reportage, *Between the World and Me* clearly illuminates the past, bravely confronts our present, and offers a transcendent vision for a way forward.

*The Real American Dream* - Andrew DELBANCO 2009-06-30 Since we discovered that, in Tocqueville's words, "the incomplete joys of this world will never satisfy the heart," how have we Americans made do? In "The Real American Dream" one of the nation's premier literary scholars searches out the symbols and stories by which

Americans have reached for something beyond worldly desire. A spiritual history ranging from the first English settlements to the present day, the book is also a lively, deeply learned meditation on hope. Andrew Delbanco tells of the stringent God of Protestant Christianity, who exerted immense force over the language, institutions, and customs of the culture for nearly 200 years. He describes the falling away of this God and the rise of the idea of a sacred nation-state. And, finally, he speaks of our own moment, when symbols of nationalism are in decline, leaving us with nothing to satisfy the longing for transcendence once sustained by God and nation. From the Christian story that expressed the earliest Puritan yearnings to New Age spirituality, apocalyptic environmentalism, and the multicultural search for ancestral roots that divert our own, "The Real American Dream" evokes the tidal rhythm of American history. It shows how Americans have organized their days and ordered their lives--and ultimately created a culture--to make sense of the pain, desire, pleasure, and fear that are the stuff of human experience. In a time of cultural crisis, when the old stories seem to be faltering, this book offers a lesson in the painstaking remaking of the American dream.

**America's Dream** - Esmeralda Santiago 2009-10-13

"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.

A Cultural History of the Disney Fairy Tale - Tracey L. Mollet 2020-11-21

This book charts the complex history of the relationship between the Disney fairy tale and the American Dream, demonstrating the ways in which the Disney fairy tale has been reconstructed and renegotiated alongside, and in response to important changes within American society. In all of its fairy tales of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the Walt Disney studios works to sell its audiences the national myth of the United States at any one historical moment. With analyses of films and television programmes such as *The Little Mermaid* (1989), *Frozen* (2013), *Beauty and the Beast* (2017) and *Once Upon a Time* (2011-2018), Mollet argues that by giving its fairy tale protagonists characteristics associated with 'good' Americans, and even by situating their fairy tales within America itself, Disney constructs a vision of America as a utopian space.

Celebrity Culture and the American Dream - Karen Sternheimer 2014-12-12

*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.

**Stakes Is High** - Mychal Denzel Smith 2022-01-25

Brave, clear-eyed, and passionate, *Stakes Is High* is the book we need to guide us past crisis mode and through an uncertain future. The events of the past decade have forced us to reckon with who we are and who we want to be. We have been invested in a set of beliefs about our American identity: our exceptionalism, the inevitable rightness of our path, the promise that hard work and determination will carry us to freedom. But in *Stakes Is High*, Mychal Denzel Smith confronts the shortcomings of these stories -- and with the American Dream itself -- and calls on us to live up to the principles we profess but fail to realize. In a series of incisive essays, Smith exposes the stark contradictions at the heart of American life, holding all of us, individually and as a nation, to account. We've gotten used to looking away, but the fissures and casual violence of institutional oppression are ever-present. There is a future that is not as grim as our past. In this profound work, Smith helps us envision it with care, honesty, and

imagination.

*A Progressive History of American Democracy Since 1945* - Chris J. Magoc 2021-12

"*A Progressive History of American Democracy Since 1945: American Dreams, Hard Realities* offers a social, political, and cultural history of the United States since World War II. Unpacking a period of profound transformation unprecedented in the national experience, this text takes a synthetic approach to the history of the 1940s to the present day. It examines how Americans descended from a mid-century apogee of boundless expectations to the unsettling premise that our contemporary historical moment is fraught with a sense of crisis and national failure. The book's narrative explores the question of decline and more importantly, how the history of this transformation can point the way toward a recovery of shared national values. Chris J. Magoc also gives extensive treatments to the following: Grassroots movements that have expanded the meaning of American democracy, from the 1950s human rights struggle in the South, to contemporary movements to confront systemic racism and the existential crisis of climate change; The resilience of American democracy in the face of antidemocratic forces; The impacts of a decades-long economic transformation; The consequences of America's expanding global military footprint and national security state; Fracturing of a nation once held together by a post-war liberal consensus and broadly shared societal goals to an America facing an attack from within on empirical truth and democracy itself. This book will be of interest to students of modern U.S. history, social history and American Studies and general readers interested in recent U.S. history"--

**The American Dream** - Lawrence R. Samuel 2012-08-27

There is no better way to understand America than by understanding the cultural history of the American Dream. Rather than just a powerful philosophy or ideology, the Dream is thoroughly woven into the fabric of everyday life, playing a vital role in who we are, what we do, and why we do it. No other idea or mythology has as much influence on our individual and collective lives. Tracing the history of the phrase in popular culture, Samuel gives readers a field guide to the evolution of our national identity over the last eighty years. Samuel tells the story chronologically, revealing that there have been six major eras of the mythology since the phrase was coined in 1931. Relying mainly on period magazines and newspapers as his primary source material, the author demonstrates that journalists serving on the front lines of the scene represent our most valuable resource to recover unfiltered stories of the Dream. The problem, Samuel reveals, is that it does not exist; the Dream is just that, a product of our imagination. That it is not real ultimately turns out to be the most significant finding and what makes the story most compelling.

*Gatsby* - Bob Batchelor 2013-11-07

In 1925, F. Scott Fitzgerald produced his third novel, a slim work for which he had high expectations. Despite such hopes, the novel received mixed reviews and lackluster sales. Over the decades, however, the reputation of *The Great Gatsby* has grown and millions of copies have been sold. One of the bestselling novels of all time, it is also considered one of the most significant achievements in twentieth-century fiction. But what makes *Gatsby* great? Why do we still care about this book more than eighty-five years after it was published? And how does *Gatsby* help us make sense of our

own lives and times? In *Gatsby: The Cultural History of the Great American Novel*, Bob Batchelor explores the birth, life, and enduring influence of *The Great Gatsby*—from the book’s publication in 1925 through today’s headlines filled with celebrity intrigue, corporate greed, and a roller-coaster economy. A cultural historian, Batchelor explains why and how the novel has become part of the fiber of the American ethos and an important tool in helping readers to better comprehend their lives and the broader world around them. A “biography” of F. Scott Fitzgerald’s masterpiece, this book examines *The Great Gatsby*’s evolution from a nearly-forgotten 1920s time capsule to a revered cultural touchstone. Batchelor explores how this embodiment of the American Dream has become an iconic part of our national folklore, how the central themes and ideas emerging from the book—from the fulfillment of the American Dream to the role of wealth in society—resonate with contemporary readers who struggle with similar uncertainties today. By exploring the timeless elements of reinvention, romanticism, and relentless pursuit of the unattainable, Batchelor confirms the novel’s status as “The Great American Novel” and, more importantly, explains to students, scholars, and fans alike what makes *Gatsby* so great.

**An American Dream** - Norman Mailer 2015-02-17

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 Strip** - Stefan Al 2017-03-03

The transformations of the Strip—from the fake Wild West to neon signs twenty stories high to "starchitecture"—and how they mirror America itself. The

Las Vegas Strip has impersonated the Wild West, with saloon doors and wagon wheels; it has decked itself out in midcentury modern sleekness. It has illuminated itself with twenty-story-high neon signs, then junked them. After that came Disney-like theme parks featuring castles and pirates, followed by replicas of Venetian canals, New York skyscrapers, and the Eiffel Tower. (It might be noted that forty-two million people visited Las Vegas in 2015—ten million more than visited the real Paris.) More recently, the Strip decided to get classy, with casinos designed by famous architects and zillion-dollar collections of art. Las Vegas became the "implosion capital of the world" as developers, driven by competition, got rid of the old to make way for the new—offering a non-metaphorical definition of "creative destruction." In *The Strip*, Stefan Al examines the many transformations of the Las Vegas Strip, arguing that they mirror transformations in America itself. The Strip is not, as popularly supposed, a display of architectural freaks but representative of architectural trends and a record of social, cultural, and economic change. Al tells two parallel stories. He describes the feverish competition of Las Vegas developers to build the snazziest, most tourist-grabbing casinos and resorts—with a cast of characters including the mobster Bugsy Siegel, the eccentric billionaire Howard Hughes, and the would-be political kingmaker Sheldon Adelson. And he views the Strip in a larger social context, showing that it has not only reflected trends but also magnified them and sometimes even initiated them. Generously illustrated with stunning color images throughout, *The Strip* traces the many metamorphoses of a city that offers a vivid projection of the American dream.

**The American Dream and the Public Schools** - Jennifer L. Hochschild 2004-10-21

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.

**The American Dream** - Jim Cullen 2004

The first "narrative history" traces the thread that binds the dreams and aspirations of most Americans together, exploring shared history and sacred texts--the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence--in search of the origins of these ideas.

**The American Middle Class** - Lawrence R Samuel 2013-07-18

The middle class is often viewed as the heart of American society, the key to the country's democracy and prosperity. Most Americans believe they belong to this group, and few politicians can hope to be elected without promising to serve the middle class. Yet today the American middle class is increasingly seen as under threat. In *The American Middle Class: A Cultural*

*History*, Lawrence R. Samuel charts the rise and fall of this most definitive American population, from its triumphant emergence in the post-World War II years to the struggles of the present day. Between the 1920s and the 1950s, powerful economic, social, and political factors worked together in the U.S. to forge what many historians consider to be the first genuine mass middle class in history. But from the cultural convulsions of the 1960s, to the 'stagflation' of the 1970s, to Reaganomics in the 1980s, this segment of the population has been under severe stress. Drawing on a rich array of voices from the past half-century, *The American Middle Class* explores how the middle class, and ideas about it, have changed over time, including the distinct story of the black middle class. Placing the current crisis of the middle class in historical perspective, Samuel shows how the roots of middle-class troubles reach back to the cultural upheaval of the 1960s. *The American Middle Class* takes a long look at how the middle class has been winnowed away and reveals how, even in the face of this erosion, the image of the enduring middle class remains the heart and soul of the United States.

*The European Dream* - Jeremy Rifkin 2004

Rifkin delves deeply into the history of Europe--and eventually America--to show how Europeans have succeeded in slowly and steadily developing a more adaptive, sensible way of working and living.

**The Epic of America** - James Truslow Adams 2012-05-01

Originally published in 1931 by Little, Brown, and Company.

**Financing the American Dream** - Lendol Calder 2009-07-01

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.

**Shrink** - Lawrence R. Samuel 2020-04-01

"Psychology has stepped down from the university chair into the marketplace" was how the New York Times put it in 1926. Another commentator in 1929 was more biting. Psychoanalysis, he said, had over a generation, "converted the human scene into a neurotic." Freud first used the word around 1895, and by the 1920s psychoanalysis was a phenomenon to be reckoned with in the United States. How it gained such purchase, taking hold in virtually every aspect of American culture, is the story Lawrence R. Samuel tells in *Shrink*, the first comprehensive popular history of psychoanalysis in America. Arriving on the scene at around the same time as the modern idea of the self, psychoanalysis has both shaped and reflected the ascent of individualism in American society. Samuel traces its path from the theories of Freud and Jung to the innermost reaches of our current me-based, narcissistic culture. Along the way he shows how the arbiters of culture, high and low, from public intellectuals, novelists, and filmmakers to *Good Housekeeping* and the *Cosmo* girl, mediated or embraced psychoanalysis (or some version of it), until it could be legitimately viewed as an integral feature of American consciousness.

**Behold, America** - Sarah Churchwell 2018-10-09

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.

American Dreams - H. W. Brands 2010

A bestselling historian delivers an incisive chronicle of the events and trends that have guided--and sometimes misguided--America, from the A-bomb to the iPhone.

*The American Way of Life* - Lawrence R. Samuel 2017-05-25

Telling the full story of the American Way of Life (or more simply the American Way) in the United States over the course of the last century reveals key insights that add to our understanding of American culture. Lawrence R. Samuel argues that since the term was popularized in the 1930s, the American Way has served as the primary guiding mythology or national ethos of the United States. More than that, however, this work shows that the American Way has represented many things to many people, making the mythology a useful device for anyone wishing to promote a particular agenda that serves his or her interests. A consumerist lifestyle supported by a system based in free enterprise has been the ideological

backbone of the American Way, but the term has been attached to everything from farming to baseball to barbecue. There really is no single, identifiable American Way and never has been--it becomes clear after tracing its history--making it a kind of Zelig of belief systems. If our underlying philosophy or set of values is amorphous and nebulous, then so is our national identity and character, Samuel concludes, implying that the meaning of America is elastic and accommodating to many interpretations. This unique thesis sets off this work from other books and helps establish it as a seminal resource within the fields of American history and American studies.

**Political Tribes** - Amy Chua 2019-06-25

The bestselling author of *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother*, Yale Law School Professor Amy Chua offers a bold new prescription for reversing our foreign policy failures and overcoming our destructive political tribalism at home. Humans are tribal. We need to belong to groups. In many parts of the world, the group identities that matter most -- the ones that people will kill and die for -- are ethnic, religious, sectarian, or clan-based. But because America tends to see the world in terms of nation-states engaged in great ideological battles -- Capitalism vs. Communism, Democracy vs. Authoritarianism, the "Free World" vs. the "Axis of Evil" -- we are often spectacularly blind to the power of tribal politics. Time and again this blindness has undermined American foreign policy. In the Vietnam War, viewing the conflict through Cold War blinders, we never saw that most of Vietnam's "capitalists" were members of the hated Chinese minority. Every pro-free-market move we made helped turn the Vietnamese people against us. In Iraq, we were stunningly dismissive of the hatred

between that country's Sunnis and Shias. If we want to get our foreign policy right – so as to not be perpetually caught off guard and fighting unwinnable wars – the United States has to come to grips with political tribalism abroad. Just as Washington's foreign policy establishment has been blind to the power of tribal politics outside the country, so too have American political elites been oblivious to the group identities that matter most to ordinary Americans – and that are tearing the United States apart. As the stunning rise of Donald Trump laid bare, identity politics have seized both the American left and right in an especially dangerous, racially inflected way. In America today, every group feels threatened: whites and blacks, Latinos and Asians, men and women, liberals and conservatives, and so on. There is a pervasive sense of collective persecution and discrimination. On the left, this has given rise to increasingly radical and exclusionary rhetoric of privilege and cultural appropriation. On the right, it has fueled a disturbing rise in xenophobia and white nationalism. In characteristically persuasive style, Amy Chua argues that America must rediscover a national identity that transcends our political tribes. Enough false slogans of unity, which are just another form of divisiveness. It is time for a more difficult unity that acknowledges the reality of group differences and fights the deep inequities that divide us.

*Asian American Dreams* - Helen Zia 2001-05-15

An account of the emergence of the Asian American consciousness in the United States explores the history that led to disparate groups of Asians seeing themselves as a single, cohesive ethnic community with political power.

**How the Arabian Nights Inspired the American Dream, 1790-1935** - Susan Nance 2009-06-01

Americans have always shown a fascination with the people, customs, and legends of the "East--witness the popularity of the stories of the Arabian Nights, the performances of Arab belly dancers and acrobats, the feats of turban-wearing vaudeville magicians, and even the antics of fez-topped Shriners. In this captivating volume, Susan Nance provides a social and cultural history of this highly popular genre of Easternized performance in America up to the Great Depression. According to Nance, these traditions reveal how a broad spectrum of Americans, including recent immigrants and impersonators, behaved as producers and consumers in a rapidly developing capitalist economy. In admiration of the Arabian Nights, people creatively reenacted Eastern life, but these performances were also demonstrations of Americans' own identities, Nance argues. The story of Aladdin, made suddenly rich by rubbing an old lamp, stood as a particularly apt metaphor for how consumer capitalism might benefit each person. The leisure, abundance, and contentment that many imagined were typical of Eastern life were the same characteristics used to define "the American dream." The recent success of Disney's Aladdin movies suggests that many Americans still welcome an interpretation of the East as a site of incredible riches, romance, and happy endings. This abundantly illustrated account is the first by a historian to explain why and how so many Americans sought out such cultural engagement with the Eastern world long before geopolitical concerns became paramount.

The Third Coast - Thomas L. Dyja 2013-04-18

Winner of the Chicago Tribune's 2013 Heartland Prize A

critically acclaimed history of Chicago at mid-century, featuring many of the incredible personalities that shaped American culture. Before air travel overtook trains, nearly every coast-to-coast journey included a stop in Chicago, and this flow of people and commodities made it the crucible for American culture and innovation. In luminous prose, Chicago native Thomas Dyja re-creates the story of the city in its postwar prime and explains its profound impact on modern America—from Chess Records to Playboy, McDonald's to the University of Chicago. Populated with an incredible cast of characters, including Mahalia Jackson, Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Chuck Berry, Sun Ra, Simone de Beauvoir, Nelson Algren, Gwendolyn Brooks, Studs Turkel, and Mayor Richard J. Daley, *The Third Coast* recalls the prominence of the Windy City in all its grandeur.

*Engines of Change* - Paul Ingrassia 2012-05-01

A narrative like no other: a cultural history that explores how cars have both propelled and reflected the American experience— from the Model T to the Prius. From the assembly lines of Henry Ford to the open roads of Route 66, from the lore of Jack Kerouac to the sex appeal of the Hot Rod, America's history is a vehicular history—an idea brought brilliantly to life in this major work by Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Paul Ingrassia. Ingrassia offers a wondrous epic in fifteen automobiles, including the Corvette, the Beetle, and the Chevy Corvair, as well as the personalities and tales behind them: Robert McNamara's unlikely role in Lee Iacocca's Mustang, John Z. DeLorean's Pontiac GTO, Henry Ford's Model T, as well as Honda's Accord, the BMW 3 Series, and the Jeep, among others. Through these cars and these characters, Ingrassia shows how the car has expressed the particularly American tension between the

lure of freedom and the obligations of utility. He also takes us through the rise of American manufacturing, the suburbanization of the country, the birth of the hippie and the yuppie, the emancipation of women, and many more fateful episodes and eras, including the car's unintended consequences: trial lawyers, energy crises, and urban sprawl. Narrative history of the highest caliber, *Engines of Change* is an entirely edifying new way to look at the American story.

**Confronting the American Dream** - Michel Gobat 2005-12-06  
Michel Gobat deftly interweaves political, economic, cultural, and diplomatic history to analyze the reactions of Nicaraguans to U.S. intervention in their country from the heyday of Manifest Destiny in the mid-nineteenth century through the U.S. occupation of 1912–33. Drawing on extensive research in Nicaraguan and U.S. archives, Gobat accounts for two seeming paradoxes that have long eluded historians of Latin America: that Nicaraguans so strongly embraced U.S. political, economic, and cultural forms to defend their own nationality against U.S. imposition and that the country's wealthiest and most Americanized elites were transformed from leading supporters of U.S. imperial rule into some of its greatest opponents. Gobat focuses primarily on the reactions of the elites to Americanization, because the power and identity of these Nicaraguans were the most significantly affected by U.S. imperial rule. He describes their adoption of aspects of "the American way of life" in the mid-nineteenth century as strategic rather than wholesale. Chronicling the U.S. occupation of 1912–33, he argues that the anti-American turn of Nicaragua's most Americanized oligarchs stemmed largely from the efforts of U.S. bankers, marines, and missionaries to spread their own version of the American

dream. In part, the oligarchs' reversal reflected their anguish over the 1920s rise of Protestantism, the "modern woman," and other "vices of modernity" emanating from the United States. But it also responded to the unintended ways that U.S. modernization efforts enabled

peasants to weaken landlord power. Gobat demonstrates that the U.S. occupation so profoundly affected Nicaragua that it helped engender the Sandino Rebellion of 1927–33, the Somoza dictatorship of 1936–79, and the Sandinista Revolution of 1979–90.