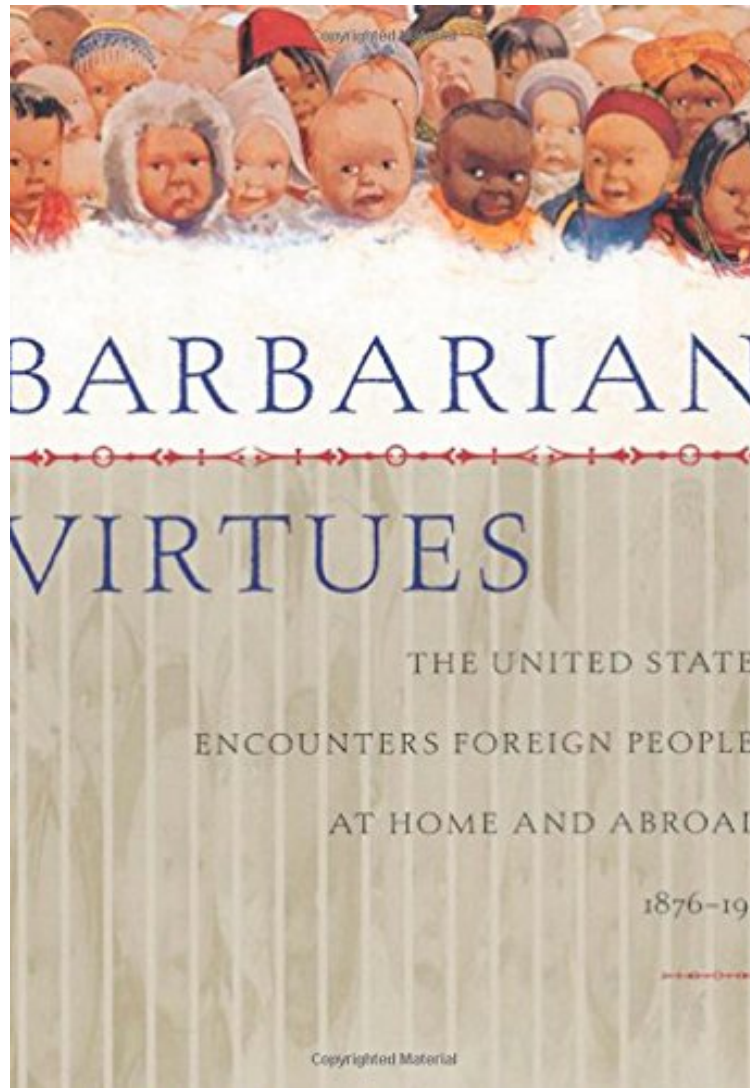


(Ebook free) *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917*

Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917

Matthew Frye Jacobson

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Matthew Frye Jacobson : Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917 before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917*:

10 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating and well-written--required reading for AmericansBy Quickhappy"At its core 'civilization' was an economic concept" (p. 50). So shows Jacobson, in his wonderful book,

Barbarian Virtues. Vile racial hatreds define these hegemonic notions of "civilization." Jacobson's extensive research shows persistent and everyday racism operating in the daily discourse of American power. Presidents McKinley and (Teddy) Roosevelt, as well as major newspapers and magazines, spew a stream of racism, and show it as a basic part of elite common sense at the time. I want to second the reviewer from Durham, who found this book short on Blackness. (Jacobson's excellent Whiteness of a Different Color helps somewhat.) One might add that this book only skims over the important experience of the violent conquest of the West and the Indians, in shaping "civilization" and "savage" during these years. (Drinnon's Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian-Hating and Empire Building is a larger and longer contribution in this regard.) The book could be faulted for lingering on the Tarzan novels, for example, when more pressing political issues ruled the day. And I was hungry for a more sustained discussion of the colonization of the Philippines. But Jacobson is in pursuit of "civilized" ideas in everyday American thought--that's his safari here and, as such, he pursues his subject with great talent. Barbarian Virtues is a fast and gripping read. And it exposes what school textbooks and the mass media forget so well: America has a long and vicious history of racial hatred. When our politicians today speak of "civilization," we ought to remember its deep, poisonous roots, and its longstanding use to justify the most brutal exertions of capitalist greed. 15 of 18 people found the following review helpful. Extraordinary
By A Customer
This is an extraordinary book. It traces the intersecting lines of the American imperial drive for markets during this period, with the push for immigration as a source of cheap labor. Interwoven with both policies was an unremitting ethnocentrism and racism. This book explains the relationship between these factors, and how they helped shape American nationalism and consciousness during the period. One can also recognize the roots of recent American history in this earlier period.... The book is brimming with startling and thought-provoking information. Even one familiar with this period of American history will find much that is new. The quotations in the book are worth the price alone: almost every page contains a quotation to make the jaw drop! This book is exceptionally well written, and extremely fascinating. It's one of the rare books that had me grabbing my friends and urging them to read it!
0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars
By Brian Yokley
Great price

How a new American identity was forged by immigration and expansion a century ago. In Barbarian Virtues, Matthew Frye Jacobson offers a keenly argued and persuasive history of the close relationship between immigration and America's newly expansionist ambitions at the turn of the twentieth century. Jacobson draws upon political documents, novels, travelogues, academic treatises, and art as he recasts American political life. In so doing, he shows how today's attitudes about "Americanism" -- from Border Watch to the Gulf War -- were set in this crucial period, when the dynamics of industrialization rapidly accelerated the rate at which Americans were coming in contact with foreign peoples.

From Publishers Weekly
A sense of moral outrage simmers throughout Barbarian Virtues, an outrage that tacitly informs Jacobson's exploration of U.S. attitudes toward immigration and foreign policy (which he sees as two sides of the same coin) in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, but which is kept from boiling over until the last page. There, Jacobson concludes: "Despite some opposition, the United States consciously chose imperial power along with the antidemocratic baggage and even the bloodshed that entailed; and many Americans liked it." This is not really news. But Jacobson, a professor of American Studies at Yale and author of Whiteness of a Different Color, does have an interesting thesis: at a time when America depended on nonwhite foreigners as both reliable consumers of American products abroad and industrious workers in the U.S., it also reviled them as "primitives" in need of civilization and as potential threats to the national order. The strength of his book is the wealth of evidence it provides; referring to a wide range of documentation--from journalism to literature, political rhetoric to pseudo-scientific studies, Tarzan to Teddy Roosevelt--Jacobson explores every conceivable nuance of his thesis. He might have written a book with far greater resonance, however, had he devoted more than a few pages to sketching out how his thesis also applies to America today. Still, Jacobson succeeds in presenting an analysis of a crucial period in the development of American identity as forged in the simultaneous "crucible of immigration" at home and "empire-building" abroad. 24 pages of bw photos not seen by PW. (Apr.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.
From Library Journal
Though the growth and prosperity of the United States was made possible by the labor of immigrants and the availability of external markets, foreigners have often been viewed by Americans with ambivalence. In this study, Jacobson (American studies, Yale), the author of Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race (LJ 11/1/98) and other works exploring race and the immigrant experience, examines complex political and social views during a period of explosive immigration and overseas expansion. By considering a wide variety of contemporary sources such as newspapers, novels, academic treatises, and political writings, he discovers attitudes that offer striking similarities to those still voiced by politicians and political action groups in the latter part of the 20th century. Based upon a wide variety of primary and secondary sources, this readable and thoughtful work is recommended for large academic libraries.-Theresa McDevitt, Indiana Univ. of Pennsylvania
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From Booklist
Jacobson, a history professor at Yale, examines "the temper of American nationalism" from Reconstruction to World War I, a period of great industrial growth and expansionist impulses in Alaska, Hawaii, Latin America, and the

Caribbean. Foreign policy was dictated by the need for markets to absorb the production of American goods or cheap labor to produce those goods. Jacobson chose the period "to redress two striking failures of our national memories-- one regarding immigration; the other, imperialism." Despite idealized images of U.S. immigration policy, it has been more about economics than idealism. Jacobson also recounts U.S. engagement in the Philippines, Cuba, Guam, and Puerto Rico as illustrations of U.S. expansionist desires. He examines the pernicious racism of the Exclusion Act of 1882 as a means of keeping out the Chinese in contrast to the eventual assimilation of the once-hated Irish as they became official whites. An excellent look at an aspect of U.S. history not often discussed or studied. Vanessa Bush