



American Exceptionalisms: From Winthrop to Winfrey

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Wide-ranging, interdisciplinary look at the emergence and persistence of the concept of American exceptionalism in U.S. culture and history.

An incisive and wide-ranging look at a powerful force and myth in American culture and history, *American Exceptionalisms* reveals the centuries-old persistence of the notion that the United States is an exceptional nation, in being both an example to the world and exempt from the rules of international law. Scholars from North America and Europe trace versions of the rhetoric of exceptionalism through a multitude of historical, cultural, and political phenomena, from John Winthrop's vision of the "city upon a hill" and the Salem witch trials in the seventeenth century to *The Blair Witch Project* and Oprah Winfrey's "Child Predator Watch List" in the twenty-first century. The first set of essays focus on constitutive historical moments in the development of the myth, from early exploration narratives through political debates in the early republic to twentieth-century immigration debates. The latter essays address the role of exceptionalism in the "war on terror" and such cornerstones of modern popular culture as the horror stories of H. P. Lovecraft, the songs of Steve Earle, and *The Oprah Winfrey Show*.

"...quality essays that reflect the new willingness to challenge exceptionalist dogma." — *Journal of American History*

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Review

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