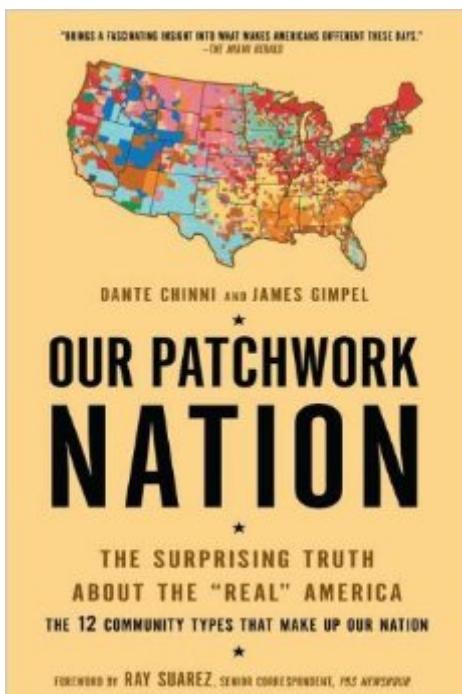


The book was found

Our Patchwork Nation: The Surprising Truth About The "Real" America



Synopsis

A provocative counterargument to the blue/red divide that illuminates our country's multidimensional political spectrum. In a climate of culture wars and economic uncertainty, the media have often reduced America to a simplistic schism between red and blue states. In response to that oversimplification, journalist Dante Chinni teamed up with political geographer James Gimpel, using on-the-ground reporting and statistical analysis to get past generalizations and probe American communities in depth. Looking at the data, they recognized that the country breaks into twelve distinct types of communities, whose differences and specific concerns shed light on the subtle distinctions in how Americans vote, shop, and otherwise behave. Showcasing personal interviews, combined with facts and statistics, *Our Patchwork Nation* offers a brilliant new way to examine the issues that matter most to our communities, and to our nation.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is an excellent book. The authors present a unique analysis of data. I would lower the rating slightly just because it could have been even greater if they had widened the scope of the data considered. In reading this book, you get a clear picture of where American society is at the moment. The authors explain what defines the differences and conflicts we face. Where their analysis is lacking relates to at least two factors. First, their chapter on culture doesn't go very deep. The cultures of these communities have formed over centuries. They have their origins in the cultures of the British isles and the European continent. The differences are vast between the Scots-Irish

culture of the American South and the Northern European culture of the American North. If you want a fuller understanding, I'd recommend supplementing your reading with two other excellent books: Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America (America: A Cultural History) By David Hackett Fischer American Nations: A History of the Eleven Rival Regional Cultures of North America By Colin Woodard In this respect, there is another interesting book to consider that helps understand the differences between the North and South:

Books such as "Our Patchwork Nation" delve into more detailed information about the diversity of US Americans and why they do what they do. They go beyond the examination of the red and blue States model used to explain the political preferences of US voters, beyond the regional differences which define many of our preferences, beyond the ethnic diversity which we often used to do the same. Chinni and Gimpel provide a new model that examines the USA, county by county, largely in terms of the economic and political behavior of each. This gives us a far more granular and complex, but also more insightful view of US demographics. The book is both timely and contextual. It gives us a picture of the cultures of the USA in what the authors describe as "The Great Recession," in the lead up to the presidential elections later this year. If we understand culture as the survival and success discourse which people in a particular group create, share, and perpetuate, this is a book about culture despite its heavy emphasis on economics and politics. The down side is that its data will quickly become dated; on the other hand, the assemblage of such data can provide a launching pad and a comparative baseline for future research and observation. Every model requires some reductionism, simplification to a certain degree, of the complexity with which reality confronts us. A model is a way of looking at and understanding things that inevitably walks the tightrope between fragmentation and oversimplification. The menu is not the meal, but by reading it and glancing about to see what the diners at other tables are being served, and consulting our own tastes, we are able to make a somewhat informed choice about what to order.

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