

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910345143703321
Autore	Wuthnow Robert
Titolo	American mythos : why our best efforts to be a better nation fall short / / Robert Wuthnow
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Princeton, : Princeton University Press, c2006
ISBN	9786612157486 9781282157484 1282157485 9781400827022 1400827027
Edizione	[Course Book]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (297 p.)
Disciplina	303.3/72/0973
Soggetti	Social values - United States Social ethics - United States Immigrants - United States United States Moral conditions
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. [263]-276) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Deep culture and democratic renewal -- Quandaries of individualism -- The justice of privilege -- Self-made men and women -- In America, all religions are true -- Ethnic ties that bind (loosely) -- Saving ourselves from materialism -- Venues for reflective democracy.
Sommario/riassunto	America was built on stories: tales of grateful immigrants arriving at Ellis Island, Horatio Alger-style transformations, self-made men, and the Protestant work ethic. In this new book, renowned sociologist Robert Wuthnow examines these most American of stories--narratives about individualism, immigration, success, religion, and ethnicity-- through the eyes of recent immigrants. In doing so, he demonstrates how the "American mythos" has both legitimized American society and prevented it from fully realizing its ideals. This magisterial work is a reflection and meditation on the national consciousness. It details how Americans have traditionally relied on narratives to address what it means to be strong, morally responsible individuals and to explain why some people are more successful than others--in short, to help us

make sense of our lives. But it argues that these narratives have done little to help us confront new challenges. We pass laws to end racial discrimination, yet lack the resolve to create a more equitable society. We welcome the idea of pluralism in religion and values, yet we are shaken by the difficulties immigration presents. We champion prosperity for all, but live in a country where families are still experiencing homelessness. American Mythos aptly documents this disconnect between the stories we tell and the reality we face. Examining how cultural narratives may not, and often do not, reflect the reality of today's society, it challenges readers to become more reflective about what it means to live up to the American ideal.

---