

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910797122303321
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Titolo	Hunt the Devil : a demonology of US war culture // Robert L. Ivie and Oscar Giner
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Tuscaloosa, Alabama : , : The University Alabama Press, , 2015 ©2015
ISBN	0-8173-8819-2
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (208 p.)
Classificazione	LAN004000POL031000HIS036000
Disciplina	133.4/20973
Soggetti	Demonology - United States Tricksters Imagery (Psychology) War and society - United States Rhetoric - Political aspects - United States
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 and index.
Nota di contenuto	Contents; Acknowledgments; Introduction; 1. Evildoers; 2. Witches; 3. Indians; 4. Dictators; 5. Reds; 6. Tricksters; Conclusion; Notes; Selected Bibliography; Index
Sommario/riassunto	"A critical study of the demonic imagery that has been persistently embedded and codified in America's war culture. The authors examine "the devil myth" in both its past and present iterations and also highlight the counter-myth of the "trickster figure" whose democratic impulses have occasionally succeeded in countering the impulse towards demonization. To unveil the devil myth, the authors identify outward projections of evil onto the faces of America's enemies. They begin by scrutinizing the image of evildoers used to justify the global war on terror. It is difficult, they observe, to recognize this literalized image as a rhetorical construction subject to critical reflection without revisiting earlier manifestations of the devil myth in American history. Mythical projection is a cyclical process of political culture, they argue. Traces of earlier iterations of the devil myth carry into the present, but enemies are demonized anew in distinctive ways at each historical juncture of national crisis. To illustrate this process, the book includes

chapters on demonized figures preceding the war on terror: witches, Indians, dictators, and reds. Each chapter shows how these emotionally loaded symbols have functioned as apparitions of dark foes that must be destroyed to redeem the nation's innocence. In this way, the book reveals how the subliminal figure of the devil haunts U.S. political culture so that war symbolically wards off evil in defense of, but at the cost of curtailing, its democratic soul. One of the study's underlying questions is how the nation can make peace with diversity instead of condemning it as a dark foe carrying the mark of evil. The book works toward an answer by discussing the creative and critical role of the democratic trickster"--
