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John Tirman


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WITH A FOREWORD BY
HOWARD ZINN

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John Tirman : 100 Ways America Is Screwing Up the World before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised 100 Ways America Is Screwing Up the World:

4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A Hundred Different Perspectives By Bob Magnant Be it 'AIPAC', 'Big Pharma', 'Consumerism' or 'Disney, Inc.', John Tirman's celebration of democracy provides the reader with much food for thought. In 'Altering the Earth's Climate' and 'Television', the leadoff chapters of 100 Ways America Is Screwing Up the World, the author sets the tone for his fascinating book and shows how a fresh perspective of some

common topics can easily set your mind spinning. Tirman is a well respected political scientist who has written widely on foreign policy, politics and human rights. This book takes a long look at broad range topics that you are probably well aware of but may never have really given them this kind of thought. His very personal style of writing makes each topic quite understandable and sensible at the same time. He also packs a lot into just a few pages on each subject. I have paraphrased some of his reflections on 'Agribusiness' below to provide you with what I feel is a good example. "The lower cost of Government subsidized corn in the US has created an incentive for processed food manufacturers to substitute high-fructose corn syrup for other sugars, which now strongly correlates with obesity and an epidemic of diabetes that offsets any intended good of the subsidies. Genetically modified foods are sure to be another health-related problem of farm subsidies that's just over-the-horizon. And to make matters worse, such subsidies end up costing the developing world some \$300 billion annually with actual assistance being only \$50 billion! And just because Europe is as guilty as we are on these issues doesn't make it right." In 'We Don't Do Body Counts', Tirman shows how, with our current policy in the Middle East, we have callously attempted to deflect attention from the moral consequences of our war of choice, which are always inconvenient. It makes us remember the Vietnam Nightly News and the failure of past policies. 'America as Victim', 'Damsels in Distress', 'The Weapons Habit', 'The Killing Fields of Death Row'; the list goes on. Each topic is a masterpiece of insightful analysis. I feel that his discussion of 'Consumerism' should be required annual reading for people of all ages until 'we get it.' As the current Executive Director of MIT's Center for International Studies, he is obviously no pessimist and he demonstrates that by ending this work on a positive note with a wrap-up called Ten Things America Does Right. I encourage you to read this book; it will definitely open your eyes. Bob Magnant is the author of The Last Transition... - a fact-based novel about Iran, Iraq and the Middle East... 6 of 15 people found the following review helpful. IQ Test By Haim This book is an IQ test. If you believe a single word of this revisionist, anti-American claptrap, you must have an IQ in single digits. That Tirman is a professor of political science at MIT tells you just about all you need to know, to understand the degenerate age we live in. Obviously, I cannot in this forum refute every point Tirman makes, so let me mention a few of his best. #19 Genocide(a) the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was unnecessary and unwarranted, (b) FDR slow to react to Nazi death camps, (c) U.S. sat on its hands during the Rwanda massacres. How lovely for Tirman to deplore the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, that together killed about 100,000 people. Of course, he was not going to be one of the one million (maybe more) casualties, both American and Japanese, that everyone reasonably expected from an invasion of the Japanese home islands, during WW II, the single greatest catastrophe in human history. Oh, and never mind that conventional aerial bombings of cities, including Tokyo and Dresden, and the artillery bombardment of Berlin by the Soviets, produced similar casualties. The atomic bombings are unique, and so Americans are uniquely guilty, according to Tirman. Blaming the allies for the Nazi death camps is a relatively recent, and especially pernicious, revisionist lie. Anyone who has read in military history knows the idiocy of this assertion. But, if you are new to the subject, you can quickly catch up with the excellent book, "The Myth of Rescue" by W.D. Rubinstein. Too bad Tirman did not read this book. First, it was Hutus who were murdering Tutsies in Rwanda, so how about a little blame for them? Second, Tirman is confusing the U.S. for Belgium. The U.S. has never had any connection to Rwanda. Even the movie, "Hotel Rwanda", establishes the connection to Belgium. It was the Belgians, and possibly the French, who were sitting on their hands, not the Americans, if you are looking hard to blame somebody other than the Rwandans themselves. The rest of the book is just like this, page after page. When Tirman treats a topic I know nothing about, like the Spanish-American war, I can see how convincing he can seem. Once he touches a topic I do know something about, the illusion of competence shatters immediately, and Tirman is revealed for the propagandist he is. I will say this in the book's favor: you could use it as a syllabus. If you actually research each topic that Tirman presents, with the intent of actually discovering the truth, you will learn a lot about history and you will rediscover your love for America: truly, "the last best hope of man on earth". 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great for a Research Paper and General Knowledge By Empathy This book is tough love (in speaking the truth) and a wake up call to take corrective action! I would also consider this book to be a primer of sorts. There are enough ideas in this book to help me research in depth what I need to accomplish. On a more personal basis, I could have written this book myself, as most of Tirman's views reflect my own. However, I actually learned a thing or two. One topic which I was most ignorant of and learned most about was "Disney, Inc." - "it is one of the worst offenders of sweatshop practices." Boycott anyone? This book was a page turner. I like that each topic is not more than a few pages. Sometimes he gives verifiable statistics and facts. Other times he mostly spouts off his opinions; however, his opinions are founded enough to flesh out in other books, journals, magazines, or newspapers. My favorite topic of all was the Phalangist Punditry (Krauthammer, Podhoretz, Kristol). Other favorite topics include (not in any particular order): We Don't Do Body Counts (in other words we don't care how many innocents were killed in the Iraq bombings) Forgetting History (Christopher Columbus, etc..) Defense Contractors We're Number One Consumerism (Retail therapy) The New Age The Self-help Mania (Consumed with ourselves, do we care about others) SUVs Dissing the United Nations Wars of Choice (Why not think of ways of reducing oil consumption vs. going to war)

What do George W. Bush, Wal-Mart, Halliburton, gangsta rap, and SUVs have in common? They're all among the

hundred ways in which America is screwing up the world. The country that was responsible for many, if not most, of the twentieth century's most important scientific and technological advancements now demonizes its scientists and thinkers in the twenty-first, while dumbing down its youth with anti-Darwin/pro-"Intelligent Design" propaganda. The longtime paragon of personal freedoms now supports torture and illegal wiretapping#8212spreading its principles and policies at gunpoint while ruthlessly bombing the world with Big Macs and Mickey Mouse ears. At once serious-minded and satirical, John Tirman's 100 Ways America Is Screwing Up the World is an insightful, unabashed, entertaining, and distressing look at where we've gone terribly wrong#8212from the destruction of the environment to the promotion of abhorrent personal health and eating habits to the "wussification" of the free press#8212an alternately admonishing and amusing call to arms for patriotic Blue America.

From Publishers WeeklyAs a liberal response to the wealth of pop conservative writing—such as last year's 100 People Who Are Screwing Up America by Bernard Goldberg and Peter Schweitzer's Do as I Say (Not as I Do): Profiles in Liberal Hypocrisy—this collection of 100 pithy salvos against current U.S. culture, and domestic and foreign policy hits its mark. Tirman, an unabashed liberal and the executive director of MIT's Center for International Studies, has a sly style and makes his often predictable points with unexpected panache. Whether he 's skewering the American obsession with consumerism, the rise of the pro-war progressive ("when I see a liberal hawk, I smell a rat") or the recent globalization of Christian evangelism, Tirman stays just this side of cranky and avoids preaching only to the converted. About a third of the time, he makes arresting points, such as that the media obsesses over white "damsels in distress," like Laci Peterson or Natalee Holloway, while refusing to discuss truly important issues such as "rapes of girls as a weapon of war." As quick-sketch political commentary goes, these laconic essays are terrific. But the bottom line is that while Tirman is arguably fairer and more nuanced than Goldberg or Schweitzer, none of these books contributes to substantive political understanding or debate. (Aug. 1) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. About the AuthorJohn Tirman is executive director of MIT's Center for International Studies. He is the author, or coauthor and editor, of nine books on international affairs. His work has appeared in the New York Times, the Washington Post, The Nation, the Wall Street Journal, and the International Herald Tribune. He lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts.