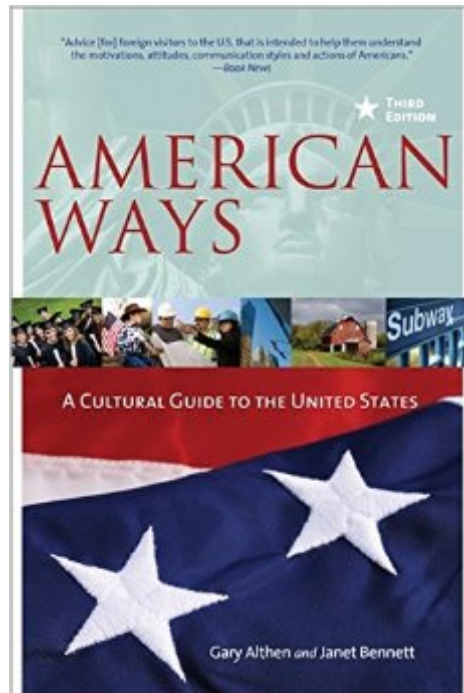


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# American Ways: A Cultural Guide To The United States Of America



## Synopsis

Whether you're a businessperson beginning to work in the United States or a foreign student visiting for a semester, *American Ways* will help you navigate the diverse and changing culture of the United States. From the deep-seated attitudes that mark the American character to customs and everyday activities, Gary Althen and Janet Bennett provide invaluable information on religion, politics, education, and relationships.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book seeks to look at American cultural patterns within a cross-cultural perspective. A number of cultural stereotypes are compared with the American stereotype, particularly Japan. I say "cultural stereotypes" because this is what is primarily used. At times, I have to disagree completely with the authors' interpretation of the meaning behind the actions of the cross-cultural experience. For example they give some examples of difficulties the author(s) had in Japan and then they explain why this occurred, always giving the benefit of the doubt to the Japanese culture. However, if that same action would be seen as an insult by a Japanese person I really see no reason for the authors to explain it away using a Japanese cultural value. In other words, they fail to critically analyse different cultures either from within or from an American perspective. The end result is that you are to assume that other cultures always treat people with respect and it is only an American-centric view that would think otherwise. I am not American and can claim something of a dispassionate

view on the subject. At first glance this book appears to be a useful, quick read for those going overseas but in reality it is a tough slog through some unanalysed stereotypes. This book fails to get past surface meanings to the deeper reality of the cross-cultures with which it contrasts American culture.

Dated, but still one of the best. I wish it was more direct about America's "pernicious dualism", our inability to think in terms of spectrum rather than black/white, right/wrong. Similarly, I thought that our xenophobia, our relative inability to think or learn beyond our borders, got short shrift. My rating reflects the dearth of good material on the subject.

Anyone providing international student or scholar orientation should not plan their program without first reading this. Provides valuable insight into 'American culture' that we often are unaware of. Provides good anecdotal info that internationals new to our culture can really benefit from.

I slogged through the first 25 pages stating obvious assumptions then WHAM! I could not read it fast enough. This book should be required reading for anyone attempting to understand American Cultural Patterns invisible to Americans belonging to the dominant culture. In other words, if you were born in another culture or belong to a subculture in the U.S. this book will explain why it is so hard to communicate with "rational white managers who have been in the same business for decades". It is a book full of examples, easy to read and understand. Even if the reader does not agree with the generalizations, the categories to understand culture are enlightening. "Rational white men" have a particular view of facts as if enough of them will lead to truth. Individualism keeps the sense of future limited to one lifetime (or the next quarter earnings). Linguistic features of English lead toward linear chains of cause, effect and outcomes. Other cultures experience relationships as community, time as seasonal or celestial, truth as intuitive, The authors do a better job than I can in describing without judgment. The idea is to celebrate American Cultural Patterns by understanding them better and thereby open the door to appreciating other cultures as just as valid. I will read this book several times and keep it as a primary reference. It is worth the fifteen cents a page I paid for it.

This is a very good book! Pleasure to read and explains everything! Good language use - easy to read, yet live and narrative. Good vocabulary (not particularly rich - it is written for a foreign reader) yet intuitively easy to understand, if some words are unfamiliar. The style is very much like someone

just tells you. Very deep approach taken by the author, getting to origins of all cultural aspects and behaviors first, and then when you understand the basics, going down to all details. Plenty of examples of situations are given. Logical and concise. I have been in USA for 5 years now, and I am quite adjusted already, but this was still a good source of information to me and once finished reading, I gave it as a present to my friend who is only considering to study in US, hope it helps him. It may also be a good reading for those interested in intercultural communications, even if not planning to visit America. I wish I had this book in my early years here!

American Cultural Patterns - A Cross-Culture Perspective is a very broad but in depth study of this title subject. Exactly the type information that answers long-time questions of mine. What about cultural patterns in the western society as we become more integrated (or not) as neighbors, co-workers, commercial/retail buyers and sellers? What are we doing about integration? Why is the western society so greedy and selfish? This perspective is a must read to even begin discussing the patterns and changing our attitudes.

The book is pretty good! I love it! I can know many American ways in this book. The book shows many things about American.

Addresses many issues for those new to the US. Addressed many issues I hadn't thought of. Will be using with my HS ELLs.

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