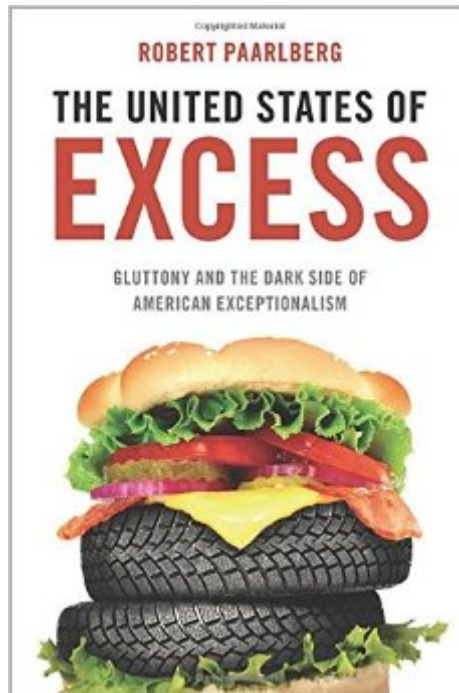


The book was found

# The United States Of Excess: Gluttony And The Dark Side Of American Exceptionalism



## Synopsis

Compared to other wealthy countries, America stands out as a gluttonous over-consumer of both food and fuel. The United States boasts an obesity prevalence double the industrial world average, and per capita carbon emissions twice the average for Europe. Still worse, the policy steps taken by America in response to obesity and climate change have so far been the weakest in the industrial world. These aspects of America's exceptionalism are nothing to be proud of. Is it possible that America is hard-wired to consume too much food and fuel? Unfortunately, yes, says Robert Paarlberg in *The United States of Excess*. America's excess is driven in each case by its distinct endowment of material and demographic resources, its unusually weak national political institutions, and a unique political culture that celebrates both individual freedoms over social responsibility, and free markets over governmental authority. America's over-consumption is shown to be over-determined. Because of these powerful underlying circumstances, America's strongest policy response, both to climate change and obesity, will be adaptation rather than mitigation. As the damaging consequences of climate change become manifest, America will not impose adequate measures to reduce fossil fuel consumption, attempting instead to protect itself from storms and sea-level rise through costly infrastructure upgrades. In response to the damaging health consequences of obesity, America will opt for medical interventions and physical accommodations, rather than the policy measures that would be needed to induce better diets or more exercise. These adaptation responses will generate serious equity problems, both at home and abroad. Responding to obesity with medical interventions will fall short for those in America most prone to obesity - racial minorities and the poor - since these groups have never enjoyed adequate access to quality health care. Responding to climate change by building more resilient infrastructures at home, while allowing atmospheric concentrations of CO<sub>2</sub> to continue their increase, will impose greater climate disruption on poor tropical countries, which are far less capable of self-protection. Awareness of these inequities must be the starting point toward altering America's current path.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 264 pages

Publisher: Oxford University Press; 1 edition (April 1, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0199922624

ISBN-13: 978-0199922628

Product Dimensions: 8.3 x 1.2 x 5.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.9 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (8 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #531,055 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #120 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Public Affairs & Policy > Cultural Policy](#) #299 in [Books > Textbooks > Business & Finance > Economics > Macroeconomics](#) #471 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Public Affairs & Policy > Environmental Policy](#)

## Customer Reviews

What I like most about Paarlberg's "The United States of Excess" is that he lays out the facts in well-referenced detail, offers clear and concise analyses, and then gently coaxes the reader along to his or her own conclusions. I found this to be true as well in his previous two works, "Starved for Science" and "Food Politics". His style is also more conversational than academic; this is a plus for retirees such as me who never had/took the opportunity to study political science in college. While you may think that obesity and CO2 emissions are strange bedfellows, Paarlberg uses a political construct of adaptation and mitigation to bring both together for that Aha! moment. It's an enjoyable read that in the end gave me the feeling of having successfully completed a 6-star sudoku in ink! "The United States of Excess" could easily be characterized -- given "Starved for Science" and "Food Politics" -- as Volume Three of the Paarlberg Trilogy.

Paarlberg reminds us that we have among the highest rates of obesity and less effective responses to environmental crisis. Lots of relevant facts pop up throughout the book, a delight to this fact-addicted reader. Regrettably, there will be no quick and easy answers to the challenges he so effectively identifies.

A quick look at what makes our culture tick --- bread and circuses. Putting aside the obvious problems associated with our over consumption of gas and calories --- which this book does an excellent job in doing---what concerns me most is the lack of civic awareness associated with this mindless pursuit of consumption. Readers interested in a deeper look into the source of excess should read: "How much is enough: Money and the good life," by Robert and Edward Skidelsky.

While the two excesses cited by this book, food and fuel consumption, sometimes are strained to seem analogous, the authors chief contention that they are manifestations of the same political and cultural processes seems valid. This is a very readable analysis of America's maddening

combination of problems and promise.

[Download to continue reading...](#)

The United States of Excess: Gluttony and the Dark Side of American Exceptionalism ANA Grading Standards for United States Coins: American Numismati Association (Official American Numismatic Association Grading Standards for United States Coins) The Two Marxisms: Contradictions and Anomalies in the Development of Theory (The Dark Side of the Dialectic; V. 3) (His the Dark Side of the Dialectic; V. 3) The Limits of Power: The End of American Exceptionalism (American Empire Project) Standard Catalog of United States Paper (Standard Catalog of United States Paper Money, 14th ed. ed By Robert F. Lemke) A Guide Book of United States Coins 2017: The Official Red Book, Hardcover Spiralbound Edition (Guide Book of United States Coins (Cloth Spiral)) National Geographic Guide to National Parks of the United States, 8th Edition (National Geographic Guide to the National Parks of the United States) The Buy Side: A Wall Street Trader's Tale of Spectacular Excess My Side of the Mountain Trilogy (My Side of the Mountain / On the Far Side of the Mountain / Frightful's Mountain) Sainly Solutions to Life's Common Problems: From Anger, Boredom, and Temptation to Gluttony, Gossip, and Greed A Railroad Atlas of the United States in 1946: Volume 1: The Mid-Atlantic States (Creating the North American Landscape) Dark Web: Exploring and Data Mining the Dark Side of the Web (Integrated Series in Information Systems) Advance And Retreat: Personal Experiences In The United States And Confederate States Armies The United States Cookbook: Fabulous Foods and Fascinating Facts From All 50 States Warranty Fraud Management: Reducing Fraud and Other Excess Costs in Warranty and Service Operations (Wiley and SAS Business Series) Staying Up Much Too Late: Edward Hopper's Nighthawks and the Dark Side of the American Psyche Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal Breaking Rank: A Top Cop's ExposÃfÂ© of the Dark Side of American Policing The Beautiful Fall: Fashion, Genius, and Glorious Excess in 1970s Paris The Bermuda Form: Interpretation and Dispute Resolution of Excess Liability Insurance

[Dmca](#)