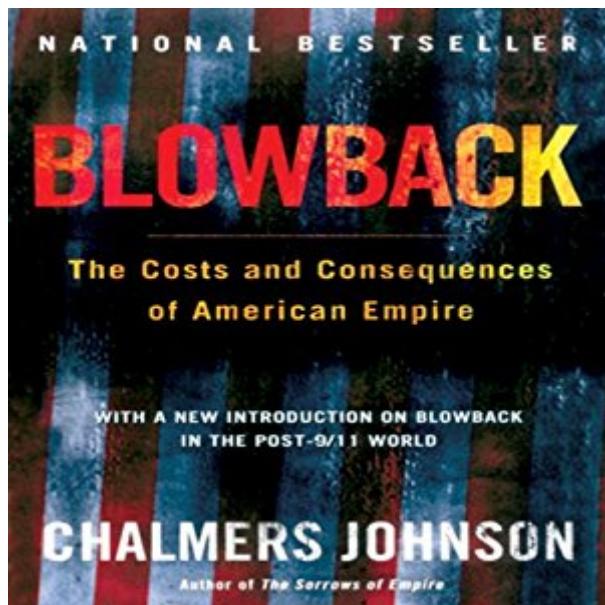


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Blowback (Second Edition): The Costs And Consequences Of American Empire



Synopsis

The term "blowback", invented by the CIA, refers to the unintended consequences of American actions abroad. In this incisive and controversial book, Chalmers Johnson lays out in vivid detail the dangers faced by our overextended empire and reveals the ways in which our misguided policies are planting the seeds of future disaster.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book hits it right out of the park. It is an unbelievably cogent argument about how US Foreign Policy has caused and will continue to cause future generations of hatred towards America and her citizens. I recommend this book to anyone who is interested in looking behind the "Media Curtain" to get a highly detailed yet amazingly easy read into the foreign policy blunders the US has committed and continues to commit in countries like Japan & specifically in Okinawa, South Korea & the greater South Pacific Region. The book makes the case that the US government like the Soviet era government during the Cold War, used other weaker nations as strategic "satellites," to contain the other "political theory" in the political war between capitalism (US) & socialism (USSR) the capitalists won. However, Johnson points out that the US government is still playing by the same rules laid out in the cold war which in turn is costing the US major as far as monetary assets and "good-will" in the face of the citizens of other nations. The stealth imperialism presented in this book is an eye opening and revealing experience for the reader. After reading this book you will look at the world in a completely new light. You will begin to read news stories and know that there in fact are more pieces to the story presented and you will likely be able to fit those pieces together based

on the knowledge you have gained by reading BLOWBACK.

I am shocked and ashamed at how much I haven't known about what the US has been doing in our name during my lifetime ... behind the scenes, not in the history books, denied at the time, supported by huge financing, never explained to Congressmen, hidden from the American people, without accountability. We, as American citizens, need to begin to comprehend the scope and frequency of governmental covert actions so we can do something to control them ... or our future and our children's future will continue to be in serious jeopardy.... democratic principles rely on citizens making informed decisions to guide institutional policies. "Blowback" is what happens when human rights are ignored and violated. This book is a must read for anyone wanting to learn how to limit practices that are the breeding ground for extremism.

An excellent primer on the US's Pacific empire. Professor Johnson's arguments are cogent and easily digestible, if not entirely pleasant to the taste. I highly recommend this book! It's a quick, uncomplicated read for a general audience (I only had to look up a handful of words) otherwise unfamiliar with the subterfuge and machinations of empire. The author's focus on the Pacific was both revelatory and embarrassing. The repeated comparisons of the US with the Soviet Union were unsettling. The author's evaluation of, and future predictions for more, blowback are disturbing, especially since it was penned prior to the tragic events of 9/11. The book utterly lacked maps and would've benefited from a couple of clarifying charts and at least one timeline, particularly concerning the recent history of China. I read, underlined, thoroughly annotated in the margins, and passed this book along to expand the thinking of fellow Americans.

Although the title and opening chapter make this book out to be an overview of the evils of American imperialism, in fact it's primarily an introduction to America's policy in East Asia over the last half decade. Seven of the ten chapters are explicitly about Asian concerns, and the remaining three are also focused primarily on Asia. The moral of these lessons from recent history is that US imperialist policies developed for the Cold War are being foolishly maintained, and the international outrage that they are creating is likely to culminate in political, economic, and security crises for the US. What makes this book a worthwhile pick for the lay reader is the concept of blowback. In his eagerness to apply this lens to the broad range of events he wants to cover, Johnson stretches this term well beyond its original meaning, but the point is well taken: Blowback is the side effects of foreign policy that citizens and even politicians do not understand because are ignorant of said foreign policy. For

example, 9/11 was blowback for American policies in the Middle East that few Americans are aware of. Because we don't understand how our policies have caused our own woes, we are powerless to rectify them or prevent future blowback. The purpose of this short book is to inform Americans of some of our less admirable actions in East Asia over the last half century and how those actions are likely to be perceived by East Asians. Johnson hopes that, when we have understood the problems we have created and continue to create in East Asia, we will recognize the consequences and take action to avert conflict and ameliorate tensions. This book was a very worthwhile read. I recommend it to all US citizens who intend to vote in a national election. It has a strong bias, which I like, not because he's right about everything, but because it sends an important message, and because the bias makes it interesting.

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