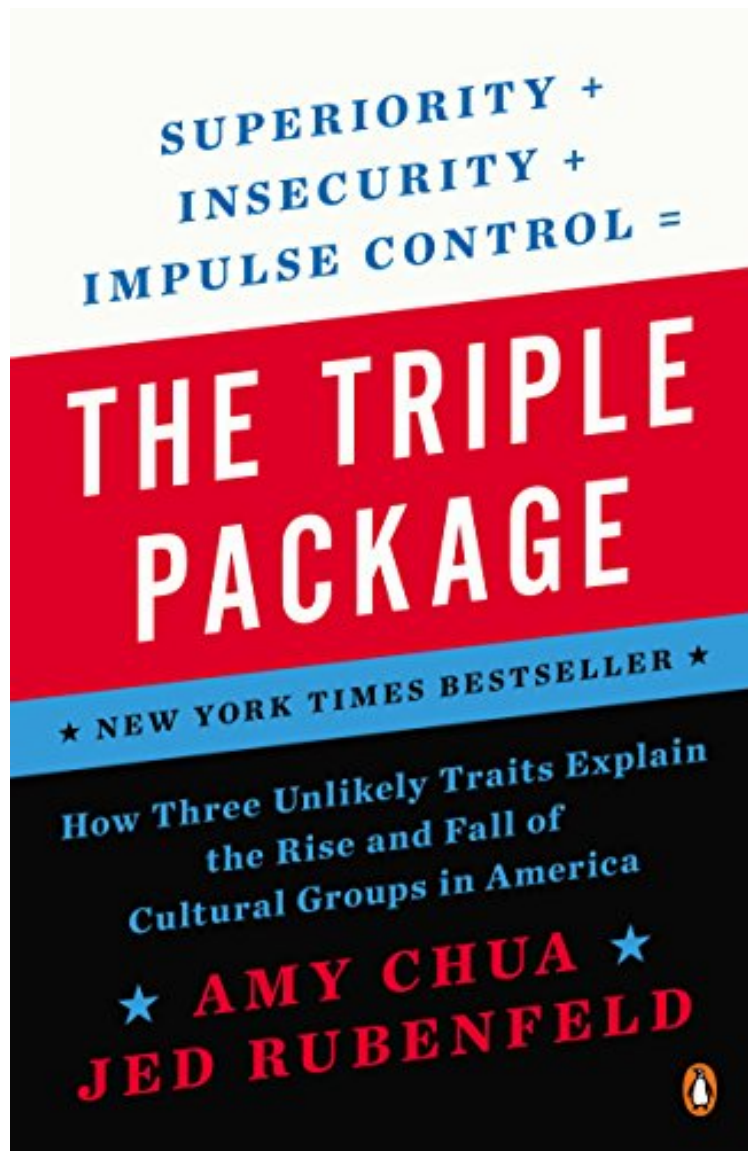


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The Triple Package: How Three Unlikely Traits Explain the Rise and Fall of Cultural Groups in America

Amy Chua, Jed Rubenfeld

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Amy Chua, Jed Rubenfeld : The Triple Package: How Three Unlikely Traits Explain the Rise and Fall of Cultural Groups in America before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Triple Package: How Three Unlikely Traits Explain the Rise and Fall of Cultural Groups in America:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Hat Trick ValuesBy John M. FordThis book begins with the

question of who is successful in America. The answer is not a list of individuals who have accumulated wealth, achievements, or fame. Instead the authors focus on groups whose members measure above average in business and other forms of "...material, conventional, prestige-oriented success." These cultural groups are defined similarly: "...their members tend to be raised with, identify themselves by, and pass down certain culturally specific values and beliefs, habits and practices." America's most successful groups include Mormons; immigrants from Cuba, Nigeria, India, China, Iran, and Lebanon; and Jews. These groups are not genetically superior or recipients of unfair advantages, argue authors Amy Chua and Jed Rubenfeld. They share three cultural characteristics the authors call "The Triple Package." Members of each group have a Superiority Complex, "...a deeply internalized belief in your group's specialness, exceptionality, or superiority." Members of successful groups are characterized by Insecurity, "...a species of discontent--an anxious uncertainty about your worth or place in society, a feeling or worry that you or what you've done or what you have is in some fundamental way not good enough." Finally, these cultural subgroups value Impulse Control, "...the ability to resist temptation, especially the temptation to give up in the face of hardship or quit instead of persevering at a difficult task." Triple Package values run counter to three strong currents in contemporary American culture. Rather than regarding any person or culture as Superior to any other, Americans shy away from comparative judgments. Insecurity is seen as a threat to self-esteem, which has become a core value in public education where the competition which can lead to achievement is softened to reduce disappointment and negative self-esteem. Impulse Control is incompatible with the immediate gratification and unrestrained freedom valued in our indulgent, youth-oriented culture. Triple Package subcultures are successful in part because they contrast so sharply with the mainstream culture around them. The book explores how these values are manifest differently in the eight successful subcultures. There are analyses of how successive generations can lose their subcultural heritage, becoming simultaneously more mainstream and less successful. Contrasts with the values of poverty-stricken subcultures, such as those found in Appalachia and inner-city neighborhoods highlight the advantages of Triple Package values as a path to individual as well as group success. This is a well-researched and thoughtfully written book. The arguments and supporting evidence are clearly communicated. An extensive and usable chapter notes section allows readers to engage with the authors' main points in depth. This book is highly recommended for anyone interested in subgroup differences in contemporary American culture. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. This is a really good book. Indeed, this is a daring book. By Peter Schaeffer This is a really good book. Indeed, this is a daring book. Why should this book be considered daring? Because the authors (Amy Chua - Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother and Jed Rubenfeld - Also a Yale professor) show that intelligence and hard work pay off in America... For people of all races and all economic origins (including the children of poor people). The conventional wisdom (Politically Correct orthodoxy) of American life is that "racism" and economic advantages (having wealthy parents) determine how successful people are in life. That's a nice piece of political / religious / cultural mythology, but is not actually true. The authors provide a wealth of factual data demonstrating that the PC view of American life is simply nonsense. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A scary look at why certain groups of Americans are and will be successful in school and later in life. By Grampa The politically correctists and the keep dumping the money into public school funders probably hate this book. For the rest of us with children, grand children, nephews/nieces and grand nephews/nieces as noted by one of the better reviewers. This book identifies and discusses the elephant in the classroom and home that many people want to avoid discussing. It explains, often, why children of successful parents are anything but successful. Know any failure to launchers still living at home with productive parents? The first two parts of the package are interesting and those traits are probably inherited from the parents, grand parents and the clan/village the kids come into contact with. There probably isn't much that can be done to enhance the first two traits. The third trait, "Impulse Control" can probably be helped by parents/grand parents and good mentors. If kids and adults lack Impulse Control, the chances of them being less successful than those with impulse control is self evident in our society today.

"That certain groups do much better in America than others--as measured by income, occupational status, test scores, and so on--is difficult to talk about. In large part this is because the topic feels racially charged. The irony is that the facts actually debunk racial stereotypes. There are black and Hispanic subgroups in the United States far outperforming many white and Asian subgroups. Moreover, there's a demonstrable arc to group success--in immigrant groups, it typically dissipates by the third generation--puncturing the notion of innate group differences and undermining the whole concept of 'model minorities.'" Mormons have recently risen to astonishing business success. Cubans in Miami climbed from poverty to prosperity in a generation. Nigerians earn doctorates at stunningly high rates. Indian and Chinese Americans have much higher incomes than other Americans; Jews may have the highest of all. Why do some groups rise? Drawing on groundbreaking original research and startling statistics, *The Triple Package* uncovers the secret to their success. A superiority complex, insecurity, impulse control--these are the elements of the Triple Package, the rare and potent cultural constellation that drives disproportionate group success. The Triple Package is open to anyone. America itself was once a Triple Package culture. It's been losing that edge for a long time now. Even as headlines proclaim the death of upward mobility in America, the truth is that

the old-fashioned American Dream is very much alive—but some groups have a cultural edge, which enables them to take advantage of opportunity far more than others. Americans are taught that everyone is equal, that no group is superior to another. But remarkably, all of America's most successful groups believe (even if they don't say so aloud) that they're exceptional, chosen, superior in some way. Americans are taught that self-esteem—feeling good about yourself—is the key to a successful life. But in all of America's most successful groups, people tend to feel insecure, inadequate, that they have to prove themselves. America today spreads a message of immediate gratification, living for the moment. But all of America's most successful groups cultivate heightened discipline and impulse control. But the Triple Package has a dark underside too. Each of its elements carries distinctive pathologies; when taken to an extreme, they can have truly toxic effects. Should people strive for the Triple Package? Should America? Ultimately, the authors conclude that the Triple Package is a ladder that should be climbed and then kicked away, drawing on its power but breaking free from its constraints. Provocative and profound, *The Triple Package* will transform the way we think about success and achievement.

Publishers Weekly (starred and boxed): "In their provocative new book, Chua (*Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother*) and Rubinfeld (*The Interpretation of Murder*)—Yale Law professors and spouses—show why certain groups in the U.S. perform better than others. According to the authors, three traits breed success: a superiority complex, insecurity, and impulse control. Only when this 'Triple Package' comes together does it generate drive, grit, and systematic disproportionate group success. Supported by statistics and original research... This comprehensive, lucid sociological study balances its findings with a probing look at the downsides of the triple package—the burden of carrying a family's expectations, and deep insecurities that come at a psychological price. Kirkus: "Husband and wife professors at Yale Law School explore why some cultural groups in the United States are generally more successful than others. Chua and Rubinfeld argue that each of these groups is endowed with a 'triple package' of values that together make for a potent engine driving members to high rates of success... [and] that the U.S. was originally a triple-package nation. However, while Americans still view their country as exceptional, in the last 30 years, the other two parts of the package have gone out the window, replaced by a popular culture that values egalitarianism, self-esteem and instant gratification, creating a vacuum for more motivated groups to fill. On a highly touchy subject, the authors tread carefully, backing their assertions with copious notes. Though coolly and cogently argued, this book is bound to be the spark for many potentially heated discussions. National Online: "Thinkers like Chua and Rubinfeld do us a service by reaching beyond the limits of what we can quantify." J.D. Vance, National Online: "Their book is a sometimes funny, sometimes academic, and always interesting study of the cultural traits that make some groups outperform others in America. . . . the book asks a very important question: why are some of us doing so much better (or worse) than others? . . . I'm not sure that Chua and Rubinfeld have all the right answers. But I do know that by focusing on people—and the cultures that support and affect them—they're asking the right questions. That's more than I can say for most of the social policy experts occupying the airwaves today." Logan Beirne, FoxNews.com: "Filled with surprising statistics and sociological research. . . . From the nation's start, Washington and the Founders believed that hard work and sacrifice meant success for the future. This was the start of the American dream. 'Triple Package' contends that success is driven not by inborn biology, but is instead propelled by qualities that can be cultivated by all Americans. The book serves as an opportunity to discuss what has helped drive America's triumphs in the past—and how we might harness this knowledge for our future." Elle: "The book meticulously documents that a variety of subgroups—Chinese, Mormons, Jews, Iranians, Indians, and Nigerians, among others—are higher-achieving than the average American; its 182 pages of text come with more than 100 pages of supporting notes. In analyzing how these groups, all of which identify as outsiders in some way, have done so well, the authors suggest that all Americans might profit from emulating these 'model minorities.'" David B. Green, Haaretz (Israel): "Their book is not racist. For one thing, they are drawing a correlation between success and certain psychological attitudes, not congenital characteristics. They also go out of their way to say that the Triple Package, or the material success it can help people attain, is no guarantee of happiness, and they give plenty of examples of the psychological damage it can do. Even more significantly, there's no doubt that attitudes—and performance—can and do change over time. . . . As a reader, I enjoyed the extensively sourced statistics and anecdotes that provide the basis for Chua and Rubinfeld's argument, and was not especially troubled by the fact that *The Triple Package* is not an academic book. For me, its main value is found in the final chapter, in which the authors examine where America has gone wrong." Business Traveller (UK): "The titles of these forces explain what they are clearly enough, although the detail is intriguing. As you'd expect, it's the individuals who have emerged from these groups that provide the best stories, however. . . . Interestingly, the authors are nuanced on what constitutes "success" and point out that there is a dark underside to the 'advantages'; that those in these groups 'enjoy'. . . . It's hard to argue with the quantitative and qualitative data amassed here. By and

large, successful people are very ambitious, and don't mind you knowing the fact (they also often invite you to celebrate their success). The authors are very good in their descriptions of this sort of ego. It is also an enjoyable read, and one which really should not be criticised for the wrong reasons. I think many will nod in agreement. . . .a dose of common sense, rather like Amy Chua's previous book, *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother*.
Kavaree Bamzai, *India Today*: "[the book] is implicitly critical of America's instant gratification disorder, and highlights the death of upward mobility among Americans. . . . The Triple Package is both a self-affirming anthem for those who need it as well as an anthropological exercise to understand what is going wrong with post-millennial America."
Will Pavia, *The Times (UK)*: "The Triple Package is backed up with reams of research and qualifications. They tiptoe mirthlessly over cultural egg shells yet still manage to stir up controversy."
Katie Roiphe, *Financial Times (UK)*: "Chua and Rubenfeld's explosive new meditation on success, *The Triple Package*, has already begun to enrage people, even those who, by their own admission, haven't read it but have simply heard about how shocking it is."
The Independent (UK): "The book is not racist — it is well-written; seductive."
Matthew Syed, *The Times (UK)*, *Book of the Week*: "One of the most controversial books of recent years ... the authors are to be commended for dealing with a controversial subject, and for revealing some deep truths. It deserves a wide audience."
Emma Brockes, *The Guardian (UK)*: "A lot to find interesting ... They draw on eye-opening studies of the influence of stereotypes and expectations on various ethnic and cultural groups ... The authors' willingness to pursue an intellectual inquiry that others would not be bracing."
Jenni Russell, *Sunday Times (UK)*: "Provocative ... If you care at all about the social pressures underpinning success and failure, or relish fresh perspectives on how societies really work, you will want to read this."
Allison Pearson, *Daily Telegraph (UK)*: "The authors have already been accused of racism, mostly by people who haven't read the book ... Powerful, passionate and very entertaining."
About the Author
Amy Chua and Jed Rubenfeld are professors at Yale Law School. Chua, one of *Time* magazine's 100 most influential people in the world in 2011, is the author of *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother*, which unleashed a firestorm debate about the cultural value of self-discipline, as well as the bestselling *World on Fire*. Rubenfeld examined the political dangers of "living in the moment" in *Freedom and Time*; he is also the author of the international bestseller *The Interpretation of Murder*.
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If there's one group in the United States today that's hitting it out of the park with conventional success, it's Mormons. Just fifty years ago, many Americans had barely heard of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and regarded Mormons as a fringe group. Now Mormons are one of the most successful groups in America. Overwhelmingly, Mormon success has been of the most mainstream, conventional, apple-pie, 1950s variety. You don't find a lot of Mormons breaking the mold or dropping out of college to form their own high-tech start-ups. What you find is corporate, financial, and political success, which makes perfect sense given the nature of the Mormon chip on the shoulder. Long regarded as a polygamous, almost crackpot, sect, Mormons seem determined to prove they're more American than other Americans. Whereas Protestants make up about 51 percent of the U.S. population, America's five million to six million Mormons comprise just 1.7 percent. Yet a stunning number have risen to the top of America's corporate and political spheres. Baptists are America's largest Christian denomination, with a population of forty million to fifty million, about eight times the size of the Mormon population. The roster of living Baptist corporate powerhouses is not, however, eight times the size of the Mormon list. On the contrary, available data indicate it's much smaller.
Here's another data point: In February 2012, Goldman Sachs announced the addition of three hundred more employees to the thirteen hundred already working in the firm's third largest metropolitan center of operations (after New York/New Jersey and London). Where is this sixteen-hundred-employee headquarters? In Salt Lake City, Utah. By reputation, the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton business school is one of the nation's best and most prestigious. In 2010, Wharton placed thirty-one of its graduates with Goldman — exactly the same number as did Brigham Young University's less well-known Marriott School of Management. The real testament to Mormons' extraordinary capacity to earn and amass wealth, however, is the LDS Church itself. The amount of American land owned by the Mormon church is larger than the State of Delaware. The entire Church of England, with its grand history, had assets of about \$6.9 billion as of 2008. The Vatican claimed \$5 billion in assets as of 2002. By comparison, the Church of the Latter-day Saints is believed to have owned \$25 billion to \$30 billion in assets as of 1997, with present revenues of \$5 billion to \$6 billion a year. As one study puts it, "Per capita, no other religion comes close to such figures."