

What They Saw in America

Grounded in the stories of their actual visits, *What They Saw in America* takes the reader into the journeys of four distinguished yet very different foreign visitors – Alexis de Tocqueville, Max Weber, G. K. Chesterton, and Sayyid Qutb – who traveled to the United States between 1830 and 1950. The comparative insights of these important outside observers (from both Europe and the Middle East) encourage sober reflection on a number of features of American culture that have persisted over time: individualism and conformism, the unique relationship between religion and capitalism, indifference toward nature, voluntarism, attitudes toward race, and imperialistic tendencies. Listening to these travelers' views, both the ambivalent and even the more unequivocal, can help Americans better understand themselves, more fully empathize with the values of other cultures, and more deeply comprehend how the United States is perceived from the outside.

JAMES L. NOLAN JR. is a professor of sociology at Williams College. His teaching and research interests fall within the general areas of law and society, culture, technology and social change, and historical comparative sociology. His previous books include *Legal Accents, Legal Borrowing: The International Problem-Solving Court Movement* (2009); *Reinventing Justice: The American Drug Court Movement* (2001); and *The Therapeutic State: Justifying Government at Century's End* (1998). He is the recipient of several grants and awards, including National Endowment for the Humanities fellowships and a Fulbright scholarship. He has held visiting fellowships at Oxford University, Loughborough University, and the University of Notre Dame.

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*Alexis de Tocqueville, Max Weber,
G. K. Chesterton, and Sayyid Qutb*

JAMES L. NOLAN JR.



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To my students

Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>page</i> ix
Introduction	I
1 Pride, Patriotism, and the Mercantilist Spirit: Tocqueville and Beaumont Discover America	111
2 Tocqueville and the Quandary of American Democracy	36
3 Agrarianism, Race, and the End of Romanticism: Weber in Early Twentieth-Century America	66
4 Weber on Sects, Schools, and the Spirit of Capitalism	93
5 A New Martin Chuzzlewit: Chesterton on Main Street	116
6 Chestertonian Distributism and the Democratic Ideal	141
7 From Musha to New York: Qutb Encounters American <i>Jabiliyya</i>	163
8 Qutb's "Inquiring Eyes" in Colorado and California	183
Conclusion	203
<i>Notes</i>	237
<i>References</i>	283
<i>Index</i>	291

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