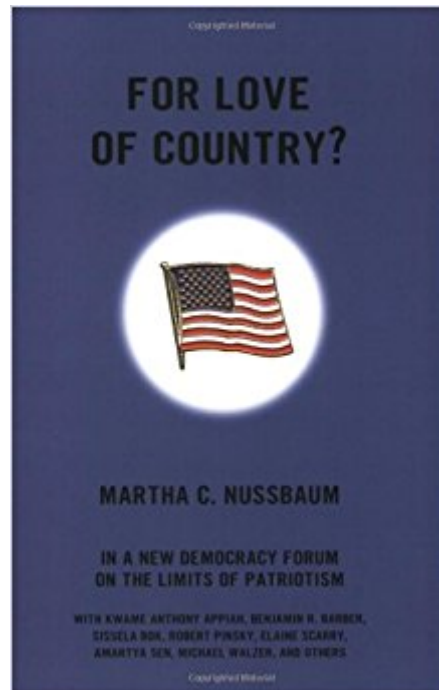




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For Love Of Country?



Synopsis

After the terrorist attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center, American flags appeared everywhere. Is patriotism a good response at a time of national crisis? What does it mean for us to think of ourselves as a nation first? With our connections to the world growing stronger and more vital than ever, Martha C. Nussbaum argues that we should distrust conventional patriotism as parochial and instead see ourselves first of all as "citizens of the world." Sixteen prominent writers and thinkers respond, including Benjamin R. Barber, Sissela Bok, Nathan Glazer, Robert Pinsky, Elaine Scarry, Amartya Sen, and Michael Walzer. NEW DEMOCRACY FORUM A series of short paperback originals exploring creative solutions to our most urgent national concerns. The series editors (for Boston Review), Joshua Cohen and Joel Rogers, aim to foster politically engaged, intellectually honest, and morally serious debate about fundamental issues—both on and off the agenda of conventional politics.

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Customer Reviews

Brown University philosophy professor Nussbaum's lead essay, "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism," which originally appeared in the Boston Review, ignites an energetic response from 15 other essayists. Tracing ideas to the Stoics, Nussbaum argues for cosmopolitanism over patriotism, asserting that the world citizen regards all human beings as fellow citizens and neighbors and that it is better to be a citizen of the world than merely a citizen of a state. While a few respondents agree

with Nussbaum, most take steamy umbrage at her premise. Hilary Putnam says Nussbaum may be a prophet but world citizenship isn't for today. Robert Pinsky says she "spectacularly fails" and then eulogizes the sight of an American flag flapping over his neighborhood market. Elaine Scarry cautions against replacing nationalism with internationalism at the risk of bypassing constitutionalism. Richard Falk warns against replacing national patriotism with cosmopolitanism without "addressing the market-driven globalism." Others challenge Nussbaum on the basis that there is no larger world government to become citizens of, belittling her suggestion that people can have many allegiances and criticizing her for putting forth an abstract, rather than a specific, sense of humanity. In her reply to the respondents, Nussbaum maintains that we share a fundamental humanity by virtue of the fact that, although each person is born by chance into a particular country, "we are all subject to disease and misery of all kinds;...we are all condemned to death." Unlike the fourth century B.C. of the Stoics, practical opportunities for moral world citizenship without a world state are many. To say, as Nussbaum writes, "I cannot act as a world citizen, since there is no world state" is a cowardly way of avoiding thinking about how high a price one will pay to help others in need. Readers will wonder whether some of the respondents have a clue about what Nussbaum proposes in this exciting compendium. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In the essay that opens this slim but demanding volume, law and ethics professor Nussbaum argues that it is better to prepare children to be cosmopolitans--citizens of the world--rather than patriots of a nation. She states her case provocatively enough to allow 15 other professors to respond with demurrers ranging in tone from "yes, but" to "poppycock!" Each of the 15 offers a distinct perspective on the argument, although most respond with versions of the position that both patriotism and cosmopolitanism are worth inculcating. Only conservative historian Gertrude Himmelfarb is utterly dismissive of cosmopolitanism, thinking it a utopian abstraction that "obscures, even denies . . . the givens of life: parents, ancestors, family, race, religion, heritage, history, culture, tradition, community--and nationality." The most piquant of the other essays are Richard Falk's, with its reservations about such present-day, real-world aspects of cosmopolitanism as transnational capitalism and global marketing, and Judith Butler's critique, crabbed but cogent, of the universality of moral concepts on which cosmopolitanism depends. Ray Olson --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

For Love of Country is a great book, it expanded my mind in regards to the world around me. This is

my second purchase, this copy is a gift for someone whom I believe will benefit from this reading.

First of all, I am suspicious of the argument(made by those on the Right, esp those who NEVER seen combat or even military service) that the only way you can be a " real patriot" unless you sign up for the armed forces in a time of crisis(there may be times when this move is justifiable pace WWII and the US Civil War- when there was really NO substitute for victory). There are many ways of being a patriot(of whom military service is just one), distributing civic minded pamphlets, teaching English to newly arrived immigrants, working with at risk teenagers, volunteering at local hospital/free clinic- or even a soup kitchen. I agree with Martha Nussbaum that patriotism should NOT be conflated with chauvinism(what we in the UK term jingoism), but I am uncomfortable with her claim that we should think of ourselves of citizens of the world. Simply because even in an era of globalization, we still THINK of ourselves as being primarily citizens of given nation states- Americans, Britons, Poles, Spaniards, Russians et al.I for one do not think that my support for multinational/supranational entities such as the United Nations, the European Union, the International Criminal Court detracts from being a "loyal subject" of Her Majesty any more than being a Roman Catholic detracts from my loyalty to Crown and Country- it is because I regard support for such enties as being in the best interests of my country that I do so.To conclude, Patriotism is to chauvinism/jingoism what gourmet cooking is to cannibalism. PS I wonder if Martha Nussbaum regards herself as a patriot(the old joke by George M.Cohan is still valid- "many a bum show has been saved by the flag!")

This book consists of a brief essay by Martha Nussbaum, 16 comments on it by various philosophers and scholars, and a final response by Dr. Nussbaum. Nussbaum's essay is a strong pitch for cosmopolitanism as opposed to devotion to one country. She criticizes "patriotism" for narrowness, intolerance, and proneness to lead to war. Several of the 16 following essays point out, with varying degrees of clarity, that she has rather failed to distinguish patriotism from chauvinism. Most of the essays defend patriotism, or at least local loyalties--to family, culture, and so on.I would respectfully submit that some clearer thinking is needed. First, real patriotism--love of country--is not only different from chauvinism, it is a quite different feeling. Patriotism involves caring enough about one's institutionalized polity to vote, support candidates, speak, write, fight to defend the country if it is attacked, and generally keep it on an even keel. Patriotism is about recognizing that your nation-state has done a lot for you--protecting you, guaranteeing certain freedoms, subsidizing your education, and so on--and you care about that, so you want to give something back.

Chauvinism--the sort of "patriotism" that takes the form of hating other people and other places--is quite different. It comes from fear (where else could hate come from?) and, in particular, deep insecurity. Chauvinists are rarely good citizens. In the US, they have been notoriously prone to oppose the Constitution, especially its freedoms and separation of powers (see the Bush administration, for example). They also are notoriously prone to cheat on obligations to country; they are often corrupt and they don't like serving in the military or otherwise giving back. Also quite different are commitments to family and to culture. A family is not a polity; loyalty to family is partly instinctive, partly learned, and not the same thing as loyalty to a political entity. Culture is a totally different thing from nationhood. One of the main reasons I love the US is that it is tolerant and multicultural. (Again, chauvinists don't like this, which shows they are not very patriotic.) I am proud of my culture, such as it is, but my culture isn't the US. The US is an institution, not a culture. Popular Anglo-American culture is often called "American culture," but it isn't. America is thoroughly multicultural, and even within the Anglo-American tradition, regionalism is very strong. Southern Scots-Irish culture is very different from anything in New England or Wyoming. Hating or opposing other people isn't loving one's country, any more than hating all other kids is loving your kids. America's traditions of freedom, and its heritage (Abraham Lincoln, FDR, etc.), are mentioned by various essayists, but this is only somewhat relevant. Sure, I'm proud of all that, but I would love America's great accomplishments if I were Australian or Mongolian. Being loyal is a somewhat different thing, involving--among other things--putting up with the bad stuff too, and working to fix it. Cherry-picking "good traditions" isn't enough. Finally, love of country could mean love of landscape (though none of these authors says so). I love the North Cascades--I love equally the part in the US and the part in Canada. Loyalty to one's nation is different. So, what does one owe to who? My personal view might be very crudely summarized as follows: One owes one's family some real warm love and care--as individuals. One owes one's culture nothing at all, but if you appreciate your culture, go for it, without putting down others' cultures. One owes one's country some loyalty, including defense--as long as one is a citizen of the country and as long as the country is not unalterably set against you and yours. One owes the entire human race a lot of love, support, and concern. One owes the world--the nonhuman lives included--a bit less immediate love and concern, but they too are fellow travelers, and we depend on them, and we can't ignore them. Finally, one owes it to family AND culture AND nation AND planet to fight chauvinism and intolerance at every level and in every way. A patriot must hate that sort of "patriotism." One can be a patriotic American or Italian or Uzbekistani AND a cosmopolitan world citizen, just as one love one's family AND love the human race too (in a different way). This book could provide a useful start in talking about who

owes what to whom, but the grave scholars will have to clarify their thinking a lot more on exactly what emotions and exactly what units we are talking about.

This is a collection of essays that discusses and debates the ideas of patriotism and cosmopolitanism. The idea of being a "citizen of the world" is very fascinating and complex, it is of course naturally apart of any discourse regarding globalization. I think this may be why I enjoyed the book, I find most if not all books dealing with globalization very interesting

For most people patriotism is a self-evident virtue that requires little defense or explanation. Here's a book why this should not be the case. Whether in challenging patriotic morality with the cosmopolitan alternative (Martha Nussbaum) or in showing what's good and necessary about patriotism (most of her critics), this book will doubtlessly stimulate your thinking and might even change your take on the subject. Strongly Recommended

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