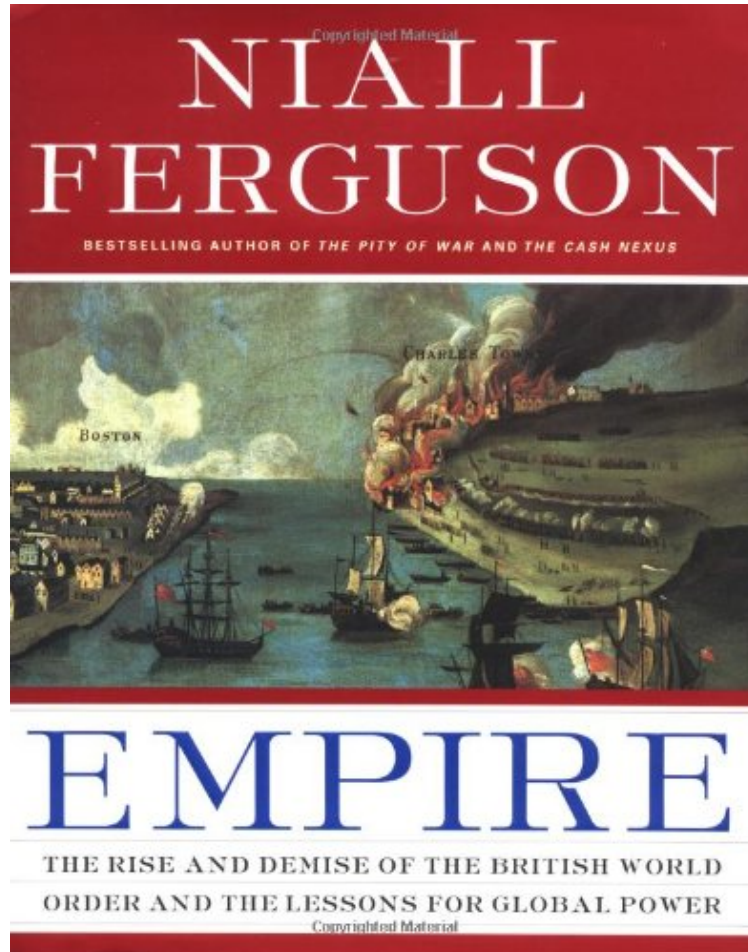


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Empire

Niall Ferguson

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Niall Ferguson : Empire before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Empire:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. HOW NOT TO RUN AN EMPIRE! By RAY RIDGE Book title - - EMPIRE: The Rise and Demise of the British World Order the Lessons for Global Power, by Niall Ferguson. As the title suggests this is not a book for a light read on the plane to the holiday hotel. Nevertheless, for those interested in the 'politics of power' at a global level then this tome certainly touches the core elements of the amazing success that was the international economic-financial British Empire. The jacket blurb makes claims about it being insightful for the present situation the USA finds itself in, but frankly I think that is a tad far-fetched. Whilst the USA is indeed the global superpower of the start of the 21st Century it is a long, long way from being the mega-power that was Britain at the zenith of its imperial might. The demise of the British Empire is well explained although there are no new or unique insights, but again the decline is not really a lesson for the USA for all the author's attempts to make it seem

so. Our World has changed beyond all recognition from Kitchener's machine-gun army crushing the Madhi's hordes at Omdurman: Anyone who considers the USA's Afghanistan or Iraq campaigns of the last decade will recognise the differences. Similarly, the World has emerging global powers soon to be on a par with the USA in economic-financial terms which the British Empire to a large extent only had to deal with after WW1. Then if we consider the Internet communication to which this is pinned the predicament of the 2010 USA compared to the 'steam-boat' and 'telegraph' of old is highlighted even more. All that said, this is a thoroughly readable, informative and evocative book about the often unheeded hazards and dangers of imperialism and whilst the USA is surely not condemned to repeat or experience them all there are salutary lessons for the Obama White House on what are the positives and negatives of trying to maintain a global presence when your backyard infrastructure is crumbling and under siege from within and without. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I greatly enjoyed this book and I am sure it will also ... By Dennis Rutzou This is a fascinating economic history which outlines in some detail the important achievements that the British have brought to the world, many of which have passed by unnoticed. I greatly enjoyed this book and I am sure it will also be enjoyed by many others. The author is to be commended for the fantastic organisation of the subject and the prodigious research that would have been required. It was disappointing that the graphs and charts are impossible to read in the Kindle format. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Quite readable... By General99 I feared that this book would be an unbearable academic treatise... surprisingly, it was easy to read and it provided a lot of explanation into fundamental questions such as "How did a small island country like England manage to rule a country with the size and population of India? Interesting stuff.

The British Empire was the largest in all history, its reach the nearest thing to world domination ever achieved. By the eve of the Second World War, over a fifth of the world's land surface and nearly a quarter of the world's population were under some form of British rule. Yet for today's generation, the British Empire has come to stand for nothing more than a lost Victorian past--one so remote that it has ceased even to be a target for satire. The time is ripe for a reappraisal. In this major new work of synthesis and revision, Niall Ferguson argues that the British Empire should be regarded not merely as vanished Victoriana but as the very cradle of modernity. Nearly all the key features of the twenty-first-century world can be traced back to the extraordinary expansion of Britain's economy, population, and culture from the seventeenth century until the mid-twentieth--economic globalization, the communications revolution, the racial make-up of North America, the notion of humanitarianism, the nature of democracy. Displaying the originality and rigor that have made him the brightest light among British historians, Ferguson shows that far from being a subject for nostalgia, the story of the Empire is pregnant with lessons for the world today--in particular for the United States as it stands on the brink of a new kind of imperial power based once again on economic and military supremacy.

.com At its peak in the nineteenth century, the British Empire was the largest empire ever known, governing roughly a quarter of the world's population. In *Empire*, Niall Ferguson explains how "an archipelago of rainy islands... came to rule the world," and examines the costs and consequences, both good and bad, of British imperialism. Though the book's breadth is impressive, it is not intended to be a comprehensive history of the British Empire; rather, Ferguson seeks to glean lessons from this history for future, or present, empires--namely America. Pointing out that the U.S. is both a product of the British Empire as well as an heir to it, he asks whether America--an "empire in denial"--should "seek to shed or to shoulder the imperial load it has inherited." As he points out in this fascinating book, there is compelling evidence for both. Observing that "the difficulty with the achievements of empire is that they are much more likely to be taken for granted than the sins of empire," Ferguson stresses that the British did do much good for humanity in their quest for domination: promotion of the free movement of goods, capital, and labor and a common rule of law and governance chief among them. "The question is not whether British imperialism was without blemish. It was not. The question is whether there could have been a less bloody path to modernity," he writes. The challenge for the U.S., he argues, is for it to use its undisputed power as a force for positive change in the world and not to fall into some of the same traps as the British before them. Covering a wide range of topics, including the rise of consumerism (initially fueled by a desire for coffee, tea, tobacco, and sugar), the biggest mass migration in history (20 million emigrants between the early 1600s and the 1950s), the impact of missionaries, the triumph of capitalism, the spread of the English language, and globalization, this is a brilliant synthesis of various topics and an extremely entertaining read. --Shawn Carkonen From Publishers Weekly Acclaimed British historian Ferguson (*The Pity of War*) takes the revisionist (or perhaps re-revisionist) position that the British Empire was, on balance, a good thing, that it "impos[ed] free markets, the rule of law... and relatively incorrupt government" on a quarter of the globe. Ferguson's imperial boosterism differs from more critical recent scholarship on the empire, such as Linda Colley's *Captives* and Simon Schama's *A History of Britain: The Fate of Empire*. Ferguson's gracefully written narrative traces the history of the empire from its beginnings in the 16th century. As Ferguson tells it, by the 18th century British consumers had developed a strong taste for sugar, tobacco, coffee, tea and other imports. The empire's role was to supply these commodities and to offer cheap land to British settlers. Not until the late 18th century did Britain add a "civilizing

mission" to its commercial motives. Liberals in Britain, often fired by religious feelings, abolished the slave trade and then set out to Christianize indigenous peoples. Ferguson gives a wonderful account of the fabled career of missionary and explorer David Livingstone. The author admits that the British sometimes responded to native opposition with brutality and racism. Yet he argues that other empires, especially those of Germany and Japan, were far more brutal (a not entirely satisfying defense). Indeed, Ferguson contends that Britain nobly sacrificed its empire in order to defeat these imperial rivals in WWII. His provocative and elegantly written account will surely trigger debate, if not downright vilification, among history readers and postcolonial scholars. 25 color illus., bw illus., maps. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Past, present, and future meet in British historian Ferguson's provocative take on British history. His primary assertion is that "for better, for worse--fair and foul--the world we know today is in large measure the product of Britain's Age of Empire." Impressive facts and figures come first in his account--chiefly, that the empire Britain assembled was the biggest in world history, "bar none." But why did it disappear? Ferguson's answers to that question are underscored by his insistence that Americans should--no, must--understand the loss of empire and its implications for the U.S. Since the global hegemony enjoyed by Britain disintegrated, will the superpower status currently exercised by the U.S. do likewise? Or, as Ferguson poetically yet emphatically phrases the issue, "Should the United States seek to shed or to shoulder the imperial load it has inherited?" The lesson here may have been taught before--history informs current events--but it is a lesson that deserves to be retaught regularly. Brad Hooper Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved