



Trust: The Social Virtues and The Creation of Prosperity

By Francis Fukuyama

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In his bestselling *The End of History and the Last Man*, Francis Fukuyama argued that the end of the Cold War would also mean the beginning of a struggle for position in the rapidly emerging order of 21st-century capitalism. In *Trust*, a penetrating assessment of the emerging global economic order "after History," he explains the social principles of economic life and tells us what we need to know to win the coming struggle for world dominance.

Challenging orthodoxies of both the left and right, Fukuyama examines a wide range of national cultures in order to divine the underlying principles that foster social and economic prosperity. Insisting that we cannot divorce economic life from cultural life, he contends that in an era when social capital may be as important as physical capital, only those societies with a high degree of social trust will be able to create the flexible, large-scale business organizations that are needed to compete in the new global economy.

A brilliant study of the interconnectedness of economic life with cultural life, *Trust* is also an essential antidote to the increasing drift of American culture into extreme forms of individualism, which, if unchecked, will have dire consequences for the nation's economic health.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Fukuyama argues that a nation's economic strength is tied to its social unity, and that America is in danger of losing both.

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From Library Journal

Fukuyama (*The End of History and the Last Man*, LJ 1/92) examines the impact of culture on economic life, society, and success in the new global economy. He argues that the most pervasive cultural characteristic influencing a nation's prosperity and ability to compete is the level of trust or cooperative behavior based upon shared norms. In comparison with low-trust societies (China, France, Italy, Korea), which need to negotiate and often litigate rules and regulations, high-trust societies like those in Germany and Japan are able to develop innovative organizations and hold down the cost of doing business. Fukuyama argues that the United States, like Japan and Germany, has been a high-trust society historically but that this status has eroded in recent years. This well-researched book provides a fresh, new perspective on how economic prosperity is grounded in social life. Highly recommended for academic libraries.

Jane M. Kathman, Coll. of St. Benedict Lib., St. Joseph, Minn.

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From [Booklist](#)

Fukuyama's first effort at global punditry, *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992), was an international best-seller; his new book is a blueprint for success in this "posthistorical" world. Neoclassical economics, Fukuyama maintains, is 80 percent correct but ignores the role of social capital ("reciprocity, moral obligation, duty toward community, and trust") in facilitating the "stability and prosperity of postindustrial societies." High-trust societies like Japan, Germany, and (in spite of our individualism) the U.S. develop the kind of flexible organizations that the global economy demands far more easily than do low-trust societies or "familistic" nations like China, France, Italy, and South Korea. Fukuyama assesses the success and failure of various social structures, arguing that the U.S. needs to overcome its "Crisis of Trust": "American liberals need to understand that they cannot take organic cohesion of American society for granted. . . American conservatives, for their part, have to understand that before they cut back the role of the state in society, they should have some idea about how to regenerate civil society and find alternative ways of taking care of its weaker members." Though much of this is traditional conservative thought dressed up in contemporary jargon, Fukuyama's track record, strong publisher promotion, and a 50,000-copy print run should generate interest. *Mary Carroll*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Adam Jones:

What do you regarding book? It is not important together with you? Or just adding material when you need something to explain what your own problem? How about your spare time? Or are you busy man? If you don't have spare time to try and do others business, it is give you a sense of feeling bored faster. And you have free time? What did you do? Everybody has many questions above. They need to answer that question

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